

# SUSTAIN: THE ALLIANCE FOR BETTER FOOD & FARMING

England & Wales · Charity number 1018643

## Details

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**Status** Registered

**Legal form** Charitable company

**Company number** [02673194](#)

**Registered** 1993-03-12

**Register** [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

## Contact

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244-254 Cambridge Heath Road  
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E2 9DA

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**Email** [sustain@sustainweb.org](mailto:sustain@sustainweb.org)

**Website** [www.sustainweb.org](http://www.sustainweb.org)

## Activities

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**Objects:** TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN AND TO INITIATE OR CARRY ON RESEARCH INTO ALL ASPECTS OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE POLICY PRODUCTION DISTRIBUTION AND CONSUMPTION WITH A VIEW TO IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC BY INCREASING THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND APPRECIATION OF THE WAY IN WHICH FOOD IS PRODUCED AND DISTRIBUTED AND THE EFFECTS THIS CAN HAVE ON HUMAN HEALTH AND THE HEALTH OF THE ENVIRONMENT ON WHICH HUMANS DEPEND

**Activities:** Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming, advocates food and agriculture policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, improve the working and living environment, enrich society and culture and promote equity. We represent around 100 national public interest organisations, and are independent from the agri-food industry.

## Classification

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- **How:** Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Environment/conservation/heritage, Economic/community Development/employment
- **Who:** Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

## Geography

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- **Area of benefit:** IN PRACTICE THE UNITED KINGDOM
- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Throughout England And Wales

## Finances

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Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£2,662,451	£2,381,017	£2,014,207	30
2024-03-31	£2,779,892	£2,174,259	£1,732,773	31
2023-03-31	£1,826,450	£1,781,876	£1,127,140	30
2022-03-31	£1,573,469	£1,467,979	£1,082,566	29
2021-03-31	£2,569,445	£2,239,202	£977,076	25

## Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
<b>MIKE RAYNER</b>	Chair	
ALISON JANE SWAN PARENTE BA DL		2016-01-12
Andre Kpodonu		2020-12-18
Bridget Jennifer Henderson		2016-01-12
Cobi-Jane Oluwatobi Akinrele		2020-12-18
David Edwards Mr		2020-12-18
Deirdre Alison Woods		2019-12-09
Dr Kawther Hashem		2022-12-14
Josie Cohen		2021-12-15
Jyoti Fernandes		2020-12-18
KATHARINE HELEN BOYD		2013-01-09
Rob Percival		2022-12-14
Shafalee Loth		2020-12-18
Stephanie Slater		2013-11-26
Victoria Williams		2014-11-27

**SUSTAIN: THE ALLIANCE FOR BETTER FOOD & FARMING**

England & Wales - Charity number 1018643

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# Accounts

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# Annual report

Review and accounts for the year ended  
31 March 2025

Company registered number: 02673194

Charity registered number: 1018643

**sustain**  
the alliance for better food and farming

# Foreword

The range and quality of work being undertaken across the Sustain alliance is impressive. As has been our readiness to respond to emerging developments such as the 25-year farming roadmap, 10-year NHS health plan, the national Food Strategy and the transition to a new government following the 2024 General Election.

This year, our events in parliament, at political party conferences in the autumn, at the sustainable farming gatherings Oxford Real Farming Conference and Groundswell, and engagement with the new cohort of MPs, Select Committee Chairs and Ministers, resulted in our policy recommendations being taken up in influential processes.

We also faced significant challenges, not least the intense downward pressure on government budgets due to international trade disputes and global conflict. HM Treasury budget decisions contributed to tense relations between the new government and farmers. Sustain played a key role in encouraging third-sector environment and conservation groups to respond in a way supportive of farmers, focusing on the need to retain environmental farm payments and prioritise farm profitability through fair dealing and diversification in the supply chain.

Sustain's powerful ability to link practice to policy, and local to national, came strongly to the fore this year. Our innovative Bridging the Gap programme launched 10 pilots to demonstrate how to make

nature-friendly food affordable and accessible to diverse communities, through schemes such as fruit and veg vouchers and school food procurement. Our Recipe for Change campaign set out how millions of pounds generated from new levies on unhealthy food could drive reformulation and pay for beneficial initiatives. The Sustainable Food Places network, now in its 10th year, grew to 114 places implementing food system change at a local level, with local authority areas in London and the North East demonstrating their progress through our Good Food Local benchmarking. Such work has generated great interest from MPs and the Defra Food Strategy team.

We have been making progress on many fronts. Sustain has also restructured and welcomed new senior staff to the team, strengthening our approach to both operations and impact. It is now time for our alliance to decide on our shared priorities for the next strategy period. We have a treasure chest of tried-and-tested practical and policy solutions to some of the most difficult challenges that face our society and our planet. As an alliance, we are ready to step up with renewed confidence to put these centre-stage in policy-making at local and national levels.



**Professor Mike Rayner**  
Chair of Sustain's Council of Trustees

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## Trustees during the financial year covered by this report:

Mark Ainsworth\*\* (elected 20/11/24)  
Sara Azeem\* (elected 20/11/24)  
Josie Cohen (re-elected 14/12/22)  
Djenai Delerue\* (resigned 13/05/25)  
Amy Deptford\* (elected 20/11/2024)  
Jyoti Fernandes\*\* (re-elected 29/12/23)  
Kerry Geldart (elected 20/11/24)  
Kawther Hashem (re-elected 29/11/23)  
Bridget Henderson (resigned 20/11/24)  
Tilly Jarvis (elected 20/11/24)  
Katharine Jenner (re-elected 14/12/22)

Shefalee Loth (re-elected 29/11/23)  
Emma Österberg\* (elected 20/11/24)  
Rob Percival\*\* (elected 14/12/22)  
Raksha Mistry\* (resigned 20/11/24)  
Professor Mike Rayner (re-elected 20/11/24)  
Ele Saltmarsh\* (elected 19/12/23)  
Stephanie Slater (resigned 20/11/24)  
Alison Swan Parente (re-elected 20/11/24)  
Nick Weir\*\* (re-elected 19/12/23)  
Victoria Williams (re-elected 14/12/22)  
Dee Woods\*\* (re-elected 20/11/24)

Note: Those marked with an asterisk (\*) share the trustee role between two people in their organisation as part of a leadership development opportunity for diversity. One in each pair marked with a double asterisk (\*\*) is the nominated Trustee registered with Companies House and the Charity Commission.

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**Company registered number:** 02673194

**Charity registered number:** 1018643

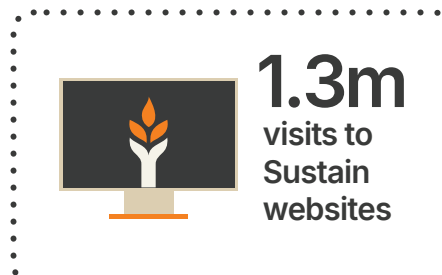
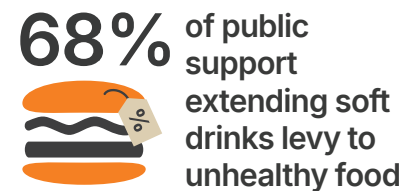
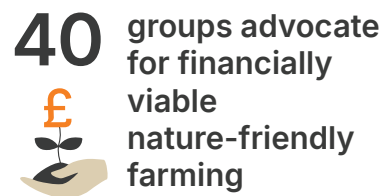
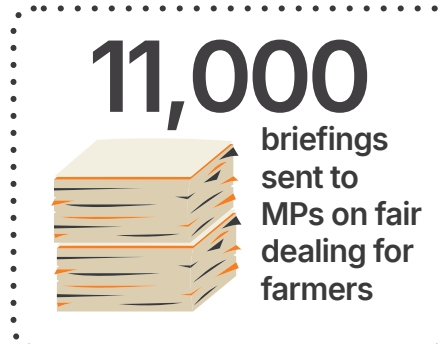
**Registered office:** The Green House, 244-254 Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9DA

**Auditors:** Goldwins, 75 Maygrove Road, West Hampstead, London NW6 2EG

**Bankers:** The Co-operative Bank, PO Box 101, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP and Triodos Bank, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AS

# Our year in numbers

Our projects, campaigns, partnerships and policy work contributed to the following over the year April 2024 to March 2025:



Find out more about Sustain's success stories and achievements at:  
[www.sustainweb.org/about/success-stories](http://www.sustainweb.org/about/success-stories)

# Good food production

Our vision is a food production system that is based on the principles of agroecology, that is fair for all who participate in it, and which is connected with its local community, through shorter, localised supply chains, and community food growing spaces, all of which cover rural, peri-urban and urban areas

Our Sustainable Farming Campaign cultivated relationships with the new cohort of MPs, Ministers and their teams, promoting policies to accelerate the transition to nature-friendly farming. We co-hosted *A Taste of Agroecology* in Parliament, attended by 51 MPs and Minister for Farming Daniel Zeichner; and Sustain's Chief Executive attended a Farm to Fork reception at 10 Downing Street. Our recommendations on whole-farm planning were adopted by the National Audit Office, and we coordinated a [joint consultation response](#) to the government's proposed Land Use Framework.

Concerned that the new government's Budget risked alienating farmers, we led on carefully curated alliance communications on the controversial farm inheritance tax and changes to farm support. Our communications were among the top five Google results for over 10 days. We also worked closely with influential conservation and climate groups on media work to protect the farming budget.

Our partnership with Riverford Organics mobilised 11,000 briefings being sent to MPs on fair dealing for farmers. Our policy demands were reflected in parliamentary debates and party manifestos, and paved the way for Defra's Farm Profitability Review. We also coordinated a [landmark open letter](#) on fair

supply chains to the new Environment Secretary, a first for major conservation bodies.

We published new research with the Open University on [employee ownership and agroecology](#), and co-authored [Home Grown](#) – a roadmap for horticulture – launched at the Groundswell regen farming conference and featured in *The Times*.

At the Oxford Real Farming Conference in January 2025, we once again curated the policy room with a packed programme, including a Q&A with the Director of Defra's Farming Programme.

Sustain's Chief Executive serves on the steering group of the Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics, whose [research this year](#) showed that supermarkets are not yet complying with new legislation that prohibits using antibiotics to prop up poor farming practices.

At local level, our Capital Growth campaign continued to support hundreds of London's community food-growing spaces and local councils through training, events, and advice. Over 2,000 people joined our Good to Grow and Urban Harvest festivals, and our Growing for Nature survey informed the Greater London Authority's *Nature Recovery Strategy*.

Over 1,500 people take part in events and webinars in our Good to Grow Week

Sustain CEO attends Number 10 Downing Street 'Farm to Fork' reception

Over 300 people attend our panel sessions on ELMs and horticulture at Groundswell

Urban Harvest festival hosts 30 events with 500+ attendees and 25 community gardens

April

May

June

July

September

October

We host a 'Six Inches of Soil' film screening and panel debate with 150 attendees

Positive communications on farm inheritance tax appear in top 5 Google results for over 10 days

Launch of 'Home Grown' UK horticulture report with Soil Association and Wildlife Trusts

SEWN Together North event in London connects 40 community food growers with local council officers

“ Sustain was absolutely all over the Oxford Real Farming Conference!

**Barnaby Coupe, Senior Land Use Policy Manager, The Wildlife Trusts**

“ Thank you for a great and very informative day. The facilitators were brilliant!

**Attendee at Capital Growth's bumblebee identification workshop**



Photo: Our Sustainable Farming Campaign co-hosted A Taste of Agroecology in Parliament, attended by new Farming Minister Daniel Zeichner and over 50 MPs. Pictured (left to right): Jyoti Fernandes, Landworkers Alliance; Daniel Zeichner MP, Minister for Farming; Will White, Sustain's Sustainable Farming Campaign Coordinator; Martin Lines, Nature Friendly Farming Network

13 local council officers discuss support for urban food growing at our Inter-Council Forum

We submit evidence to EFRA inquiry on supply chain fairness

Sustain welcomes 1,000+ attendees in sessions at the Oxford Real Farming Conference Policy Room and new entrants networking event

Capital Growth launches 8 training workshops, including soil and pollinator care

We attend key DEFRA stakeholder meeting on the 25-year Farming Roadmap

Joint briefing published on Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) access for under-5-hectare farmers and growers

## November

'A Taste of Agroecology' event hosted in Parliament with alliance members NFFN, LWA, Pasture for Life and Soil Association

## December

Farmers Against Farmwashing e-action sends 11,000+ fair farming briefings to MPs; cited in parliamentary debates

## January

EFRA Committee quotes our key policy points in letter to DEFRA on Groceries Code Adjudicator reform

## February

DEFRA attends Q&A and stakeholder session on Land Use Framework at our Sustainable Farming working party

## March

Capital Growth facilitates anti-racism learning set with 5 community food growing leaders from London

# Good food economy

Our vision is of fair supply chains that support a flourishing diversity of supply, manufacturing, retail and catering enterprises – at home and overseas – that create good jobs and livelihoods; helping agroecological farmers and sustainable fishers to thrive and making good food the easiest choice.

Our Bridging the Gap programme established 10 pilot projects to explore how to make climate- and nature-friendly food affordable and accessible to all. The team released an [International Policy Review](#), held two thought-provoking webinars on [public sector food](#) and [fruit and veg on prescription](#) and presented our [Bridging the Gap film](#) to a packed session at the Oxford Real Farming Conference in January 2025. We are now turning our findings into advocacy for policies to support more people to access climate- and nature-friendly food.

This year saw publication of the draft [Local Food Growth Plan](#), coordinated by Sustain, working with the Landworkers Alliance (LWA); Food, Farming & Countryside Commission; Pasture for Life; Sustainable Food Trust; and our Local Food working party. This provided case studies of successful local food retail models, and policy proposals to help grow the sector. Our snapshot review of challenges highlighted priorities for policy and infrastructure across retail, procurement and supply chains, which was picked up with interest by Defra's national food strategy team. This was followed by detailed engagement on solutions for growing the sector, with people from retail, marketing, food partnerships and business support organisations.

Sustain's long-standing and perennially popular [Real Bread Campaign](#) continued to champion culturally diverse engagement, recruiting 14 new ambassadors from diverse backgrounds and running the 12th annual Sourdough September, with participation from over 45 countries. The campaign published a Real Bread Manifesto and relaunched the Real Bread Map to help community bakeries connect with local customers. The campaign also continued to challenge misleading marketing practices and claims by UK supermarkets, submitting complaints to local authorities, with Morrisons and Co-op improving their practices as a result.

Now in its 7th year, our [Roots to Work](#) jobs platform launched a careers resources page for those seeking work and employers in the sustainable food sector. We introduced 'inclusion indicators' on job listings, promoting the disability confident, ethnicity confident and Living Wage Employer schemes, as well as promoting other positive recruitment practices considered to be helpful for equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). The website continued to profile a diverse range of people working in the sector and hosted networking events, collectively resulting in a growth in the audience for this work.

Policies to help community bakeries championed in Real Bread Manifesto

New report asks the NHS and GPs to put fruit and veg on prescription

Popular webinar examines fruit and veg vouchers to promote health and horticulture

Pilots launched for organic vegetable supply to schools in Wales, Aberdeen and East London

Roots to Work promotes Living Wage, disability confident and ethnicity confident schemes

April

May

June

July

August

Public sector food procurement webinar promotes plant-based meals

Snapshot published of barriers and solutions for local food sector

Improved Real Bread Map relaunched, connecting bakers with customers

Roots to Work careers resources launched to help build good food sector

Review published of international policies to promote affordable fruit and veg

Pilots of affordable organic fruit and veg launched in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Carrickfergus



“ It was heart-warming to know that there are so many passionate candidates who want to make a real difference in the world. Roots to Work is clearly reaching the right audience.

**Sustainable Merton, who advertise their vacancies on Sustain's Roots to Work jobs platform**

“ It's been one of my dreams to be able to use affordable, locally farmed organic produce in my primary schools and thanks to Growing Communities, it's finally happening.

**James Taylor, School Chef and participant in Hackney School Food pilot, part of Sustain's Bridging the Gap programme**

Teviot Centre Food Co-op in Tower Hamlets, east London, supported to trade in affordable organic fruit and veg by Sustain's Bridging the Gap programme. Credit: Sylvie Belbouab

People from 45 countries participate in 12th annual Sourdough September

Real Bread Campaign ambassador Aidan Monks named Baker of the Year

137 people attend Roots to Work networking event at ORFC2025

Real Bread Week encourages people to 'Bake, Buy and Boost' Real Bread

Draft Local Food Growth Plan shared at celebratory event

September

October

November

January

March

Bridging the Gap presents at Soil Association Organic Trade Conference

Tower Hamlets residents enabled to buy organic fruit and veg in vouchers pilot

Bridging the Gap film launched at packed ORFC2025 session

70 farmers, millers, bakers, academics and broadcasters discuss support for Real Bread

# Good food for all

Our vision is that we want to see healthy, sustainable food accessible and affordable to all, through a diverse array of outlets and services, and for it to become unacceptable and expensive to market, sell or serve unhealthy, unethical and unsustainable produce, over the alternative.

The **Recipe for Change** campaign for a levy on unhealthy food staged packed-out panel events at the Labour and Conservative party conferences. We published a new tool showing a 'menu of options' for spending levy revenue, and our evidence was quoted in the Chief Medical Officer's (CMO's) annual report and by House of Lords Select Committee on Food, Diet and Obesity.

We continue to put the voices of diverse families, parents, carers and children at the forefront of our work. Our Children's Food Ambassadors launched their parent manifesto ***Our Children, Our Future***, with national polling showing high parental support for healthy school food expansion, an energy drinks ban, and honest food labelling and packaging. Ambassadors discussed their manifesto with school food minister Stephen Morgan MP.

150 people attended our **Children's Food Summit**, with a lively cross-party MP panel chaired by youth activist Dev Sharma. 'Yummy' food heroes were celebrated in the Children's Food Awards for work on early years feeding, community engagement, diversity and inclusion, and school food; whilst less healthy products and brands targeting babies and toddlers came under fire in our 'Yucky' awards.

We continue to advocate for universal healthy school meals, relaunching the **Superpowers of School Meals report** in Parliament. We also continue to push for increased eligibility and value of Healthy Start, as well as automatic enrolment of eligible families with babies and children under 4.

This year, 25 of 30 London councils improved their results in our **Beyond the Food Bank** measures. Sustain also co-delivered the Greater London Authority funded Food Roots 2 programme with Food Matters and The Social Investment Company. We engaged 21 London food partnerships and food poverty alliances, supporting them to address food insecurity and develop their partnership.

Ten local authorities passed **local healthy food advertising policies** with our support, bringing the total to 22 plus Transport for London. Hounslow Council became the first to restrict unhealthy commercial baby food advertising. We collaborated with Obesity Health Alliance to respond to several Advertising Standards Authority and Ofcom consultations on food advertising regulation. Our work is also gaining international attention, with keynote speeches at high-profile events, including in Australia and New York.

Two Recipe for Change parliamentary roundtables engage MPs, early years groups and think tanks

Westminster Council commits to permanent universal primary meals and expands secondary free meals

Menu of spending options tool explores how revenue from a new levy should be spent

Recipe for Change campaign events at Labour and Conservative party conferences

Autumn Budget delivers on our calls to update the Soft Drinks Industry Levy

April

May

June

July

September

October

Launch of parents' manifesto for healthy children's food, backed by national poll of 2,000+ parents

Commitments on food advertising, energy drinks and school meals secured in party manifestos

New research shows soft drinks industry levy reduces children's sugar consumption

Government extends Household Support Fund for 6 months, following campaign pressure

House of Lords report backs healthier children's food and expansion of unhealthy food levies



“ All of you here this morning will be aware of Sustain’s invaluable work as they continually fight to ensure that everyone has access to healthy and sustainably produced food. And, as many across the country are still feeling the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis, Sustain’s Children’s Food Campaign is more essential than ever.

**Sharon Hodgson MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on School Food**

“ The Children’s Food Summit really was a day of positivity, possibility and a pleasure to hear about all the brilliant people and projects making life better for children through good food.

**Stephanie Slater, Chief Executive, School Food Matters**

Parent ambassadors present their manifesto for healthy children’s food in Parliament with Sharon Hodgson MP and Baroness Rosie Boycott (front, centre). Credit: Matt Crossick

Hounslow Council adopts first healthier baby food advertising policy with our support

Chief Medical Officer report backs our calls for levies on unhealthy food and drinks

7 leading public health groups back our calls for expansion of school meals, Healthy Start and a levy on unhealthy food products

150 people attend Children’s Food Summit, including several MPs and Peers

Superpowers of School Meals parliamentary event and new report launch

**November      December      January      February      March**

Poll shows 2 in 3 adults support a levy on unhealthy food

Children’s Food Campaign parent ambassadors present their manifesto in Parliament

100 councils and organisations, including Sustain, call for auto-enrolment for free school meals

Good practice celebrated in our ‘Yummy’ Children’s Food Awards; unhealthy products slammed as ‘Yucky’

100+ people attend launch of Good Food Local: London at City Hall, including reps from 31 of the capital’s 33 councils

# Climate and nature emergency

## Local Action

Local authorities are showing leadership. Our [Every Mouthful Counts toolkit](#) for local authorities supported 59 places to embed food in local climate plans, ensuring that food is recognised as both a climate challenge and a solution. With our support, councils and food partnerships are also influencing government reviews, advocating with elected officials, and delivering local improvements.

## National policy

We have helped food gain traction in national climate policy. The UK's [7th Carbon Budget](#), published in January 2025, setting much clearer targets for food and farming. Following campaign pressure, all major political parties committed to sustainable food procurement in their 2024 General Election manifestos, with Labour pledging that 50% of public sector food will be 'local or sustainable'.

## Factory farms

We stepped up our support for local community action this year, to prevent expansion of damaging factory farms. This year, we achieved a powerful milestone win in [Methwold, Norfolk](#), where we helped the community to block one of the largest proposed megafarms in Europe. Working with Foodrise and other alliance members, we successfully persuaded the local planning authority that the application was unlawful on climate grounds, setting important precedent.

Alongside litigation, we are systematically exposing harms caused by factory farming, including revealing widespread breaches of environmental permitting rules, working with the Bureau of Investigative Journalism. Our new report [Stink or Swim](#) revealed that 10 agribusinesses produced more waste than the UK's 10 largest cities. In November, our interactive [Muck Maps](#) became the first research to reveal the spread of factory farm waste across the UK. The maps, developed with Compassion in World Farming, Friends of the Earth and Materiality, attracted widespread national press coverage. We also launched [Toxic Trade-Off](#) – an analysis of intensive livestock's impact on housebuilding targets - at our event at the Labour Party conference.

Beyond Methwold, over 60 councils have joined 'Planning for the Planet' – and several have adopted text in local planning policy to enable sustainable farming and protect communities from industrial agriculture pollution.

## Food procurement

Procurement remains a key focus for our [Food for the Planet](#) campaign. A new council signed the London Food Purchasing Commitment, and the Greater London Authority recommended it as part of free school meal funding. Our joint briefing with Foodrise made a strong case for healthier, plant-rich public sector menus and supported alliance-wide advocacy.

We have also advanced work on climate-friendly food advertising via a partnership with the University of Oxford. This new research hub will provide important research for the development of climate-friendly food policies.

## Diverse ambassadors

We have prioritised ensuring diverse voices shape the food and farming transition. We launched the ['Back the Future'](#) young farming ambassadors programme with Nature Friendly Farming Network (NFFN), Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK), the Landworkers Alliance and the National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs. Six young ambassadors will champion just, sustainable farming policies throughout 2025. [Roots of Change](#) – a collaboration of the Institute for Development Studies and Sustain – is building just transition perspectives through agricultural rewilding.



“ Today’s victory really marks the beginning of the end for these types of atrocious megafarms. Congratulations on this stunning victory!

**Carina Millstone, Executive Director of Foodrise (formerly Feedback)**

“ Thank you all so much. For the climate, for the people who would have eaten this poor nutrition, and most of all for the millions of animals spared a miserable life.

**Alister Scott, Executive Director, Global Rewilding Alliance and Foodrise (formerly Feedback)**



Local campaigners opposing a new ‘mega’ factory farm await outside King’s Lynn and West Norfolk Council for a decision from the planning authority. With the support of Sustain and others, the community was successful in blocking the development on the grounds of climate impact.  
Credit: Lily O’Mara

## Key moments

### » April 2024

Stink or Swim report launched exposing shocking pollution from top agribusinesses

### » June 2024

Public sector food procurement standards secured in all major political party manifestos

### » July 2024

Sign-ups to London Food Purchasing Commitment grows to 5 councils

### » August 2024

Sustain warns national planning policy overhaul puts farmland and rivers at risk

### » September 2024

Packed event at Liberal Democrat conference highlights factory farming’s huge role in river pollution

Labour Party conference event shows impact of factory farm pollution on housebuilding and nutrient neutrality

### » October 2024

We champion integration of food and farming policies in national planning consultation

### » November 2024

Muck Maps released revealing faecal and nutrient pollution from factory farms

### » January 2025

Climate and Nature team secure Bertha Fellowship to help communities resist factory farm expansion

### » February 2025

Roots of Change project launched with University of Sussex to support agricultural rewilding

Back the Future project recruits 6 young farming ambassadors

Investigative journalists work with Sustain to expose environmental permit violations by agribusinesses

### » March 2025

Historic victory! Megafarm in Norfolk rejected, explicitly citing climate impacts

# Local action

## Sustainable Food Places

The **Sustainable Food Places network** grew to 114 members this year as we marked our 10th anniversary as a network with a record 14 places receiving awards recognising their innovation and leadership on healthy and sustainable food.

When the General Election was called, we pivoted to provide resources and training to support local food partnership coordinators to engage with prospective parliamentary candidates and their newly elected MPs. Our Westminster **Day of Celebration and Action** in November 2024 welcomed a record 55 MPs, as well as members of the Defra Food Strategy Team.

The report on UK's under-preparedness for food systems shocks, commissioned by the **National Preparedness Commission** recognised the central role of food partnerships in both preparing communities and helping them to navigate food supply disruptions and other food systems shocks.

## Policy

This year also saw a marked increase in engagement between food partnerships and MPs representing their constituencies, both before and after the July 2024 General Election. Toward the end of 2024, the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland (DAERA) launched the first ever NI Food Strategy Framework, and UK Defra Secretary of State Steve Reed announced development of a national Food Strategy, with place-based action identified as a vital part of implementation.

## Good Food Local: London

Participation in our **Good Food Local** benchmarking grew, with all Councils in the North East and nearly all London Councils taking part.

We provided advice and support to London councils, to make progress on key policies and initiatives to improve their local food system. In September 2024, we launched our survey of progress at City Hall. Over 100 people attended, with 30 of 33 London councils represented, alongside food partnerships and partner organisations.

We commissioned the University of Nottingham to conduct an impact evaluation in London, showing that 80% of respondents found the Good Food Local approach helpful in prioritising actions and 72% recognising it made a significant contribution to adopting a whole food systems approach.

## Good Food Local: North East

We continued to roll out our Good Food Local approach in the North East, convening councils, food partnerships and local organisations to make systematic progress on key measures for food system change. All councils in the region, plus Cumberland Council, participated in the initial benchmarking. In November. Our website showcased actions, scoring criteria, case studies and recommendations. 11 of 13 councils published their data.

We consulted local authorities and partners to create a national platform and self-assessment tool for driving change through Good Food Local.



Representatives from 75 local food partnerships met with 55 MPs in Parliament to celebrate the role of local action in transforming food systems. We are increasingly confident that the local food partnership approach is gaining traction in Defra's emerging food strategy  
Credit: Sustain

## Food Roots 2

Sustain co-delivered the **Food Roots 2** learning and support programme for London's local food partnerships and food poverty alliances. This included seven workshops supporting food partnership development; Healthy Start promotion; working with Councils; campaigning and advocacy; and creating a legacy toolkit.

We also conducted 10 online workshops, good practice sharing sessions, and three online drop-in sessions. Sustain led three action learning sets for new food partnerships and provided individual support as needed. We engaged consistently with 20 of the 21 grantees.

We also contributed to development and promotion of the Alliance for Dignified Food Support's Dignity Toolkit, and Sheffield University's Food at Home research into disabled and older people's access to food in their own home.

“ Every year the Good Food London survey is an opportunity for us as a borough to understand where we are, set targets for what we could be doing next and, importantly, acknowledge and celebrate what we have achieved. The report, and the brilliant team at Sustain behind it, have been with us every step of the way as we have taken forward a whole systems approach to food, bringing together boroughs facing similar challenges, driving the sharing of best practice and, however big the task or challenge has sometimes appeared, encouraging us to take a bite out of it and to keep going.

**Andy Gold, Head of Food Strategy, London Borough of Newham**

“ The connections and learnings that have come from Food Roots 2 have been incredibly valuable – it's so reassuring to know we'll still have this after the programme.

**Local Food Partnership coordinator and participant in the Food Roots 2 programme**

## Key moments

### » May 2024

Westminster Debate on auto-enrolment for Healthy Start uses Sustain data from Healthy Start Uptake Map

### » June 2024

Good Food Local benchmarking committee marks start of Good Food Local national roll out

21 food partnerships and food poverty alliances engage in Food Roots learning and support

### » September 2024

NE event celebrates first year of regional partnership; all NE councils attend

Greater London Authority commissions an additional 6 months of Food Roots 2

Following campaign pressure, Government extends Household Support Fund

### » November 2024

First NE local authority benchmarking published; 11 of 13 councils publicly share their results

75 local food partnerships and 55 MPs meet in Parliament to recognise the role of local action in transforming food systems

DAERA Minister launches NI's first Food Strategy Framework, referencing local action

Middlesbrough becomes first UK town to achieve Gold Sustainable Food Places Award

### » December 2024

30 of 33 London boroughs submit data on food system actions and policies, our highest engagement yet

### » February 2025

National Preparedness Commission report on UK food resilience cites central role of food partnerships in delivering UK food security

### » March 2025

Launch event and report publication for Good Food Local: London, held at City Hall

### » March 2025

Collaborative work starts on development of a Food Roots legacy toolkit

# National influence

This year, we have seen a significant increase in Sustain's engagement with senior government officials and their teams, following extensive groundwork during the General Election period and the entry of a large cohort of new MPs into Westminster. We built warm and productive connections with MPs, select committees, civil servants and ministerial teams on key processes such as the [National Food Strategy](#), NHS 10-Year Health Plan, 25 Year Farming Strategy and Defra horticulture team. Several national Food Strategy leads on themes relevant to our specialisms have sought us out for our expert input and connections, and we have high hopes this will lead to tangible progress during 2025 and beyond.

The announcement of the General Election to be held in July 2024 necessitated a swift and strategic response from the team. In consultation with alliance members, we produced Sustain's '[Manifesto Tracker](#)', which evaluated how political party pledges aligned with our own [Sustain Manifesto for Better Food and Farming](#). This involved significant input from campaign leads specialising in themes such as farming, climate, public health, and local action. The tracker revealed some key alignments across the political spectrum with Sustain's own manifesto, including on healthy and sustainable public sector food procurement, pesticide and antibiotic use reduction, and establishment of a food partnership in every area. These gave us key footholds for parliamentary engagement, media work and securing commitments.

We also produced the [Sustain General Election Toolkit](#). This provided our networks at national and local level with the necessary information, tools, and resources to engage with their Prospective Parliamentary Candidates (PPCs). The Sustain team hosted a popular Sustainable Food Places (SFP) [training session](#) to explain how local food partnership coordinators could engage with their local candidates. Post-election, the toolkit was updated to facilitate engagement with the huge cohort of newly elected MPs.

The team played a leading role in arranging and running the Sustainable Food Places (SFP) [Day of Action and Celebration](#) in Parliament, November 2024. The event enabled parliamentarians – MPs, their teams and ministerial advisors – to engage with local food partnerships. Emma Lewell-Buck MP kindly hosted this much-appreciated event, who is adept in cross-party working and building consensus, and has been a long-term champion of equitable access to healthy and sustainable food, through national policy and local action.

We ran or partnered on three events at the main political party conferences in autumn 2024, including a popular event on river pollution at the Liberal Democrat conference with WWF and River Action. The team also updated the 'Engaging with your MPs toolkit' to promote good food policies to new and returning MPs.

The team found numerous ways to engage parliamentary attention on the Sustain alliance's concerns in relation to the economics of sustainable farming, including a joint submission coordinated by Sustain to [HM Treasury's forthcoming Budget](#). The team also submitted evidence and engaged with several select committee processes, particularly around the incoming Chairs of committees of interest, including the new Chair of the EFRA Committee, to highlight issues of particular concern for the committee's attention.

The team's efforts resulted in several notable achievements. The Sustain manifesto tracker and General Election toolkit were well-received, with very positive feedback from our target audience.

“ I got to meet an MP, share experiences with others, and have a renewed vision of what a sustainable food movement can do. This helps boost our credibility with local organisations.

**Jenny Salter, Gloucestershire Food Partnership Coordinator**

“ It was an honour to attend the parliamentary event and present our parents' manifesto. It was an amazing experience to be able speak as a parent and a privilege to represent all parents on such an important issue. I really felt that the passion in the room, from everyone involved, was palpable. It was exciting to be in the Houses of Parliament too! And I felt so lucky to be shown around by my MP.

**Mary Needham, Children's Food Campaign parent ambassador**

# Building our communications and reach

The Sustain family of websites collectively received over 1.3 million visits this year, with sustainweb.org accounting for over 800,000 of these visits.

An impressive 10% of our web users provide us with their email address via a call to action or event sign up, and 5% join an email list. This year, we overhauled storage of this data, allowing fresh insight to be gleaned about our supporters, improving data hygiene, and positioning Sustain well for realignments of outreach priorities in 2025 and beyond.

Our continued efforts on supporter growth has led to 16,000 new additions to our email newsletter lists this year. We have recorded over 33,000 engaged supporter interactions and sent more than 12,000 action emails to Members of Parliament and other targets. A notable highlight is the 'Supermarkets STOP Farmwashing' campaign, conducted in partnership with Riverford Organics.

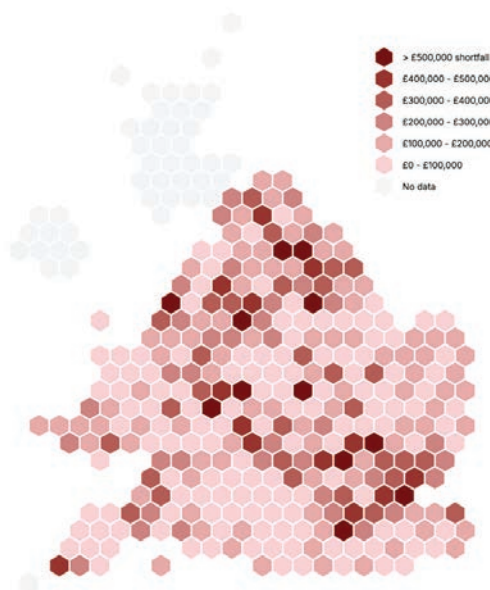
The Sustain Annual Conference held in March 2025 and streamed live via the Sustain lounge set, has become a crucial and highly anticipated event, this year with over 400 attendees and exceptionally positive feedback.

Our jobs platform **Roots to Work** continues to bloom with a 16% growth this year. **Good Food Local's** reach is now national with the launch of a new streamlined platform targeted at reaching over 100 local authority areas. Additionally, we've launched the **Planet Card** platform as part of the Bridging the Gap programme. The platform (launched October 2024) has already recorded over 600 part-funded transactions and supported well over 100 people.

Social engagement remains steady on our main channels, with LinkedIn continuing to show the most growth, with 9,773 followers for the Sustain account. However, where Sustain's campaigns and strategic narrative gains the most impressions is via posts by our individual campaigners.

Our new account on Bluesky is growing steadily, with 2,968 at time of writing. Some Sustain campaigns also have accounts on Instagram such as the Real Bread Campaign with 21,900 followers, Roots to Work with 4,851 followers, Capital Growth at 1,167 and Children's Food Campaign at 314. Future activity is being assessed by Sustain's Communications team as we evaluate an ever-changing social media landscape and the impact of AI search.

**Healthy Start map:**  
Estimated loss to families in 2024



From top left: Healthy Start map developed by Sustain's digital and food poverty team; view from Sustain's Live Lounge during the 2025 Sustain Annual Conference; snapshot from Sustain's Summer Reception in June 2024, celebrating our campaigns and successes.

# Equity, diversity, inclusion and racial justice

We built on the foundational work of our Diversity Outreach programme to focus on embedding lasting change to advance equity, diversity, inclusion and racial justice across the sector. This work spanned internal reflection and capacity-building, creating opportunities for underrepresented groups, to externally focused work on improving wider sector thinking and practice.

Internally, we introduced mandatory training modules for all staff on equity, diversity and inclusion, disability awareness and unconscious bias, to be integrated into staff inductions and refreshers. We also continued to embed anti-racism in our organisational culture through a pilot Action Learning Set, offering space for colleagues running projects and campaigns to reflect on practice and identify actions for meaningful change.

The launch of our **Careers in Sustainable Food and Farming** resource on our jobs platform **Roots to Work** in May 2024 significantly boosted engagement with universities and prompted a series of student workshops, with more planned. Our jobs platform **Roots to Work** continues to support inclusion by spotlighting stories of Black and people of colour (BPOC) in the sector. We introduced inclusivity indicators for job listings, such as employers offering ethnicity or disability confidence schemes and/or paying Living Wages, and now require salaries/pay to be shown. Further inclusive recruitment guidance is in development.

We have created a cross-organisational internship opportunity for a person from a marginalised background, due for recruitment in autumn 2025.

In September 2024, we launched a movement-building programme supporting 13 national and grassroots organisations with one-to-one mentoring, peer learning and anti-racism training. The success of our **How to Be an Anti-Racist Organisation workshops**, delivered with Eating Better and the Social Justice Collective, showed the importance of tailored support. Feedback

from participants highlighted a strong appetite for continued collaboration and accountability.

The Food and Racial Justice Working Group, co-convened with Eating Better, met regularly and co-created **The Gathering Table**: a summit on racial justice in food and farming, planned for June 2025. We are also collaborating on **Culture Roots Collective**, an online hub for BPOC in the sector, with Eating Better, AFN+ and Navaratnam Partheeban.

Sustain contributed to wider systemic change by supporting partner organisations, including Sustainable Food Places, Food Sense Wales and the Soil Association with EDI consultancy and planning.

**Careers in sustainable food and farming**



In May 2024, we launched a new Careers in Sustainable Food and Farming resource on our Roots to Work jobs platform, significantly boosted engagement with universities and prompting a series of student workshops.



# Who we work with

As an alliance, Sustain is as strong as its membership. Alliance membership is open to national organisations that do not distribute profits to private shareholders and which operate in the public or their members' interest. The organisations must be wholly or partly interested in food or farming issues and support the general aims and work of the alliance.

## Sustain alliance members

Action on Salt / Action on Sugar	Garden Organic	Soil Association
Alexandra Rose Charity	Global Justice Now	Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK)
Baby Milk Action	GM Freeze	Sustainable Food Trust
Behaviour Change	Green Christian	Sustainable Healthy Food Group
Better Food Traders	Growing Communities	Sustainable Soils Alliance
Beyond GM	Health Education Trust	The Country Trust
Bio-Dynamic Agriculture Association	Incredible Edible	The Kindling Trust
Bio-Dynamic Agriculture College	Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN)	The Landworkers' Alliance
British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry	International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)	The Orchard Project
British Dietetics Association	Magic Breakfast	The Real Farming Trust
Caroline Walker Trust	Marine Conservation Society	The Scottish Pantry Network
Centre for Agroecology Water and Resilience (CAWR)	National Federation of Women's Institutes	Think Through Nutrition
Centre for Food Policy – City University	National Trust	Transform Trade
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)	Nature Friendly Farming Network	Unchecked
Chefs in Schools	Nourish NI	Unison – the public service union
Commonwork Trust	Open Food Network UK	Unite the union – rural and agricultural sector
Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Network	Oral Health Foundation	Vegetarian Society
Compassion in World Farming	Organic Farmers & Growers	Whole Health Agriculture
CPRE The Countryside Charity	Organic Growers Alliance	Women's Environmental Network
Diabetes UK	Organic Trade Board	World Cancer Research Fund
Dung Beetles for Farmers	Oxford Climate Alumni Network (OXCAN)	Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF)
E.coli 0157	Pasture-fed Livestock Association	<b>Sustain alliance observers</b>
Eating Better	People Need Nature	Child Poverty Action Group
Faculty of Public Health	Permaculture Association	ClientEarth
Fairtrade Foundation	Pesticide Action Network (PAN) UK	Food Ethics Council
FareShare	Plantlife	GMB
Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group SW	Rare Breed Survival Trust	Green Alliance
First Steps Nutrition Trust	Royal Academy of Culinary Arts, Chefs Adopt a School Trust	Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF)
Food Foundation	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)	Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)
Food Matters	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	Nourish Scotland
Food Sense Wales	School Food Matters	Obesity Health Alliance
Food Systems and Policy Group, University of Hertfordshire	School of Artisan Food	Royal Society for Public Health
FoodCycle	Scotland The Bread	Which?
Foodrise	Shared Assets	Wildlife and Countryside Link
Forum for the Future	Slow Food in the UK	WWF - Scotland
Friends of the Earth	Social Farms and Gardens	WWF - UK
Gaia Foundation		

Sustain works closely with, for example: colleague alliances and initiatives working on cross-cutting food, farming, fishing, environmental and social policy – including: the Alliance to Save our Antibiotics; Eating Better Alliance; Green Alliance; Food, Farming and Countryside Commission; Green Care Coalition; Obesity Health Alliance; Sustainable Soils Alliance; Trade Justice Movement; and Wildlife and Countryside Link. Our connections and work with such organisations is described in more detail [here](#).

Across the UK Nations, we work with sister organisations: Food Sense Wales; Nourish Scotland; and Nourish Northern Ireland. We also work with over 100 UK towns, cities and regions and their Sustainable Food Place partnerships and/or food poverty alliances and/or local authorities; and our newsletters have over tens of thousands of sign-ups, with tens of thousands more followers via social media.

### Interested in becoming a Sustain member?

If your organisation is interested in becoming a Sustain alliance member or observer, download an application form at: [www.sustainweb.org/membership](http://www.sustainweb.org/membership) or email the Sustain team on [sustain@sustainweb.org](mailto:sustain@sustainweb.org) to speak to Chief Executive Kath Dalmeny for a conversation about how to get involved. When you submit an application, this is reviewed by the Sustain team and we may ask you for further information or clarification; we will make an initial assessment, ask you any questions necessary for clarification, and take it to the Sustain Council of Trustees with a recommendation (the Council is elected by Sustain's members). If they approve your application, this will be circulated to Sustain members via our alliance newsletter Digest for any comments or questions before ratification.

If your work is local or international rather than national, or you are an individual or represent a company or other profit-making organisation, you may prefer to get involved with a specific project or campaign, get on one or more of our mailing lists, publicise your healthy and sustainable food and farming events on our events calendar, or join a project or campaign advisory Working Party. Get in touch and we'll help you decide how best to join in and share your unique perspectives.

The Sustain alliance helps organisations interested in food and farming system change to join up, champion solutions that have the backing of a powerful coalition and to campaign effectively for change. By joining the Sustain alliance, organisations can:

- Present and publicise your work and expertise as part of the system of solutions to the big challenges that face us in food, farming, nature, climate and public health.
- Participate in working groups or more formally in impactful partnership programmes.
- Help design and champion initiatives that can bring real benefit, on national policy and for local communities.
- Have opportunities to network and contribute to events.
- Add your voice and expertise to joint submissions, consultations and media work.
- Influence the criteria our alliance uses to develop standards and measure success.

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Find out about Sustain membership here: [www.sustainweb.org/membership/become\\_a\\_sustain\\_member/](http://www.sustainweb.org/membership/become_a_sustain_member/)  
Join one or more of Sustain's mailing lists here: [www.sustainweb.org/email/](http://www.sustainweb.org/email/)

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“ Having worked alongside Sustain for many years, Chefs in Schools values the opportunity to become a member of the alliance in order to further support Sustain and other organisations within the sector to improve both access and quality in relationship to school food. Chefs in Schools firmly believes in the power of organising together and sharing best practice as a way of creating lasting change.

**Naomi Duncan, Chief Executive of Chefs in Schools**

“ Incredible Edible's vision is to create kind, confident, connected communities through the medium of local food. We're excited to work with the Sustain alliance of like-minded people to build a fairer society where access to good food is everyone's right. Our campaign for a community Right to Grow on public land is strengthened through this alliance, supporting the positive changes needed for health and well-being.

**Pam Warhurst, Incredible Edible founder**

# What people say about us...

"It has been great to collaborate with Sustain as part of our programme of work on food, farming and nature. Your insights and knowledge in this space has been invaluable in what was a very challenging political period."

**European Climate Foundation**

"I was so happy to hear that the Sustain screening was a brilliant evening."

**Claire Mackenzie, Producer of the Six Inches of Soil film, for which Sustain organised a screening and panel discussion**

"It's great to have something specifically linking business and asset ownership to a fairer food system – it's a key component of agroecology that is often overlooked in the UK."

**Bonnie Hewson, Director of Farming the Future Fund, commenting on Sustain's employee ownership report**

"A really skilful letter and good to avoid the inheritance tax issue. I have picked up from some that they support the Government, not all I have to say. Farming is so key to our work, and I would say, our health."

**Martin Spray, Chair of Wildlife & Countryside Link, on joint letter supporting pro-farmer policies**

"Thank you again for helping us get re-started on the Harvest-o-meter! The Year 3 children really enjoyed working out all the weights and totalling it all up and learning about how many meals they have helped create!"

**London school teacher, supported by Sustain's Capital Growth community food-growing network**

"It's been an absolute pleasure working with you. Today's victory really marks the beginning of the end for these types of atrocious megafarms. Congratulations on this stunning victory, and huge gratitude."

**Feedback following local planning authority decision to turn down factory farming application on climate grounds**

"It's been one of my dreams to be able to use affordable, locally farmed organic produce in my primary schools and thanks to Growing Communities, it's finally happening."

**James Taylor, school chef participating in Hackney School Food pilot as part of Bridging the Gap**

"At its heart, Welsh Veg in Schools (part of the Bridging the Gap programme) is about getting sustainably produced, local veg into schools to nourish children via their school meals – the more progress we make, the more benefit we can deliver to them."

**Katie Palmer, Programme Manager, Food Sense Wales**

"This is such a fantastic way for me to enjoy local produce, the discount encourages me to do so. I have mostly benefited from the little roast veg packs, which are so cheap and seriously tasty. The flavours of the local produce are unbelievable – I had a celeriac that was out of this world! Many thanks for making this available for us all."

**Carrick Friendly Food Club member, participating in a Bridging the Gap pilot**

"Really excellent and detailed piece of work. Shocking figures."

**Bureau of Investigative Journalism, commenting on Sustain's Stink or Swim report and Muck Maps revealing pollution from factory farms**

"This has been like group therapy for us [council officers]. It reminds me of why I do my job."

**Participant in SEWN North community food growing event connecting growers and council officers**

"Being able to display The Real Bread Loaf Mark, gives my customers assurance that they are purchasing a quality product. I am very proud to have it on show."

**Liz Wilson, owner, Ma Baker, Overton on Dee**

"Thank you so much for putting it on – really good. We NEED to connect more farmers and bakers of every scale in their local area."

**Participant feedback, BATCH: Stroud event organised by Sustain's Real Bread Campaign**

"Great to feel connected and part of a wider movement of gardens across the city!"

**Community gardener participating in Sustain's Capital Growth network**

"Thanks so much for managing such a great platform!"

**Helena Houghton, Chefs Adopt a School, feedback on Sustain's Roots to Work jobs platform**

"Thank you so much for the help your books have given me in opening up a tiny microbakery on our small island of not quite 90 residents but a huge number of tourists – 3,000 and up."

**Daphne Lischke, The Motley Way, Orkney**

"We love that Sustain's sustainable food recruitment website Roots to Work have introduced a tag for jobs with a Living Wage employer."

**Living Wage Foundation, feedback on Sustain's Roots to Work jobs platform**

"The Local Food Growth Plan report was very useful and the project is important and needed in the sector."

**Peter Russell, Chief Executive of Ooooby e-commerce platform for small farms and veg boxes**

"It was an amazing experience to be able speak as a parent and a privilege to represent all parents on such an important issue. It was exciting to be in the Houses of Parliament too! And I felt so lucky to be shown around by my MP."

**Mary Needham, Parent Ambassador for Sustain's Children's Food Campaign**

"[You have] unlocked the ability for all of us to do this work. I have put a gold star next to Sustain because they are the one place you need to go to for support."

**Kate Cressall, Public Health manager, Luton Council, following a presentation on local healthier food advertising policies at OHID North East**

"We gain a lot from being a part of the Children's Food Campaign and look forward to doing more together in the coming years as early years nutrition has become a more mainstream concern than it once was."

**Vicky Sibson, Executive Director, First Steps Nutrition Trust**

"I cannot speak of Sustain's work highly enough."

**Jamie Perry, The Rothschild Foundation, commenting on Sustainable Food Places**

"We're incredibly pleased to have the opportunity to shine a light on some of our region's approaches to good food, the benchmarking process allows us to celebrate our achievements whilst also highlighting opportunities for improvement helping us to make the case to continue taking action on food for our people and communities."

**Lucy Chapman, Programme Manager for the Association of Directors of Public Health North East and Chair of the Good Food Local North East Steering Group**

"It was a watershed moment for me hearing [about the UK's local healthier food advertising policies]. As we heard today, we need to learn from our colleagues in Great Britain."

**Mike Freeland, Australian MP, on keynote speech at the Australian Public Health Conference, by Sustain's Commercial Health Determinants Coordinator**

"All of you will be aware of Sustain's invaluable work as they continually fight to ensure that everyone has access to healthy and sustainably produced food. And, as many across the country are still feeling the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis, Sustain's Children's Food Campaign is more essential than ever."

**Sharon Hodgson MP, Chair of School Food APPG (All Party Parliamentary Group)**

"It was great to see such well-attended and thoughtful discussions. I can't imagine how much work went into them, but it definitely felt worthwhile and an important part of growing momentum on the issue."

**Mark Heffernan, Impact on Urban Health, on our Recipe for Change events at political party conferences**

"I am grateful to the Sustainable Food Places Network for all the work you are doing locally to support vulnerable households facing food poverty."

**Jo Churchill MP, Minister for Employment, in response to Sustainable Food Places letter on Household Support Fund**

"It was a great day. My MP was very receptive and already has a fair understanding of the whole food chain. I also talked further with him and his assistant over lunch."

**Charlotte Bailey, Secretary for Winchester Food Partnership, following Sustainable Food Places day of celebration and action in parliament**

"Thank you for this brilliant statement and for explicitly acknowledging islamophobia and the impact on Muslim women. Many statements shied from including this."

**Sustain supporter, following our statement of solidarity for people affected by racist violence against refugees in the UK**

"This is the best anti racism training I've attended so far!"

**Participant in Sustain's anti-racism workshop series**

# Internal developments

## Sustain's governance

Sustain is governed by its membership, which is open to national organisations that do not distribute profits to private shareholders and thus operate in the public interest. Members must be wholly or partly interested in food and/or farming issues and support the general aims and work of the alliance.

Sustain's membership usually meets once a year in a general session at the Annual Conference, with business matters of the Annual General Meeting undertaken electronically to enable diverse and inclusive participation, including for geographically dispersed people and organisations. Many alliance members also attend a range of specialist policy and project working party meetings, as well as specialist events tackling issues of common concern.

Sustain Council members are elected by the membership (and a minimum of one third of the Council must stand down each year) to form a governing body of up to 15 Trustee places. Trustees also offer up to 5 role-share places to support diverse younger talent to gain experience in charity leadership. This opportunity is now routinely part of our Trustee recruitment and election process, clearly signalling our intention to welcome and support people from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, personal characteristics and identities. We work to ensure that this provides the best possible experience for participants, and can offer remuneration for some activities for those in role-share positions to help overcome barriers to participation.

All Trustees and role-shares declare any relevant financial interests when they are elected, and at the beginning of each quarterly meeting, and these interests are publicly available on Sustain's website.

Sustain's Council of Trustees meets quarterly to guide the work of the alliance, subject to approval by the members. As the Trustees are drawn from Sustain's membership, all of whom are third-sector organisations, they are already familiar with structures and governance in this sector. Quarterly meetings of Sustain's Council of Trustees were held hybrid throughout the year. We encourage at least one meeting fully in-person each year, to enable personal connections and engagement.

Trustees often support key areas of our work, with valuable contributions such as:

- Serving on interview panels for new jobs and staff at Sustain
- Chairing events, policy roundtables and working parties
- Providing expert and 'critical friend' comments on policies and documents
- Connecting us with excellent contributors, especially experts from diverse backgrounds, identities and expertise, on food, farming and movement-building issues

In line with Charity Commission guidance, Trustees note at each meeting that the arrangements enable satisfactory participation, discussion and scrutiny of the matters to be addressed.

In 2025, the Council of Trustees has agreed to work towards meeting the good practice set out in the Charity Governance Code, as a process of continuous improvement over the next three years.

## Organisational restructure

During 2024 and 2025, following several team changes, Sustain took the opportunity to undertake a restructure of our senior leadership and management teams. We reviewed all of the role descriptions for our senior team and established lead responsibilities for a range of strategic and operational needs.

The restructure included successful recruitment of a Director of Policy and Advocacy to lead on our influencing programme and join our senior leadership team. We also created and successfully recruited to a new role, Head of HR and Operations, who set to work to overhaul Sustain's employment policies and systems, and to prepare for a raft of employment legislation and enhanced responsibilities for employers due to be updated under the new government.

We also undertook a spring-clean the way we work to form a series of internal groups to take responsibility for developing our work on matters such as learning and skills; health and wellbeing; EDI and racial justice; and operational planning, each with its own terms of reference.

## Organisation Development Plan (ODP)

The newly formed Operations Group developed a one-year transitional Organisation Development Plan (ODP). Each chapter is led by a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT), with chapter headings as follows:

- **Communications:** with a goal to improve Sustain's effectiveness with refinement of its public offering, increased stakeholder engagement, and an intelligence driven focus on outcome. We aim for Sustain to be equipped to be a thought leader, shaping and influencing the discourse across our areas of operation.
- **Learning and development:** with a goal to equip campaigners, project staff, change makers and colleagues working on cross-cutting activities with effective skills and training and build Sustain's organisational knowledge. We will also strengthen our alliance, and the wider movement, through training, learning and development opportunities for Sustain staff, interns and volunteers, alliance members and the people and groups within our networks.
- **Funding:** with a goal to secure adequate funding to pursue the objectives set out in our strategy and enable our ambitions for development. In 2025, we will review our systems and improve staff skills towards a consistent, proactive, shared and diversified approach to fundraising, helping Sustain be strong, confident and better equipped to achieve our goals, demonstrate our value, be resilient to change, and provide more freedom to be creative and bold.
- **Membership:** with a goal to centre the importance of alliance working and collaboration in everything we do, and to increase the strength, depth, reach and engagement of the Sustain alliance to ensure that we have a working relationship with all organisations with shared aims.
- **Influence:** with a goal to strengthen the influence, profile and reputation of Sustain and the alliance with policymakers. We will ensure Sustain is working to good practice in advocacy, policy, campaigning as well as public affairs, government relations and relations with local and regional decision-makers.
- **Diversity:** with a goal to increase the number of projects, campaigns and activities that are developing, piloting and/or integrating EDI and racial justice actions into their work, and able to report on such activities for monitoring, evaluation and learning processes. And also to provide collegiate support and take specific steps to support effective pursuit of the objectives and workplan of the Diversity Outreach role and programme at Sustain.

In Autumn 2025, we will start the process to review this ODP, in line with Sustain's new Strategy. Our aim longer term is to move towards an annual and 3-year organisational planning cycle that will support impactful delivery of Sustain's new Strategy from 2026 onwards, strengthening our organisational and operational infrastructure to enable success.

## Risk management

The Operational Group also oversees a revised risk register to ensure that we are actively managing risks across our key areas of operation and delivery, including:

- Ensuring Sustain meets its obligations for impartiality, public communications and advocacy expenditure during a year featuring local elections and a General Election.
- Funding vulnerability for strategically important areas of Sustain's work.
- Threats to key policy initiatives – implementation of anti-obesity legislation on food promotion; weak Food Strategy response; ongoing concerns over public health policy; pressures on environment, farm and land-use policies; adverse industry influence; general lack of food system governance.
- Government, Treasury and industry resistance to policies that may have savings in the longer-term, but cost implications in the short-term.
- Staff matters – pressures on time, workload, physical and mental wellbeing; lack of diversity and the need for better representation and inclusion.
- HR issues relating to employment contracts, administration and related matters.
- Compliance with key legislation, regulation and statutory guidance, including from the Charity Commission, Information Commissioners Office, and the Electoral Commission.
- World events: cost of living, war in Ukraine and Gaza, extreme weather events, climate and nature emergency.
- Virus, malware, fraudulent attack on systems – which needs constant vigilance.

With a General Election held in July 2024, we were highly cognisant of the importance of ensuring that Sustain's activities complied with the Lobbying Act, and that we must remain politically balanced and not promote any particular candidate or political party. We issued guidance to all staff members, and key communications and public affairs staff remained alert to this, to ensure an open and shared approach to agreeing lines for communication and for problem-solving. These expectations were also

built into the job description and induction for the new Director of Policy and Advocacy, and will be a key area of responsibility for the Public Affairs Manager to be recruited in 2025.

## Office premises

Sustain continues to enjoy high-quality office premises and services from our landlord, Ethical Property Company (EPC). We share the office building with other organisations working for environmental and social causes. Our office has good facilities and access to meeting space; and opens out onto a shared roof space with seating and herb planters.

We are delighted to report that The Ethical Property Company has taken on board requests from Sustain and other tenants for a dedicated private prayer room and quiet space, for use by people from diverse backgrounds and for diverse personal needs – which has refurbished and is available via an online booking system.

Many staff have expressed their preference for a mixture of the opportunity to work at home as well as enjoy the benefits of in-person meetings, connections, social activities and events. We are continuing to support flexible working, whilst also encouraging social and group activities, and have (by popular demand) made regular monthly staff meetings hybrid, with an encouragement for these to be in-person where possible.

This year, we undertook a thorough spring clean, benefited from donations of new furniture, and are introducing various equipment and office arrangements to support people with diverse needs to feel comfortable and productive.

## Fair pay

Sustain renewed our annual commitment and accreditation to declare ourselves a registered London Living Wage Employer; as have our landlords Ethical Property Company, so cleaning and other staff are included. We are proud to be part of the growing Living Wage movement as a key response to food poverty and health equity.

Sustain also promotes Living Wage accreditation via our Good Food Local – London and North East reports and league table of local authority areas, as one of the key ways local authorities can help to reduce food poverty. This year, we also introduced real Living Wage employer tags into our jobs platform Roots to Work, to promote inclusive employment and raise awareness among employers.

For the eighth year, Sustain's Annual Report contains an independently audited Pay Ratio Analysis. We are pleased to report that Sustain's Pay Ratio is between 2:1 (highest to lowest salaries) and 3:1 (highest salary to London Living Wage paid by Sustain to interns and contributors with lived experience), well within the Wagemark benchmark of 8:1 considered to be good practice.

## Staff team

Across the year, we welcomed several new members of staff to the Sustain team and launched significant new initiatives. We congratulate new arrivals for fitting in so well and soon becoming valued staff members and an important part of the Sustain team and culture.

Last year, we reported on initial progress with our review of Sustain's leadership and operational needs, through a process we called 'Ship-Shape'. This year, we implemented the key recommendations arising from that process, including:

- Refreshed job descriptions for members of the senior leadership and senior management teams.
- Creation of groups led by the senior team to share and allocate management of various key tasks and processes, whilst maintaining cross-organisational communication and continuity.
- Recruitment of two new posts: Director of Policy and Advocacy; and Head of HR and Operations (see below).
- Planning towards recruitment of a Public Affairs Manager in summer 2025.
- We continue to note gaps in our capacity, including strategic communications; event management; and senior-level fundraising and development.

Our new Director of Policy and Advocacy is Glen Tarman, a non-profit leader with over 30 years' experience in advocacy, campaigning, policy, communications and digital for charities and international development, human rights and environmental NGOs. Glen previously headed advocacy globally for the INGOs CARE International and Action Against Hunger and he was Advocacy, Policy and Campaigns Director for Bond, the UK network of international NGOs. A co-founder of Make Poverty History, one of the biggest campaigns Britain has seen, Glen has led many coalitions and campaigns in the UK and internationally that have combined lobbying and citizen action to win change on social justice causes (including Sustain sister alliance the Trade Justice Movement).

Our new Head of HR and Operations is Danila Ardé, who has worked in HR for over 30 years both in the UK and abroad, having held similar roles previously in the health, charity and higher education sectors. Danila has a post-graduate qualification in Human Resource Management and is CIPD accredited. Her experience spans both small charities and large multi-site organisations. Supporting people who want to make a real difference in the world combines her love of HR and the belief that we all have a responsibility to our environment and each other. Recent project management and community engagement work include coordinating local community projects and green spaces, and working with local school teachers, children and community groups to encourage positive participation in environmental projects designed to address climate change and pollution and encourage social cohesion.

## Recruitment

Our Head of HR and Operations has introduced a new recruitment pack, better showcasing the charity during the recruitment process, along with a newly implemented application process allowing for a better applicant experience and improved data collection.

We also made special efforts this year to further embed equity, diversity and inclusion into all of our recruitment processes, including new guidance, training for interview panellists, and implementation of our disability confident and ethnicity confident schemes.

## HR and people

We have continued to provide and improve our range of benefits to staff which include:

- An Employee Assistance Programme run by Health Assured, which provides professional, confidential, 24-hour helpline support service for personal, financial, or legal challenges. The cover is for Sustain staff members and extends to spouses/partners and children aged 16-24 in full-time education, all whom live in the same household.
- Membership of CSSC offering staff access to a range of savings, free events, benefits and discounts for galleries, historic buildings, sporting and cultural events.
- Access to free organic fruit in our office, which is appreciated by staff.

We have revised our staff appraisal system with a greater focus on staff development, and more closely aligned with organisational objectives and our new organisational development goals. A revised voluntary peer appraisal system was also trialled this year.

In response to our staff survey in July 2024, Sustain introduced a popular staff suggestion scheme, used by one third of employees already. Sickness absence allowances, a new sabbatical policy and our approach to flexible working have been adapted in response to staff suggestions. We also supported a new staff health group, which aims to discuss issues around health and appropriate support, steered by a staff member, HR and a recently revised terms of reference to keep the group focused and on track. Referrals to Access to Work and purchases of specialist equipment have also been made to further support staff.

Sustain now also has our first Human Resource Information System (HRIS), allowing for more data accuracy and compliance with legislation. The new system has been designed and implemented by the Head of HR and is GDPR compliant.

## Skills and learning

We continued to run tailored training sessions and our popular skills share programme enabling Sustain staff and external contributors to run sessions to share insights and expertise. The Head of HR also introduced this year the IHASCO platform for mandatory and development training with 100% completion rates. A new training records system show over 270 hours of recording staff training from September 2024 to April 2025. A new training needs analysis questionnaire for all staff will enable Sustain to assess and plan training across the team.

We have an ambition to understand and implement AI (Artificial Intelligence) where this will enhance our work. A small group of staff have been trialling MD Co-pilot and the charity now has a new Information Management Group which meets fortnightly to share learning.

## Strategic review

Sustain continues to implement our strategy Fertile Future, 2021 to 2025 through a range of policy groups, project working groups and project and campaign activities. This strategy was developed in the period post-Brexit associated with huge upheaval to the food and farming system; during the Covid pandemic during which Sustain pivoted to support the emergency food response, and before the cost-of-living crisis and recent rise in global conflict impacting supply chains and prioritisation of national security in policy-making.

Clearly, a great deal has changed in our sector since our current strategy was put in place! Hence, from 2024 we started to develop our strategy for the period 2025 to 2030, to be implemented from January 2026. This has proved to be a helpful and creative process. We ran strategy sessions with the staff team, several alliance working groups and Sustain's Council of Trustees throughout the year, and will develop this input further for consultation with alliance members and other allies during 2025.

When the General Election was called for July 2024, we pivoted to package our strategic priorities in ways that could be used to advocate with manifesto writers, to use in advocacy and public communications activities, and to brief our networks and the new intake of parliamentarians. The emerging priorities of the new government will also influence our strategy, as this is the new context within which we will champion food system change in the UK over the next 3 to 5 years.

Sustain's Annual Conference took place online in March 2025 and was once again a great success, with the theme: How we change the UK food system for good. Sessions included:

- A keynote address from Professor Tim Lang on food system resilience, are we prepared? Followed by considered responses from Kath Dalmeny, Chief Executive of Sustain, and alliance members Katharine Jenner of the Obesity Health Alliance, and Dee Woods, Independent Food Aid Network.
- Securing the new Food Strategy we need. Chaired by Sustain's Director of Policy Glen Tarman, with Anna Taylor of the Food Foundation and Baroness Joan Walmsley, Chair of the House of Lords Food, Diet and Obesity Committee.
- What is the action agenda on the ground, locally and regionally, for a better UK food system? Chaired by Sustain's Director of Programmes Sarah Williams, with Katie Palmer, Food Sense Wales; Nikki Dravers, Gateshead local food partnership; Charlotte Molyneux, Devon County Council; and Lee Robb, Carrick GreenGrocers – all sharing lessons from local action for food system change.

The web page sharing conference recordings, links and resources is [here](#).



The Sustain team of staff and trustees at our strategy away day in 2024. Photo credit: Sustain

# Financial review

The Council of Trustees (who are the Directors of the Charity for company law purposes) present their report and the audited financial accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025. The Trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the requirements of the Charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

The fund balance carried forward at 31 March 2025 was £810,597 (2024: £781,030) on unrestricted general reserves. The designated reserves at 31 March 2025 was £264,312 (2024: £258,582). The restricted reserves on continuing projects were £939,298 at 31 March 2025 (2024: £693,161). The full Statement of Financial Activities is set out in the accounts below.

## Reserves policy

In accordance with guidelines from the Charity Commissioners, the Trustees have adopted a reserves policy that should ensure that: Excluding those funds represented by fixed assets, general reserves do not exceed more than six months' anticipated expenditure. The Trustees review amounts regularly, monitor progress in relation to target levels quarterly, and deemed in the financial year covered by this report that there were adequate funds to ensure the charity was able to meet all current, known and some estimated possible future liabilities.

## Investment policy

Under the memorandum and articles of association, the charity has the power to invest the monies of the company not immediately required for the furtherance of its objects in or upon such investments, securities or property as may be thought fit, subject nevertheless to such condition (as any) and such consents (if any) as may for the time being be imposed or required by law. At the present time, the Trustees' policy is to maintain such monies on deposits earning a market rate of interest, in a bank or banks with ethical credentials and to manage banking risks and maximisation of interest rate benefits through splitting funds across more than one banking provider. No further 'social investment' is currently planned.

## Risk management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the company is exposed, in particular those related to operations and finances of the company, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to major risks. The Sustain

rolling risk register and risk management process, reviewed formally at least annually by Trustees and quarterly by Sustain's senior management team, and additionally as necessary, considers possible risks and prudent ways to avoid such risks arising, as well as mitigation should problems occur, grouped under the following broad themes:

- Good governance – financial and organisational;
- Weathering ongoing turbulence and uncertainty in UK politics, economics and international political and trading relationships, posing financial, food system and strategic risks;
- Impact of external events: e.g. cost-of-living crisis, war in Ukraine and Middle East, climate change, biodiversity loss, flooding, extreme weather events;
- Meeting Sustain's objectives;
- Securing sufficient income;
- Controlling expenditure;
- Addressing HR and staffing issues;
- Health and well-being;
- Health and safety, including office management and working from home;
- Supporting diversity, equity, inclusion and racial justice;
- Tackling challenges specific to alliances;
- Protecting Sustain's reputation;
- Ensuring regulatory compliance and good practice;
- Avoiding or handling disputes;
- Managing IT security and data protection;
- Mitigating administrative burdens.

## Trustees' responsibilities

Company and charity law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its financial activities for that year. In preparing those accounts, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts;
- Prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the company has appropriate systems of control, financial or otherwise. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and which enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Setting staff pay

Sustain operates a fair and transparent fixed salary scale for setting staff pay, including senior management personnel – the persons with authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. This salary scale cannot be changed without Trustee approval. Sustain's salary scale is grouped under four ascending grades – Administrative and Project Officer; Project Coordinator; Senior Manager; Chief Executive. New recruits start at the salary grade suited to their post, as advertised, and usually at entry level for that grade. Subject to satisfactory annual appraisal, staff members move up a salary level within their grade until the top level is reached. On the exceptional occasions when a new recruit has the experience and credentials to warrant appointment at a higher salary than the entry level for their grade, this offer and decision remains in line with the standard salary scale, except starting at a higher level, and with the knowledge and agreement of at least one Sustain Trustee, who has usually participated in the recruitment process. In addition

to the salary scale, salaries (and hence the levels in the salary scale) usually also rise in line with inflation, calculated annually on the actual inflation rate in the preceding year.

As a not-for-profit organisation and registered charity, Sustain covers normal expenses, requires evidence of such claims and expenditure and keeps good records.

## Fair pay

Sustain is a registered Living Wage Employer, committed to paying at least the Living Wage or the London Living Wage, as calculated by the Living Wage Foundation, which reflects the cost of living. This year, we have also continued to apply a Pay Ratio analysis as part of the Annual Report process, seeking to ensure that Sustain maintains a fair pay ratio between the highest and lowest earners, benchmarked against sector good practice.

## Public benefit

The Trustees are aware of Charity Commission guidance on public benefit reporting as set out in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011. They believe Sustain fulfils a fundamental public benefit by promoting both the health and welfare of people and animals, improving the environment and promoting sustainable development. How Sustain achieves these objectives is described in more detail throughout this annual report, on the Sustain website and in key publications.

## Auditors

So far as the directors (Trustees) are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware. Additionally, the directors have taken all of the necessary steps that they ought to, as directors, to make themselves aware of all the relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information. A proposal to re-appoint Goldwins as auditors for the forthcoming year will be put forward at the Annual General Meeting.

This report was approved by the Council of Trustees on 19 November 2025 and signed on its behalf, by:



**Professor Mike Rayner**  
Chair of the Council of Trustees

# Auditor's report

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food and Farming (the 'Charity') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, statement of cash flows and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

### Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

## Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

## Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Annual Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

## Responsibilities of the trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the Charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

## Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
  - identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [[www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities)]. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

## Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



**Anthony Epton (Senior Statutory Auditor)**

for and on behalf of

Goldwins Limited  
Statutory Auditor  
Chartered Accountants  
75 Maygrove Road  
West Hampstead  
London NW6 2EG

19 November 2025

Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food and Farming

# Statement of financial activities

(incorporating and income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	2	41,855	33,579	<b>75,434</b>	109,625
Charitable activities					
Health and Welfare	3	284,625	2,286,825	<b>2,571,450</b>	2,657,425
Investments	4	15,567	-	<b>15,567</b>	12,842
<b>Total income</b>		<b>342,047</b>	<b>2,320,404</b>	<b>2,662,451</b>	<b>2,779,892</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	5	21,307	-	<b>21,307</b>	19,865
Charitable activities					
Health and Welfare	5	281,792	2,077,918	<b>2,359,710</b>	2,154,394
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>303,099</b>	<b>2,077,918</b>	<b>2,381,017</b>	<b>2,174,259</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments</b>		<b>38,948</b>	<b>242,486</b>	<b>281,434</b>	<b>605,633</b>
Net gains / (losses) on investments		-	-	-	-
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the year</b>	6	<b>38,948</b>	<b>242,486</b>	<b>281,434</b>	<b>605,633</b>
Transfers between funds		(3,651)	3,651	-	-
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before other recognised gains and losses</b>		<b>35,297</b>	<b>246,137</b>	<b>281,434</b>	<b>605,633</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>35,297</b>	<b>246,137</b>	<b>281,434</b>	<b>605,633</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		1,039,612	693,161	<b>1,732,773</b>	1,127,140
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>1,074,909</b>	<b>939,298</b>	<b>2,014,207</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 17 to the financial statements.

# Balance sheet

## As at 31 March 2025

	Note	£	2025 £	£	2024 £
<b>Fixed assets:</b>					
Tangible assets	11		-		-
			-		-
<b>Current assets:</b>					
Debtors	12	218,174		225,108	
Cash at bank and in hand		2,152,624		1,887,518	
		2,370,798		2,112,626	
<b>Liabilities:</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	356,591		379,853	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<b>2,014,207</b>		1,732,773
<b>Total net assets less current liabilities</b>			<b>2,014,207</b>		1,732,773
			<b>2,014,207</b>		1,732,773
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>	17				
Restricted income funds			939,298		693,161
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		264,312		258,582	
General funds		810,597		781,030	
Total unrestricted funds			<b>1,074,909</b>		1,039,612
<b>Total charity funds</b>			<b>2,014,207</b>		1,732,773
			<b>2,014,207</b>		1,732,773

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the trustees on ...19 November 2025... and signed on their behalf by



Professor Michael Rayner  
Chair



Victoria Williams  
Treasurer

Sustain:The Alliance for Better Food and Farming

# Statement of cash flows

## For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	2025	2024
		£	£
Cash flows from operating activities	18		
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>		<b>249,539</b>	<b>572,444</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		15,567	12,842
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities</b>		<b>15,567</b>	<b>12,842</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		<b>265,106</b>	<b>585,286</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,887,518	1,302,232
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	19	<b>2,152,624</b>	<b>1,887,518</b>

# Notes to the financial statements

## For the year ended 31 March 2025

### 1 Accounting policies

#### a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102 – effective 1 January 2015) – (Charities SORP FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

#### b) Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. Key judgements that the charitable company has made which have a significant effect on the accounts. The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

#### c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

#### d) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

#### e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

#### f) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

# Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food & Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

### 1 Accounting policies (continued)

#### g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services, undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

#### h) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure.

Where such information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is also provided to potential donors, activity costs are apportioned between fundraising and charitable activities on the basis of area of literature occupied by each activity.

#### i) Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

#### j) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Office equipment	25% straight line
------------------	-------------------

#### k) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

#### l) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account. Cash balances exclude any funds held on behalf of service users.

#### m) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

#### n) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

#### o) Pensions

The charity operates workplace pension scheme.

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food &amp; Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

**2 Income from donations and legacies**

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Donations	41,855	33,579	75,434	109,625
Total income from donations 2025	<b>41,855</b>	<b>33,579</b>	<b>75,434</b>	109,625
Total income from donations 2024	67,753	41,872	109,625	

**3 Income from charitable activities**

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
<b>Grant income</b>				
AFN Network+	-	4,200	4,200	-
AuroraTrust	-	50,000	50,000	37,500
Bertha Foundation	-	13,525	13,525	-
British Heart Foundation	-	15,000	15,000	-
City Bridge Foundation	-	6,815	6,815	79,000
Connect Fund (Barrow Cadbury Trust)	-	-	-	74,067
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (various)	-	116,667	116,667	50,000
European Climate Foundation	-	43,750	43,750	77,917
European Union	-	13,969	13,969	24,221
Farming the Future	-	22,000	22,000	51,682
Greater London Authority (various)	-	15,500	15,500	25,500
ICLEI European Secretariat GmbH	-	6,833	6,833	16,414
Impact on Urban Health	-	558,404	558,404	656,210
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	-	55,000	55,000	41,250
Kenneth Miller Trust	-	65,625	65,625	53,333
Lund Trust	-	12,500	12,500	-
Movements Trust	-	56,250	56,250	33,750
Network of European Foundations	-	-	-	20,814
National Lottery Community Fund (Growing Great Ideas)	-	595,900	595,900	493,200
Nutritional Wellbeing Foundation (previously known as the AIM Foundation)	-	30,247	30,247	38,494
Oak Foundation (various)	-	172,561	172,561	194,412
Rothschild Foundation	-	73,750	73,750	76,250
Samworth Foundation	55,000	-	55,000	55,000
Sustainable Food Places (Big Lottery Fund and Esmee Fairbairn Foundation)	-	197,546	197,546	202,043
Thirty Percy Foundation	150,000	-	150,000	150,000
Trust for London	-	62,500	62,500	60,000
Vital Strategies	-	-	-	52,000
Wellcome Trust	-	98,283	98,283	-
<b>Other income</b>				
Conference and workshops	3,094	-	3,094	11,897
Membership fees	34,200	-	34,200	37,650
Sales and publications	5,163	-	5,163	6,909
Subscriptions	37,168	-	37,168	37,912
Total income from charitable activities 2025	<b>284,625</b>	<b>2,286,825</b>	<b>2,571,450</b>	2,657,425
Total income from charitable activities 2024	347,058	2,310,367	2,657,425	

**4 Income from investments**

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Investment income	15,567	-	15,567	12,842
Total income from investments 2025	<b>15,567</b>	-	<b>15,567</b>	12,842
Total income from investments 2024	12,842	-	12,842	

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food &amp; Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

## 5 a. Analysis of expenditure

	Cost of raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support costs £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
<b>Staff costs (Note 7)</b>	18,806	1,289,166	180,053	<b>1,488,025</b>	1,443,378
<b>Direct cost</b>					
Payable to partner organisations	-	502,278	-	<b>502,278</b>	362,480
Consultancy costs	-	156,822	-	<b>156,822</b>	114,942
Printing and photocopying	-	7,815	-	<b>7,815</b>	8,326
Postage and distribution	-	4,454	-	<b>4,454</b>	4,005
Travel, meeting and expenses	-	59,500	-	<b>59,500</b>	80,278
Other charitable expenditure	-	62,677	-	<b>62,677</b>	71,551
<b>Support cost</b>					
Telephone and fax	-	-	1,491	<b>1,491</b>	1,492
Office costs	-	-	89,310	<b>89,310</b>	79,407
Audit fees	-	-	8,400	<b>8,400</b>	8,400
Bank charges	-	-	245	<b>245</b>	-
	18,806	2,082,712	279,499	<b>2,381,017</b>	2,174,259
Support costs	2,501	276,998	(279,499)	-	
<b>Total expenditure 2025</b>	<b>21,307</b>	<b>2,359,710</b>	-	<b>2,381,017</b>	
Total expenditure 2024	<b>19,865</b>	<b>2,154,394</b>			

Of the total expenditure, £303,099 was unrestricted (2024: £240,379) and £2,077,918 was restricted (2024: £1,933,880).

The amount payable to partner organisations is made up of several different payments – Bridging the Gap Partners (£305k); Childrens Food Campaign Partners (£110.9k); Food for the Planet Partners (£22.3k); Good Food Local Partners (£25k); Grant Conduit for Member Organisation (£35k) and Local Food Retail Partner (£4k).

## b. Analysis of expenditure from previous reporting period

	Cost of raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support costs £	2024 Total £
<b>Staff costs (Note 7)</b>	17,455	1,251,402	174,521	1,443,378
<b>Direct cost</b>				
Payable to partner organisations	-	362,480	-	362,480
Consultancy costs	-	114,942	-	114,942
Printing and photocopying	-	8,326	-	8,326
Postage and distribution	-	4,005	-	4,005
Travel, meeting and expenses	-	80,278	-	80,278
Other charitable expenditure	-	71,551	-	71,551
<b>Support cost</b>				
Telephone and fax	-	-	1,492	1,492
Office costs	-	-	79,407	79,407
Audit fees	-	-	8,400	8,400
	17,455	1,892,984	263,820	2,174,259
Support costs	2,410	261,410	(263,820)	-
<b>Total expenditure 2024</b>	<b>19,865</b>	<b>2,154,394</b>	-	<b>2,174,259</b>

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food &amp; Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

**6 Net income/ (expenditure) for the year**

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	48,029	48,029
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	7,000	7,000
	<u>48,029</u>	<u>48,029</u>
	<u>7,000</u>	<u>7,000</u>

**7 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel**

Staff costs were as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Salaries and wages	1,305,283	1,259,122
Social security costs	115,795	122,356
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	66,947	61,900
	<u>1,488,025</u>	<u>1,443,378</u>

The emoluments of members of staff, including benefits in kind, are within the range of;

	2025	2024
£60,001 – £70,000	3	2
£70,001 –£80,000	–	1
£80,001 –£90,000	1	–

The total employee benefits including national insurance and pension contributions of the key management personnel were £226,419 (2024: £207,936).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2024: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2024: £nil).

Trustees' expenses represents the payment or reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs totalling £94 (2024: £73) relating to attendance at meetings of three trustees.

**8 Staff numbers**

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2025	2024
	No.	No.
Raising funds	0.4	0.4
Health and Welfare	26.1	26.6
Support	3.5	3.7
	<u>30.0</u>	<u>30.7</u>

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food & Farming

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

#### 9 Related party transactions

The following declaration provides transparency on related party transactions and, as appropriate, are also routinely declared by Sustain's Trustees at their quarterly meetings and publicly on the Sustain website.

A number of trustees and management team members hold prominent positions in other organisations.

Sustain received a grant of £251,737 (2024: £315,499) via the Soil Association, which is the overall programme manager for the Sustainable Food Places network – a programme run jointly by Food Matters, Soil Association (both Sustain members) and Sustain. Three of Sustain's trustees are a member of staff for the Soil Association and Food Matters. Separately, Sustain paid the Soil Association £30,589 as part of the Bridging the Gap project, as well as £600 for the Sustainable Farming campaign.

Food Matters received £67 for travel expenses to attend an event organised by Sustain. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for Food Matters. Sustain's Chief Executive is on the board at Food Matters.

Sustain paid the Obesity Health Alliance £21,891, who are partners on the Recipe for Change project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the Obesity Health Alliance.

Sustain paid the Action on Salt and Health; Action on Sugar £6,092, who are partners on the Recipe for Change project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the Action on Salt and Health; Action on Sugar.

Sustain received £600 from Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK) for project work. Sustain paid SOS-UK £75 for a RACE Summit supporter ticket. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the SOS-UK.

The Landworker's Alliance paid Sustain £10,520 for work on the Sustainable Farming Campaign and the Local Food Retail project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the Landworker's Alliance.

The Real Bread Campaign also received annual membership fees of £49.50, as well as £148.79 for copies of the Knead to Know more books from the School of Artisan Foods. A Sustain Trustee is on the board at the School of Artisan Foods.

Sustain paid £34,936 to Alexandra Rose Charity, who are project partners on the Bridging the Gap project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the Alexandra Rose Charity.

Open Food Network was paid a bursary of £60 during 24/25 as part of the Local Food Retail project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the Open Food Network.

Better Food Traders paid Sustain £6,000 as part of the Farming the Future Collaboration project. Sustain paid Better Food Traders £1,750 as part of the Local Food Plan support. A member of Sustain's Senior Leadership Team is on the board (unpaid) at Better Food Traders.

Finally, Sustain paid £43,678 to Growing Communities, who are project partners on the Bridging the Gap project. A member of Sustain's Senior Leadership Team is on the board (unpaid) at Growing Communities.

#### 10 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food &amp; Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

**11 Tangible fixed assets**

	Fixtures, fittings and Equipment £	<b>Total £</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At the start of the year	33,658	<b>33,658</b>
Additions in year	-	-
Disposals in year	-	-
At the end of the year	<u>33,658</u>	<u><b>33,658</b></u>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At the start of the year	33,658	<b>33,658</b>
Charge for the year	-	-
Eliminated on disposal	-	-
At the end of the year	<u>33,658</u>	<u><b>33,658</b></u>
<b>Net book value</b>		
<b>At the end of the year</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At the start of the year	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

**12 Debtors**

	2025 £	2024 £
Other debtors	<b>97,977</b>	26,901
Prepayments	<b>4,779</b>	4,779
Accrued income	<b>115,418</b>	193,428
	<u><b>218,174</b></u>	<u>225,108</u>

**13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2025 £	2024 £
Other creditors	<b>61,574</b>	117,412
Accruals	<b>8,400</b>	8,400
Deferred income	<b>286,617</b>	254,041
	<u><b>356,591</b></u>	<u>379,853</u>

**14 Deferred income**

Deferred income comprises of grants from the following: Aurora Trust £12,500, Bertha Challenge Fellowship £4,508, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation £58,333, Greater London Authority £75,000, Kenneth Miller Trust £30,000, Lund Trust £37,500, Nutritional Wellbeing Foundation £26,257 and Sustainable Food Places £42,519.

	2025 £	2024 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	<b>254,041</b>	487,742
Amount released to income in the year	<b>(254,041)</b>	(487,742)
Amount deferred in the year	<b>286,617</b>	254,041
Balance at the end of the year	<u><b>286,617</b></u>	<u>254,041</u>

**15 Pension scheme**

The charity operates workplace pension scheme and has no pension liability as at the year end.

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food &amp; Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

## 16 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Net current assets	810,597	264,312	939,298	2,014,207
<b>Net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>810,597</b>	<b>264,312</b>	<b>939,298</b>	<b>2,014,207</b>

## 17 Movements in funds

	At the start of the year £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Bridging the Gap	319,446	598,700	(537,123)	-	381,023
Campaign for a Better Food Britain	7,560	49,602	(57,162)	-	-
Capital Growth	24,320	14,315	(36,549)	-	2,086
Children's Food Campaign	144,827	653,434	(611,488)	-	186,773
Climate and Nature	33,102	275,892	(200,606)	-	108,388
Diversity Outreach	11,363	2,500	(27,738)	-	(13,875)
FoodSHIFT 2030	(14,357)	13,969	-	388	-
Food Poverty	17,750	84,349	(70,603)	3,263	34,759
Local Food Retail	37,936	74,180	(86,561)	-	25,555
London Food Link	15,164	8,000	(5,354)	-	17,810
Sustainable Farming and Land Use	47,021	312,917	(224,741)	-	135,197
Sustainable Food Places	49,029	232,546	(219,993)	-	61,582
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>693,161</b>	<b>2,320,404</b>	<b>(2,077,918)</b>	<b>3,651</b>	<b>939,298</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds:</b>					
Designated funds:					
Employment Liabilities	198,582	-	-	5,730	204,312
Innovation and Activities Fund	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
Match Funding Contingency	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Total designated funds	258,582	-	-	5,730	264,312
General funds	781,030	342,047	(303,099)	(9,381)	810,597
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>1,039,612</b>	<b>342,047</b>	<b>(303,099)</b>	<b>(3,651)</b>	<b>1,074,909</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>	<b>2,662,451</b>	<b>(2,381,017)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,014,207</b>

**Purposes of restricted funds**

Income that is received for specific projects, as – for example – grants, donations and earned income, is accounted for as restricted funds, with expenditure usually attributed over a specific period of time. We manage restricted funds carefully, keep expenditure under regular review, and aim to keep to the specified budget. If project funds are projected to be overspent for an unavoidable reason, we take action early to reduce expenditure and/or raise more funds to cover the potential shortfall. If we continue to project and incur an unavoidable overspend, a transfer is made from Sustain's unrestricted funds. The balances on restricted funds as at 31 March 2025 arise from income received for specific projects on which some expenditure is still to be incurred in the coming financial year. Each of Sustain's projects is described in more detail below:

### Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

**Bridging the Gap** explores ways to enable people on low incomes to access climate and nature friendly food. The programme will test six approaches to bridging the gap in accessibility and affordability, coproduced with people working in food and farming across the four nations. Evidence from the pilots will be used to advocate for national and local policy change.

**Campaign for a Better Food Britain** (umbrella term for Sustain's coordination of work on policy and standards following the UK's exit from the European Union). This work helps Sustain's alliance to make their voices heard in important discussions about the future of the UK's approach to food, farming, fishing and international trade, particularly with regard to health, ethics and sustainability.

**Capital Growth:** This long-standing initiative, supported by the Mayor of London, offers practical support to hundreds of community gardens around London to help more people grow food, and to have greater access to land, skills, nature and growing spaces for community and environmental benefit.

**Children's Food Campaign:** Advocates for better food and food teaching for children in schools, protection of children from unhealthy food marketing, high food standards for health and well-being, and clear food labelling that can be understood by everyone.

**Climate and Nature:** Catalyses large-scale and systematic solutions in the food and farming system as a key way to avert and adapt to climate change and restore nature, with a special focus on national and local policy, and institutional responsibilities at all levels, for taking measurable action.

**FoodSHIFT 2030** is an EU-funded Horizon 2020 consortium programme involving 10 city-region projects across Europe. Sustain's role is to share experiences of campaigning and movement building on healthy and sustainable food, involving a wide range of places.

**Food Poverty:** Sustain's programme of work seeking to tackle the root causes of food poverty, and encouraging policies and practices that would enable everyone to eat well. This includes the London Food Poverty Campaign: benchmarking local authorities on their actions to help people and communities move 'beyond the food bank'; producing an annual league table of London Borough action to drive change and share good practice. This also includes work on policy at local, regional and national level to enable people on a low income to access the healthy and sustainably produced food they need.

**Local Food Retail** brings food, farming and supply-chain groups together to create a plan to achieve a measurable growth in UK grocery retail market share for local food across the UK. The common purpose is to support food more likely to be produced in nature-friendly ways, give a fair deal to farmers and to deliver healthy and nutritious food, enabling consumers to purchase in-line with their values.

**London Food Link:** The umbrella for all of Sustain's initiatives in the capital. London Food Link (LFL) is a network of organisations and individuals in London who grow, make, cook, sell, save and simply enjoy good food in the capital.

**Sustainable Farming and Land Use:** Advocates for improvements in policy and practice to support better farming livelihoods, more and better jobs in sustainable food production, fair trading practices, and the farm payments, policies and supply chain practices that would incentivise change towards healthy, fair and environmentally sustainable food production.

**Sustainable Food Places:** The Sustainable Food Places Network – organised jointly by Food Matters, Soil Association, Sustain, Food Sense Wales, Nourish Scotland and Nourish NI – helps people and places share challenges, explore practical solutions and develop good practice on key food issues. It encourages public, private and third-sector groups and local communities to form local food partnerships to work together to improve their food system. Sustain helps the network to run focused initiatives, this year including:

- **Food for the Planet**, helping local authorities, businesses and organisations take simple actions to tackle the climate and nature emergency through food.
- **Veg Cities**, led by Sustain in partnership with the wider Peas Please initiative, to increase availability and consumption of vegetables, including through improvements to Healthy Start.

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food &amp; Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

**18 Reconciliation of net income / (expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities**

	2025	2024
	£	£
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)</b>	<b>281,434</b>	605,633
Dividends, interest and rent from investments	<b>(15,567)</b>	(12,842)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	<b>6,934</b>	139,674
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	<b>(23,262)</b>	(160,021)
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>249,539</b>	572,444

**19 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents**

	At 1 April 2024	Cash flows	Other changes	At 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£
Cash in hand	1,887,518	265,106	-	<b>2,152,624</b>
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>1,887,518</b>	<b>265,106</b>	-	<b>2,152,624</b>

**20 Operating lease commitments**

The charity has no future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases.

**21 Legal status of the charity**

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food &amp; Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

## 22 Notes from 2024 accounts (prior year)

## a. Summary analysis of assets and liabilities by funds of previous reporting period

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Net current assets	781,030	258,582	693,161	1,732,773
<b>Net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>781,030</b>	<b>258,582</b>	<b>693,161</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>

## b. Details of movement in funds during the previous reporting period

	At the start of the year £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Bridging the Gap	121,262	493,200	(295,016)	-	319,446
Campaign for a Better Food Britain	41,190	83,768	(117,398)	-	7,560
Capital Growth	18,630	97,902	(92,212)	-	24,320
Children's Food Campaign	(108,060)	767,347	(514,460)	-	144,827
Climate and Nature	13,676	229,789	(210,363)	-	33,102
Diversity Outreach	-	500	(31,199)	42,062	11,363
FoodSHIFT 2030	28,598	24,221	(67,176)	-	(14,357)
Food Poverty	30,818	146,038	(159,106)	-	17,750
Local Food Retail	6,352	76,250	(44,666)	-	37,936
London Food Link	4,682	31,999	(21,517)	-	15,164
Sustainable Farming and Land Use	17,720	164,182	(134,881)	-	47,021
Sustainable Food Places	57,872	237,043	(245,886)	-	49,029
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>232,740</b>	<b>2,352,239</b>	<b>(1,933,880)</b>	<b>42,062</b>	<b>693,161</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds:</b>					
Designated funds:					
Employment Liabilities	186,233	-	-	12,349	198,582
Innovation and Activities Fund	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
Match Funding Contingency	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
<b>Total designated funds</b>	<b>246,233</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12,349</b>	<b>258,582</b>
<b>General funds</b>	<b>648,167</b>	<b>427,653</b>	<b>(240,379)</b>	<b>(54,411)</b>	<b>781,030</b>
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>894,400</b>	<b>427,653</b>	<b>(240,379)</b>	<b>(42,062)</b>	<b>1,039,612</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>1,127,140</b>	<b>2,779,892</b>	<b>(2,174,259)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>

# Funders

Sustain would like to thank the following funders for their financial support for our work over the course of this financial year:

AFN Network+  
Aurora Trust (previously known as the Ashden Trust)  
Bertha Foundation  
Big Lottery Fund  
British Heart Foundation  
City Bridge Foundation  
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (various)  
European Climate Foundation  
European Union - Horizon 2020  
Farming the Future  
Greater London Authority (various)  
ICLEI European Secretariat GmbH  
Impact on Urban Health (part of Guy's & St Thomas' Foundation)  
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust  
Kenneth Miller Trust  
Lund Trust  
Movements Trust  
National Lottery Community Fund (Growing Great Ideas)  
Nutritional Wellbeing Foundation (previously known as the AIM Foundation)  
Oak Foundation  
Rothschild Foundation  
Samworth Foundation  
Sustainable Food Places  
Thirty Percy Foundation  
Trust for London  
Wellcome Trust

# Annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2025

## A Sustain publication

November 2025

Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming, advocates food and agriculture policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, tackle climate change and restore nature, improve the living and working environment, enrich society and culture, and promote greater equity. It represents around 100 national public interest organisations and hundreds more working at local and regional level, and cultivates the movement for change, working with many others at local, regional, national and international level.



Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming

[sustain@sustainweb.org](mailto:sustain@sustainweb.org)  
[www.sustainweb.org](http://www.sustainweb.org)

Sustain, The Green House  
244-254 Cambridge Heath Road  
London E2 9DA  
020 3559 6777

Sustain works as an alliance to achieve our shared vision of a system of food, farming and fishing, in which:

- Good food production: All food is produced in a way that is fair and sustainable
- Good food economy: There is a fair and thriving food economy from farm to fork
- Good food for all: Healthy, sustainable diets are accessible and affordable to all

**SUSTAIN: THE ALLIANCE FOR BETTER FOOD & FARMING**

England & Wales - Charity number 1018643

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# Accounts

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# Annual report

Review and accounts for the year  
ended 31 March 2024

Company registered number: 02673194

Charity registered number: 1018643

**sustain**  
the alliance for better food and farming

# Foreword

This year, we have been increasingly concerned that such a large number of fellow citizens are struggling to afford the costs of food, let alone a healthy diet. This is contributing to health inequalities and undermines our goal of an equitable food system. It also makes sustainable farming less economically viable. In this context, our work on the Bridging the Gap, Say Yes and Recipe for Change programmes are ever more relevant and promising.

Bridging the Gap seeks to demonstrate how climate and nature friendly food can be made affordable and accessible to people on lower incomes, piloting approaches that use vouchers, public procurement and other mechanisms to bridge the gap in price and make sustainable farming more attractive and profitable.

Recipe for Change builds on our alliance's success in winning the landmark sugary drinks tax, seeking to extend this approach to products high in fat, salt or sugar, to ensure that food prices reflect the true cost of food and raise much-needed funds to pay for community food programmes, affordable sustainable food and health promotion.

Meanwhile, we were proud to see so many young people and parents joining the Children's Food Campaign in taking the message to parliament that we must all Say Yes to School Food for All as a fundamental investment in young people, whilst the Mayor of London (with our support) and other local

authorities across the country, continued to roll out free school meals for all primary school children.

The latter part of year was dominated by preparations for the forthcoming local elections and General Election, with Sustain colleagues and alliance members making strenuous efforts to get healthy, equitable and sustainable food and farming into party manifestos and local food strategy agendas. We ran or co-hosted several well-attended events at party conferences across the political spectrum, including sessions on public support and finances for sustainable farming, and how to prevent intensive and damaging livestock farming from proliferating through climate-friendly planning control. We also engaged with over 50 MPs at the Sustainable Food Places day of celebration and action in parliament.

Such game-changing initiatives set the scene for Sustain's five-year strategy review that will commence during 2024. We will be asking Sustain alliance members for your views and hope this year's impressive Annual Report will provide inspiration for what should be our shared priorities in the five-year period to 2030.



**Professor Mike Rayner**  
Chair of Sustain's Council of Trustees

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## Trustees during the financial year covered by this report:

Cobi-Jane Akinrele (resigned 19/12/23)

Josie Cohen (re-elected 15/12/2021)

Djenai Delerue\* (elected 19/12/23)

David Edwards (resigned 19/12/23)

Jyoti Fernandes\*\* (re-elected 19/12/23)

Mollie Gupta (resigned 19/12/23)

Kawther Hashem (re-elected 19/12/23)

Bridget Henderson (re-elected 15/12/2021)

Katharine Jenner (re-elected 14/12/2022)

Andre Kpodonu (resigned 19/12/23)

Shafalee Loth (re-elected 19/12/23)

Raksha Mistry\* (re-elected 14/12/2022)

Rob Percival\*\* (re-elected 14/12/2022)

Mike Rayner, Chair (re-elected 15/12/2021)

Ele Saltmarsh\* (elected 19/12/23)

Stephanie Slater, Vice Chair (re-elected 15/12/2021)

Alison Swan Parente (re-elected 15/12/2021)

Nick Weir\*\* (re-elected 19/12/23)

Victoria Williams, Treasurer (re-elected 14/12/2022)

Deirdre (Dee) Woods (re-elected 15/12/2021)

Note: Those marked with an asterisk (\*) share the trustee role between two people in their organisation as part of a leadership development opportunity for diversity. One in each pair marked with a double asterisk (\*\*) is the nominated Trustee registered with Companies House and the Charity Commission.

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**Company registered number:** 02673194

**Charity registered number:** 1018643

**Registered office:** The Green House, 244-254 Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9DA

**Auditors:** Goldwins, 75 Maygrove Road, West Hampstead, London NW6 2EG

**Bankers:** The Co-operative Bank, PO Box 101, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP and Triodos Bank, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AS

# Our year in numbers

Our projects, campaigns, partnerships and policy work contributed to the following over the year April 2023 to March 2024:

41

London and North East councils report action to improve food access and health

11,000+

letters from constituents ask MPs to #GetFairAboutFarming



95 food partnerships in Sustainable Food Places network



11,000+ people access organic fruit and veg in Bridging the Gap pilots

1,000+ people

sign letter to Defra on Real Bread standards



6 Fringe Farming toolkits help local growers gain access to land and support

48 MPs

engaged in Sustainable Food Places day of action



1.4m

free school meals a week secured for London's primary school children



5

food and farming fringe events held at national political party conferences



350

people attend Sustain Annual Conference on General Election tactics



Over 900

good food jobs advertised on Roots to Work platform



13

new and diverse Children's Food parent ambassadors



20

organisations join new food and racial justice working group



1.4m

visits to Sustain websites



234,000 tonnes

of CO<sub>2</sub> saved by 59 Food for the Planet local authorities

Find out more about Sustain's success stories and achievements at: [www.sustainweb.org/about/success-stories](http://www.sustainweb.org/about/success-stories)

# Good food production

Our vision is a food production system that is based on the principles of agroecology, that is fair for all who participate in it, and which is connected with its local community, through shorter, localised supply chains, and community food growing spaces, all of which cover rural, peri-urban and urban areas.

Our Sustainable Farming Campaign significantly strengthened engagement with political stakeholders, securing crucial support for sustainable land use and agroecological farming. We engaged with MPs from all major political parties via numerous roundtables, conferences and briefings, advocating for ambitious Environmental Land Management (ELM) standards, farmer-focused routes to market, and regulation for fairer food supply chains.

We responded to watering down of ELM ambition by launching our 'Beyond 2024: A New Horizon for the Agri-Food System' vision for UK farming and supported Riverford Organic's #GetFairAboutFarming campaign, releasing joint briefings, an e-action catalysing 11,000 MP letters and 110,000 petition signatories, securing a parliamentary debate. We provided written and oral evidence to the Efra Committee's inquiry on fairness in farmer incomes and ethical supply chains.

We highlighted unfairness in the UK seasonal worker scheme in our joint report 'Debt, Migration, and Exploitation', with LWA, NEF, Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, FLEX, and seasonal farmworkers. We also launched in parliament our joint study 'Soy no more' urging a move away from soy feed in UK pig and poultry farming.

Our 14-year collaboration in the Alliance to Save our Antibiotics continued apace. We called on government to end prophylactic use of farm antibiotics, with extensive public support, setting the scene for landmark legislation. We held supermarkets to account for farm antibiotic use in their meat and dairy supply chains, winning specific commitments to improve.

We made significant strides in peri-urban farming through our Fringe Farming campaign and published Fringe Farming Toolkits and hosted with Landworkers Alliance a Peri-Urban Practitioners Forum. The forum worked to improve access to local authority land for agroecological food production. Additionally, we began a funded project on 'Landed Community Kitchens' in collaboration with Coventry University and the Urban Agriculture Consortium.

In London, our well-established Capital Growth community food growing network continued to support 3,000+ urban gardens. We attended the London Permaculture Festival and delivered beginner food growing sessions with The Royal Parks. Our SEWN (Sustainable Enterprise and Wellbeing Network) events fostered collaboration among garden members and local food networks. The Urban Harvest campaign engaged 21 London gardens, promoting urban agriculture.

Sustain responds to government ditching prized Horticulture Strategy, with widespread media coverage

We host online Peri-Urban Practitioners Forum: 'Land mapping for food growing'

'Beyond 2024: A new horizon for the agri-food system,' briefing released with Sustain members promoting agroecology

Fringe Farming Toolkits launched to help establish peri-urban farming across the UK

Jacob-Rees Mogg MP forced to apologise after farmer constituent letter (coordinated by Sustain) defends British food standards

May

June

July

August

September

October

Report launch: 'Soy No More: Breaking away from soy in UK pig and poultry farming' with LWA, Hodmedod's, Pasture for Life

Sustainable Enterprise Wellbeing Network (SEWN) fosters community garden collaboration

Two Beginner Food Growing training sessions offered in partnership with The Royal Parks

Annual 'Urban Harvest' with 21 London community food gardens welcomes volunteers and visitors

10 London councils steer food growing renaissance via Capital Growth's inter-council network

“ I really enjoyed reading this update – it felt balanced, objective and well-written, and was one of the best summaries of recent agricultural policy that I have read recently.”

**Director of Strutt and Parker, farming asset manager, on our Sustainable Farming Newsletter**

“ I only found out about Capital Growth through Instagram a few months ago but I’m really appreciating being part of the network and have met loads of helpful people running brilliant community gardens as a result. Thank you!”

**Pascale Vassie, St George’s CofE Primary School Gardening Club**



Photo: Launch of horticulture report *Home-grown* at Groundswell - Regenerative Agriculture Festival, credit: Pete Williams

Sustain gives oral evidence to Efra select committee on food supply chain fairness

MPs urged to #GetFairAboutFarming by 11,000 citizens in e-action by Sustain and Riverford Organics

Sustain hosts two-day policy room at Oxford Real Farming Conference 2024, with record attendance

Sustain joins stakeholder roundtable with Shadow Secretary of State for Defra on 'how to support the food supply chain'

Good to Grow Week webinar covers the Right to Grow; land access; diversity; and nature conservation in food growing

November

December

January

March

April

House of Lords Horticulture report published, integrating our suggestions

MPs debate Get Fair About Farming petition, with 110,000+ signatures; MPs quote directly from Sustain briefings

Sustain attends roundtable with Shadow Farming Minister Daniel Zeichner MP on 'first 100 days'

Capital Growth launches Growing for Nature campaign; 140 food growers feed into GLA Nature Recovery strategy

Six Inches of Soil screening hosted with panel debate in London; 150+ attendees

# Good food economy

Our vision is that fair supply chains that support a flourishing diversity of supply, manufacturing, retail and catering enterprises – at home and overseas – that create good jobs and livelihoods; helping agroecological farmers and sustainable fishers to thrive and making good food the easiest choice.

As a beacon programme for a good food economy, we continued to develop our ground-breaking Bridging the Gap programme, establishing pilots across the four UK nations to help nature- and climate-friendly organic fruit and veg reach low-income households, and advocate for policy and investment to 'bridge the gap' in price. By the end of the year our initial pilots were providing over 10,000 school children and over 450 families with affordable agroecological fruit and veg via local retail.

We also launched the Local Food Retail campaign, galvanising an ambitious growth plan for the local food sector and demonstrating its potential to policy makers and investors. We partnered with Landworkers Alliance, Pasture for Life, Sustainable Food Trust and Food, Farming & Countryside Commission to engage 44 local food sector practitioners - from farm to retail - to produce a snapshot review of the sector.

These programmes worked alongside our Sustainable Farming Campaign, Food for the Planet and Sustainable Food Places Network to catalyse better policy and practice in supply chains including significant work championing better public sector food procurement.

Now in its 16th year, Sustain's Real Bread Campaign continues to promote Real Bread and people who make it. We lobbied for an Honest Crust Act to improve composition, labelling and marketing standards, to level the economic playing field for SME bakeries. This included a letter to Defra, signed by 1,000+ bakers and buyers, urging government to withdraw its apparent endorsement of what we dubbed a "sourfaux cheats' charter".

In Spring 2023 Sustain launched Connecting Community Food Enterprises to help community food projects move towards financial and environmental sustainability through enterprise models. This pilot engaged 22 local food enterprises via four partner organisations with workshops, resources, site visits and one-to-one support. Our online toolkit and 10 case studies received 800+ visits in the first six weeks.

Our thriving Roots to Work jobsite promoted over 900 good food jobs. Our Diversity Outreach Coordinator ran our first careers-focused event attended by 129 people, also promoting regular blogs to spotlight the diversity of roles and people working in good food, plus advice on ways into the sector.

Bridging the Gap represented at the 2023 City Food Policy Symposium attended by 200+ people

Joint letter to Defra calls for £5m investment in local food hubs, backed by 11 key groups

Following intensive coproduction, Bridging the Gap aligns six core themes to guide the work

15 citizens, farmers, market managers and dietitians join Cardiff Bridging the Gap pilot codesign workshops led by Food Sense Wales

Local Food Retail Plan holds meetings with Defra officials to gain support for the plan

April

May

July

August

September

Connecting Community Food Enterprises offers workshops, site visits and support to community food projects

'Withdraw sourfaux code support' letter to Defra signed by 1,000+ bakers and buyers

Local Food Working Party established involving 20 better food and farming organisations

Real Bread for All guide helps independent bakeries make Real Bread accessible to people on tighter budgets

Sourdough September celebrated from Australia to Zambia; our hashtag used 1,900+ times on Instagram alone



“ In all my years in the food and farming world I have never been part of such a diverse and inclusive group.”

**Member of Sustain’s Bridging the Gap Collaboration Group**

“ Real Bread Week shines a spotlight on people who work with energy and integrity against the industrial loaf juggernaut. It gives focus and inspiration to the fight against ultra-processed food products and is a welcome excuse to celebrate the real thing.”

**Hannah Ewan, Scotland The Bread**

Photo: Teviot Centre Food Co-op, credit: Kiloran O’Leary

Bridging the Gap runs its first webinars with 300 people attending

Local Food Retail Plan hosts panel discussion at Oxford Real Farming Conference on supply chains with 100+ audience

Bridging the Gap and Organic Research Centre poll consumers on attitudes to organics

Connecting Community Food Enterprise toolkit launched at popular webinar

November

January

February

March

Bridging the Gap launches first pilot in Tower Hamlets with Alexandra Rose Charities

Thousands of people get involved in Real Bread Week, nationally and internationally

Roots to Work site traffic up 60% year on year, plus <3,000 followers on new Instagram channel

Our Roots to Work jobsite hosts its first careers event attended by 129 people

# Good food for all

Our vision is that we want to see healthy, sustainable food accessible and affordable to all, through a diverse array of outlets, and for it to become unacceptable and expensive to market unhealthy, unethical and unsustainable produce, over the alternative.

Our exciting new Recipe for Change coalition was launched to build on the success of the game-changing Soft Drinks Industry Levy. We published modelling showing further levies on salt and sugar could prevent up to 2m cases of diet-related disease, and ran panel events at Labour and Conservative party conferences.

Inspiring young food ambassadors from Halifax Academy and Scotland took to the stage at our Children's Food Summit in Leeds. Speakers included Henry Dimbleby, Thomasina Miers and Christina Adane. 'Yummy' and 'Yucky' Children's Food Awards celebrated campaign heroes and spotlighted corporate unhealthy food villains.

Our 'Say Yes to School Food For All' campaign met with MPs in Parliament and our email campaign reached 299 MPs. Our 'Say Yes' map showed support from people in 1,200 locations and 120 organisations, presented to 10 Downing Street in partnership with the UK Youth Parliament. We also recruited 13 fantastic new Children's Food Ambassadors, helping ensure our campaigns are informed by first-hand experience, and parent voices are heard by those in power.

Healthy Start provides vital payments for fruit, vegetables and formula for families of very young children on low incomes. Our data map exposed £58m lost to low uptake, helping us advocate for increases in eligibility, value, and permanent access for families living under the immigration condition 'no recourse to public funds'.

29 out of 33 London Boroughs participated in our 13th Good Food for All Londoners report, and we celebrated progress with 150 representatives of 73 organisations and councils in London's City Hall with Deputy Mayor Joanne McCartney. We're now expanding the Good Food Local approach across the NorthEast and Cumbria, with a framework adaptable to further areas.

Our London Food Poverty Campaign investigated the food experiences of people seeking asylum. Our in-depth research exposed the appalling quality of food and lack of access to cooking facilities, making news headlines in The Guardian and BBC News.

Around 150 local authorities sought our advice on healthy food advertising, with Newham, Knowsley and Luton all passing policies. With The Times, we exposed how KFC lobbying was undermining local planning policies for healthier high streets.

Lewisham Council launches food justice action plan, with our support

165 people attend our milestone Children's Food Summit in Leeds

Emma Lewell-Buck MP introduces private member's bill on Healthy Start auto-enrolment with our support

Recruitment opens for Sustain's new Children's Food Ambassador programme

Our report shows how a salt and sugar levy could prevent upto 2m cases of diet-related disease

## April

## May

## June

## July

## September

Our mapping reveals 200,000 families missing out on £58m of Healthy Start value

Tower Hamlets becomes 7th local authority to adopt healthier food advertising policy

Welsh Government announces new restrictions on unhealthy food promotions

Recipe for Change campaign discusses investment of food levy revenues with anti-poverty groups

New Recipe for Change campaign launched with 35 coalition partners

“ Great Children’s Food Summit in Leeds! It’s been the talk of regional and local networks ever since.”

**Nicola Corrigan, Health & Wellbeing Programme Manager for Yorkshire and the Humber, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities**

“ Congratulations on launching the [Good Food for All Londoners] report and we look forward to continuing to work with the Sustain team in improving our local food system.”

**Bimpe Oki, Public Health Consultant, Lambeth**



“ Breaking the junk food cycle is tough. Using taxes as a signal and incentive is critical. Look at Sugary Drinks Tax. Huge impact. That’s why I support this campaign. Because it’s economically illiterate to subsidise obesity.”

**Lord James Bethell, supporting our Recipe for Change campaign, via X / Twitter**

Colleagues from Sustain, UK Youth Parliament and BiteBack take our ‘Say Yes to School Food for All’ campaign to 10 Downing Street, credit: Adrian Pope

Recipe for Change campaign events at Conservative and Labour Party conferences

We take our ‘Say Yes to School Food for All’ campaign to 10 Downing Street, with UK Youth Parliament

40 health organisations and experts call for ban on energy drinks sales to children

Good Food Local programme launches in North East and Cumbria

Sustain joins 120 organisations calling for extension of Household Support Fund

## October

## November

## December

## January

## February

12 local authorities participate in new Good Food Local programme in the North East

We help The Times expose KFC lobbying against council healthier food planning policies

Mayor of London funds universal primary school meals for a second year

Sustain gives evidence in oral session of House of Lords inquiry on food, diet and obesity

Launch of Good Food for All Londoners report with 73 organisations and 29 of London’s 33 boroughs participating

# Climate and nature emergency

## Local Action

Our Food for the Planet campaign continues to help local councils adopt policies that reduce food-related emissions and promote sustainable, healthy food. Sustain's online toolkit helps councils track their food and climate change actions, estimating potential emissions reductions. The recommendations are now integrated into the Climate Emergency UK's rankings.

Our 'Every Mouthful Counts' report celebrated five metropolitan boroughs as leaders this year, demonstrating urban areas' potential to source food sustainably, tackle food waste, and support just, sustainable food production. Emma Greenwood, Climate & Youth Voice Champion and former Youth MP provided an inspiring foreword to the report. Twelve UK councils requested and received personalised feedback.

We are excited about a new project with Oxford University, trialling interventions at local authority level for healthy, sustainable diets. Sustain's expertise in procurement and advertising policies will be leveraged to support new research.

## Planning for the Planet

In June, we launched 'Planning for the Planet' in partnership with Compassion in World Farming, engaging tens of thousands of supporters through an e-action. The campaign has two main goals: keeping river pollution a national priority and proposing solutions to tackle polluting intensive livestock agriculture, using planning policy to prevent factory farm expansion locally. Resources for councils are available through a registration-only dashboard, with nearly 60 registrations. Our 'Poop Idol' league table of the 20 worst places for factory farm excreta prompted many councillor inquiries, and a popular and lively panel at the Oxford Real Farming Conference proposed just solutions. Parliamentary engagement has successfully yielded recognition of agriculture's role in river pollution, and was reflected in party manifestos.

In April, "Stink or Swim" analysed and mapped the large agribusinesses behind intensive livestock pollution and their ties to UK retailers, in collaboration with Friends of the Earth and Compassion in World Farming.

## Food procurement

Progress on national standards for public sector food has stalled with the Government putting the promised Buying Standards review on hold. However, other parties have shown commitment. The Labour party promised 50% public sector food spending on local or sustainable food if elected. The Liberal Democrats' Food and Farming Policy Paper, developed with input from Sustain, includes strong public procurement standards and measures against agricultural pollution.

Following the London Food Purchasing Commitment launch last year, four councils have signed up to making their meals align with a planetary health diet. Sustain is advocating for climate-friendly free school meals across London, engaging particularly with mayoral candidates.

## National advocacy

National food and climate policies remain frustratingly inadequate to meet climate targets. We aim to advance the inclusion of food policies in national net zero plans. Contributions to carbon budget evidence gathering, planning policy reforms, and nitrogen budgets all aim to do so. Despite progress on procurement, national policies still fall far short.

## Just transition

Justice and equity are crucial for a climate-friendly food system transition. After extensive research and consultation, we are developing a new Just Transition programme of work. A kick-off workshop and gap analysis – with alliance members – garnered support and helped develop the next steps for the project.



“ We had a very good briefing from Sustain. It made the point that the main cause of river pollution is livestock farming—that of chickens and other animals. This is perfectly true.”

**Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb**



Placard from climate, nature, and global solidarity protest in London, 2022. Credit: Ruth Westcott

## Key moments

### » Spring 2023

Local campaigns grants launched – 10 projects chosen from over 180 applicants on procurement, advertising, pricing and an equitable transition.

### » June 2023

We award 5 International climate action grants to grassroots activists.

### » July 2023

Planning for the Planet' launched, with research showing 100 busloads of waste produced by factory farming every hour.

E-action with Compassion in World Farming reaches tens of thousands of supporters.

Four London Councils commit to aligning council-controlled meals with a planetary health diet.

### » August 2023

20th place joins Planning for the Planet campaign.

### » September 2023

Liberal Democrats release Food Policy including key asks from Sustain alliance.

Packed-out event at Liberal Democrat party conference, in partnership with River Action.

Launch of 'Poop Idle', showing top 20 UK places for faecal animal waste production.

### » October 2023

Climate Emergency UK release new local authority league table, integrating food for the first time.

### » November 2023

Sustain wins MySociety Award for climate action.

### » December 2023

Launch of Every Mouthful Counts: Metropolitan Boroughs, to coincide with COP28 climate talks.

### » January 2024

We convene inaugural Just Transition workshop.

### » February 2024

50th place joins Planning for the Planet campaign.

### » April 2024

'Stink or Swim' report launched, showing the 10 large agribusinesses most responsible for UK river pollution.

# National influence

## Engagement with MPs and policy makers

This year, we engaged proactively with political party manifesto development. We submitted to the Labour Party National Policy Forum and engaged directly with the Leader of the Opposition's Office to integrate our asks into the Labour manifesto. We also met with the Green Party manifesto team to brief them on their food and farming proposals and submitted to the Liberal Democrat manifesto consultation process. We were pleased to see growing policy alignments with the Sustain manifesto among these parties ahead of manifesto launches scheduled for summer 2024, including on public sector food procurement, pesticide and antibiotic use reduction, energy drinks ban and a food partnership in every area, to name a few.

Over this period, Sustain hosted three significant parliamentary events. The Sustainable Food Places Day of Celebration and Action was a particular highlight, attracting over 50 MPs who engaged with local food partnerships. This event facilitated crucial discussions with key influencers, including Labour's shadow farming minister and spokespeople from the SNP and Liberal Democrats. Additionally, our 'Say Yes to School Food for All' campaign drop-in, co-hosted with the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on school food saw participation by 12 Labour MPs, including two members of the Shadow front bench, four Conservative MPs, and the Lib Dem spokesperson for Education. Our joint parliamentary drop-in with the Nature Friendly Farming Network on nature friendly farming welcomed 19 MPs, including three EFRA committee members and farming spokespeople, aimed at influencing the supply chain fairness inquiry.

Sustain's team was involved in five events across three political party conferences, delivering two well-attended sessions at the Labour and Liberal Democrat party conferences in autumn 2023, with shadow ministerial and senior party spokespeople. We worked closely with the Nature Friendly Farming Network and the Labour Climate and Environment Forum to commission new polling showing public appetite for nature-friendly farming. We worked with River Action for an event on river pollution at the Lib Dem Party Conference and co-ran two fringe events focusing on fiscal measures and healthy food at the Conservative and Labour Party conferences, working closely with the Obesity Health Alliance and the Institute for Government.

Sustain's work has received more recognition in Parliament than in previous years, particularly in the first quarter of 2024 where Sustain was mentioned six times in Parliamentary debates. Highlights included quotes from the Shadow minister for food and farming and Efra Committee members of our milestone 'Unpicking Food Prices' report, as well as mentions by Baronesses Jones and Baroness Harris of our new river pollution analysis.

## Public affairs support at key influencing moments

Our team helped the Children's Food Summit in Leeds to be a notable success, with 95% of attendees finding the content useful and 99% reporting improved knowledge. Key highlights included a popular keynote panel with Henry Dumbleby and Thomasina Miers and involvement of wonderful youth ambassadors, in the first event of its kind for our Children's Food Campaign. We also assisted the team in highlighting disparities in free school meal provisions through an e-action and supported the Say Yes petition handover to 10 Downing Street.

We collaborated closely with the Sustainable Farming Campaign team to deliver several high-impact advocacy moments. This included drafting an open letter to Jacob Rees-Mogg MP about his questionable views on hormone-treated beef, which garnered significant media attention and forced a public retraction on BBC TV. Our media outreach resulted in over 200,000 Twitter views and widespread press coverage. Additionally, we supported Riverford Organic's #GetFairAboutFarming campaign by promoting a successful parliamentary petition. We also ran several training sessions for the Sustainable Food Places network, focusing on key moments for 2024 and effective MP engagement strategies.

“ I found the event enjoyable and extremely constructive, and I am sure all attendees felt the same, to thank you for making this possible. I am sure we will continue to have a constructive relationship.”

**Patricia Gibson, SNP spokesperson for food and farming**, following the Day of Action

## Sustain Annual Conference

Sustain's public affairs team organised the Sustain Annual Conference held in December 2023. We themed the event around discussing tactics for 2024, a landmark year for local and national elections across the UK. We welcomed speakers including Lord Deben (outgoing Climate Change Committee Chair), Dee Woods (Sustain trustee) and Craig Bennett (Wildlife Trusts), Youth MP Dev Sharma and former Department for Health Special Advisor, Richard Sloggett. We were pleased that 95% of attendees rated the event as good or very good, 97% rated the programme as very good or good, and 83% said the event improved their knowledge.

## Supporting policies, legislation and national strategy processes

We led Sustain's responses to key select committee inquiries, including the Efra committee inquiry into fair supply chains, as well as the House of Lords inquiry into food, diet and obesity. We ensured that key campaign ideas and asks gained attention, and our proactive engagement with the committees led to Sustain campaigners giving oral evidence sessions to three select committee inquiries. We also met with Incredible Edible and co-drafted a new briefing to support Baroness Rosie Boycott with a proposed amendment on community growing in the Levelling Up Bill.

## Digital and press

Over the past year, our team successfully landed numerous news stories, significantly enhancing Sustain's media presence and influence. For the Healthy Start campaign, we updated our map with fresh data in April, resulting in extensive regional media coverage and radio interviews in the North East of England. For the first Number 10 Farm to Fork Summit convened by the Prime Minister, we coordinated a media briefing with over 40 national journalists, and facilitated an interview with National Food Strategy Tsar Henry Dimbleby on BBC Newsnight, helping to shape the national narrative.

“ Thanks so much for organising this morning and thanks for having me back! It was a great session and lots of exciting stuff on the horizon for next year.”

**Nancy from Eastbourne Food Partnership,** following Sustain's parliamentary training session

## Key moments

### » May 2023

We coordinate media briefing with 40+ national journalists during Number 10's first Farm to Fork Summit.

Our Say Yes campaign drop-in, co-hosted with the APPG on school food, involves 20 MPs.

### » June 2023

Sustainable Food Places Day of Celebration and Action welcomes over 50 MPs engaging with local food partnerships.

Our joint parliamentary drop-in with Nature Friendly Farming Network welcomes 19 MPs.

### » July 2023

Sustain submits written evidence to Efra inquiry on UK trade policy: food and agriculture.

### » Summer 2023

We meet with manifesto writing teams for Labour, Lib Dems and the Green Party.

### » September 2023

Sustain is involved in five events at the Labour, Conservative and Lib Dem Party Conferences.

### » October 2023

We secure extensive media coverage for farmer letter to Jacob Rees-Mogg MP objecting to his undermining of British food standards.

Parliamentary training session for the Sustainable Food Places network is warmly received.

### » November 2023

Say Yes petition handover to 10 Downing Street gains public attention.

### » December 2023

Sustain annual conference welcomes keynote speaker Lord Deben, outgoing Chair of the Climate Change Committee, who says: "Without nature, there is no food".

December 2023: Sustain launches e-action urging MPs to attend and engage in the #GetFairAboutFarming debate.

### » March 2024

Sustain gives oral evidence to House of Lords Food, Diet and Obesity Select committee inquiry.

# Local action

Local action is coming of age at Sustain, demonstrated through engagement with ever more local authorities and food partnerships across the UK. Despite the slow progress on food and farming policy in some areas at a national level, and on-going cost-of-living pressures to the finances of councils and community organisations, council-level food policy and action continues apace as does growth in the Sustainable Food Places (SFP) network and movement.

## Sustainable Food Places goes from strength to strength

From humble beginnings, Sustainable Food Places has grown to a network of 95 members and expected to grow to over 100 by mid-2024. They represent one third of local authority areas across the UK, all taking a cross-sector approach to transforming the lives of communities, ensuring that everyone has access to healthy and nutritious food that is good for people and the planet. Sustain continued to guide and support this network with campaigns and good food movement grants, convening peer support spaces and a wide range of well-received events.

Our SFP Day of Celebration and Action in Westminster embodied the strength of the network and attracted around 50 MPs to meet their food partnerships and hear about their local priorities. Our policy calls centered around a food partnership and plan in every local area and investment in local economies.

“ The SFP Day of Celebration and Action inspires people that change can happen and that we are in it together.”

**Paul Brookhouse**, Coordinator, Sustainable Food Derby

## National action for local benefit

We have responded to the priorities of local networks through our national advocacy and parliamentary work, for example by prioritising calling for the renewal of the Household Support Fund – a vital source of funding for emergency food in local areas, as well as improvements to the Healthy Start scheme and reforming public sector food procurement. Crucially, we relied on

the lived-experience, evidence and intel from our local networks as well as coordinated action with partners such as the Local Government Association to increase the effectiveness of this work. Complementing our campaigning, we supported local food partnership coordinators in advising their MPs on particular matters, such as school meals.

Despite progress on the National Food Strategy grinding to a halt in other nations, consultation on the draft National Food Plan as part of the Good Food Nation duties kicked off promisingly in Scotland. This will place a duty on local authorities to produce a food plan by 2026 and continues to inspire the other nations.

## Local action in London

A decade of benchmarking action on good food among London councils through Good Food for All Londoners with the support of the Greater London Authority (GLA) has demonstrated the value of this approach, resulting in more councils taking action by introducing new policies, increasing funding and resourcing local projects. This year's survey and report measured action in a record number of London councils – 29 out of 33 responded. We continued to help London councils throughout the year through 1-to-1 advice and peer-learning workshops supported by the GLA on priority issues such as developing a food partnership or making healthier choices in convenience stores easier.

## Taking our approach to the regions

With funding from Impact on Urban Health, we began to replicate this approach among the 12 councils in the North East of England, under the umbrella of Good Food Local. Over the next three years, we hope to extend the approach to other regions, resulting in more councils changing policy and practice around good food.

## Local action on food and climate change

In London, Sustain has worked with Re-London since March 2023 to develop the Food Purchasing Commitment. This year, with Sustain's support, this has attracted four signatory councils. The Commitment sets out unified and ambitious targets to ensure that food bought and served across council-controlled services is climate-friendly; that less of it is wasted; and that local and sustainable food producers and growers are supported.

Across the country, 59 councils have now signed up to our Food for the Planet campaign and guidance to tackle food and farming-related emissions. These resources are very much needed, since our annual Every Mouthful Counts report revealed that 61% of metropolitan councils analysed did not have significant actions to tackle food and farming-related emissions in their climate and nature policies. On a more positive note, several councils reached out for personalised feedback and recommendations for improving policies after the launch of this research.

## International action at a local level

Internationally, our involvement in FoodSHIFT 2030, a project to support and scale up sustainable food system innovations in cities across Europe, came to an end. We delivered several webinars and workshops attended by hundreds of participants. Sustain's expertise is highly valued, and we became partners in a bid for a new project under the EU Horizon2020 research framework aiming at the transition to organic production and consumption in several EU regions.

“ I am looking at bringing a fresh and more practical perspective in terms of local governance models and I think Sustain has the potential to do a good game on it.”

**Raluca Barbu**, Highclere Consulting, FoodSHIFT partner in Romania



Local food partnerships in the Sustainable Food Places make year-on-year progress on healthy and sustainable food systems. In March 2024, Cambridge became the third place to achieve a Gold award, alongside Brighton & Hove and Bristol.

## Key moments

### » May 2023

SFP-funded campaign launches promoting Healthy Start fruit and veg cards at Bury Market.

We present how councils can tackle household food insecurity to 60 Co-op Party food champion Councillors.

### » June 2023

SFP Day of Celebration and Action in Westminster attracts around 50 MPs, and includes address by Daniel Zeichner MP, Labour Shadow Food & Farming Minister.

### » July 2023

'Sourcing local food in public sector catering and procurement' webinar - hundreds participate.

SFP-funded Shropshire and Vale of Glamorgan food trails hailed a success by local producers – set to continue as annual events.

### » September 2023

New SFP evaluation shows food partnerships well equipped to coordinate government funding in Wales.

### » November 2023

148 organisations led by Sustain call for urgent extension of Healthy Start to migrant and refugee families facing destitution.

'Movement-building through Cultural Events and Festivals' webinar showcases food partnerships diversifying their networks.

### » December 2023

New SFP evaluation shows food partnerships are driving transition from emergency food aid to more empowering models.

### » January 2024

Launch of Good Food Local North East - 12 councils commit to measuring action and identifying good practice and areas for improvement.

### » February 2024

Good Food Local London report surveys councils on activities to improve LGBTQ+ inclusion – 4 councils share case studies.

Sustain joins 120+ organisations calling for extension of Household Support Fund.

### » March 2024

Cambridge receives SFP Gold Award, the third place in the UK to receive this prestigious award.

# Building our communications and reach

The Sustain websites have received over 1.4 million visits this year, with sustainweb.org accounting for 875,000 of these visits. On average, visitors stay for over a minute and view 2.4 pages per session. Google remains our primary traffic driver, contributing 235,000 click-throughs, marking a 5% increase over the year.

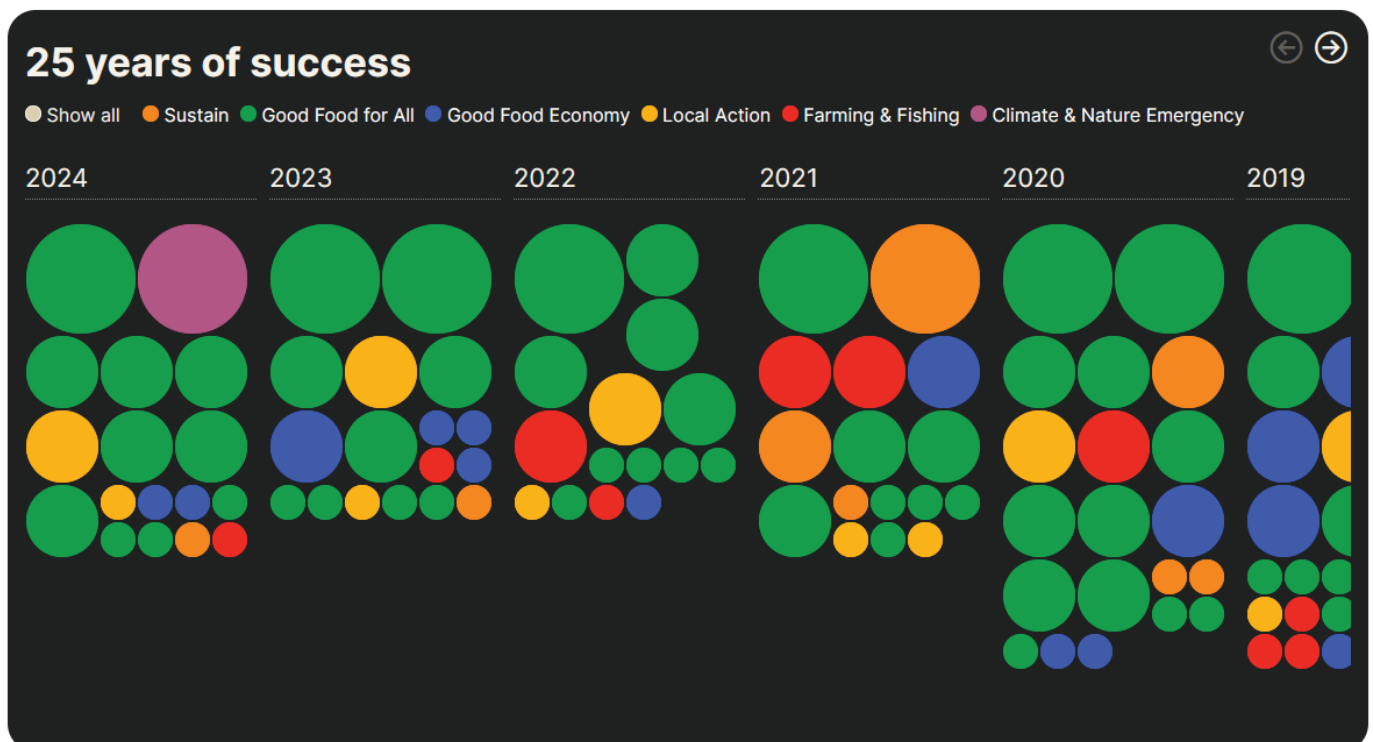
Our good food jobs site, Roots to Work rootstowork.org, has become an essential tool, receiving 400,000 page views and becoming our largest source for email list signups, significantly boosting awareness of Sustain and its initiatives.

Focused efforts on supporter growth have led to a 59% increase in email list signups, with 20,000 new additions this year. We've recorded over 40,000 engaged supporter interactions and sent more than 12,500 action emails to MPs and other targets. A highlight is the #GetFairAboutFarming campaign, run in partnership with Riverford Organic.

Our social engagement remains steady, however, Sustain has gained 2,051 new LinkedIn followers, which amounts to a year-on-year increase of around 40%. This improves Sustain's online presence and increases opportunities for wider engagement with Sustain's key messages and campaigns.

The Recipe for Change website, featuring an interactive data modelling tool, is building on the success of the Soft Drinks Industry Levy work, and our 'Say Yes to School Food for All' site aims to change UK school meal policies by collecting supporter data to amplify our collective voice. Additionally, our new Good Food Local platform gathers detailed data from local authorities nationwide to benchmark and drive progress on key food and farming policy themes and the actions they are taking.

Lastly, the Sustain Annual Conference in December has become a crucial and much anticipated event, demonstrating Sustain's impact to sector stakeholders, and bringing the movement together, with over 300 attendees at the 2023 event and exceptionally positive feedback.



The Sustain Success Stories timeline, published in 2024 to celebrate 25 years of progress towards a more healthy, equitable and and sustainable food system.

# Diversity, equity, inclusion and racial justice

Sustain is committed to action to improve diversity, equity, inclusion and racial justice in our own organisation and across the sector. We have a Diversity Core Group who oversee implementation of an annual action plan, and we have committed to transparent reporting on our actions through an annual Diversity Progress Report and The RACE Report. To find out more, visit: [www.sustainweb.org/about/diversity-equality-inclusion/](http://www.sustainweb.org/about/diversity-equality-inclusion/)

This year, Sustain invested in a new role of Diversity Outreach Coordinator. Sareta Puri took up post in August 2023. Building and nurturing relationships is central to this role and contacts were swiftly made across the alliance, other sustainable food organisations and across the higher education sector. This led to the programme evolving to focus on how to improve racial equity and justice across the sector to address the root causes of inequity, beyond being a diversity initiative.

Internally, Sareta has supported other projects and campaigns to centre diversity, anti-racism and equity in their work. To further this approach, an action learning set on DEI and anti-racism was established, which 7 Sustain staff members are participating in over 8 months.

Engagement with the education sector has included running a workshop on ethnic diversity at the Landex Conference, speaking on a sustainable careers panel at Birkbeck University and presenting to IFSTAL students. Additional opportunities have been lined up for the 2024/25 academic year.

An alliance members survey (39% response rate) provided insight into where Sustain alliance organisations are on their anti-racism, diversity and equity journeys, what aspirations they have and what support they require in this area.

In January 2024, we established a food and racial justice group, co-convened with our sister alliance Eating Better. The group's membership goes across both alliances plus non-alliance members to ensure

engagement with BPOC organisations and others doing racial justice work in this space. The group meets bi-monthly to provide space for discussion and to tackle wider challenges to build the movement and provide a collective voice.

In March 2024, we ran a webinar on careers in the sustainable food sector that featured a panel of 75% speakers from Black and minoritised ethnic backgrounds. This fuelled the creation of a careers resource launched in spring 2024 aimed at engaging with more new entrants to the sector.

Our Roots to Work platform now features more Black people and people of colour in career profile pieces and regular blogs have been published on inclusive employment practices. New indicators on ethnicity and disability schemes and Living Wage have been added to job listings. An Instagram page was created which posts job listings, blog content and reshares external information on equitable, inclusive and anti-racist work in the sector.

Across the team, our projects, campaigns and operational staff also look at ways to improve diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism. This year, a priority has been recruitment for diversity, with determined action to improve the accessibility of roles, the diversity of people applying, and inclusive and enabling selection processes, interviews, feedback and induction. Details of actions taken are shared in our Diversity Progress Reports here: [www.sustainweb.org/reports/?search=diversity](http://www.sustainweb.org/reports/?search=diversity)



# Who we work with

As an alliance, Sustain is as strong as its membership. Alliance membership is open to national organisations that do not distribute profits to private shareholders and which operate in the public or their members' interest. The organisations must be wholly or partly interested in food or farming issues and support the general aims and work of the alliance.

## Sustain alliance members

Action on Salt / Action on Sugar	Gaia Foundation	Social Farms and Gardens
Alexandra Rose Charity	Garden Organic	Soil Association
Aquaculture Stewardship Council	Global Justice Now	Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK)
Baby Milk Action	GM Freeze	Sustainable Food Trust
Behaviour Change	Green Christian	Sustainable Healthy Food Group
Better Food Traders	Growing Communities	Sustainable Soils Alliance
Beyond GM	Health Education Trust	The Country Trust
Bio-Dynamic Agricultural College	Hubbub	The Kindling Trust
Bio-Dynamic Agriculture Association	Incredible Edible	The Landworkers' Alliance
British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry	Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN)	The Orchard Project
British Dietetic Association	International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)	The Real Farming Trust
Caroline Walker Trust	Magic Breakfast	The Scottish Pantry Network
Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience (CAWR)	Marine Conservation Society	Think Through Nutrition
Centre for Food Policy - City University	National Federation of Women's Institutes	This Is Rubbish
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)	National Trust	Transform Trade
Chefs in Schools	Nature Friendly Farming Network	Unchecked
Commonwork Trust	Nourish NI	Unison – the public service union
Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Network	Open Food Network UK	Unite the union – rural and agricultural sector
Compassion in World Farming	Oral Health Foundation	Vegetarian Society
CPRE The Countryside Charity	Organic Farmers & Growers	Whole Health Agriculture
Diabetes UK	Organic Growers Alliance	Women's Environmental Network
Dung Beetles for Farmers	Organic Research Centre	World Cancer Research Fund
E.coli 0157	Organic Trade Board	Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF)
Eating Better	Oxford Climate Alumni Network (OXCAN)	
Faculty of Public Health	Pasture-fed Livestock Association	<b>Sustain alliance observers</b>
Fairtrade Foundation	People Need Nature	Allergy Alliance
FareShare	Permaculture Association	Child Poverty Action Group
Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group SW	Pesticide Action Network (PAN) UK	ClientEarth
Farms not Factories	Plantlife	Food Ethics Council
Feedback Global	Rare Breeds Survival Trust	GMB (Britain's general union)
First Steps Nutrition Trust	Royal Academy of Culinary Arts, Chefs Adopt a School Trust	Green Alliance
Food Foundation	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)	Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF)
Food Matters	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)
Food Sense Wales	School Food Matters	Nourish Scotland
Food Systems and Policy Group, University of Hertfordshire	School of Artisan Food	Obesity Health Alliance
FoodCycle	Scotland The Bread	Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH)
Forum for the Future	Shared Assets	Which?
Friends of the Earth	Slow Food in the UK	Wildlife and Countryside Link
		WWF - Scotland
		WWF - UK

Sustain works closely with, for example: colleague alliances and initiatives working on cross-cutting food, farming, fishing, environmental and social policy – including: the Alliance to Save our Antibiotics; Eating Better Alliance; Food Research Collaboration; Green Alliance; Food, Farming and Countryside Commission; Green Care Coalition; Obesity Health Alliance; Sustainable Soils Alliance; Trade Justice Movement; and Wildlife and Countryside Link. Our connections and work with such organisations is described in more detail [here](#).

Across the UK Nations, we work with sister organisations: Food Sense Wales; Nourish Scotland; and Nourish Northern Ireland. We also work with over 90 UK towns, cities and regions and their Sustainable Food Place partnerships and/or food poverty alliances and/or local authorities; the London Food Board; and our newsletters have over 65,000 sign-ups, with tens of thousands more followers via social media.

Sustain leads the organisation of public webinars and training workshops for FoodSHIFT 2030, the Europe-wide programme which looks at food system transformation. Sustain works with many partners within the project, which is comprised of 7 municipalities, 7 NGOs and 7 research institutes in 12 European countries. Sustain has also helped recruit a further 33 city regions and food partnerships in Europe to the FoodShift2030 consortium, building up an international network of solidarity upon which Sustain leans on to build and promote the training workshops.

## Interested in becoming a Sustain member?

If your organisation is interested in becoming a Sustain alliance member or observer, download an application form at: [www.sustainweb.org/membership](http://www.sustainweb.org/membership) or email the Sustain team on [sustain@sustainweb.org](mailto:sustain@sustainweb.org) to speak to Chief Executive Kath Dalmeny for a conversation about how to get involved. When you submit an application, this is reviewed by the Sustain team and we may ask you for further information or clarification; we will make an initial assessment, ask you any questions necessary for clarification, and take it to the Sustain Council of Trustees with a recommendation (the Council is elected by Sustain's members). If they approve your application, this will be circulated to Sustain members via our alliance newsletter Digest for any comments or questions before ratification.

If your work is local or international rather than national, or you are an individual or represent a company or other profit-making organisation, you may prefer to get involved with a specific project or campaign, get on one or more of our mailing lists, publicise your healthy and sustainable food and farming events on our events calendar, or join a project or campaign advisory Working Party. Get in touch and we'll help you decide how best to join in and share your unique perspectives.

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Find out about Sustain membership here: [www.sustainweb.org/membership/become\\_a\\_sustain\\_member/](http://www.sustainweb.org/membership/become_a_sustain_member/)  
Join one or more of Sustain's mailing lists here: [www.sustainweb.org/email/](http://www.sustainweb.org/email/)

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“ Sustain is an anchor providing trusted information and decades of knowledge and experience to all of us working in sustainable food and farming. Your presence enables the numerous organisations in the alliance to learn from each other and work together towards common goals - the whole is certainly greater than the sum of its parts.”

**Tilly Jarvis**

Senior Project Manager for Food and Farming, Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK)

“ Sustain do a terrific job representing the wide ranging and diverse interests of its members. You ensure that food and farming issues stay in the spotlight of public debates and that people in power are held to account. You amplify the voices of small organisations who have direct experiences of the challenges and inequities in our food system. Our membership of Sustain gives us a bigger platform on which to stand to shout about our work and to make the case for a transformed food system.”

**Jonathan Pauling**

Chief Executive, Alexandra Rose Charity

# What people say about us...

"We have found great value in joint working with Sustain on a huge range of issues over the years – from food labelling to food poverty and more."

**Emma Holland-Lindsay, Head of Public Affairs for the National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI)**

"Sustain's campaigning work is more important than ever in these uncertain times. OGA is delighted to be a member and support and contribute to this effort."

**Liz Charles, Coordinator of the Organic Growers Alliance (OGA)**

"It was a pleasure being on such a great panel. One thing I really appreciated was the diversity of everyone who presented. Usually I am the only one like me and am visibly different to everyone else at these things, so it's a breath of fresh air to join you all."

**Speaker at Roots to Work careers in food and farming event**

"Thank you so much for your time and wisdom. I cannot express how helpful this is to my current work and imminent planning. I am completely inspired to help move this forward."

**Jamie Perry, Rothschild Foundation, following information provided by Sustain's local action team**

"THANK YOU so much for providing all this information at such short notice, and, more importantly, for all the work you did on the Free Trade Agreement!"

**Carina Millstone, Chief Executive of Feedback, following joint work on food and farming standard in the UK-Australia trade deal**

"Typically excellent blog from @will\_white\_10 here, highlighting urgency of supply chain regulation (and really pleased to see the diagram I designed with @UKSustain is being so widely used)."

**Professor Carrie Bradshaw on the Sustainable Farming Coordinator Will White's Food Security blog**

"I've just finished reading [your blog], and it's excellent and faultless. I particularly like the reframing of the Food Security Index, which is brilliant. This makes me feel really proud of Sustain and the work we all do together!"

**Bee Laughton, Horticulture Lead for the Landworkers Alliance, commenting on Sustain CEO blog on food security**

"We were able to undertake work on the draft Sheffield Local Plan, which we couldn't have done without your invaluable guidance. It's wonderful to see some of the amendments making it into the plan. I hope this inspires other community organisations to get stuck into their Local Plans when the opportunity arises."

**Regather Sheffield**

"It's a completely amazing campaign and you guys have done such incredible work. This is how change is made."

**Michelle Straus, The Animal Advocacy Project, on launch of the Planning for the Planet campaign**

"This is my first year running the school garden, which has been abandoned for a while. Capital Growth has provided me with lots of useful information / things to think about which will hopefully allow me to turn the allotment into a success."

**Primary school teacher, responding to Capital Growth community food growing survey**

"Your passion and advocacy for the Universal Free School Meal policy was greatly appreciated and the evidence you gave really interesting and insightful. It was evident that your support resonated strongly with the committee and played a vital role in informing the second panel session."

**Emma Pawson, Head of Health and Wellbeing / Programme Director for Free School Meals, Greater London Authority, following Children's Food Campaign giving oral evidence to the London Assembly Economy Committee**

"I'm really enjoying this as you can probably tell. Feeling that we do have the opportunity to influence on a national level is pretty empowering."

**Children's Food Ambassador**

"The evidence we used was pretty much all taken from the Healthier Food Advertising toolkit, which was very, very helpful."

**Natalie Lovell, Tower Hamlets Public Health Manager in a presentation to the London advertising policy workshop November 2023**

"Sustain has estimated London's cash shortfall is approximately £9,984,530 (Sustain: Healthy Start Shortfall Map, 2024). We are developing a regional resource to assist public health teams, commissioners of services and frontline workers to improve the uptake of the scheme."

**Leah de Souza-Thomas, Health and Wellbeing Programme Manager, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (London Region)**

"So many people's lives have been made better thanks to the amazing work you do."

**Kat Reading, former Community Development Manager, East of England Co-op**

"It was so great to be at an event that is celebrating success and not focusing so much on the difficult circumstances that everyone is facing, having to do more with less. It led to lots of brilliant conversations as everyone is buoyed by what can be achieved rather than the huge mountain we all have to climb."

**Rachel Ledwith, Head of Community Engagement, The Felix Project, after attending the launch of the 2023 Good Food for All Londoners report benchmarking action by London's local authorities**

"Thank you for the incredible Community Food Enterprise toolkit, you've made an amazing resource with this, and I can see this being incredibly useful. I love it!"

**Food Cooperatives Coordinator, London Borough of Tower Hamlets**

"The Sustainable Food Places network has been a key factor and driver for Birmingham City Council to begin its journey right at the birth of the SFP. Due to the support, national presence and guidance, the award aspirations, and much more—we have gone from a city clueless on what food policy meant to being a national and international leader in food system approaches."

**Birmingham local food partnership**

"As a Bristol MP, I think there is so much potential. We have gold status as a Sustainable Food City, but we also have food deserts where people cannot access affordable and healthy food. So it's a great idea that through public sector procurement we could become the customers of things that are being grown in Somerset, in Gloucestershire and nearby."

**Anthony Magnall, Conservative MP for Totnes at Westminster Hall Debate on Public Sector Food Procurement and Nutrition**

"I would love to see Good Food Nation plans include support for networks such as the Highland Good Food Partnership, which supports local businesses and encourages collaboration on community food growing, food banks and tackling food waste."

**Ariane Burgess, Green Party member of the Scottish Parliament. Food and Drink Sector questions in the Scottish Parliament on 12 September 2023**

"We grew wheat on the playing field. The children planted, weeded, harvested, threshed, winnowed and milled the wheat. They then made a harvest loaf for assembly. The Bake Your Lawn guide was really useful and gave us the information, confidence and inspiration to give the project a go."

**Liz Read, primary school teacher, in response to the Real Bread Campaign's Bake Your Lawn guide**

"What a great opportunity to hear bakers talk about their experiences and also to network and share experiences with bread people. Great to meet the faces behind the Instagram profiles - real people make Real Bread!"

**Brenda Daly, Daly Bread, after participating in Roots to Real Bread, run by the Real Bread Campaign**

"You are making the world better."

**Feedback from contributors to our food and farming sector jobs platform Roots to Work**

"That was Sustain at its best – using your convening power to elevate and amplify the local voices that rarely get heard at the national level. Thanks so much for an energising afternoon."

**Professor Kevin Morgan, Cardiff University, following Sustain's Annual Conference, December 2023**

"What a breath of fresh air in the midst of all the bad media news! All power to Sustain!"

**Feedback from participant in Sustain's Annual Conference, December 2023**

"This conference was one of the best quality, inspiring and encouraging events I have ever attended."

**Feedback from participant in Sustain's Annual Conference, December 2023**

# Internal developments

## Sustain's governance

Sustain is governed by its membership, which is open to national organisations that do not distribute profits to private shareholders and thus operate in the public interest. Members must be wholly or partly interested in food and/or farming issues and support the general aims and work of the alliance.

Sustain's membership usually meets once a year in a general session at the Annual Conference, with business matters of the Annual General Meeting undertaken electronically to enable diverse and inclusive participation, including for geographically dispersed people and organisations. Many alliance members also attend a range of specialist policy and project working party meetings, which are chaired either by a Sustain Council member or an expert representative of a member organisation, as well as specialist events tackling issues of common concern.

Sustain Council members are elected by the membership (and a minimum of one third of the Council must stand down each year) to form a governing body of up to 15 Trustee places. Trustees also offer up to 5 role-share places to support diverse younger talent to gain experience in charity leadership. This opportunity is now routinely part of our Trustee recruitment and election process, clearly signalling our intention to welcome and support people from diverse backgrounds. This year, we undertook a thorough review of the role-share scheme to ensure that this provides the best possible experience for participants.

All Trustees and role-shares declare any relevant financial interests when they are elected, and at the beginning of each quarterly meeting, and these interests are publicly available on Sustain's website.

Sustain's Council of Trustees meets quarterly to guide the work of the alliance, subject to approval by the members. As the Trustees are drawn from Sustain's membership, all of whom are third-sector organisations, they are already familiar with structures and governance in this sector. Quarterly meetings of Sustain's Council of Trustees were held hybrid throughout the year. We will encourage at least one meeting fully in-person each year, to enable connections and a chance for Trustees to meet the staff team.

Once again, we refreshed our 'adoption of roles' system to identify a Lead Trustee for key areas of our work, with valuable contributions such as:

- Serving on interview panels for new jobs and staff at Sustain
- Chairing events and working parties
- Providing expert and 'critical friend' comments on policies and documents
- Connecting us with excellent contributors, especially experts from diverse backgrounds, identities and expertise, on food, farming and movement-building issues

In line with Charity Commission guidance, Trustees continued to note at each meeting that the arrangements enabled satisfactory discussion and scrutiny of the matters to be addressed.

We commissioned film-maker Anouk Witkowska Hiffler, working with Sustain's communications lead and film producer Stephanie Kennedy, to create a short film to share the experiences and inspiration of Trustees from diverse organisations, experiences and ethnic and cultural backgrounds. This film was promoted in conjunction with Sustain's AGM and Annual Conference, in which Trustees share their routes into sustainable food and farming. We thank Sustain Trustees Shefalee Loth of Which?; Dr Kawther Hashem of Consensus Action on Salt, Sugar and Health; Jyoti Fernandes of Landworkers Alliance and Raksha Mistry of the Soil Association for their participation. Find out more and view the film here: <https://www.sustainweb.org/blogs/sep23-trustees-on-diversity-in-food-and-farming/>

## Managing changing times

With more activities and financial transactions now undertaken remotely, we continued to implement and review robust systems for ensuring that our systems are fully secure. We continued to implement sign-off procedures with in-built double and triple checks for authenticity. This has served us well. In the wider world, there has once again been yet more growth in hacking attempts, phishing and fraud. However, Sustain has weathered these risks and has so far not experienced any serious breach. We remain vigilant and these matters are reviewed regularly as part of risk management, including at Trustee meetings.

## Risk management

Sustain's Trustees reviewed our annual and quarterly risk registers, highlighting key issues that remain at the forefront of our concerns and planning – externally and internally, including:

- Ensuring Sustain meets its obligations for impartiality, public communications and advocacy expenditure during a year featuring Local and General Elections.
- Funding vulnerability for strategically important areas of Sustain's work.
- Threats to key policy initiatives – implementation of anti-obesity legislation on food promotion; weak Food Strategy response; ongoing concerns over public health policy; pressures on environment, farm and land-use policies; general lack of food system governance.
- Government and industry resistance to improving incomes for the growing numbers of people experiencing food insecurity and financial crisis.
- Staff matters – pressures on time, workload, physical and mental wellbeing; lack of diversity and the need for better representation and inclusion.
- HR issues relating to employment contracts, administration and related matters.
- World events: cost of living, war in Ukraine and Gaza, climate and nature emergency.
- Virus, malware, fraudulent attack on systems – which needs constant vigilance.

## Office premises

Sustain continues to enjoy high-quality office premises and services from our landlord, Ethical Property Company (EPC). We share the office building with other organisations working for environmental and social causes. Our office has good facilities and access to meeting space; and opens out onto a shared roof space with seating and herb planters.

Many staff have expressed their preference for a mixture of the opportunity to work at home as well as enjoy the benefits of the return to in-person meetings, social activities and events. We are continuing to encourage social and group activities, and have (by popular demand) made regular monthly staff meetings hybrid, with an encouragement for these to be in-person where possible.

## Cost of living increases

We have continued to manage Sustain's finances carefully and were able to provide a generous percentage increase for staff salaries, once again meeting the very high rate of inflation, to help them manage the increased cost of living. We extend the most enormous thank you to many of our very considerate funders for providing additional contributions and budget flexibility to help mitigate these increased costs, as well as our Trustees for supporting us through this process, which was a significant area for consideration and review in Council of Trustee meetings throughout the year.

Sustain Trustees, Senior Management Team and the Trade Union have adopted a new Pay Award protocol. This enables greater clarity; opportunities for the various parties to input views and priorities at key points; and for Trustees to play a greater role in scrutiny, monitoring costs, reviewing benchmarking data and setting the parameters for the Pay Offer process.

## Fair pay

Sustain renewed our annual commitment and accreditation to declare ourselves a registered London Living Wage Employer; as have our landlords Ethical Property Company, so cleaning and other staff are included. We are proud to be part of the growing Living Wage movement as a key response to food poverty and health equity. Sustain also promotes London Living Wage accreditation via our Good Food for All Londoners report and league table of boroughs, as one of the key ways local authorities can help to reduce food poverty, and will start to champion this with other regions through our Good Food Local programme.

For the seventh year, Sustain's Annual Report contains an independently audited Pay Ratio Analysis. We are pleased to report that Sustain's Pay Ratio is between 2:1 (highest to lowest salaries) and 3:1 (highest salary to London Living Wage), well within the Wagemark benchmark of 8:1 considered to be good practice.

## Staff team

Across the year, we welcomed several new members of staff to the Sustain team and launched significant new projects. We congratulate new arrivals for fitting in so well and soon becoming part of the Sustain family.

We said goodbye to a number of senior, long-serving colleagues – Deputy Chief Executive Ben Reynolds; Head of Public Affairs Orla Delargy and

Head of Sustainable Farming Vicki Hird, moving on to senior positions with other organisations. We took the opportunity to review Sustain's leadership and operational needs, with organisational consultancy support in a process we called 'Ship-Shape'. This resulted in:

- Refreshed job descriptions for senior managers: Chief Executive, Director of Programmes, Head of Finance, Head of Local Action, and Head of Digital and Design, including a common appendix to embed our collegiate values, responsibilities and ways of working.
- Creation of 'mini job descriptions' for a wide range of operational areas, allocating a senior 'lead' to each area, with the accountability and assets to ensure key tasks and processes get done.
- Preparations to recruit two new posts: Director of Policy and Advocacy, and Head of HR and Operation, both joining the Senior Management Team. We hired an experienced HR consultant from Action Planning to help us with key HR tasks in the interim.
- Recognition of gaps in our capacity, including senior-level fundraising and development; and public affairs and communications services/ resource across the organisation.

This year, we reviewed our annual appraisal process and drew out common themes. A document providing a cross-organisation analysis of the appraisal notes. We will be using these notes and common themes either to inform how we strengthen and embed existing practices and culture, or to improve these. We also refreshed our approach to gaining feedback from the staff team, and have introduced a new annual staff survey that will provide insights, alongside diversity data towards our annual return to The RACE Report.

Sustain has traditionally operated a fairly flat organisational structure. However, colleagues have expressed the desire for a more differentiated structure to enable greater opportunities for career progression and promotion. We are reviewing options and models for introducing such a system, which will also have implications for performance management, line management, job evaluation, remuneration and sector benchmarking.

We introduced a new Employee Assistance Programme, enabling colleagues (and close household members) to gain free access to a confidential helpline service on personal, financial or legal matters.

## Skills, mentoring and training

Our new Line Managers Forum continued to meet regularly, to help develop and enhance our skills, culture and processes for effective line management.

We commissioned an external facilitator to lead three staff training sessions on managing stress, developing boundaries and building resilience.

We ran a consultation exercise with staff to gather ideas on what types of training and skill-share sessions staff would like to see offered over the coming year. As well as the traditional webinars and skills-share sessions, we are exploring different types of formats, such as drop-in sessions for media skills, communications and IT skills; plus mandatory training on prevention of bullying, harassment and discrimination. We made personal training budgets available for external providers, if people find courses or training that they think would be especially useful, with the understanding that it would be helpful for them to cascade learning to other colleagues. We also ran internal skills-share sessions on themes such as monitoring and evaluation; Parliament and how/when/why to engage with MPs.

## Policies and procedures

This year, we continued with our rolling programme to initiate and update a range of policies and procedures. In particular, we focused on improving our approach to:

- Prevention of sexual harassment, ahead of legislative changes due in autumn 2024 that put greater responsibility on employers. We consulted on and introduced a new Code of Conduct; improved our reporting mechanisms and complaints procedure; provided training for the staff team; and issued new internal guidance for running safe and inclusive events.
- Supporting colleagues experiencing sickness and needing to take time off to recover.
- Continuing to embed Sustain's new approach to employment contracts and contract management procedures to enable greater use of permanent contracts and limit precarity.
- Ensuring implementation and improvement of our recently refreshed guidance on recruitment, (including for diversity), monitoring data, and improving induction, probation and exit processes.
- Ensuring that colleagues undertake risk assessments to enable safe, comfortable and productive working from home arrangements.

- Confirming our compliance with GDPR rules and recommended procedures; our Living Wage accreditation; and our commitment to Disability Confident and Ethnicity Confident in recruitment.

With local elections in May 2024, and a General Election in July 2024, we remained highly cognisant of the importance of ensuring that Sustain's activities comply with the Lobbying Act, and that we must remain politically balanced and not promote any particular candidate or political party. We issued guidance to all staff members, and key communications and public affairs staff remained alert to this, to ensure an open and shared approach to agreeing lines for communication and for problem-solving. These expectations have also been built into the job description and interview questions for the new Director of Policy and Advocacy.

We have re-enrolled colleagues into the Sustain contributory pension scheme, in line with the regulations for employers. Our contributory pension scheme is held with NEST, and we enable payments into personal pension scheme if they prefer. Aware that there can be some hesitancy about starting a pension scheme, especially among younger colleagues, we have described more clearly on our intranet the financial value (and cumulative value) of a pension scheme, to help colleagues make informed decisions, whilst underlining that the choice remains with the individual and that Sustain cannot offer financial advice.

We continued to develop Sustain's intranet, as a key resource for organisational management and staff communication. This year, we implemented the 'My Dashboard' function to display key organisational and individual information, and to enable universal views of key data for senior managers.

## Sustain's funding

Sustain needs adequate financial and other resources to pursue our work effectively. The majority of Sustain's income continues to be from charitable grants from trusts and foundations, listed in this Annual Report. Project proposals and funding bids are developed by Sustain staff, in consultation with Sustain and working party members. A minority of Sustain's income comes from alliance membership fees, subscriptions, book and publication sales and generous voluntary donations from supporting organisations and individual supporters (including this year the fabulous Henry Cheape, who chose Sustain as one of his key charities to support whilst rowing solo across the Atlantic Ocean!) Sustain also occasionally actively solicits donations from campaign supporters, usually as part of a crowdfunding drive for a particular publication or activity.

Sustain's unrestricted income is a relatively low proportion of our total income, with fairly limited opportunities for significant increase. Our ambition to be able to find a way of paying for core and cross-cutting staff and services is unlikely to be funded by these means. We will continue to review our full cost recovery (FCR) model and approach to project budgets to understand what level of fundraising and contributions from project budgets is now needed to run the Sustain ship.

We are grateful to our funders and partners for supporting development of work on Sustain's priorities, across a range of important themes, including sustainable farming, the green food economy, local action on food and the climate and nature emergency. Multi-year grants from several of our funders, offered in a flexible way, continue to mark a welcome shift in the relationship between Sustain, funders and other donors keen to invest in strategic partnership programmes driving ambitious change in policy and practice. Due to a welcome level of staffing and financial stability, we have been able to continue to invest in Sustain's cross-cutting capacities, such as communications, public affairs, parliamentary engagement, greatly enhancing our influence and work on the climate and nature emergency.

## Passing on grants to others

Sustain sometimes plays the 'lead partner' role in a partnership, working in collaboration with others to run a programme, or pursue advocacy activities to deliver policy or practice on issues of common concern. In these circumstances, Sustain manages the partnership as well as contributing to the work. An example this year is the Bridging the Gap programme, working to pilot interventions that make healthy and sustainably produced food accessible and affordable, working in collaboration with Alexandra Rose Charity and Growing Communities, Nourish Scotland, Nourish Northern Ireland and Food Sense Wales. Such coordination and grant management is an important alliance function in pursuit of our common aims. This year, as has been typical over several previous years, the amount passed on to others in the form of partnership grants was around £360k.

## Changes in alliance membership

Some Sustain alliance memberships lapsed among several smaller and very long-standing alliance members who have experienced difficulties this year due either to finances, capacity, ceasing trading, or the lead person becoming unwell, retiring or (in two cases) having sadly passed away. We thank them all for helping to shape the first 25 years of Sustain's work. For posterity, we record their departure as follows:

- Agricultural Christian Fellowship – co-founder Christopher Jones passed away last year.
- Association of Public Analysts – whose resources have declined or been privatised.
- Family Farmers Association – founder Pippa Woods passed away last year.
- Hyperactive Children's Support Group – founder Sally Bunday has retired.

## Strategic review

Sustain continues to implement our strategy Fertile Future, 2021 to 2025 through a range of policy groups, project working parties and project and campaign activities. Due to a number of senior staff changes, we postponed our usual January Strategy Day and instead focused on thinking about the wider five-year Sustain Strategy process to commence in spring 2024. We planned the first phase to use our working groups to review 'the story so far' and what we have achieved together over the past five years; and starting to think about what we could achieve together over the next five years.

In October 2023, we organised a thoroughly enjoyable away day open to all staff, held at the Hackney School of Food. In the morning, the team participated in a garden tour and harvested seasonal produce, followed by a cookery session with Head Food Educator Tom Walker to make a delicious lunch together. This was followed by a session led by facilitator Hannah Lewis, who helped us discuss our values when we work together, and practical steps we can take to put those values into practice.

Sustain's Annual Conference took place online on 7 December 2023 and was once again a great success, with the theme: Making food and farming a priority in the Local and General Elections. Recordings of the sessions are available here: <https://www.sustainweb.org/events/dec23-sustain-annual-conference/>

The conference opened with reflections from Sustain's Chief Executive Kath Dalmeny, and responses to key questions from outgoing chair of the Climate Change Committee Lord Deben and a panel discussion between Dee Woods, Director & Food Justice Policy Coordinator, Landworkers' Alliance; Craig Bennett, CEO of The Wildlife Trusts; and Fiona Harvey, Environment Editor of The Guardian – calling in from the COP23 climate conference being held in Dubai, which for the first time addressed food and farming issues.

This was followed by themed presentations and discussions led by Sustain colleagues, examining:

- How to talk about food, farming and climate in an election year
- Making a difference locally
- What food policy solutions do we have that can help fix the food system?

# Financial review

The Council of Trustees (who are the Directors of the Charity for company law purposes) present their report and the audited financial accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024. The Trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the requirements of the Charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

The fund balance carried forward at 31 March 2024 was £781,030 (2023: £648,167) on unrestricted general reserves. The designated reserves at 31 March 2024 was £258,582 (2023: £246,233). The restricted reserves on continuing projects were £693,161 at 31 March 2024 (2023: £232,740). The full Statement of Financial Activities is set out in the accounts below.

## Reserves policy

In accordance with guidelines from the Charity Commissioners, the Trustees have adopted a reserves policy that should ensure that: Excluding those funds represented by fixed assets, general reserves do not exceed more than six months' anticipated expenditure. The Trustees review amounts regularly, monitor progress in relation to target levels quarterly, and deemed in the financial year covered by this report that there were adequate funds to ensure the charity was able to meet all current, known and some estimated possible future liabilities.

## Investment policy

Under the memorandum and articles of association, the charity has the power to invest the monies of the company not immediately required for the furtherance of its objects in or upon such investments, securities or property as may be thought fit, subject nevertheless to such condition (as any) and such consents (if any) as may for the time being be imposed or required by law. At the present time, the Trustees' policy is to maintain such monies on deposits earning a market rate of interest, in a bank or banks with ethical credentials and to manage banking risks and maximisation of interest rate benefits through splitting funds across more than one banking provider. No further 'social investment' is currently planned.

## Risk management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the company is exposed, in particular those related to operations and finances of the company, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to major risks. The Sustain

rolling risk register and risk management process, reviewed formally at least quarterly by Trustees and Sustain's senior management team, and additionally as necessary, considers possible risks and prudent ways to avoid such risks arising, as well as mitigation should problems occur, grouped under the following broad themes:

- Good governance – financial and organisational;
- Weathering ongoing turbulence and uncertainty in UK politics, economics and international political and trading relationships, posing financial and strategic risks;
- Impact of external events: e.g. cost-of-living crisis, war in Ukraine and Middle East, climate change, biodiversity loss, flooding, extreme weather events
- Meeting Sustain's objectives;
- Securing sufficient income;
- Controlling expenditure;
- Addressing HR and staffing issues;
- Health and well-being (including infectious disease, e.g. Covid-19 pandemic);
- Health and safety, including office management and working from home;
- Supporting diversity, equity, inclusion and racial justice;
- Tackling challenges specific to alliances;
- Protecting Sustain's reputation;
- Ensuring regulatory compliance and good practice;
- Avoiding or handling disputes;
- Managing IT security and data protection;
- Mitigating administrative burdens.

## Trustees' responsibilities

Company and charity law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its financial activities for that year. In preparing those accounts, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts;
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the company has appropriate systems of control, financial or otherwise. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and which enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Setting staff pay

Sustain operates a fair and transparent fixed salary scale for setting staff pay, including senior management personnel – the persons with authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. This salary scale cannot be changed without Trustee approval. Sustain's salary scale is grouped under four ascending grades – Administrative and Project Officer; Project Coordinator; Senior Manager; Chief Executive. New recruits start at the salary grade suited to their post, as advertised, and usually at entry level for that grade. Subject to satisfactory annual appraisal, staff members move up a salary level within their grade until the top level is reached. On the exceptional occasions when a new recruit has the experience and credentials to warrant appointment at a higher salary than the entry level for their grade, this offer and decision remains in line with the standard salary scale, except starting at a higher level, and with the knowledge and agreement of at least one Sustain Trustee, who has usually participated in the recruitment process. In addition

to the salary scale, salaries (and hence the levels in the salary scale) usually also rise in line with inflation, calculated annually on the actual inflation rate in the preceding year.

As a not-for-profit organisation and registered charity, Sustain covers normal expenses, requires evidence of such claims and expenditure and keeps good records.

## Fair pay

Sustain is a registered Living Wage Employer, committed to paying at least the Living Wage or the London Living Wage, as calculated by the Living Wage Foundation, which reflects the cost of living. This year, we have also continued to apply a Pay Ratio analysis as part of the Annual Report process, seeking to ensure that Sustain maintains a fair pay ratio between the highest and lowest earners, benchmarked against sector good practice.

## Public benefit

The Trustees are aware of Charity Commission guidance on public benefit reporting as set out in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011. They believe Sustain fulfils a fundamental public benefit by promoting both the health and welfare of people and animals, improving the environment and promoting sustainable development. How Sustain achieves these objectives is described in more detail throughout this annual report, on the Sustain website and in key publications.

## Auditors

So far as the directors (Trustees) are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware. Additionally, the directors have taken all of the necessary steps that they ought to, as directors, to make themselves aware of all the relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information. A proposal to re-appoint Goldwins as auditors for the forthcoming year will be put forward at the Annual General Meeting.

This report was approved by the Council of Trustees on 20 November 2024 and signed on its behalf, by:



**Professor Mike Rayner**  
Chair of the Council of Trustees

# Auditor's report

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food and Farming (the 'Charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, statement of cash flows and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

### Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

## Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

## Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Annual Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

## Responsibilities of the trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees

are responsible for assessing the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the Charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

## Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
  - identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and

regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.

- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [[www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities)]. This description forms part of our auditor's report

## Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



**Anthony Epton (Senior Statutory Auditor)**

for and on behalf of

Goldwins Limited  
Statutory Auditor  
Chartered Accountants  
75 Maygrove Road  
West Hampstead  
London NW6 2EG

20 November 2024

# Statement of financial activities

## (incorporating and income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2024

		Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	2	67,753	41,872	109,625	43,097
Charitable activities					
Health and Welfare	3	347,058	2,310,367	2,657,425	1,778,931
Investments	4	12,842	-	12,842	4,422
<b>Total income</b>		<b>427,653</b>	<b>2,352,239</b>	<b>2,779,892</b>	<b>1,826,450</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	5	19,865	-	19,865	18,455
Charitable activities					
Health and Welfare	5	220,514	1,933,880	2,154,394	1,763,421
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>240,379</b>	<b>1,933,880</b>	<b>2,174,259</b>	<b>1,781,876</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments</b>		<b>187,274</b>	<b>418,359</b>	<b>605,633</b>	<b>44,574</b>
Net gains / (losses) on investments		-	-	-	-
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the year</b>	6	<b>187,274</b>	<b>418,359</b>	<b>605,633</b>	<b>44,574</b>
Transfers between funds		(42,062)	42,062	-	-
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before other recognised gains and losses</b>		<b>145,212</b>	<b>460,421</b>	<b>605,633</b>	<b>44,574</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>145,212</b>	<b>460,421</b>	<b>605,633</b>	<b>44,574</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		894,400	232,740	1,127,140	1,082,566
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>1,039,612</b>	<b>693,161</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>	<b>1,127,140</b>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 17 to the financial statements.

# Balance sheet

## As at 31 March 2024

	Note	£	2024 £	£	2023 £
<b>Fixed assets:</b>					
Tangible assets	11		-		-
			-		-
<b>Current assets:</b>					
Debtors	12	225,108		364,782	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,887,518		1,302,232	
			2,112,626	1,667,014	
<b>Liabilities:</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	379,853		539,874	
			1,732,773	1,127,140	
<b>Net current assets</b>			1,732,773	1,127,140	
<b>Total net assets less current liabilities</b>			1,732,773	1,127,140	
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>	17				
Restricted income funds			693,161		232,740
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		258,582		246,233	
General funds		781,030		648,167	
			1,039,612	894,400	
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>			1,039,612	894,400	
<b>Total charity funds</b>			1,732,773	1,127,140	

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the trustees on 20 November 2024 and signed on their behalf by

  
Professor Michael Rayner  
Chair

  
Victoria Williams  
Treasurer

# Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024	2023
		£	£
Cash flows from operating activities	18		
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>		<b>572,444</b>	<b>(173,729)</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		12,842	4,422
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities</b>		<b>12,842</b>	<b>4,422</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		<b>585,286</b>	<b>(169,307)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,302,232	1,471,539
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	19	<b>1,887,518</b>	<b>1,302,232</b>

# Notes to the financial statements

## For the year ended 31 March 2024

### 1 Accounting policies

#### a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102 – effective 1 January 2015) – (Charities SORP FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

#### b) Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. Key judgements that the charitable company has made which have a significant effect on the accounts. The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

#### c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

#### d) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

#### e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

#### f) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

## 1 Accounting policies (continued)

### g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services, undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

### h) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure.

Where such information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is also provided to potential donors, activity costs are apportioned between fundraising and charitable activities on the basis of area of literature occupied by each activity.

### i) Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

### j) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Office equipment	25% straight line
------------------	-------------------

### k) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

### l) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account. Cash balances exclude any funds held on behalf of service users.

### m) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

### n) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

### o) Pensions

The charity operates workplace pension scheme.

**2 Income from donations and legacies**

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Donations	67,753	41,872	109,625	43,097
Total income from donations 2024	<b>67,753</b>	<b>41,872</b>	<b>109,625</b>	43,097
Total income from donations 2023	23,941	19,156	43,097	

**3 Income from charitable activities**

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
<b><u>Grant income</u></b>				
AuroraTrust	-	37,500	37,500	-
BIG grant	-	-	-	24,946
City Bridge Foundation	-	79,000	79,000	83,000
Connect Fund (Barrow Cadbury Trust)	-	74,067	74,067	6,733
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (various)	50,000	-	50,000	110,000
European Climate Foundation	-	77,917	77,917	33,333
European Union	-	24,221	24,221	56,457
Farming the Future	-	51,682	51,682	49,969
Friends Provident Foundation	-	-	-	33,894
Greater London Authority (various)	-	25,500	25,500	36,500
ICLEI European Secretariat GmbH	-	16,414	16,414	-
Impact on Urban Health	-	656,210	656,210	284,901
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	-	41,250	41,250	28,750
Kenneth Miller Trust	-	53,333	53,333	26,458
Lancashire County Council	-	-	-	12,500
Movements Trust	-	33,750	33,750	-
Network of European Foundations	-	20,814	20,814	-
National Lottery Community Fund (Growing Great Ideas)	-	493,200	493,200	214,575
Nutritional Wellness Foundation (previously known as the AIM Foundation)	-	38,494	38,494	14,584
Oak Foundation (various)	-	194,412	194,412	154,400
Rothschild Foundation	-	76,250	76,250	-
Royal Parks Foundation	-	-	-	31,317
Samworth Foundation	55,000	-	55,000	50,000
Sustainable Food Places (Big Lottery Fund and Esmee Fairbairn Foundation)	-	202,043	202,043	236,322
Thirty Percy Foundation	150,000	-	150,000	150,000
Trust for London	-	60,000	60,000	60,000
Vital Strategies	-	52,000	52,000	-
<b><u>Other income</u></b>				
Conference and workshops	9,587	2,310	11,897	1,953
Membership fees	37,650	-	37,650	31,225
Sales and publications	6,909	-	6,909	5,585
Subscriptions	37,912	-	37,912	41,529
Total income from charitable activities 2024	<b>347,058</b>	<b>2,310,367</b>	<b>2,657,425</b>	1,778,931
Total income from charitable activities 2023	390,292	1,388,639	1,778,931	

**4 Income from investments**

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Investment income	12,842	-	12,842	4,422
Total income from investments 2024	<b>12,842</b>	-	<b>12,842</b>	4,422
Total income from investments 2023	4,422	-	4,422	

## 5 a. Analysis of expenditure

	Cost of raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support costs £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
<b>Staff costs (Note 7)</b>	17,455	1,251,402	174,521	<b>1,443,378</b>	1,263,325
<b>Direct cost</b>					
Payable to partner organisations	-	362,480	-	<b>362,480</b>	285,402
Consultancy costs	-	114,942	-	<b>114,942</b>	48,309
Volunteers	-	-	-	-	98
Printing and photocopying	-	8,326	-	<b>8,326</b>	8,807
Postage and distribution	-	4,005	-	<b>4,005</b>	7,894
Travel, meeting and expenses	-	80,278	-	<b>80,278</b>	40,635
Other charitable expenditure	-	71,551	-	<b>71,551</b>	38,406
<b>Support cost</b>					
Telephone and fax	-	-	1,492	<b>1,492</b>	258
Office costs	-	-	79,407	<b>79,407</b>	80,342
Audit fees	-	-	8,400	<b>8,400</b>	8,400
	17,455	1,892,984	263,820	<b>2,174,259</b>	1,781,876
Support costs	2,410	261,410	(263,820)	-	
<b>Total expenditure 2024</b>	<b>19,865</b>	<b>2,154,394</b>	-	<b>2,174,259</b>	
Total expenditure 2023	<b>18,455</b>	<b>1,763,421</b>			

Of the total expenditure, £240,379 was unrestricted (2023: £374,689) and £1,933,880 was restricted (2023: £1,407,187).

The amount payable to partner organisations is made up of several different payments - Bridging the Gap Partners (£106.2k); Childrens Food Campaign Partners (£57.1k); Food for the Planet Partners (£76k); Good Food Enterprise Partners (£42.4k); Good Food Local Partners (£35k); Grant Conduit for Member Organisation (£35k) and Peri-Urban Farming Partners (£10.8k).

## b. Analysis of expenditure from previous reporting period

	Cost of raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support costs £	2023 Total £
<b>Staff costs (Note 7)</b>	15,886	1,088,358	159,081	1,263,325
<b>Direct cost</b>				
Payable to partner organisations	-	285,402	-	285,402
Consultancy costs	-	48,309	-	48,309
Volunteers	-	98	-	98
Printing and photocopying	-	8,807	-	8,807
Postage and distribution	-	7,894	-	7,894
Travel, meeting and expenses	-	40,635	-	40,635
Other charitable expenditure	-	38,406	-	38,406
<b>Support cost</b>				
Telephone and fax	-	-	258	258
Office costs	-	-	80,342	80,342
Audit fees	-	-	8,400	8,400
	15,886	1,517,909	248,081	1,781,876
Support costs	2,569	245,512	(248,081)	-
<b>Total expenditure 2023</b>	<b>18,455</b>	<b>1,763,421</b>	-	<b>1,781,876</b>

**6 Net income/ (expenditure) for the year**

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	48,029	46,635
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	7,000	6,700
	<u>7,000</u>	<u>6,700</u>

**7 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel**

Staff costs were as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Salaries and wages	1,259,122	1,095,023
Social security costs	122,356	115,804
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	61,900	52,498
	<u>1,443,378</u>	<u>1,263,325</u>

No employee earned more than £75,000 during the year (2023: nil).

The total employee benefits including national insurance and pension contributions of the key management personnel were £207,936 (2023: £219,088).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2023: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2023: £nil).

Trustees' expenses represents the payment or reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs totalling £73 (2023: £0) relating to attendance at meetings of one trustee.

**8 Staff numbers**

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
Raising funds	0.4	0.4
Health and Welfare	26.6	25.7
Support	3.7	3.7
	<u>30.7</u>	<u>29.8</u>

## 9 Related party transactions

The following declaration provides transparency on related party transactions and, as appropriate, are also routinely declared by Sustain's Trustees at their quarterly meetings and publicly on the Sustain website.

A number of trustees and management team members hold prominent positions in other organisations.

Sustain received a grant of £315,499 (2023: £221,333) via the Soil Association, which is the overall programme manager for the Sustainable Food Places network – a programme run jointly by Food Matters, Soil Association (both Sustain members) and Sustain. Three of Sustain's trustees are (or were) a member of staff for the Soil Association and Food Matters. Separately, the Soil Association paid Sustain £500 for an A4 page in Good Food Local: London report 2024. The Soil Association was paid £360 as part of the Bridging the Gap project.

Food Matters received £5,000 for their work on the FoodSHIFT project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for Food Matters. Sustain's Chief Executive is on the board at Food Matters.

Sustain paid the Obesity Health Alliance £20,879, who are partners on the Recipe for Change project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the Obesity Health Alliance. A member of Sustain's management team is a Steering Group member for the Obesity Health Alliance.

David Edwards was a trustee of both Sustain and the Food Foundation, who are partners on the Recipe for Change project that Sustain leads on. Sustain paid the Food Foundation £33,190 as part of that project budget.

Sustain paid Feedback Global £8,500, who are partners on the Good Food Enterprise project. A Sustain trustee was a member of staff for Feedback Global.

Sustain paid the Landworkers' Alliance £1,800, who are partners on the Peri-Urban Growing project. Three Sustain trustees are members of staff for the Landworkers' Alliance, or closely associated with LWA in other ways.

The Real Bread Campaign also received annual membership fees of £49.50, as well as £369 for copies of the Knead to Know more books from the School of Artisan Foods. A Sustain Trustee is the owner and on the board at these respective organisations.

Finally, Sustain paid £16,175 to Growing Communities, who are project partners on the Bridging the Gap project. Sustain's Chief Executive is on the board at Growing Communities.

## 10 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

**11 Tangible fixed assets**

	Fixtures, fittings and Equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>		
At the start of the year	33,658	33,658
Additions in year	-	-
Disposals in year	-	-
At the end of the year	<u>33,658</u>	<u>33,658</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At the start of the year	33,658	33,658
Charge for the year	-	-
Eliminated on disposal	-	-
At the end of the year	<u>33,658</u>	<u>33,658</u>
<b>Net book value</b>		
<b>At the end of the year</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At the start of the year	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

**12 Debtors**

	2024 £	2023 £
Other debtors	26,901	166,733
Prepayments	4,779	4,779
Accrued income	193,428	193,270
	<u>225,108</u>	<u>364,782</u>

**13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2024 £	2023 £
Other creditors	117,412	43,732
Accruals	8,400	8,400
Deferred income	254,041	487,742
	<u>379,853</u>	<u>539,874</u>

**14 Deferred income**

Deferred income comprises of grants from the following: Aurora Trust £12,500, Compassion in World Farming International £5,851, European Climate Foundation £6,250, Kenneth Miller Trust £20,625, Movements Trust £56,250, Nutritional Wellness Foundation £24,996, Oak Foundation £121,319 and Rothschild Foundation £6,250.

	2024 £	2023 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	487,742	471,751
Amount released to income in the year	(487,742)	(471,751)
Amount deferred in the year	254,041	487,742
Balance at the end of the year	<u>254,041</u>	<u>487,742</u>

**15 Pension scheme**

The charity operates workplace pension scheme and has no pension liability as at the year end.

**16 Analysis of net assets between funds**

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Net current assets	781,030	258,582	693,161	1,732,773
<b>Net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>781,030</b>	<b>258,582</b>	<b>693,161</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>

**17 Movements in funds**

	At the start of the year £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Bridging the Gap	121,262	493,200	(295,016)	-	319,446
Campaign for a Better Food Britain	41,190	83,768	(117,398)	-	7,560
Capital Growth	18,630	97,902	(92,212)	-	24,320
Children's Food Campaign	(108,060)	767,347	(514,460)	-	144,827
Climate and Nature	13,676	229,789	(210,363)	-	33,102
Diversity Outreach	-	500	(31,199)	42,062	11,363
FoodSHIFT 2030	28,598	24,221	(67,176)	-	(14,357)
Food Poverty	30,818	146,038	(159,106)	-	17,750
Local Food Retail	6,352	76,250	(44,666)	-	37,936
London Food Link	4,682	31,999	(21,517)	-	15,164
Sustainable Farming and Land Use	17,720	164,182	(134,881)	-	47,021
Sustainable Food Places	57,872	237,043	(245,886)	-	49,029
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>232,740</b>	<b>2,352,239</b>	<b>(1,933,880)</b>	<b>42,062</b>	<b>693,161</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds:</b>					
Designated funds:					
Employment Liabilities	186,233	-	-	12,349	198,582
Innovation and Activities Fund	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
Match Funding Contingency	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Total designated funds	246,233	-	-	12,349	258,582
General funds	648,167	427,653	(240,379)	(54,411)	781,030
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>894,400</b>	<b>427,653</b>	<b>(240,379)</b>	<b>(42,062)</b>	<b>1,039,612</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>1,127,140</b>	<b>2,779,892</b>	<b>(2,174,259)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>

**Purposes of restricted funds**

Income that is received for specific projects, as – for example – grants, donations and earned income, is accounted for as restricted funds, with expenditure usually attributed over a specific period of time. We manage restricted funds carefully, keep expenditure under regular review, and aim to keep to the specified budget. If project funds are projected to be overspent for an unavoidable reason, we take action early to reduce expenditure and/or raise more funds to cover the potential shortfall. If we continue to project and incur an unavoidable overspend, a transfer is made from Sustain's unrestricted funds. The balances on restricted funds as at 31 March 2024 arise from income received for specific projects on which some expenditure is still to be incurred in the coming financial year. Each of Sustain's projects is described in more detail below:

### Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

**Bridging the Gap** explores ways to enable people on low incomes to access climate and nature friendly food. The programme will test six approaches to bridging the gap in accessibility and affordability, coproduced with people working in food and farming across the four nations. Evidence from the pilots will be used to advocate for national and local policy change.

**Campaign for a Better Food Britain** (umbrella term for Sustain's coordination of work on policy and standards following the UK's exit from the European Union). This work helps Sustain's alliance to make their voices heard in important discussions about the future of the UK's approach to food, farming, fishing and international trade, particularly with regard to health, ethics and sustainability.

**Capital Growth:** Run by Sustain's London Food Link network, this offers practical support to communities around London to help more people grow more food, and to have greater access to land, skills and growing spaces for community and environmental benefit.

**Children's Food Campaign:** Advocates for better food and food teaching for children in schools, protection of children from unhealthy food marketing, high food standards for health and well-being, and clear food labelling that can be understood by everyone.

**Climate and Nature Emergency:** Catalyses large-scale and systematic solutions in the food and farming system as a key way to avert and adapt to climate change and restore nature, with a special focus on national and local policy, and institutional responsibilities at all levels, for taking measurable action.

**FoodSHIFT 2030** is an EU-funded Horizon 2020 consortium programme involving 10 city-region projects across Europe. Sustain's role is to share experiences of campaigning and movement building on healthy and sustainable food, involving a wide range of places.

**Food Poverty:** Sustain's programme of work seeking to tackle the root causes of food poverty, and encouraging policies and practices that would enable everyone to eat well. This includes the London Food Poverty Campaign: promoting steps local authorities can take to support people and communities to address the root causes of food poverty 'beyond the food bank'; which produces an annual league table comparing London Borough good practice. This also includes work on policy at local, regional and national level to enable people on a low income to access the healthy and sustainably produced food they need.

**Local Food Retail** brings food, farming and supply-chain groups together to create a plan to achieve a measurable growth in UK grocery retail market share for local food across the UK. The common purpose is to support food more likely to be produced in nature-friendly ways, give a fair deal to farmers and to deliver healthy and nutritious food, enabling consumers to purchase in-line with their values.

**London Food Link:** The umbrella for all of Sustain's initiatives in the capital. London Food Link (LFL) is a network of organisations and individuals in London who grow, make, cook, sell, save and simply enjoy good food in the capital.

**Sustainable Farming and Land Use:** Advocates for improvements in policy and practice to support better farming livelihoods, more and better jobs in sustainable food production, fair trading practices, and the subsidies, policies and industry practices that would incentivise change towards healthy, fair and environmentally sustainable food production. Also includes our Fringe Farming campaign in partnership with Landworkers Alliance for more peri-urban horticulture.

**Sustainable Food Places:** The Sustainable Food Places Network – organised jointly by Food Matters, Soil Association and Sustain – helps people and places share challenges, explore practical solutions and develop good practice on key food issues. It encourages public, private and third-sector groups and local communities to work together to improve their food system. Sustain helps the network to run a series of campaigns, this year including:

- Food for the Planet, helping local authorities, businesses and organisations take simple actions to tackle the climate and nature emergency through food.
- Veg Cities, led by Sustain in partnership with the wider Peas Please initiative, to increase availability and consumption of vegetables, including through improvements to Healthy Start.

**18 Reconciliation of net income / (expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities**

	2024	2023
	£	£
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)</b>	<b>605,633</b>	105,490
Dividends, interest and rent from investments	<b>(12,842)</b>	(670)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	<b>139,674</b>	90,477
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	<b>(160,021)</b>	141,108
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>572,444</b>	336,405

**19 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents**

	At 1 April 2023	Cash flows	Other changes	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£
Cash in hand	1,302,232	585,286	-	<b>1,887,518</b>
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>1,302,232</b>	<b>585,286</b>	-	<b>1,887,518</b>

**20 Operating lease commitments**

The charity has no future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases.

**21 Legal status of the charity**

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

## 22 Notes from 2023 accounts (prior year)

## a. Summary analysis of assets and liabilities by funds of previous reporting period

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Net current assets	648,167	246,233	232,740	1,127,140
<b>Net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>648,167</b>	<b>246,233</b>	<b>232,740</b>	<b>1,127,140</b>

## b. Details of movement in funds during the previous reporting period

	At the start of the year £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Bridging the Gap	-	214,575	(93,313)	-	121,262
Campaign for a Better Food Britain	8,133	53,604	(20,547)	-	41,190
Capital Growth	27,713	114,317	(123,400)	-	18,630
Children's Food Campaign	23,496	346,354	(477,910)	-	(108,060)
Climate and Nature	14,033	134,128	(134,485)	-	13,676
FoodSHIFT 2030	18,667	56,457	(46,526)	-	28,598
Food Poverty	33,165	111,680	(124,027)	10,000	30,818
Local Food Retail	-	-	(1,012)	7,364	6,352
London Food Link	-	22,250	(17,568)	-	4,682
Sustainable Farming and Land Use	50,247	112,813	(150,757)	5,417	17,720
Sustainable Food Places	33,897	241,617	(217,642)	-	57,872
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>209,351</b>	<b>1,407,795</b>	<b>(1,407,187)</b>	<b>22,781</b>	<b>232,740</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds:</b>					
Designated funds:					
Employment Liabilities	125,267	-	-	60,966	186,233
Innovation and Activities Fund	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
Match Funding Contingency	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
<b>Total designated funds</b>	<b>185,267</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>60,966</b>	<b>246,233</b>
<b>General funds</b>	<b>687,948</b>	<b>418,655</b>	<b>(374,689)</b>	<b>(83,747)</b>	<b>648,167</b>
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>873,215</b>	<b>418,655</b>	<b>(374,689)</b>	<b>(22,781)</b>	<b>894,400</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>1,082,566</b>	<b>1,826,450</b>	<b>(1,781,876)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,127,140</b>

# Funders

Sustain would like to thank the following funders for their financial support for our work over the course of this financial year:

Aurora Trust (previously known as the Ashden Trust)  
Big Lottery Fund  
City Bridge Foundation  
Connect Fund (Barrow Cadbury Trust)  
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (various)  
European Climate Foundation  
European Union - Horizon 2020  
Farming the Future  
Friends Provident Foundation  
Greater London Authority (various)  
Guy's and St Thomas' Charity (also known as Impact on Urban Health)  
ICLEI European Secretariat GmbH  
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust  
Kenneth Miller Trust  
Kestrelman Trust  
London Borough of Waltham Forest  
Movements Trust  
National Lottery Community Fund (Growing Great Ideas)  
Network of European Foundations  
New Wellness Foundation (previously known as the AIM Foundation)  
Oak Foundation  
Rothschild Foundation  
Samworth Foundation  
Sustainable Food Places  
Thirty Percy Foundation  
Trust for London  
Vital Strategies

# Annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2024

## A Sustain publication

November 2024

Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming, advocates food and agriculture policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, tackle climate change and restore nature, improve the living and working environment, enrich society and culture, and promote greater equity. It represents around 100 national public interest organisations and hundreds more working at local and regional level, and cultivates the movement for change, working with many others at local, regional, national and international level.



Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming

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Sustain works as an alliance to achieve our shared vision of a system of food, farming and fishing, in which:

- Good food production: All food is produced in a way that is fair and sustainable
- Good food economy: There is a fair and thriving food economy from farm to fork
- Good food for all: Healthy, sustainable diets are accessible and affordable to all

**SUSTAIN: THE ALLIANCE FOR BETTER FOOD & FARMING**

England & Wales - Charity number 1018643

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# Accounts

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Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food & Farming

# Annual report

Review and accounts for the year  
ended 31 March 2023



Company registered number: 02673194

Charity registered number: 1018643

**sustain**  
the alliance for better food and farming

## Foreword

In February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine. Coming hard on the heels of the Covid-19-fuelled economic downturn, this sent oil and grain prices soaring, with profound implications for food supply and finances across the globe. This has affected Sustain's work at all levels, from our own operations, through to responding to another huge surge in poverty and household food insecurity, as well as a notable chill on the willingness of government to champion public health and environmental policy.

We started the 2022 calendar year looking forward to exciting opportunities. This included the promise of a National Food Strategy, and a 9pm watershed for unhealthy food advertising, for which our alliance has campaigned for decades. Who could have predicted then what delays, obfuscations, inflationary pressures and political chaos would ensue?! We feel very grateful to have been able to bolster our parliament and public affairs team at this time. Our funders recognised that national and global turmoil must not become an excuse for reneging on decisive action to prevent catastrophic climate change, restore nature and enable everyone to have access to wholesome, affordable and sustainably grown food.

We were thrilled to receive news of significant funding to invest in that better food vision – our new Local Food Retail Strategy and Bridging the Gap strategic programmes. These will work alongside our sustainable farming and local networks to rebuild the relationships, trading systems, access to land

and facilities, financial investment and shorter and agroecological supply chains that could offer communities more food resilience, and less exposure to external pressures.

Encouragingly, the strength, size and confidence of the Sustainable Food Places network has also grown significantly, with 90 local authorities and food partnerships stepping up to their frontline role in addressing household food insecurity, supporting community-connected food enterprise, food's role in climate change, and using planning to enable community food growing.

Strategic and other support from the Welsh Assembly and Scotland's Good Food Nation Act have been very welcome. No such luck in Westminster, where we described Government's response to the National Food Strategy as 'feeble'. Key food and farming policies are not yet fit for the purpose of addressing the climate and nature emergency and improving public health. As a General Election starts to loom on the horizon, era-defining choices are ahead of us. We look forward to working with you to put better food and farming firmly on the public and political plate.



**Professor Mike Rayner**  
Chair of Sustain's Council of Trustees

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### Trustees during the financial year covered by this report:

Cobi-Jane Akinrele (elected 18/12/2020)**	Shefalee Loth (elected 18/12/2020)
Lucy Bjorck (elected 09/12/2019, stood down 09/12/2022)	Alison Swan Parente (re-elected 15/12/2021)
Josie Cohen (re-elected 15/12/2021)	Rob Percival (elected 14/12/2022)**
David Edwards (elected 18/12/2020)**	Stephanie Slater (re-elected 14/12/2022)
Jyoti Fernandes (elected 18/12/2020)	Professor Mike Rayner (re-elected 15/12/2021)
Dr Kawther Hashem (elected 18/12/2020)**^	Victoria Williams (re-elected 14/12/2022)
Bridget Henderson (re-elected 15/12/2021)	Deirdre (Dee) Woods (re-elected 15/12/2021)
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Andre Kpodonu (elected 18/12/2020)	Mollie Gupta (elected 18/12/2020)*
Jo Lewis (elected 09/12/2019, stood down 09/12/2022)**	Nick Weir (elected 18/12/2020)*

Note: Those marked with an asterisk (\*) share the trustee role between two people in their organisation as part of a leadership development opportunity for diversity. One in each pair marked with a double asterisk (\*\*) is the nominated Trustee registered with Companies House and the Charity Commission. Where marked also with a (^), this person transitioned from a supported role-share position to a Trustee registered with Companies House following the December 2022 election.

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**Company registered number:** 02673194

**Charity registered number:** 1018643

**Registered office:** The Green House, 244-254 Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9DA

**Auditors:** Goldwins, 75 Maygrove Road, West Hampstead, London NW6 2EG

**Bankers:** The Co-operative Bank, PO Box 101, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP and Triodos Bank, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AS

# Our year in numbers

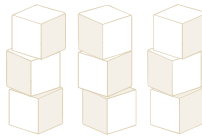
Our projects, campaigns, partnerships and policy work contributed to the following over the year April 2022 to March 2023:

**100+**

local authorities seek our support on healthier food advertising policies



**46m** kilograms of sugar removed from soft drinks every year



90 food partnerships now in Sustainable Food Places network

**12** European countries share food systems good practice



**2,500** volunteers take part in Good to Grow Day, in 126 gardens



**25** Defra officials visit peri-urban Fringe Farms



**44 MPs** engaged in Sustainable Food Places day of action



**270,000** more children set to receive free school meals in London



**350** people discuss food policy solutions to the cost-of-living crisis at Sustain's annual conference



**£1.5m**

Lottery grant secured to pilot climate friendly food for all

**Over 1,000**



good food jobs advertised on Roots to Work platform



**800**

people attend first Scottish Real Bread Festival

**20**

Sustain alliance members participate in The RACE Report



**6,000+** downloads of Sustain publications



**1** Grocery Code Adjudicator saved from being axed

Find out more about Sustain's success stories and achievements at: [www.sustainweb.org/about/working\\_together\\_our\\_success\\_stories/](http://www.sustainweb.org/about/working_together_our_success_stories/)

# Good food production

Our vision is a food production system that is based on the principles of agroecology, that is fair for all who participate in it, and which is connected with its local community, through shorter, localised supply chains, and community food growing spaces, all of which cover rural, peri-urban and urban areas.

In a busy year for our Sustainable Farming Campaign, we greatly strengthened links with MPs of all the main political parties, championing sustainable land-use, better Environmental Land Management (ELM) public payments and standards, localised food infrastructure, peri-urban farms and better food trading, aiming to re-balance the conditions and economics in favour of agroecological farming. We produced reports and briefings, hosted roundtables, marched in Westminster with farmers, gave evidence to Select Committees and had numerous meetings with MPs and Ministers, often in partnership with groups representing nature-friendly farmers whose success will be essential to the agroecological transition.

It was a period of intense political upheaval and spiralling costs exacerbated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and extreme weather events. With food security thrown into the national spotlight, we made the case for farmers to receive better incomes through supply chain regulation and a fairer share of the profit – currently often less than 1p on typical packs of everyday foods, as we showed in our ground-breaking report 'Unpicking Food Prices: Where our food pound goes and why farmers get so little', which received extensive media coverage.

We boosted efforts to secure core standards and scrutiny in international trade deals, using the UK-Australia deal and India negotiations to win high-profile attention. Working with PAN-UK and the Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics, we made pesticides and farm antibiotics touchstone issues and were cited in reports by EFRA, the International Trade Committee and International Agreements Committee. Working with sister alliance Greener UK we also raised concerns about sweeping ministerial powers in the Retained EU Law Bill.

At local level we championed peri-urban community food growing through our Fringe Farming initiative, working with the Landworkers Alliance to promote training, webinars, site visits and local authority engagement, working with local partners in Bristol, Glasgow, Cardiff, London and Sheffield.

In London, our well-established Capital Growth community food growing network (supporting over 2,000 community gardens) ran 14 training sessions for around 400 attendees. We co-hosted seven open days with our Spotlight Gardens, ran inter-council network meetings with 16 London councils, and convened a working party of over 50 London organisations, all to support community food growing.

A record 52 London gardens run Good to Grow public engagement days

Sustain's Orla Delargy gives oral evidence to EFRA Committee on food standards in the Australia trade deal

We join WWF in formal complaint on lack of public consultation on environmental standards in trade deals

Launch of Growing for Change handbook for urban food gardens

International Trade Committee calls on Government to guarantee UK pesticide controls following lobbying by Sustain and PAN-UK

April

June

July

September

November

Our Tale of Two Counties mapping of local food infrastructure prompts action in East Sussex and Lancashire

We chair cross-party roundtable in Westminster for MPs supporting peri-urban community farms

Fringe Farming promoted in Defra farm tour with Kindling Trust in Manchester

Westminster Hall Debate held on support for local food infrastructure, following our lobbying

Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics finds antibiotic-resistant bacteria in rivers near UK factory farms

Celebratory events feature 12 Spotlight Gardens showcasing diverse food growing and people

“ We now have the International Trade Committee asking the questions we were having to ask ourselves when we started. Well done everyone!”

**Josie Cohen, Pesticide Action Network UK**, on ITC report calling for standards in trade deals

“ I think if we could up-scale it the way you’re proposing... you’d do the whole country a great service”

**Derek Thomas, Conservative MP for St Ives, member of the EFRA Committee and APPG on Agroecology**, supporting Sustain’s proposals on peri-urban community farming



“ That actually wasn’t boring!”

**Claudia, Year 9 pupil (13 to 14 years old) at Camden School for Girls**, on her visit to Regent’s Park Allotment training site

Photo: OrganicLea Growers, Chingford; credit: Zoe Walde-Aldam

Our landmark Unpicking Food Prices report gains high attention from industry and in Parliament

Food Sense Wales publishes local action plan report on Fringe Farming after stakeholder event

Latest of five Peri-Urban Farming Practitioners Forum gatherings, organised by Sustain

Sustain raises high-profile concerns about farm antibiotics, pesticides and animal welfare in proposed CPTPP trade agreement and backs Feedback’s legal challenge to climate impact of Australia trade deal

Fringe Farming tour of OrganicLea engages council officers keen to support food growing

## December

## January

## February

## March

Sustainable Food Places hosts Fringe Farming events for local food partnerships keen to support horticulture

Fringe Farming policy report published, setting out recommendations for growth in peri-urban horticulture

Farmers and advocates rally around action on farm policy at Oxford Real Farming Conference, with record attendance

Three Community Food Growing Conversations hosted on Community Harvest, Social Prescribing and Growing Food on Estates

145 people attend Growing Food for Resilience webinar on community resilience through food growing

# Good food economy

Our vision is that fair supply chains that support a flourishing diversity of supply, manufacturing, retail and catering enterprises – at home and overseas – that create good jobs and livelihoods; helping agroecological farmers and sustainable fishers to thrive and making good food the easiest choice.

This year saw the launch of our exciting and pioneering new programme Bridging the Gap. This will pilot initiatives that 'bridge the gap' in price to make sustainably grown food affordable for people on a lower income. We will co-design interventions, working with food-system experts and practitioners across the four nations of the UK. Promising options include enhancing public sector food procurement; investing in values-led food hubs, wholesalers and local food retail; and subsidised voucher schemes.

We are also excited to have secured funding for a Local Food Retail Coordinator to develop a multi-organisational programme (to be launched in 2023) to catalyse better, fairer and more resilient trading in local food, to support nature friendly farmer-focused supply chains across the UK.

The government's consultation on the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill provided an opportunity for the food system to be supported through the planning system. We coordinated a response, calling for planning policies to promote horticulture, healthy food retail and control of the proliferation of hot food takeaways.

Now in its 15th year, the Real Bread Campaign kept up its impressive energy and creativity, supporting

artisan and home bakers to promote diverse and delicious bread made by traditional methods. With spiralling costs and people struggling to afford good food, we worked with bakers to trial and share good practices on making Real Bread and bread-making facilities accessible and affordable to all, and championing high standards through strengthening UK bread, flour and labelling regulations.

We renewed our efforts to celebrate diversity, securing six subsidised places for people from under-represented backgrounds on a microbusiness course at The School of Artisan Food. We also made special efforts to feature people from diverse ethnic backgrounds and cultural heritage at events, in guest blogs, in our new A to Z of internationally diverse bread, and in True Loaf magazine.

In London, we promoted sustainable food enterprise through Jellied Eel magazine, Food Talks and networking events for good food pioneers in the capital, especially those improving access to affordable healthy and sustainable food for lower income communities. We also highlighted support for good food enterprise in our work with London's boroughs and food partnerships, many of whom want to support solutions to the rising cost of living that build community wealth and resilience.

Real Bread Campaign hosts four free fringe events at UK Grain Lab

Real Bread Campaign helps Open University survey contribution of 200 small bakeries to local economies

150 bakery professionals urge EFRA to introduce Honest Crust Act

Real Bread Campaign lobbies Prime Minister to support small bakery businesses

Six subsidised places offered on School of Artisan Food five-day microbusiness course

May

June

July

August

September

£1.5m National Lottery funding secured for pioneering new Bridging the Gap programme

Food access advocates start to discuss pilot projects to make nature-friendly food affordable to all

London Food Link gathering helps good food pioneers share inspiration and good practice

Advisor recruited to help with co-production of Bridging the Gap pilots

We call for planning policies on good food retail and hot food takeaways control, in Levelling Up Bill consultation



“ Such a fantastic jobs board, I am so glad Sustain does this.”  
**Cathy Hughes**, True Food Community Cooperative, Reading

“ Super-practical. Full of sage advice and heart-warming values about good bread. Wholeheartedly recommended.”  
**Chris Cundill**, Rosa’s Bakery Limited, Neath in Wales, commenting on Knead to Know... more – the Real Bread Campaign’s guide to starting a microbakery

“ Sustain highlights the need to use ‘all the tools in the box’ to promote local growth in shorter supply chains and with innovation at local and national level.”  
**Peter Aldous**, Conservative MP for Waveney, Suffolk

Photo: Granville Community Kitchen’s Good Food Box, credit: Jonathan Goldberg

London’s local authorities discuss how to help citizens afford good food in the cost-of-living crisis

We host roundtable on using planning policy to achieve a healthier food environment

Sustain briefing published on supporting good food systems in the National Planning Policy Framework and National Design Code

First Scottish Real Bread Festival takes place during Real Bread Week

Sustain contributes to Food Talk event: ‘Is £3 a fairer price for a pint of milk?’

October                      November                      January                      February                      March

MPs ask parliamentary questions on flour and bread standards for the Real Bread Campaign

28 out of 33 London councils submit evidence of action on good food for all Londoners

Not all Real Bread is White event promotes the inspirational work of Black bakers

Packed Bridging the Gap session at Oxford Real Farming Conference discusses practical ways to make sustainable food accessible to all

2,000 people now subscribe to our Planning Food Cities newsletter

# Good food for all

Our vision is that we want to see healthy, sustainable food accessible and affordable to all, through a diverse array of outlets, and for it to become unacceptable and expensive to market unhealthy, unethical and unsustainable produce, over the alternative.

We celebrated the fifth anniversary of the landmark Soft Drinks Industry Levy, sending a thank-you card to HM Treasury and all MPs. This highlighted 46m kg of sugar removed from soft drinks every year; that 89% of soft drinks sales are now low or no sugar; with £1.5bn funds raised to help support school breakfasts and holiday activity programmes.

We decided that the time has come for a national campaign to Say Yes to School Food for All. After extensive consultation, we launched this on International School Meals Day in March 2023 backed by over 30 organisations plus 21 MPs from six political parties. We enthusiastically welcomed commitments by Westminster Council and the Mayor of London to free school meals for all primary-age children in state schools, whilst noting the postcode lottery for children elsewhere.

We have campaigned for over 20 years for legislation restricting prominent displays of unhealthy food in shops. This came into force in October 2022. We also campaigned vigorously for implementation of laws passed in 2021 to introduce a 9pm watershed and online ban on unhealthy food advertising. Disappointingly, the Government has now delayed these until 2025.

Now in its 12th year, our Good Food for All Londoners benchmarking report continues to set the bar for action by London's 33 boroughs to improve access to healthy and sustainable food. Alongside the thriving Boroughs Food Group, this has become a leading organising tool for sharing and driving good practice. Expertise established in London has attracted attention across the UK, with over 100 local authorities asking for our support with healthier food advertising policies; 200 people attending our Veg Cities webinar on peri-urban community horticulture; and 126 gardens taking part in Good to Grow Day. We are also discussing with several regional authorities the possibility of piloting our good food benchmarking framework in other areas, learning from our well-established experience in the capital.

Prompted by our campaigning, the NHS and Department of Health reinstated monthly publishing of uptake data for Healthy Start fruit, veg and milk vouchers for low-income parents. We continued to press for increased value and expanded eligibility. We also worked in partnership with Food Matters and the Greater London Authority to run the London Food Roots Incubator, helping local food poverty alliances to strengthen local action on food poverty.

We ask HM Treasury for sugar reduction data on fourth anniversary of Soft Drinks Industry Levy

126 gardens take part in Good to Grow Day with 2,500 volunteers involved

Our Healthy Start discussion list grows to 300+ members from public health, food partnerships and food poverty alliances

Workshops with school pupils to get their insights into free school meals and universalism

We coordinate letter from headteachers, academy trusts and teaching unions calling for expansion of free school meals

## April

ASA upholds our case against KP Snacks and The Hundred for targeting children with unhealthy snack promotion

Health & Social Care Act enshrines in law 9pm watershed and online HFSS food advertising ban

## May

Children's Food Campaign objects to government delay in HFSS food advertising restrictions

80 representatives from London boroughs discuss solutions to household food insecurity, coordinated by our London Food Poverty Campaign

## June

Food poverty alliances share learning on food co-ops, solidarity models and affordable veg box schemes

“ Really, you and the Sustainers are amazing, and I think this is one of the best things you, or anybody in this space, have done. And the timing is perfect, as it feels like we’re at a tipping point on this issue.”

**Dan Parker**, Veg Power and Living Loud, responding to the launch of the Say Yes to School Food for All campaign



“ Thank you for the continued work of Sustain and others to expose the deep flaws in the new Healthy Start digital scheme, that are directly causing serious financial hardship to low-income pregnant women and households with young children; this at a time of unprecedented increases in inflation and the cost of living.”

**Peter Cox**, Public Health Commissioner, Kent County Council

“ I’m writing the paper copying from your amazing document. It’s just got everything. There’s such a logical process to follow – it’s really not hard work.”

**Natalie Lovell**, Tower Hamlets Public Health Programme Manager for Healthy Environments, commenting on Sustain’s Healthier Food Advertising Policy Toolkit

Pupils from Sacred Heart Primary School at launch of Say Yes campaign, credit: Adrian Pope

Barnsley becomes first northern town to introduce healthier food advertising policy

We welcome High Court ruling against Kellogg’s in junk food marketing case

Mayor of London announces free school meals for all primary school children for 2023 school year, with our support

Expert webinar to learn from Kellogg’s (unsuccessful) court case on food marketing restrictions

Launch of Say Yes to School Food For All campaign

June

July

October

February

March

Work starts with London Borough of Waltham Forest on transitioning away from emergency food aid

Sustain co-sponsors Labour and Conservative Party conference events on fiscal measures for healthy food

Regulations come into force limiting in-store HFSS food and drink promotion

Packed launch event for Good Food for All Londoners benchmarking report

117 gardens register for forthcoming Good to Grow open gardens day

# Parliament and public affairs

We were grateful this year to receive additional financial support to boost our influential parliament, public affairs and communications team, with tools and capacity, which proved especially important during a year when such a large amount of important public health and environmental policy came under threat. The team worked impressively to coordinate high-profile responses across a wide range of campaigns, alliance organisations, MPs, peers and subject areas, as well as with partners across the four nations of the UK.

Particular highlights of work by the parliament and public affairs team include:

- Inserting the Sustainable Farming Campaign's report *Unpicking Food Prices* into the national debate with three concerted communications campaigns and supporting parliamentary activity. Coordinated lobbying of parliamentarians also generated an EFRA select committee inquiry into supply chain fairness.
- We undertook cross sector engagement to help set strategy towards the Retained EU Law (REUL) Bill, seeking to defend key food safety, sustainable farming, public health and environmental protections, as well as parliamentary scrutiny over any future legislative changes. We undertook extensive work to brief parliamentarians and the media. Lord John Krebs and Baroness Rosie Boycott (a Sustain patron) were especially helpful in the House of Lords stages of the Bill's progress, on areas of particular concern such as pesticide standards, hormone beef, antibiotic resistance and river pollution.
- Briefings and consultation responses on the new India and Australia trade deals and the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans Pacific Partnership trade succession. We created opportunities for some of our specialist alliance members to talk to trade negotiators and the Food Standards Agency, including the Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics, Pesticide Action Network UK and the Chartered Institute for Environmental Health.
- Launch of our Say Yes to School Food for All campaign, starting to build a parliamentary supporter network for the campaign, providing the campaign lead with a comprehensive discourse analysis of Hansard, and advice and research on framing to help make this work resonate with public opinion.
- We undertook extensive and dogged work to mitigate the impact of the botched digital transfer by government of Healthy Start – vouchers for

fruit, veg and milk for low-income parents with young children. We used online mapping showing what local people and areas are missing out on, placed Parliamentary Questions and Freedom of Information requests, challenged official claims, got official uptake data corrected, and catalysed publication of data by region, which we know that the local public health teams we work with need to prioritise local delivery. We also briefed numerous journalists, resulting in coverage by regional broadcast media and a detailed feature in the *New Statesman*. This resulted in service improvements such as increased staff on the helpline and a government commitment to backdate payments to parents who had missed out.

Our team contributed to sessions at the Sustainable Food Places national conference and the Oxford Real Farming Conference comparing progress on food and farming policy across the four UK nations. We explored recent Westminster activity on key food policy areas such as school meals provision, Healthy Start vouchers, access to land for food growing and food policy governance. We discussed the progress of the Good Food Nation Bill in Scotland, as well as the food bill in Wales, and what part food partnerships played in the process. It was helpful to hear from food partnerships on what their priorities were and how Sustain could keep them informed and involved in our Westminster lobbying. There was an appetite for MPs to be more visible and to see the work locally, which we will build on.

In June, we were deeply disappointed by the Government's long-awaited response to the groundbreaking National Food Strategy, championed by food entrepreneur Henry Dimbleby and supported by Sustain alliance members. See more details below.

In October we ran our first 'thought leadership' event where we brought farmers, campaigners, academics and civil society together for a Meat Summit to examine how we might collectively reduce the climate damage caused by high levels of intensive meat production and consumption. The event received positive feedback due to the range of speakers, quality of the debate and choice of venue. Our speakers included world-leading academics, TV chefs, high profile farmers, local authority leads, youth ambassadors and senior members from our alliance and attracted 160 attendees.

Our Annual Conference welcomed 350 attendees, with well-respected economics expert Ha Joon Chang and speakers from across the alliance to discuss the theme 'What food policy solutions exist to tackle the cost of living crisis?' These included

campaigners working on obesity, food poverty and the environment, as well as Labour's Shadow food and farming minister, the Conservative former chair of the APPG on the National Food Strategy and the Lib Dem spokesperson for Education.

Aware that a General Election could be triggered in the coming period, we continued to develop warm and productive relationships with a number of influential politicians, parliamentarians, parliamentary researchers, and special advisers, supplying high-quality briefings and presentations to party staff developing manifestos, All Party Parliamentary Groups, policy roundtables, and parliamentary inquiries. We refreshed our awareness of guidance from the Charity Commission and Electoral Commission on compliance with the Lobbying Act.

Thanks to our new Vuelio media monitoring system we were able to analyse how parliamentarians and their secretariats respond to our communications work, emails and briefings, and what forms of communication will maximise our chance of better engagement.

“ Thank you for inviting me to such an interesting conference and giving a chance to talk there.”

**Professor Ha Joon Chang**, author of *Edible Economics*, keynote speaker at Sustain's Annual Conference 2022



Cross-party political support for free school meals grows: Lord Bethell (Conservative peer), Munira Wilson MP (Liberal Democrat), Chair of Food Foundation Laura Sandys (former Conservative MP) and Stephen Timms MP (Labour) support launch of Free School Meals have Superpowers evidence pack. Credit: Will Hearle @willhearlephoto | Food Foundation

## Parliament and public affairs:

### Key moments

#### » April 2022

We protest as Trade and Agriculture Commission confirms UK-Australia trade deal will lower welfare and environmental standards.

#### » May 2022

800 people send messages to over half of MPs objecting to the Government U-turn on junk food marketing restrictions.

#### » June 2022

We describe government response to National Food Strategy as 'a feeble to-do list that may or may not be ticked.'

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) Committee backs core standards in international trade deals.

#### » July 2022

Sustain contributes to Food Matters Live debate on the impact of Brexit on UK food standards.

Sustain advises on legal challenge to UK-Australia trade deal over government's failure to consult.

#### » October 2022

Meat Summit addresses the climate impact of meat production and consumption.

#### » November 2022

We highlight weakening of pesticide and antibiotics standards in the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) trade deal.

#### » December 2022

Sustain Annual Conference asks: 'What food policy solutions exist to tackle the cost of living crisis?'

We back call from WWF for core food, farming and environmental standards and protections in international trade deals.

#### » Spring 2023

We coordinate submissions on food security to the EFRA Select Committee, Environmental Audit Committee and Net Zero Skidmore Review.

We extensively brief the Labour National Policy Forum and Liberal Democrats, engage with roundtables and secure meetings with the Leader of the Opposition and shadow team. We also attend policy development meetings and provide extensive briefing for the Liberal Democrats.

# National Food Strategy

The National Food Strategy, a two-part review published in 2020-2021, involved extensive research, expert interviews, and public opinion testing over a two-year period. Led by Henry Dimbleby (LEON Restaurants co-founder and a non-executive director of Defra). The review aimed to identify key policies and recommendations for a better food system. Seeing this as a prime opportunity to present Sustain priorities, we convened roundtables with alliance members to prioritise our asks and submitted a series of papers to the National Food Strategy development team.

The first part of the strategy, released in 2020 during the turbulence of the Covid-19 pandemic and the impending end of the Brexit transition period, focused on immediate and urgent measures. The second part, published in 2021, provided an in-depth analysis of our broken food system and offered 14 recommendations to address them. The Government committed to respond to the National Food Strategy recommendations in 2022. We record details here for posterity.

Sustain welcomed the recommendations of the independent Dimbleby team, which aligned with many of Sustain's longstanding policy priorities and campaigns. Some of the key points included:

1. **Sugar and salt reformulation tax:** First called for by Sustain in 2012.
2. **Sustainable farming practices:** The strategy suggested guaranteeing agricultural payments, establishing a rural land use framework, and creating an innovation fund to promote sustainable land use, all of which were in line with Sustain's sustainable farming campaign.
3. **Protecting food standards in trade deals:** The strategy echoed Sustain's campaigns to ensure high food and farming standards remained in place after Brexit by safeguarding them in future trade agreements, including controls on farm antibiotics to combat antibiotic resistance.
4. **Children's access to food:** Recommendations included extending free school meals to children in households earning less than £20,000, undocumented children, and those from households with the immigration status 'No Recourse to Public Funds' (NRPF). It also proposed funding for the Holiday Activities and Food Programme to ensure year-round access to healthy food for all children.
5. **Healthy Start:** The strategy called for expanding eligibility for Healthy Start to align with free school meals and extend it until school age, along with increased promotion and awareness among relevant healthcare workers.

6. **Improved procurement:** The strategy proposed strengthening Government Buying Standards, enhancing monitoring and reporting and promoting a dynamic procurement model, enabling smaller-scale producers to sell to the public sector.
7. **Promoting fruit and veg consumption:** Recommendations included doubling the budget for the School Fruit and Veg Scheme and introducing a 'Community Eatwell' programme, where GPs could prescribe fruits and vegetables.
8. **Reducing meat consumption:** The strategy recommended an aim for a 30% increase in fruit and veg consumption and a 30% reduction in meat consumption by 2032.
9. **Food Bill and Food Partnerships:** Sustain had championed a Good Food Bill (as has been adopted in Scotland as the Good Food Nation Act), and we were pleased to see this included as a recommendation, along with support for more local food partnerships.

The Government responded in June 2022 with its own food strategy. In their White Paper, which reflected little of the insight and prioritisation of food manifest in the Dimbleby report, the Government committed only to:

- A land use strategy by 2023
- A consultation on mandatory reporting by industry on health, and 'explore' the same on environment and animal welfare
- A consultation on public sector food procurement, including 50% local or higher standard food

This fell far short of expectations, causing consternation and disappointment throughout our movement. Kath Dalmeny, chief executive of Sustain said, "Government was given crystal clear analysis and a set of recommendations by the Dimbleby food strategy and has chosen to take forward only a handful of them. This isn't a strategy, it's a feeble to do list, that may or may not get ticked."

Sustain created an accountability grid highlighting the extensive shortcomings of the Government response and distributed it to parliamentary contacts, civil servants, and stakeholders. Many senior leaders and teams in influential organisations shared our view that the Dimbleby food strategy should continue to be a framework for national and local action, so we have some hope that the process will have generated allies and that persistence will (eventually) pay off.

Find out more on [Sustain's National Food Strategy hub](#) – where we collated key documents, responses, blogs and summaries.

# Climate and nature emergency

How and what we farm, fish, eat and dispose of are some of the biggest contributors to dangerous climate change and precipitous loss of nature. The food system currently uses up the UK's entire annual carbon budget. To have any hope of tackling the climate and nature emergency, we must transform how food is grown and transported, and what we eat. Sustain champions solutions to the climate emergency that improve our dietary health, tackle inequality, and help restore nature.

The number of places taking part in our Food for the Planet campaign more than doubled this year, with 48 local authorities and regions taking action a range of initiatives such as climate-friendly food procurement, promoting less and better meat and more plant-rich diets, supporting nature friendly farming and community food growing, and radically reducing food waste.

In London, Sustain contributed extensively to the London Circular Food Procurement Working Group, with two-thirds of London's councils represented, and we supported the EU-wide Buy Better Food report, which now has over 50 members. This kept us busy whilst waiting for the much-delayed UK Government response to their public consultation on Government Buying Standards for food, which we believe must be urgently reformed to drive climate- and nature-friendly food production and consumption.

In November, we launched our report benchmarking nearly 200 local authorities on food and climate change, entitled 'Every Mouthful Counts'. We timed the launch to coincide with the COP27 international climate talks being hosted by Egypt. We created a new interactive online map, with tailored action plans and recommendations for 20 councils, with 21 'Leader' councils identified. Following the launch, over 20 councils approached the team for advice about improving their score, and we provided support to a cohort of food partnerships in Northern Ireland keen to participate. We were able to support ten local campaigns with small grants, for innovation on climate-friendly food advertising, food procurement and climate-friendly food pricing.

Sustain helped to devise the landmark Healthier Food Advertising policy adopted by the Mayor of London in 2018, implemented across the Transport for London public transport network and demonstrably improving healthier food consumption by Londoners. This year, over 100 local authorities around the country sought Sustain's support to consider introducing similar policies in their

own areas. Given the close correlation between healthy and climate-friendly diets, we now want to develop an integrated policy that could also reduce the promotion of intensively farmed livestock products, and be adopted by local authorities as part of their Food Strategy and Climate Action Plans.

This year, we ran a high-profile Meat Summit to discuss bold action to reduce the impact of climate-wrecking livestock production; we also invested in development of a groundbreaking new campaign to win a de facto moratorium on factory farms through the planning system. This is generating excitement and support amongst members of our working group and wider network.

Our Climate and Nature Coordinator also joined the 'Nitrogen Group' – a collaboration of UK NGOs led by Client Earth to advocate for controls on farming-derived ammonia and other nitrogen pollutants.

“ Thank you so much for a fantastic webinar last week – so helpful and reassuring in our early development work here on a North Yorkshire Food Strategy”

**Ruth Everson**, Public Health Manager,  
North Yorkshire County Council



# Local action

Sustain is an alliance of around 100 national organisations. Across the year, we had a growing appreciation that we are also an alliance of hundreds of local and regional organisations working to improve the food and farming system, for the benefit of people and planet. The interplay between national and local action is an increasingly important characteristic of our work.

This year, we significantly stepped up our public affairs and advocacy work to promote local action on food and farming and were delighted to achieve recognition for the value of local food partnerships in the Local Government Association's public health annual report, as well as the long-awaited Government food strategy. Despite being disappointing in other areas, this was a welcome foothold for the 90+ food partnerships who are now members of the Sustainable Food Places (SFP) network, which Sustain has coordinated with Food Matters and the Soil Association over the past nine years.

We submitted evidence informed by our local networks to several parliamentary enquiries, government departments and Ministers, calling

for changes in policy and government programmes – notably a planning briefing calling for more detailed national planning policies to achieve a sustainable food and farming system, submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. We also called for improvements to the Healthy Start food vouchers programme – a priority for hundreds of frontline organisations in our network.

Following patient work by our sister alliance Food Sense Wales, the Welsh Minister of Social Justice announced £3 million of Welsh Government funding to support the development of cross-sector food partnerships in response to the cost-of-living crisis. Meanwhile, the Good Food Nation Bill passed in the Scottish Parliament in June 2022 following the persistent advocacy of our sister alliance Nourish Scotland, putting a statutory duty on government, local authorities and health boards to produce food plans, with food partnerships well placed to coordinate delivery on key actions.

The value of food partnerships was also evident in focused campaigns and initiatives coordinated by Sustain, helping local authorities and institutions to reduce the climate and nature impact of food



Leaders of local food partnerships from across the country gather for the Sustainable Food Places day of action and celebration in Westminster. The day was an opportunity to put the amazing work of food partnerships on the radar of local MPs, and to put out a call for: One food bill for every nation; One food plan and partnership in every local area. Credit: Jonathan Goldberg

procurement, food waste and land-use in their areas; helping good food enterprises to thrive; and continuing to tackle food poverty and the cost-of-living crisis. We gave financial and other support to 9 Good Food Movement projects, 9 Good Food Economy campaigns, 3 Veg Cities campaigns and 1 Food for the Planet campaign in our round of grants. We also ran numerous events, visits and webinars throughout the year to help inform, inspire and share skills among the SFP peer network.

In July, we hosted an engaging Day of Celebration and Action in Westminster. 26 parliamentarians attended from all of the main parties in the four UK nations, generating 18 further meetings/connections between food partnerships and MPs, with a total of 44 MPs engaged. We followed up with an open letter to several Secretaries of State calling for a Good Food Bill in every Nation of the UK and support for food partnerships in every place.

In March 2023, we were delighted to run our first national in-person Sustainable Food Places conference in three years, hosted at Oxford University with more than 160 participants from across the UK, with lively discussions, workshops and sharing of skills and experiences. 95% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt inspired and re-energised about their work.

March 2023 also saw publication of our latest Good Food for All Londoners benchmarking of local authorities in London, for their actions to improve access to good food for people on a low income, and to improve the capital's food system for health and sustainability. From the 28 councils who took part in this year's survey (out of the 33 councils in London), responses show promising progress, with overall scores increasing from last year.

Looking internationally, we continued our involvement in FoodSHIFT, which is promoting local action in places all around Europe. We organised several well-attended workshops and webinars looking at good practice and inspiring examples of governance, innovation and improving local policy.

“ Observing the development of the Sustainable Food Places programme has been a source of pleasure and pride for me personally, seeing it grow from the initial cohort of just six cities to what it is now [90 towns, cities and regions], shaping perceptions of what a good food system can look like and attracting international attention.”

**Laurence Scott**, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

## Local action:

### Key moments

#### » April 2022

Webinar addressing local action on food and the cost-of-living crisis – hundreds attend.

#### » June 2022

Good Food Nation Act becomes law in Scotland, requiring local action on food.

Government's response to the National Food Strategy published, recognising the value of local food partnerships.

#### » July 2022

Welsh Minister of Social Justice announces £3m for food partnerships in Wales.

#### » Spring/Summer 2022

We run numerous well-attended sessions on e.g. National Food Strategy, diversity and inclusion, peri-urban farming, community food enterprises, community engagement, free school meals, ultra-processed foods, reducing meat and dairy.

Sustainable Food Places helps Local Government Association promote good practice on local authority action on food poverty.

#### » October 2022

Workshop with Northern Ireland food partnerships to support action on food and climate.

#### » November 2022

Launch of Every Mouthful Counts report assessing UK local authority action on food and climate.

#### » January 2023

Sustain briefs Big Lottery on local responses to the cost-of-living crisis that move beyond charitable food aid.

#### » February 2023

£10k grants launched for Race Equity Diversity & Inclusion (REDI) pilot projects with local food partnerships.

#### » March 2023

Good Food for All Londoners report shows London councils making progress on action for healthy and sustainable food.

Sustainable Food Places annual conference welcomes 160 participants and is a resounding success!

# Building our communications and reach

Traffic on Sustain's website continues to grow, with close to 500,000 page views this year on Sustainweb.org and the average time spent on pages up by over 5% compared to same period last year. Over 12,500 people joined our email newsletter lists. We started to trial a system to map our supporters by constituency, with over 35,000 supporters now mapped in this way. For the first time we can now visualise website interactions geographically and interact with cohorts of supporters on constituency specific issues. This also enables Sustain's projects and campaigns to grow their supporter base in targeted areas, which will be useful for locally focused work such as Food for the Planet, work with local authorities, and the new Say Yes to School Food for All on universal free school meals.

We added a carbon-saving calculator to the Capital Growth and Good to Grow Harvest-ometers to help community food growers demonstrate the environmental value of their activities, and an extensive data visualisation addon for the Food for the Planet website.

A new press page in our Content Management System (CMS) will show Sustain's latest coverage in the news. Stories on our website, when quoted in the press, will also now have links to their coverage, facilitated by the media monitoring package we have with the service Vuelio. We want to build a better understanding of what stories work best and how we may increase our coverage.

We produced more video content and a number of engaging animations this year, further enhancing the quality of the Sustain assets we push to social channels.

Additionally, we put considerable effort into creating solid documentation on our Intranet to provide a number of self-help resources for staff. This guidance includes a communications toolkit and image guidance. We now run monthly drop-in sessions for staff to attend with their comms or CMS questions.



# Diversity, equity, inclusion and racial justice

Sustain has a profound commitment to promoting equity, meaning that we want to promote diversity and inclusion across a wide range of characteristics. We recognise that there are entrenched and structural causes of inequality. In particular, we recognise the extent and depth of racial inequality and racial injustice in the food system and want to do what we can to help address this.

We run a diversity group that meets regularly to promote positive change internally, and in our externally policy, campaign and communications activities. For transparency, and to stimulate action, we now produce a separate annual report on our progress on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Anti-racism, the latest compiled in spring 2023: <https://www.sustainweb.org/reports/may23-progress-on-diversity-and-anti-racism/>. This reports on our actions to improve diversity in:

- Leadership for change
- Project and campaign leadership – with project-specific activities described throughout this Annual Report
- Budget allocation
- Audit and review
- Internal structures and development
  - Recruitment for diversity
  - HR: employment policies and practices
- Communicating and creating platforms
- Reflections on system change, looking beyond our own organisation and network, to influence change more widely

This year, we thoroughly reviewed our recruitment practices in order to improve our welcome and opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds and identities to gain employment in the Sustain team. We are planning towards recruitment of a Diversity Outreach Coordinator who can lead on work to improve opportunities for younger people from diverse ethnic backgrounds to benefit from opportunities and employment in the food and farming sector. We also worked with a specialist diversity consultant to help us review our internal employment policies and practices, and implemented a wide range of improvements as a result.

“ Thanks for the wonderful advocacy of Sustain, this is amazing! We have more organisations signed up now than our target for the first year. I think most of the extra ones were via you!”

**Jamie Agombar, Chief Executive of Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK), which is coordinating The RACE Report initiative, working with Hindu Climate Action, Nature Youth Connection and Education, and South Asians for Sustainability**



# Who we work with

As an alliance, Sustain is as strong as its membership. Alliance membership is open to national organisations that do not distribute profits to private shareholders and which operate in the public or their members' interest. The organisations must be wholly or partly interested in food or farming issues and support the general aims and work of the alliance.

\*Those marked with a star were welcomed this year as members of Sustain – agreed by Sustain's Council, with ratification by Sustain's membership either confirmed or pending

## Sustain alliance members

Action on Salt / Action on Sugar	Gaia Foundation	Social Farms and Gardens
Alexandra Rose Charity	Garden Organic	Soil Association
Aquaculture Stewardship Council	Global Justice Now	Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK)
Association of Public Analysts	GM Freeze	Sustainable, Food, Diet and Non-Communicable Disease Prevention Research Group
Baby Milk Action	Growing Communities (and Better Food Traders)	Sustainable Food Trust
Behaviour Change	Health Education Trust	Sustainable Soils Alliance
Beyond GM	Hubbub	The Country Trust
Bio-Dynamic Agricultural College	Hyperactive Children's Support Group	The Kindling Trust
Bio-Dynamic Agriculture Association	Incredible Edible*	The Landworkers' Alliance
British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry	Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN)	The Orchard Project
British Dietetic Association	International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)	The Real Farming Trust
Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)	Keep Britain Tidy	Think Through Nutrition
Caroline Walker Trust	Magic Breakfast	This Is Rubbish
Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience (CAWR)	Marine Conservation Society (MCS)	Transform Trade
Centre for Food Policy	National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI)	Unchecked
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)	National Trust	Unison – the public service union
City to Sea	Nature Friendly Farming Network (NFFN)	Unite the union – rural and agricultural sector
Commonwork Trust	Nourish NI*	Vegetarian Society
Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Network	Open Food Network UK	Whole Health Agriculture*
Compassion in World Farming	Oral Health Foundation	Women's Environmental Network
Diabetes UK	Organic Farmers & Growers	World Cancer Research Fund
Dung Beetles for Farmers	Organic Growers Alliance*	Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF)
Eating Better	Organic Research Centre – Elm Farm	
E.coli 0157	Organic Trade Board	<b>Sustain alliance observers</b>
Faculty of Public Health	Oxford Climate Alumni Network (OXCAN)	Agricultural Christian Fellowship
Fairtrade Foundation	Pasture-fed Livestock Association	Allergy Alliance
Family Farmers Association	People Need Nature	Child Poverty Action Group
FareShare	Permaculture Association	ClientEarth*
Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group SW	Pesticide Action Network (PAN) UK	Community Food and Health Scotland
Farms not Factories	Plantlife	Food Ethics Council
Feedback Global	Rare Breeds Survival Trust	GMB (Britain's General Union)
First Steps Nutrition Trust	Royal Academy of Culinary Arts, Chefs Adopt a School Trust	Green Alliance
Food Foundation	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) (covers RSPCA Assured)	Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF)
Food Matters	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)
Food Sense Wales*	School Food Matters	Nourish Scotland
Food Systems and Policy Group, University of Hertfordshire	School of Artisan Food	Obesity Health Alliance
FoodCycle	Shared Assets	Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH)
Forum for the Future	Slow Food in the UK	Which?
Friends of the Earth		Wildlife and Countryside Link
		WWF – Scotland
		WWF – UK

Sustain works closely with, for example: colleague alliances and initiatives working on cross-cutting food, farming, fishing, environmental and social policy – including: the Alliance to Save our Antibiotics; Eating Better Alliance; Food Research Collaboration; Green Alliance; Food, Farming and Countryside Commission; Green Care Coalition; Obesity Health Alliance; Sustainable Soils Alliance; Trade Justice Movement; and Wildlife and Countryside Link. Our connections and work with such organisations is described in more detail [here](#).

Across the UK Nations, we work with sister organisations: Food Sense Wales; Nourish Scotland; and Nourish Northern Ireland. We also work with over 90 UK towns, cities and regions and their Sustainable Food Place partnerships and/or food poverty alliances and/or local authorities; the London Food Board; and our newsletters have over 65,000 sign-ups, with tens of thousands more followers via social media.

Sustain coordinates the Food Learning Forum, working with a range of food, farming and community sector organisations to learn about and tackle issues of common concern. Further, Sustain leads the organisation of public webinars and training workshops for FoodSHIFT 2030, the Europe-wide programme which looks at food system transformation. Sustain works with many partners within the project, which is comprised of 7 municipalities, 7 NGOs and 7 research institutes in 12 European countries. Sustain has also helped recruit a further 33 city regions and food partnerships in Europe to the FoodShift2030 consortium, building

up an international network of solidarity upon which Sustain leans on to build and promote the training workshops.

## Interested in becoming a Sustain member?

If your organisation is interested in becoming a Sustain alliance member or observer, download an application form at: [www.sustainweb.org/membership](http://www.sustainweb.org/membership) or email the Sustain team on [sustain@sustainweb.org](mailto:sustain@sustainweb.org) to speak to Chief Executive Kath Dalmeny for a conversation about how to get involved. When you submit an application, this is reviewed by the Sustain team and we may ask you for further information or clarification; we will make an initial assessment, ask you any questions necessary for clarification, and take it to the Sustain Council of Trustees with a recommendation (the Council is elected by Sustain's members). If they approve your application, this will be circulated to Sustain members via our alliance newsletter Digest for any comments or questions before ratification.

If your work is local or international rather than national, or you are an individual or represent a company or other profit-making organisation, you may prefer to get involved with a specific project or campaign, get on one or more of our mailing lists, publicise your healthy and sustainable food and farming events on our events calendar, or join a project or campaign advisory Working Party. Get in touch and we'll help you decide how best to join in and share your unique perspectives.

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Find out about Sustain membership here: [www.sustainweb.org/membership/become\\_a\\_sustain\\_member/](http://www.sustainweb.org/membership/become_a_sustain_member/)  
Join one or more of Sustain's mailing lists here: [www.sustainweb.org/email/](http://www.sustainweb.org/email/)

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“ Food Sense Wales has developed a strong relationship with Sustain over the last five years, working on programmes such as Sustainable Food Places, Food Power and Bridging The Gap. Now, as a new member of the Sustain Alliance, we look forward to drawing on the broader support of the group as well as offering up our own experiences from Wales as we head into ever increasingly and challenging times for the Food System.”

**Katie Palmer**, Programme Manager at Food Sense Wales

“ Sustain has an incredible track record of advocating for fairer and more sustainable food systems and has continually raised awareness of the importance of the law in transforming food systems for the better. We share the alliance's belief that systemic change in agriculture, fisheries and land management is crucial if the UK is to address the critical environmental issues that we now face. We look forward to working together to deliver a shared vision for sustainable agriculture and food systems across the UK.”

**Laura Clarke**, Chief Executive of ClientEarth

# What people say about us...

"You all managed to pull off a great event. It was an absolute honour for us to be a part of it. I want to extend my appreciation for the opportunity to contribute. I was really impressed with the diversity of contributions, I honestly wouldn't have ever dreamt of seeing such representation on stage. I am in awe of the young people's confidence too."

**Dr Kawther Hashem, speaker and participant in the Children's Food Campaign Summit in Leeds**

"Observing the development of the Sustainable Food Places programme has been a source of pleasure and pride for me personally, seeing it grow from the initial cohort of just six cities to what it is now, shaping perceptions of what a good food system can look like and attracting international attention. Thanks to all involved for your hard work and commitment in making that happen, and I hope that the work will continue for a long time into the future."

**Laurence Scott, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation**

"A big thanks from me to all of you for giving me a platform for this work. I thought the event went well. I could have listened to you all day, Ben."

**Dr Adrian Morley, Research Fellow (Sustainable Food Systems), Manchester Metropolitan University, following event chaired by Sustain Deputy Chief Executive Ben Reynolds on sustainable food supply chains**

"Key work delivered with passion. Terrific."

**Environmental Health Officer attending Sustain's presentation on HFSS regulation at CIEH conference**

"My copy of Knead to Know more has been invaluable in setting up my business."

**Dave Stewart, Dr Dough, commenting on the Real Bread Campaign's guide to setting up a micro-bakery**

"I love that Sourdough September has become a global event. It gives people all over the world the opportunity to connect with each other in the present, through a tradition from our past which will continue to nourish us in the future. Thank you!"

**Sibyl Leon, BREAD Encounters, USA**

"Good to Grow is a fantastic initiative that supports and enables community food-growing projects to access their communities. It is a vital resource which should be available across the country."

**Community growing network coordinator, following network coordinator peer group meeting**

"The interactive [Healthy Start] map is really helpful and a screenshot with our area highlighted will; be making its way to our upcoming 'financial resilience' training resource."

**Milly Carmichael, Health Improvement Officer – Food Poverty, Bath and North East Somerset Council**

"Thanks for all the advocacy you are doing on behalf of everyone!"

**Claire Mellon, Programme Officer (Children's), Division of Public Health, Leicester City Council**

"Throughout the past 2 years, I've always found the Healthy Start emails insightful and the campaigns from Sustain impactful. So many people's lives have been made better thanks to the amazing work you do."

**Organiser of East of England community food co-op**

"Support from Sustainable Food Places has enabled us to leverage further funds for this work and we have secured £13,000 of funding from PHEE to develop our Food Poverty Training with a specific module focused on HSV. This will include better information for retailers and will also be targeted to local veg box suppliers to support them to access the scheme."

**Fiona, Oxfordshire Food Partnership**

"Such a fantastic day, I really enjoyed myself and it was great to feel part of such a positive movement. Brilliantly put together."

**Feedback from food partnership coordinator on Sustainable Food Places Day of Action and Celebration**

"Thank you for inviting Richard to Sustain's event in Parliament this morning. Richard enjoyed listening to the fantastic work being done by Sustain and your local partners across the UK."

**Richard Burgon MP's office following Sustainable Food Places Day of Celebration and Action**

"I want to offer my sincere thanks for this session. So encouraging to see how UK Local Authorities are already seeing the need to develop coherence across food, nature and climate policy and the opportunities for 'good food' to drive multi-stakeholder co-production/ mobilisation."

**David Edwards, Director of Food Strategy, WWF**

"Thanks for a really excellent webinar on the cost of living crisis yesterday. It was so good to hear from other food partnerships about how they are responding and feel a sense of solidarity amidst it all."

**Food Partnership Coordinator**

"Great to hear about all the great practices happening around the country on using planning as a tool for creating sustainable food systems."

**Participant in food and planning webinar**

"Thank you so much for all your support this last year – the inter-council network is so useful for our work."

**Alice Laughton, Kensington & Chelsea Council**

"We really value all the work you've done particularly bringing councils together, great training opportunities, campaigns and networking people."

**Ruth Arnott, Southwark Council**

"Great feedback from the students. Very positive in their comments. Relevant, interesting, well delivered."

**Feedback from course leader after talk by Sustainable Farming Officer James Woodward to trainee Cordon Bleu chefs about farmer-friendly sourcing**

"Your session was the best session I went to across the two days. How you ran it, the panel and breadth of views you covered. I know there is a lot of prep for these sessions, so wanted to thank you and your team."

**Sustain farming policy session participant, Oxford Real Farming Conference January 2023**

"Thanks for organising an excellent visit which has definitely generated interest with the Councillors who attended and will hopefully lead to identification of a suitable site in Enfield!"

**Enfield Council officer, feedback on Fringe Farming site visit at OrganicLea, Waltham Forest**

"Just to say thank you for sending this through. We were just in the process of putting our response together and I used quite a bit of your wording to support our stance. I hope the coordinated response therefore will have some impact."

**Dan Clayton, Public Health Wales about Sustain's response to the Wales healthy food and energy drinks consultations**

"Your ORFC session on Bridging the Gap was the best one I attended at the whole event." "Me too!"

**Two participants in the Oxford Real Farming Conference, January 2023**

"Congratulations to you all on leading the way on free school meals for all because nothing less will do. We want England to follow Scotland and Wales in introducing FSM for all primaries...and then we can extend the policy to secondary schools! Good luck."

**Professor Kevin Morgan, Cardiff University**

"Thanks so much everyone, what a brilliant and unique session!"

**Nika Pajda, Bite Back 2030, participant in our webinar on the Kellogg's court case**

"Just keep doing more of these events to connect experiences across the country. Great work! Thank you!"

**Fiona Bell, B&NES Affordable Food Network, feedback on Good to Grow webinar**

"I have just used the calculator tool and it's really helpful. Thank you for providing this."

**Caroline Macalese, BANES Council, feedback on Healthy Start shortfall calculator**

"We are doing a lot of campaigning at the moment and promotion so it will be good to use the calculator to see the additional monies going to families."

**Deniece Dobson, Luton Council, feedback on Healthy Start shortfall calculator**

"This event was wonderful, thank you to all the organisers. It was great to hear that the work we are doing locally in Bury has sparked interested with other food partnerships, and has been referenced in strategy development. I have never walked into a room before and be asked wow are you Bury!"

**Participant feedback on Sustainable Food Places Annual Conference**

"Thanks so much for arranging today's launch. Marsha was really happy to attend and be part of the campaign. Thanks once again for all your brilliant work."

**Office of Marsha de Cordova MP, following Say Yes campaign launch**

"Brilliant – thank you v v much."

**Baroness Rosie Boycott on receiving our REUL briefing**

"Sustain's work is fantastic!"

**Therese Angharad James, MSc Environmental Health student, following Sustain presentation at CIEH practitioner conference**

# Internal developments

## Sustain's governance

Sustain is governed by its membership, which is open to national organisations that do not distribute profits to private shareholders and thus operate in the public interest. Members must be wholly or partly interested in food and/or farming issues and support the general aims and work of the alliance.

Sustain's membership usually meets once a year in a general session at the Annual Conference, with business matters of the Annual General Meeting undertaken electronically to enable diverse and inclusive participation, including for geographically dispersed people and organisations. Many alliance members also attend a range of specialist policy and project working party meetings, which are chaired either by a Sustain Council member or an expert representative of a member organisation, as well as specialist events tackling issues of common concern. Sustain Council members are elected by the membership (and a minimum of one third of the Council must stand down each year) to form a governing body of up to 15 Trustee places. Trustees also offer up to 5 role-share places to support new talent and diversity in leadership. This opportunity is now routinely part of our Trustee recruitment and election process, clearly signalling our intention to welcome and support young people from diverse backgrounds. Following Council of Trustee elections in December 2022, we were proud to celebrate the fact that our 'role-shares for cultivating diverse new talent and leadership', has resulted in two people transitioning to Board-level representatives in their own right.

All Trustees and role-shares declare any relevant financial interests when they are elected, and at the beginning of each quarterly meeting, and these interests are publicly available on Sustain's website.

Sustain's Council of Trustees meets quarterly to guide the work of the alliance, subject to approval by the members. As the Trustees are drawn from Sustain's membership, all of whom are third-sector organisations, they are already familiar with structures and governance in this sector. Quarterly meetings of Sustain's Council of Trustees were held either online or hybrid throughout the year. We will encourage at least one meeting fully in-person each year, to enable connections and a chance for Trustees to meet the staff team.

Once again, we refreshed our 'adoption of roles' system to identify a Lead Trustee for key areas of our work, with valuable contributions such as:

- Serving on interview panels for new jobs and staff at Sustain
- Chairing events and working parties
- Providing expert and 'critical friend' comments on policies and documents
- Connecting us with excellent contributors, especially experts from diverse backgrounds, identities and expertise, on food, farming and movement-building issues

In line with Charity Commission guidance, Trustees continued to note at each meeting that the arrangements enabled satisfactory discussion and scrutiny of the matters to be addressed.

For the third year running, Sustain's AGM business and voting procedures were undertaken wholly by electronic communications (email), with the prior approval of our auditor, in line with advice from the Charity Commission. We continue to find this an efficient and inclusive process, enabling high levels of participation and greater likelihood of quoracy.

## Managing changing times

With more activities and financial transactions now undertaken remotely, we continued to implement and review robust systems for ensuring that our systems are fully secure. We continued to implement sign-off procedures with in-built double and triple checks for authenticity. This has served us well. In the wider world, there has once again been yet more growth in hacking attempts, phishing and fraud. However, Sustain has weathered these risks and has so far not experienced any serious breach. We remain vigilant and these matters are reviewed regularly as part of risk management, including at Trustee meetings.

## Risk management

Sustain's Trustees reviewed our annual and quarterly risk registers, highlighting key issues that remain at the forefront of our concerns and planning – externally and internally, including:

- World events: cost of living, war in Ukraine, climate and nature emergency.
- Derailment of key policy initiatives – implementation of anti-obesity legislation on food promotion; weak Food Strategy response; ongoing concerns over public health policy; pressures on environment, farm and land-use policies; general lack of food system governance.
- Government and industry resistance to improving incomes for the growing numbers of people experiencing food insecurity and financial crisis.
- Funding vulnerability for strategically important areas of Sustain's work.
- Pressures on staff – time, workload, physical and mental wellbeing.
- HR issues relating to employment contracts, time spent on administration and related matters.
- Virus, malware, fraudulent attack on Sustain systems – which needs constant vigilance.

## Office premises

Coming out of the Covid-19 extraordinary period, more staff have returned to office life for at least part of their working week, whilst still managing continued incidence of Covid-19 and the need for some people to avoid exposure. Many staff have expressed their preference for a mixture of the opportunity to work at home as well as enjoy the benefits of the return to in-person meetings, social activities and events. The phased return to the office has gone relatively smoothly.

Sustain signed a new lease with our landlord Ethical Property Company (EPC), due to expire at the end of March 2023. We have renewed for another 5 years until 31 March 2028 with a 5.3% increase in rent.

## Cost of living increases

As one crisis faded in intensity, we moved into a new world of financial insecurity, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the consequent rise in fuel and food prices and spiralling inflation. We managed Sustain's finances carefully and were able to provide two discretionary payments to all staff to help them manage the increased cost of living, weighted towards those on lower levels of our payscale, as well as a generous pay increase in line with inflation. We extend the most enormous thank you to many of our very considerate funders for providing additional contributions and budget flexibility to help mitigate these increased costs, as well as our Trustees for supporting us through this process, which was a significant area for consideration and review in Council of Trustee meetings throughout the year.

“ Just a note of thanks about this ex-gratia payment and also the weighting towards lower-income employees. I know that it needs careful stewardship to manage such payments alongside recognising cost of living pressures on colleagues, whilst grant conditions don't always allow the level of flexibility that organisations with large unreserved income sources have”

**Member of staff in receipt of a discretionary cost-of-living payment**

## Fair pay

Sustain renewed our annual commitment and licence to declare ourselves a registered London Living Wage Employer; as have our landlords Ethical Property Company, so cleaning and other staff are included. We are proud to be part of the growing Living Wage movement as a key response to poverty, food poverty and health equity. Sustain also promotes London Living Wage accreditation via our Good Food for All Londoners report and league table of boroughs, as one of the key ways local authorities can help to reduce food poverty.

For the sixth year, Sustain's Annual Report contains an independently audited Pay Ratio Analysis. We are pleased to report that Sustain's Pay Ratio is between 2:1 (highest to lowest salaries) and 3:1 (highest salary to London Living Wage), well within the Wagemark benchmark of 8:1 considered to be good practice.

## Sustain staff

Across the year, we welcomed several new members of staff to the Sustain team and launched significant new projects. We congratulate new arrivals for fitting in so well and soon becoming part of the Sustain family.

This year, Sustain's relationship with the IWGB Union developed, after we entered into a voluntary recognition agreement last year. We worked with the Union group to move towards greater use of permanent contracts for staff members, requiring a lot of changes to our recruitment, contract management and financial planning. We recognise there is a perennial challenge within the voluntary sector of short-term project funding and precarity of employment contracts, making it difficult for staff members to feel secure, gain rental agreements and loans, and make life plans. Some of these matters are beyond Sustain's power to fix, but we are committed to do what we can to increase job security, including adapting our fundraising and financial management model to support such ambitions.

This year, we reviewed our annual appraisal process and drew out common themes. A document providing a cross-organisation analysis of the appraisal notes. We will be using these notes and common themes either to inform how we strengthen and embed existing practices and culture, or to improve these.

We continued to embed changes begun in the previous year, in recognition of necessary structures and systems to manage Sustain's growth in size, complexity and influence. We have not previously had formal criteria for allocating various job titles. With various staff changes, we felt it would be a good time to clarify the criteria, expectations, line management responsibilities, job title and remuneration for the role and job title, and also how this relates to other grades and job titles at Sustain.

We created one additional 'Head' role this year – Head of Local Action – a welcome addition to the senior management and advocacy team

## Operational and HR support

We explored a proposal to recruit a new member of staff to fulfil HR, People and Skills development activities. However, due to the large costs associated with the pay increases to take into account elevated inflation rates, and other rising costs, we needed to put this proposal on hold for the time being. We have built in the potential for this role into the new FCR model that we will return to this proposal in due course.

## Skills, mentoring and training

Sustain's senior leadership team benefited from mentoring offered by the Association for Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO), which enabled coaching sessions for our Deputy Chief Executive Ben Reynolds and Director of Programmes Sarah Williams, which they have both found valuable. We also enjoyed the support of Executive Assistant Sophie Davies, a new role for Sustain, supporting Chief Executive Kath Dalmeny with administrative and communication tasks, strategic outreach, organising meetings and diary management.

Our new Line Managers Forum continued to meet regularly, to help develop and enhance our skills, culture and processes for effective line management. A professional trainer from Animo Leadership helped us this year with two workshops for line managers to develop our common leadership values and learn how to manage complex and challenging situations. People with line management responsibilities greatly appreciated this input, helping to embed and communicate good practice and ensure consistency. We also worked together to refresh our approach to annual appraisals and our personal development framework for thinking through skills, training or work experience the person may wish to pursue.

We ran a consultation exercise with staff to gather ideas on what types of training and skill-share sessions staff would like to see offered over the coming year. As well as the traditional webinars and skills-share sessions, we are exploring different types of formats, such as drop-in sessions for media skills, communications and IT skills. We are also making personal training budgets available for external providers, if people find courses or training that they think would be especially useful, with the understanding that it would be helpful for them to cascade learning to other colleagues. We also ran internal skills-share sessions on themes such as monitoring and evaluation; Parliament and how/when/why to engage with MPs.

## Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food & Farming

### Policies and procedures

This year, we continued to update a range of policies and procedures, including:

- Continued to embed Sustain's new approach to employment contracts and contract management procedures to enable greater use of permanent contracts and limit precarity.
- In line with our compliance check rolling process, updated our Whistleblowing policy, Anti-Bullying and Harassment policy.
- Re-enrolled into our contributory pension scheme people who had previously opted out, in line with government rules.
- Confirmed our compliance with GDPR rules and recommended procedures.
- Reviewed and updated our new Diversity Style Guide.
- Started to review our sickness and absence policy, post-Covid.

We undertook a thorough overhaul of Sustain's intranet, including:

- Tidying up the Staff Handbook to make key information more accessible.
- Moving our Line Management guidance and key documents onto the intranet so that all staff can view them, to enable greater clarity and transparency.
- Developed a Recruitment Handbook to document and embed our refreshed approach to recruitment, especially recruitment for diversity.
- Started to plan a 'My Dashboard' function to display key organisational and individual information, which may also enable universal views of key data for senior managers.

We commissioned a specialist diversity consultant to audit our policies and procedures and took onboard a range of changes to our language and approach in several key areas. We also undertook a major piece of work to overhaul Sustain's recruitment and induction policies and procedures, creating a new Recruitment Handbook, especially to embed our commitment to recruitment for diversity.

### Sustain's funding

Sustain needs adequate financial and other resources to pursue our work effectively. The majority of Sustain's income continues to be from charitable grants from trusts and foundations, listed in this Annual Report. Project proposals and funding bids are developed by Sustain staff, in consultation with Sustain and working party members. A minority of Sustain's income comes from alliance membership fees, subscriptions, book and publication sales and generous voluntary donations from individual supporters or supporting organisations. Sustain occasionally actively solicits donations from campaign supporters, usually as part of a crowdfunding drive for a particular publication or activity.

Sustain's unrestricted income is a relatively low proportion of our total income, with fairly limited opportunities for significant increase. Our ambition to be able to find a way of paying for core and cross-cutting staff and services is unlikely to be funded by these means. This year, we reviewed our approach to these roles, requiring us to:

- Review Sustain's full cost recovery (FCR) model and approach to project budgets to understand what level of fundraising and contributions from project budgets is now needed to run the Sustain ship.
- Run the new FCR model and approach past the Treasurer and other Trustees for scrutiny.
- Look at how to incorporate contributions from project budgets to cross-cutting roles and services.
- Continue to look at ways of packaging up various roles and services as fundable in their own right – for example development of online advocacy tools, public affairs support for the alliance, etc.

We are grateful to our funders and partners for supporting development of work on Sustain's priorities, across a range of important themes, including sustainable farming, the green food economy, local action on food and the climate and nature emergency. Multi-year grants from several of our funders, offered in a flexible way, continue to mark a welcome shift in the relationship between Sustain, funders and other donors keen to invest in strategic partnership programmes driving ambitious change in policy and practice. Due to a welcome level of staffing and financial stability, we have been able to continue to pay much more attention to investing in Sustain's cross-cutting capacities, such as communications, public affairs, parliamentary engagement, greatly enhancing our influence and work on the climate and nature emergency.

## Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food & Farming

### Strategic review

Sustain continues to implement our strategy Fertile Future, 2021 to 2025 through a range of policy groups, project working parties and campaign activities. We ran a lively Strategy Day in January 2023 to help us review our progress and generate ideas for the future. The strategy day covered the 'what' and the 'how' of Sustain's work:

- In a session on 'what we do', we set out the wide range of projects, campaigns and cross-cutting themes that Sustain works on, and invited staff to make the connections between them, creating a tangible expression of our work to improve the food system and joining the dots.
- In a session on 'how we do it', we examined:
  - Using our networks to galvanise action
  - Who to prioritise as targets for advocacy work
  - Tools we can use to influence change
  - Building relationships and understanding
  - Strengthening our persuasive resources
  - Building skills in parliamentary engagement
  - Welcoming diverse voices

The Sustain Annual Conference provided an opportunity for alliance members to come together in December 2022 and review what our movement has to offer as solutions to the cost-of-living crisis.

Sustain's annual conference in December 2022 was once again a great success, tackling the question: What food policy solutions exist to tackle the cost-of-living crisis? We thank Trustees, staff members, alliance members and associates for having expertly chaired or contributed to the sessions. A recording is at: [www.sustainweb.org/events/oct22-sustain-annual-conference/](http://www.sustainweb.org/events/oct22-sustain-annual-conference/). Sessions included:

- Conversation with Professor Ha-Joon Chang, economist and author of 'Edible Economics: A Hungry Economist Explains the World', chaired by Ben Reynolds, Deputy Chief Executive of Sustain.
- Panel session: What's been won and lost in the last year? with speakers from the Green Alliance, Independent Food Aid Network and Obesity Health Alliance.
- Panel session: How to respond to the current crisis, with policy solutions offered in relation to:
  - Free School Meals, led by the Children's Food Campaign
  - Local responses to the current crisis, led by Medway Council
  - Finding out what food enterprises need, led by Sustainable Food Places
  - Supporting consumers through the cost-of-living crisis, led by Which?
  - Fairness in the food supply chain, led by the Sustainable Farming Campaign
  - Good Food Nation and Healthy Basket Guarantee, led by Nourish Scotland
- Parliamentary panel: What do we need from policy makers? Chaired by Sheila Dillon, food journalist and presenter of BBC Radio 4's The Food Programme, with:
  - Daniel Zeichner, Labour MP for Cambridge and Shadow Minister for Food and Farming
  - Jo Gideon, Conservative MP for Stoke-on-Trent Central and former Chair of the APPG on the National Food Strategy
  - Munira Wilson, Lib Dem MP for Twickenham and Lib Dem spokesperson for Education

# Financial review

The Council of Trustees (who are the Directors of the Charity for company law purposes) present their report and the audited financial accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023. The Trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the requirements of the Charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

The fund balance carried forward at 31 March 2023 was £648,167 (2022: £687,948) on unrestricted general reserves. The designated reserves at 31 March 2023 was £246,233 (2022: £185,267). The restricted reserves on continuing projects were £232,740 at 31 March 2023 (2022: £209,351). The full Statement of Financial Activities is set out in the accounts below.

## Reserves policy

In accordance with guidelines from the Charity Commissioners, the Trustees have adopted a reserves policy that should ensure that: Excluding those funds represented by fixed assets, general reserves do not exceed more than six months' anticipated expenditure. The Trustees review amounts regularly, monitor progress in relation to target levels quarterly, and deemed in the financial year covered by this report that there were adequate funds to ensure the charity was able to meet all current, known and some estimated possible future liabilities.

## Investment policy

Under the memorandum and articles of association, the charity has the power to invest the monies of the company not immediately required for the furtherance of its objects in or upon such investments, securities or property as may be thought fit, subject nevertheless to such condition (as any) and such consents (if any) as may for the time being be imposed or required by law. At the present time, the Trustees' policy is to maintain such monies on deposits earning a market rate of interest, in a bank or banks with ethical credentials. No further 'social investment' is currently planned.

## Risk management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the company is exposed, in particular those related to operations and finances of the company, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to major risks. The Sustain rolling risk register and risk management process, reviewed formally at least quarterly by Trustees and Sustain's senior management team, and additionally as necessary, considers possible risks and prudent ways to avoid such risks arising, as well as mitigation should problems occur, grouped under the following broad themes:

- Covid-19 Coronavirus pandemic;
- Good governance – financial and organisational;
- Weathering ongoing turbulence and uncertainty in UK politics, economics and international political and trading relationships, posing financial and strategic risks;
- Meeting Sustain's objectives;
- Securing sufficient income;
- Controlling expenditure;
- Addressing staffing issues;
- Supporting diversity, equity, inclusion and racial justice;
- Tackling challenges specific to alliances;
- Protecting Sustain's reputation;
- Ensuring regulatory compliance;
- Avoiding or handling disputes;
- Mitigating administrative burdens.

## Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food & Farming

### Trustees' responsibilities

Company and charity law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its financial activities for that year. In preparing those accounts, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts;
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the company has appropriate systems of control, financial or otherwise. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and which enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### Setting staff pay

Sustain operates a fair and transparent fixed salary scale for setting staff pay, including key management personnel – the persons with authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. This salary scale cannot be changed without Trustee approval. Sustain's salary scale is grouped under four ascending grades – Administrative and Project Officer; Project Coordinator; Senior Manager; Chief Executive. New recruits start at the salary grade suited to their post, as advertised, and usually at entry level for that grade. Subject to satisfactory annual appraisal, staffs move up a salary level within their grade until the top level is reached. On the exceptional occasions when a new recruit has the experience and credentials to warrant appointment at a higher salary than the entry level for their grade, this offer and decision remains in line with the standard salary scale, except starting at a higher level, and with the knowledge and agreement of at least one Sustain Trustee, who has usually participated in the recruitment process. In addition

to the salary scale, salaries (and hence the levels in the salary scale) also rise in line with inflation, calculated annually on the actual inflation rate in the preceding year.

As a not-for-profit organisation and registered charity, Sustain covers normal expenses, requires evidence of such claims and expenditure and keeps good records. Sustain does not make ex gratia payments to staff, nor does it pay bonuses to staff.

### Fair pay

Sustain is a registered Living Wage Employer, committed to paying at least the Living Wage or the London Living Wage, as calculated by the Living Wage Foundation, which reflects the cost of living. This year, we have also continued to apply a Pay Ratio analysis as part of the Annual Report process, seeking to ensure that Sustain maintains a fair pay ratio between the highest and lowest earners, benchmarked against sector good practice.

### Public benefit

The Trustees are aware of Charity Commission guidance on public benefit reporting as set out in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011. They believe Sustain fulfils a fundamental public benefit by promoting both the health and welfare of people and animals, improving the environment and promoting sustainable development. How Sustain achieves these objectives is described in more detail throughout this annual report and on the Sustain website.

### Auditors

So far as the directors (Trustees) are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware. Additionally, the directors have taken all of the necessary steps that they ought to, as directors, to make themselves aware of all the relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information. A proposal to re-appoint Goldwins as auditors for the forthcoming year will be put forward at the Annual General Meeting.

This report was approved by the Council of Trustees on 29 November 2023 and signed on its behalf, by:



**Professor Mike Rayner**  
Chair of the Council of Trustees

# Auditor's report

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food and Farming (the 'Charity') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, statement of cash flows and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice)..

### Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

## Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

## Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Auditor's report

## Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Annual Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

## Responsibilities of the trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the Charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

## Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
  - identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.

## Auditor's report

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [[www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities)]. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

## Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



**Anthony Epton (Senior Statutory Auditor)**

for and on behalf of

Goldwins Limited  
Statutory Auditor  
Chartered Accountants  
75 Maygrove Road  
West Hampstead  
London NW6 2EG

29 November 2023

# Statement of financial activities

(incorporating and income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2023

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2023 Total funds	2022 Total funds
	Note	£	£	£	£
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	2	23,941	19,156	<b>43,097</b>	50,000
Charitable activities					
Health and Welfare	3	390,292	1,388,639	<b>1,778,931</b>	1,522,799
Investments	4	4,422	–	<b>4,422</b>	670
<b>Total income</b>		<b>418,655</b>	<b>1,407,795</b>	<b>1,826,450</b>	<b>1,573,469</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	5	18,455	–	<b>18,455</b>	18,094
Charitable activities					
Health and Welfare	5	356,234	1,407,187	<b>1,763,421</b>	1,449,885
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>374,689</b>	<b>1,407,187</b>	<b>1,781,876</b>	<b>1,467,979</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments</b>		<b>43,966</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>44,574</b>	<b>105,490</b>
Net gains / (losses) on investments		–	–	–	–
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the year</b>	6	<b>43,966</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>44,574</b>	<b>105,490</b>
Transfers between funds		(22,781)	22,781	–	–
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before other recognised gains and losses</b>		<b>21,185</b>	<b>23,389</b>	<b>44,574</b>	<b>105,490</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>21,185</b>	<b>23,389</b>	<b>44,574</b>	<b>105,490</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		873,215	209,351	<b>1,082,566</b>	977,076
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>894,400</b>	<b>232,740</b>	<b>1,127,140</b>	<b>1,082,566</b>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 17 to the financial statements.

## Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food &amp; Farming

**Balance sheet****As at 31 March 2023**

	Note	£	2023 £	£	2022 £
<b>Fixed assets:</b>					
Tangible assets	11		-		-
			<u>-</u>		<u>-</u>
<b>Current assets:</b>					
Debtors	12	364,782		102,196	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,302,232		1,471,539	
			<u>1,667,014</u>	<u>1,573,735</u>	
<b>Liabilities:</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	539,874		491,169	
			<u>1,127,140</u>	<u>1,082,566</u>	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<u>1,127,140</u>	<u>1,082,566</u>	
<b>Total net assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>1,127,140</u>	<u>1,082,566</u>	
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>	17				
Restricted income funds			232,740		209,351
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		246,233		185,267	
General funds		648,167		687,948	
			<u>894,400</u>	<u>873,215</u>	
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>			<u>894,400</u>	<u>873,215</u>	
<b>Total charity funds</b>			<u>1,127,140</u>	<u>1,082,566</u>	

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the trustees on 29 November 2023 and signed on their behalf by



Professor Michael Rayner  
Chair



Victoria Williams  
Treasurer

# Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	2023	2022
		£	£
Cash flows from operating activities	18		
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities		(173,729)	336,405
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		4,422	670
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities		4,422	670
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(169,307)	337,075
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,471,539	1,134,464
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	19	1,302,232	1,471,539

# Notes to the financial statements

## For the year ended 31 March 2023

### 1 Accounting policies

#### a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102 – effective 1 January 2015) – (Charities SORP FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

#### b) Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. Key judgements that the charitable company has made which have a significant effect on the accounts. The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

#### c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

#### d) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

#### e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

#### f) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

**1 Accounting policies (continued)****g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services, undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

**h) Allocation of support costs**

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure.

Where such information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is also provided to potential donors, activity costs are apportioned between fundraising and charitable activities on the basis of area of literature occupied by each activity.

**i) Operating leases**

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

**j) Tangible fixed assets**

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Office equipment	25% straight line
------------------	-------------------

**k) Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

**l) Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account. Cash balances exclude any funds held on behalf of service users.

**m) Creditors and provisions**

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

**n) Financial instruments**

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

**o) Pensions**

The charity operates workplace pension scheme.

**2 Income from donations and legacies**

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023 Total	2022 Total
	£	£	£	£
Donations	23,941	19,156	<b>43,097</b>	50,000
Total income from donations 2023	<b>23,941</b>	<b>19,156</b>	<b>43,097</b>	50,000
Total income from donations 2022	40,296	9,704	50,000	

**3 Income from charitable activities**

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023 Total	2022 Total
	£	£	£	£
<b>Grant income</b>				
AIM Foundation	-	14,584	<b>14,584</b>	10,417
Ashden Trust	-	-	-	22,486
BIG grant	-	24,946	<b>24,946</b>	87,986
City Bridge Trust	-	83,000	<b>83,000</b>	84,500
Connect Fund (Barrow Cadbury Trust)	-	6,733	<b>6,733</b>	-
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (various)	110,000	-	<b>110,000</b>	102,450
European Climate Foundation	-	33,333	<b>33,333</b>	-
European Union	-	56,457	<b>56,457</b>	-
Farming the Future	-	49,969	<b>49,969</b>	47,534
Friends Provident Foundation	-	33,894	<b>33,894</b>	31,535
Greater London Authority (various)	-	36,500	<b>36,500</b>	126,840
Guy's and St Thomas' Charity	-	284,901	<b>284,901</b>	112,639
Heart of Bucks	-	-	-	8,407
Hull City Council	-	-	-	23,100
John Ellerman Foundation	-	-	-	41,667
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	-	28,750	<b>28,750</b>	50,000
Kenneth Miller Trust	-	26,458	<b>26,458</b>	60,000
Lancashire County Council	-	12,500	<b>12,500</b>	12,500
London Borough of Southwark	-	-	-	5,950
National Lottery Community Fund (Growing Great Ideas)	-	214,575	<b>214,575</b>	-
Oak Foundation (various)	-	154,400	<b>154,400</b>	23,076
Open University	-	-	-	4,500
Rothschild Foundation	-	-	-	25,000
Royal Parks Foundation	-	31,317	<b>31,317</b>	30,254
Samworth Foundation	50,000	-	<b>50,000</b>	50,000
Sustainable Food Places (Big Lottery Fund and Esmee Fairbairn Foundation)	-	236,322	<b>236,322</b>	243,240
Thirty Percy Foundation	150,000	-	<b>150,000</b>	150,000
Trust for London	-	60,000	<b>60,000</b>	60,000
Unicef	-	-	-	17,650
<b>Other income</b>				
Conference and workshops	1,953	-	<b>1,953</b>	942
Membership fees	31,225	-	<b>31,225</b>	34,194
Sales and publications	5,585	-	<b>5,585</b>	9,002
Subscriptions	41,529	-	<b>41,529</b>	46,930
Total income from charitable activities 2023	<b>390,292</b>	<b>1,388,639</b>	<b>1,778,931</b>	1,512,382
Total income from charitable activities 2022	395,568	1,127,231	1,522,799	

**4 Income from investments**

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023 Total	2022 Total
	£	£	£	£
Investment income	4,422	-	<b>4,422</b>	670
Total income from investments 2023	<b>4,422</b>	-	<b>4,422</b>	670
Total income from investments 2022	670	-	670	

**5 a. Analysis of expenditure**

	Cost of raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support costs £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
<b>Staff costs (Note 7)</b>	15,886	1,088,358	159,081	<b>1,263,325</b>	1,140,383
<b>Direct cost</b>					
Payable to partner organisations	-	285,402	-	<b>285,402</b>	99,665
Consultancy costs	-	48,309	-	<b>48,309</b>	72,820
Volunteers	-	98	-	<b>98</b>	161
Printing and photocopying	-	8,807	-	<b>8,807</b>	12,961
Postage and distribution	-	7,894	-	<b>7,894</b>	5,769
Travel, meeting and expenses	-	40,635	-	<b>40,635</b>	23,372
Other charitable expenditure	-	38,406	-	<b>38,406</b>	17,441
<b>Support cost</b>					
Telephone and fax	-	-	258	<b>258</b>	25
Office costs	-	-	80,342	<b>80,342</b>	87,582
Audit fees	-	-	8,400	<b>8,400</b>	7,800
	15,886	1,517,909	248,081	<b>1,781,876</b>	1,467,979
Support costs	2,569	245,512	(248,081)	-	
<b>Total expenditure 2023</b>	<b>18,455</b>	<b>1,763,421</b>	-	<b>1,781,876</b>	
Total expenditure 2022	18,094	1,449,885			

Of the total expenditure, £374,689 was unrestricted (2022: £337,277) and £1,407,187 was restricted (2022: £1,130,702).

The amount payable to partner organisations is made up of several different payments – Bridging the Gap Partners (£26.1k); Childrens Food Campaign Partner (£177.1k); Food Roots partners (£19k); Food for the Planet Partners (£36.1k); and Peri-Urban Farming partners (£27.1k).

**b. Analysis of expenditure from previous reporting period**

	Cost of raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support costs £	2022 Total £
<b>Staff costs (Note 7)</b>	15,100	977,793	147,490	1,140,383
<b>Direct cost</b>				
Payable to partner organisations	-	99,665	-	99,665
Consultancy costs	-	72,820	-	72,820
Volunteers	-	161	-	161
Printing and photocopying	-	12,961	-	12,961
Postage and distribution	-	5,769	-	5,769
Travel, meeting and expenses	-	23,372	-	23,372
Other charitable expenditure	-	17,441	-	17,441
<b>Support cost</b>				
Telephone and fax	-	-	25	25
Office costs	-	-	87,582	87,582
Audit fees	-	-	7,800	7,800
	15,100	1,209,982	242,897	1,467,979
Support costs	2,994	239,903	(242,897)	-
<b>Total expenditure 2022</b>	<b>18,094</b>	<b>1,449,885</b>	-	<b>1,467,979</b>

**6 Net income/ (expenditure) for the year**

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Depreciation	-	-
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	46,635	45,968
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	6,700	6,200
	<u>6,700</u>	<u>6,200</u>

**7 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel**

Staff costs were as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Salaries and wages	1,095,023	1,005,809
Redundancy and termination costs	-	4,030
Social security costs	115,804	80,889
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	52,498	49,655
	<u>1,263,325</u>	<u>1,140,383</u>

No employee earned more than £75,000 during the year (2022: nil).

The total employee benefits including national insurance and pension contributions of the key management personnel were £219,088 (2022: £203,544).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2022: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2022: £nil).

Trustees' expenses represents the payment or reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs totalling £0 (2022: £118) relating to attendance at meetings of the trustees.

**8 Staff numbers**

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
Raising funds	0.4	0.4
Health and Welfare	25.7	24.9
Support	3.7	3.7
	<u>29.8</u>	<u>29.0</u>

## 9 Related party transactions

The following declaration provides transparency on related party transactions and, as appropriate, are also routinely declared by Sustain's Trustees at their quarterly meetings and publicly on the Sustain website.

A number of trustees and management team members hold prominent positions in other organisations.

Sustain received a grant of £236,322 (2022: £243,240) via the Soil Association, which is the overall programme manager for the Sustainable Food Places network – a programme run jointly by Food Matters, Soil Association (both Sustain members) and Sustain. Four of Sustain's trustees are members of staff for the Soil Association and Food Matters. The Chief Executive of Sustain is a board member of Food Matters. Furthermore, Food Matters received £26,416, for their role as partners on the Food Roots project (£22,560), as well as for work on FoodSHIFT (£3,000), and other training work (£856). A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for Food Matters. Sustain's Chief Executive is on the board at Food Matters.

Sustain paid the Obesity Health Alliance £65,580, who are partners on the Fiscal Measures project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the Obesity Health Alliance. A member of Sustain's management team is a Steering Group member for the Obesity Health Alliance.

Sustain paid School Food Matters £1,000, who provided support on CFC's Say Yes campaign. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for School Food Matters. A member of Sustain's management team is on the board at School Food Matters.

Sustain paid the Landworker's Alliance £5,500, who are partners on the Peri-Urban Growing project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the Landworker's Alliance.

Sustain received a payment of £200 from the Open Food Network UK. Two of Sustain's trustees are members of staff at the Open Food Network UK.

The Real Bread Campaign also received annual membership fees of £45 from Welbeck Bakehouse as well as the School of Artisan Foods. A Sustain Trustee is the owner and on the board at these respective organisations.

## 10 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

## Note to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

**11 Tangible fixed assets**

	Fixtures, fittings and Equipment £	<b>Total £</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At the start of the year	33,658	<b>33,658</b>
Additions in year	-	-
Disposals in year	-	-
At the end of the year	<u>33,658</u>	<u><b>33,658</b></u>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At the start of the year	33,658	<b>33,658</b>
Charge for the year	-	-
Eliminated on disposal	-	-
At the end of the year	<u>33,658</u>	<u><b>33,658</b></u>
<b>Net book value</b>		
<b>At the end of the year</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At the start of the year	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.		

**12 Debtors**

	2023 £	2022 £
Other debtors	166,733	38,537
Prepayments	4,779	4,779
Accrued income	193,270	58,880
	<u>364,782</u>	<u>102,196</u>

**13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2023 £	2022 £
Other creditors	43,732	5,058
Accruals	8,400	14,360
Deferred income	487,742	471,751
	<u>539,874</u>	<u>491,169</u>

**14 Deferred income**

Deferred income comprises of grants from the following: AIM Foundation £33,495, Guy's and St Thomas' Foundation £87,806, Barrow Cadbury Trust £33,167, Rothschild Foundation £75,000, European Climate Foundation £6,667, Kenneth Miller Trust £11,458, Movements Trust £90,000 and Thirty Percy Foundation £150,000.

	2023 £	2022 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	471,751	296,389
Amount released to income in the year	(471,751)	(296,389)
Amount deferred in the year	487,742	471,751
Balance at the end of the year	<u>487,742</u>	<u>471,751</u>

**15 Pension scheme**

The charity operates workplace pension scheme and has no pension liability as at the year end.

**16 Analysis of net assets between funds**

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Net current assets	648,167	246,233	232,740	1,127,140
<b>Net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>648,167</b>	<b>246,233</b>	<b>232,740</b>	<b>1,127,140</b>

**17 Movements in funds**

	At the start of the year £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Bridging the Gap	-	214,575	(93,313)	-	121,262
Campaign for a Better Food Britain	8,133	53,604	(20,547)	-	41,190
Capital Growth	27,713	114,317	(123,400)	-	18,630
Children's Food Campaign	23,496	346,354	(477,910)	-	(108,060)
Climate and Nature	14,033	134,128	(134,485)	-	13,676
FoodSHIFT 2030	18,667	56,457	(46,526)	-	28,598
Food Poverty	33,165	111,680	(124,027)	10,000	30,818
Local Food Retail	-	-	(1,012)	7,364	6,352
London Food Link	-	22,250	(17,568)	-	4,682
Sustainable Farming and Land Use	50,247	112,813	(150,757)	5,417	17,720
Sustainable Food Places	33,897	241,617	(217,642)	-	57,872
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>209,351</b>	<b>1,407,795</b>	<b>(1,407,187)</b>	<b>22,781</b>	<b>232,740</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds:</b>					
Designated funds:					
Employment Liabilities	125,267	-	-	60,966	186,233
Innovation and Activities Fund	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
Match Funding Contingency	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
<b>Total designated funds</b>	<b>185,267</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>60,966</b>	<b>246,233</b>
General funds	687,948	418,655	(374,689)	(83,747)	648,167
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>873,215</b>	<b>418,655</b>	<b>(374,689)</b>	<b>(22,781)</b>	<b>894,400</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>1,082,566</b>	<b>1,826,450</b>	<b>(1,781,876)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,127,140</b>

**Purposes of restricted funds**

Income that is received for specific projects, as – for example – grants, donations and earned income, is accounted for as restricted funds, with expenditure usually attributed over a specific period of time. We manage restricted funds carefully, keep expenditure under regular review, and aim to keep to the specified budget. If project funds are projected to be overspent for an unavoidable reason, we take action early to reduce expenditure and/or raise more funds to cover the potential shortfall. If we continue to project and incur an unavoidable overspend, a transfer is made from Sustain's unrestricted funds. The balances on restricted funds as at 31 March 2023 arise from income received for specific projects on which some expenditure is still to be incurred in the coming financial year. Each of Sustain's projects is described in more detail below:

### Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

**Bridging the Gap** explores ways to enable people on low incomes to access climate and nature friendly food. The programme will test six approaches to bridging the gap in accessibility and affordability, coproduced with people working in food and farming across the four nations. Evidence from the pilots will be used to advocate for national and local policy change.

**Campaign for a Better Food Britain** (includes Sustain's work relating to Brexit): The campaign helps Sustain's alliance to make their voices heard in important discussions about the future of the UK's approach to food, farming and fishing, particularly with regard to health, ethics and sustainability.

**Capital Growth:** Run by Sustain's London Food Link network, this offers practical support to communities around London to help more people grow more food, and to have greater access to land, skills and growing spaces for community benefit.

**Children's Food Campaign:** Advocates for better food and food teaching for children in schools, protection of children from unhealthy food marketing, high food standards for health and well-being, and clear food labelling that can be understood by everyone.

**Climate and Nature Emergency:** Catalyses large-scale and systematic solutions in the food and farming system as one of the key ways to avert climate change and restore nature, with a special focus on national and local policy, and institutional responsibilities at all levels, for taking measurable action.

**FoodSHIFT 2030** is an EU-funded Horizon 2020 consortium programme involving 10 city-region projects across Europe. Sustain's role is to share experiences of campaigning and movement building on healthy and sustainable food, involving a wide range of places.

**Food Poverty:** Sustain's programme of work seeking to tackle the root causes of food poverty, and encouraging policies and practices that would enable everyone to eat well. This includes:

- . **Food Power:** working with Church Action on Poverty to support towns, cities and rural areas around the UK to implement strategies tackling the root causes of food poverty.
- . **London Food Poverty Campaign:** promoting steps local authorities can take to support people and communities to address the root causes of food poverty 'beyond the food bank'; which produces an annual league table showing London Borough good practice.
- . **Right to Food:** seeking to instate into UK law and good governance the Right to Food, to help our country take progressive steps towards the eradication of hunger, and towards the development of fair and balanced systems for sustainable farming and fishing that works for both food producers and consumers alike.

**Local Food Retail:** brings food, farming and supply-chain groups together to create a plan to achieve at least 10 percent of UK grocery retail market share for local food across the UK. The common purpose is to support food more likely to be produced in nature-friendly ways, give a fair deal to farmers and to deliver healthy and nutritious food, enabling consumers to purchase in-line with their values.

**London Food Link:** The umbrella for all of Sustain's initiatives in the capital. London Food Link (LFL) is a network of organisations and individuals in London who grow, make, cook, sell, save and simply enjoy good food in the capital.

**Sustainable Farming and Land Use:** Advocates for improvements in policy and practice to support better farming livelihoods, more and better jobs in sustainable food production, fair trading practices, and the subsidies, policies and industry practices that would incentivise change towards healthy, fair and environmentally sustainable food production. Also includes our Fringe Farming campaign for more peri-urban horticulture.

**Sustainable Food Places:** The Sustainable Food Places Network – organised jointly by Food Matters, Soil Association and Sustain – helps people and places share challenges, explore practical solutions and develop good practice on key food issues. It encourages public, private and third-sector groups and local communities to work together to improve their food system. Sustain helps the network to run a series of campaigns, this year including:

- . **Food for the Planet,** helping local authorities, businesses and organisations take simple actions to tackle the climate and nature emergency through food.
- . **Veg Cities,** led by Sustain in partnership with the wider Peas Please initiative, to increase availability and consumption of vegetables.
- . **SUGAR SMART,** helping local authorities, schools, restaurants, hospitals and independent companies to reduce the amount of sugar we all consume.

**18 Reconciliation of net income / (expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities**

	2023	2022
	£	£
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)</b>	<b>44,574</b>	105,490
Dividends, interest and rent from investments	<b>(4,422)</b>	(670)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	<b>(262,586)</b>	90,477
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	<b>48,705</b>	141,108
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>(173,729)</b>	336,405

**19 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents**

	At 1 April 2022	Cash flows	Other changes	At 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£
Cash in hand	1,471,539	(169,307)	-	<b>1,302,232</b>
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>1,471,539</b>	<b>(169,307)</b>	-	<b>1,302,232</b>

**20 Operating lease commitments**

The charity has no future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases.

**21 Legal status of the charity**

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

**22 Notes from 2022 accounts (prior year)****a. Summary analysis of assets and liabilities by funds of previous reporting period**

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Net current assets	687,948	185,267	209,351	1,082,566
<b>Net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>687,948</b>	<b>185,267</b>	<b>209,351</b>	<b>1,082,566</b>

**b. Details of movement in funds during the previous reporting period**

	At the start of the year £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Campaign for a Better Food Britain	6,664	44,117	(42,648)	-	8,133
Capital Growth	17,900	134,754	(124,941)	-	27,713
Children's Food Campaign	14,286	197,577	(188,367)	-	23,496
Climate and Nature	-	23,076	(9,043)	-	14,033
FoodSHIFT 2030	69,867	-	(51,200)	-	18,667
Food Poverty	42,840	252,556	(262,231)	-	33,165
Sustainable Farming and Land Use	25,831	160,055	(135,639)	-	50,247
Sustainable Food Places	19,821	311,800	(297,724)	-	33,897
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>203,118</b>	<b>1,136,935</b>	<b>(1,130,702)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>209,351</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds:</b>					
Designated funds:					
Employment Liabilities	109,863	-	2,690	12,714	125,267
Innovation and Activities Fund	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
Match Funding Contingency	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
Total designated funds	159,863	-	2,690	22,714	185,267
<b>General funds</b>	<b>614,095</b>	<b>436,534</b>	<b>(339,967)</b>	<b>(22,714)</b>	<b>687,948</b>
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>773,958</b>	<b>436,534</b>	<b>(337,277)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>873,215</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>977,076</b>	<b>1,573,469</b>	<b>(1,467,979)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,082,566</b>

# Funders

Sustain would like to thank the following funders for their financial support for our work over the course of this financial year:

AIM Foundation  
Ashden Trust  
Big Lottery Fund  
Cara Delevingne Foundation  
City Bridge Trust  
Connect Fund (Barrow Cadbury Trust)  
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (various)  
European Climate Foundation  
European Union - Horizon 2020  
Farming the Future  
Friends Provident Foundation  
Greater London Authority (various)  
Guy's and St Thomas' Charity (also known as Impact on Urban Health)  
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust  
Kenneth Miller Trust  
Kestrelman Trust  
Lancashire County Council  
London Borough of Waltham Forest  
National Lottery Community Fund (Growing Great Ideas)  
Oak Foundation  
Rothschild Foundation  
Royal Parks Foundation  
Samworth Foundation  
Sustainable Food Places  
Thirty Percy Foundation  
Trust for London  
Vital Strategies

# Annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2023

## A Sustain publication

November 2023

Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming, advocates food and agriculture policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, tackle climate change and restore nature, improve the living and working environment, enrich society and culture, and promote greater equality. It represents around 100 national public interest organisations and hundreds more working at local and regional level, and cultivates the movement for change, working with many others at local, regional, national and international level.



Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming

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London E2 9DA  
020 3559 6777

Sustain works as an alliance to achieve our shared vision of a system of food, farming and fishing, in which:

- Good food production: All food is produced in a way that is fair and sustainable
- Good food economy: There is a fair and thriving food economy from farm to fork
- Good food for all: Healthy, sustainable diets are accessible and affordable to all

**SUSTAIN: THE ALLIANCE FOR BETTER FOOD & FARMING**

England & Wales - Charity number 1018643

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# Accounts

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# Annual report

Review and accounts for the year  
ended 31 March 2022



Company registered number: 02673194

Charity registered number: 1018643

**sustain**  
the alliance for better food and farming

# Foreword

This Annual Report reflects on a year in which the Covid-19 crisis transitioned almost seamlessly into a cost-of-living crisis, as fuel and food prices started to increase due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in early 2022. Such developments served to deepen the many challenges now facing our food and farming system, as well as household food insecurity for millions of people in the UK experiencing financial hardship. This year also saw world leaders meeting in Glasgow in the latest round of international talks at COP-26 on the climate emergency.

Amidst such a perfect storm of developments and pressures, the Sustain team has once again kept up an admirable level of project and campaign work, bringing people together in common cause to help secure a healthy and sustainable food future for all. The work we have undertaken this year to support the well-being of our staff members feels especially important in such challenging times.

It is perhaps unsurprising that our work this year has had a strong focus on national policy and the politics of food and farming. Sustain played a major role in coordinating responses to the National Food Strategy consultation, held several well-attended parliamentary events, and ran our sell-out Annual Conference on the theme of Keeping Food on the Political Plate. We were pleased to welcome speakers from all of the

leading political parties, as well as the Chairs of two key Select Committees – Environment Food and Rural Affairs and International Trade.

We applaud the work of our sister alliance Nourish Scotland in all they have done to win a Good Food Nation Bill; and our sister alliance Food Sense Wales in getting so much traction with the Welsh Assembly. By contrast, progress on food and farming policy in Westminster feels achingly slow, fragmented and full of setbacks. Nevertheless, Sustain's farming, climate, health, international trade and public affairs teams persisted in their efforts to keep the healthy and sustainable food and farming on the public agenda, at local, national and – at COP-26 – international level.

Sustain's vibrant projects and campaigns feel like a perfect antidote to pessimism. Sustain continues to cultivate a renaissance in good food culture through community food growing, Real Bread baking, school food standards, sugar reduction initiatives, peri-urban market gardening, and clearing junk food advertising out of our communities. Sustain's work to promote better food and farming fills me with inspiration and hope. I am sure it does you too. Please do join in!



**Professor Mike Rayner**  
Chair of Sustain's Council of Trustees

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## Trustees during the financial year covered by this report:

Cobi-Jane Akinrele (elected 18/12/2020)\*\*  
Lucy Bjorck (elected 09/12/2019)  
Josie Cohen (elected 15/12/2021)  
David Edwards (elected 18/12/2020)\*\*  
Jyoti Fernandes (elected 18/12/2020)  
Mollie Gupta (elected 18/12/2020)\*  
Dr Kawther Hashem (elected 18/12/2020)\*  
Bridget Henderson (re-elected 12/12/2018)  
Andre Kpodonu (elected 18/12/2020)  
Katharine Jenner (re-elected 09/12/2019)\*\*

Shefalee Loth (elected 18/12/2020)  
Jo Lewis (elected 09/12/2019)\*\*  
Raksha Mistry (elected 18/12/2020)\*  
Professor Mike Rayner, Chair (re-elected 15/12/2021)  
Stephanie Slater, Vice Chair (re-elected 15/12/2021)  
Alison Swan Parente (elected 15/12/2021)  
Nick Weir (elected 18/12/2020)\*  
Victoria Williams, Treasurer (re-elected 23/11/2017)  
Deirdre (Dee) Woods (elected 09/12/2019)

Note: Those marked with an asterisk (\*) share the trustee role between two people in their organisation as a leadership development opportunity. One in each pair marked with a double asterisk (\*\*) is the nominated Trustee registered with Companies House and the Charity Commission.

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**Company registered number:** 02673194

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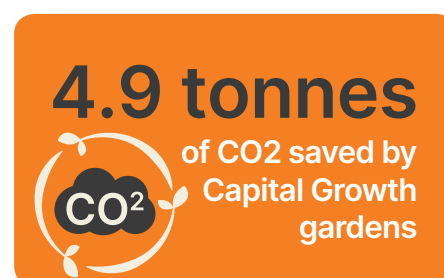
**Registered office:** The Green House, 244-254 Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9DA

**Auditors:** Goldwins, 75 Maygrove Road, West Hampstead, London NW6 2EG

**Bankers:** The Co-operative Bank, PO Box 101, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP and Triodos Bank, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AS

# Our year in numbers

Our projects, campaigns, partnerships and policy work contributed to the following over the year April 2021 to March 2022:



Find out more about Sustain's success stories and achievements at: [www.sustainweb.org/about/working\\_together\\_our\\_success\\_stories/](http://www.sustainweb.org/about/working_together_our_success_stories/)

# Good food production

Our vision is a food production system that is based on the principles of agroecology, that is fair for all who participate in it, and which is connected with its local community, through shorter, localised supply chains, and community food growing spaces, all of which cover rural, peri-urban and urban areas.

Our Sustainable Farming Campaign has been very busy this year engaging with Defra's Environmental Land Management (ELM) teams to push for policies and farm payment schemes that match the ambition for an agroecological UK, achieving good progress on Integrated Pest Management (IPM), agroforestry, organic and other areas. We have generated huge interest and support through delivering numerous workshops and talks at key farming conferences, work with parliamentarians, and surveying 500 farmers in England and Wales to highlight the need for growth in local food supply chains. We also carried out local supply chain mapping work in two counties to help make the case for investment in the localised food systems.

UK plans for international trade deals continue to raise concerns about food and farming standards for many in the Sustain alliance. We partnered with Pesticide Action Network UK and Sussex University to highlight concerns about pesticide standards. This included a parliamentary event to promote our reports and briefings, which the Efra select committee chair, and the International Trade select committee chair as speakers, as well as a senior MPs and Defra officials. We are consistently pressing for proper public scrutiny and core standards in trade deals, on issues such as

climate, biodiversity, pesticides, farm antibiotics stewardship, animal welfare and food standards, with positive reactions from the Committee on Climate Change, the National Food Strategy, Food Standards Agency, and the Efra and International Trade select committees.

At city level, we have continued to champion fringe farming with partner cities Bristol, Glasgow, London and Sheffield, where local authorities, landowners, planners and food growing practitioners are working together to promote productive market gardening in peri-urban areas. Our Fringe Farming policy report setting out recommendations for local and national action.

At community level, our Capital Growth network of over 3,000 community food gardens in London has continued to thrive. We delivered well-attended workshops to improve knowledge and skills to grow food in the city, with a focus on agroecology, biodiversity and climate resilience. London growers helped us to co-produce a handbook on the role of urban food gardens in addressing the climate and nature emergency. Seventy London gardens took part in our Urban Harvest Festival and Good to Grow day of action.

94 community gardens around the UK take part in Good to Grow Day 2021

Toxic Trade report published with Pesticide Action Network and Sussex University critiques CPTPP deal

Joint briefing published for COP-26 climate talks on Delivering the UK's Nationally Determined Contribution through farming and land use

We co-host Conservative Environment Network roundtable on Future Farming at Conservative Party Conference

## April

## June

## September

## October

## November

We support Dynamic Food Procurement group to help farmers get public sector food contracts

Discussions on fairer routes to market held at Groundswell Regenerative Agriculture Show

New twilight sessions held at The Royal Parks for people learning to grow food

Feedback collected on 20 workshops with 300 people on food growing knowledge and skills

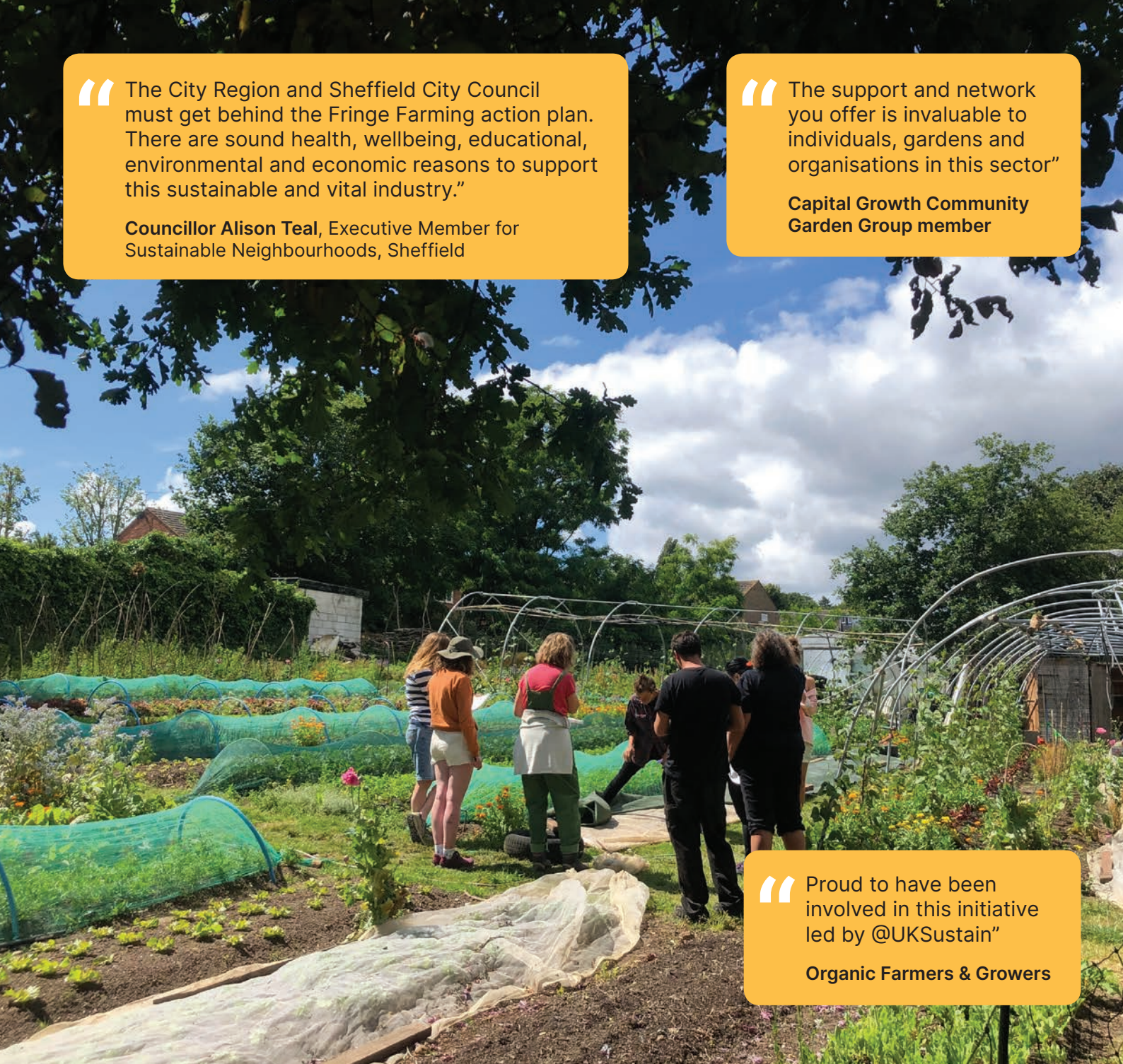
Extensive work continues to engage Defra on Environmental Land Management and agroecology

“ The City Region and Sheffield City Council must get behind the Fringe Farming action plan. There are sound health, wellbeing, educational, environmental and economic reasons to support this sustainable and vital industry.”

**Councillor Alison Teal**, Executive Member for Sustainable Neighbourhoods, Sheffield

“ The support and network you offer is invaluable to individuals, gardens and organisations in this sector”

**Capital Growth Community Garden Group member**



“ Proud to have been involved in this initiative led by @UKSustain”

**Organic Farmers & Growers**

Photo: Chrissy Harrison from Keats Farm delivering food growing training with Capital Growth at market garden in Bexley Heath, credit: Fi McAllister

Fringe Farming and Good Food Trade events held at Oxford Real Farming Conference

Community food growing practitioners meet to explore agroecology in the urban context

Joint campaigning wins support for organic farming, agroforestry, IPM and farmland biodiversity in Sustainable Farming Incentive scheme

We map local supply chain infrastructure in two counties, making the case for investment

19 London gardens recruited to establish a new Community Garden Group

## January

Forty London gardens take part in our annual Good to Grow day of action

Fringe Farming policy report published, setting out recommendations for growth in peri-urban horticulture

## February

Market research undertaken to understand the views of farmers on local routes to market

## March

We submit evidence and give oral evidence to select committees, including EFRA enquiry into UK-Australia trade deal

Partner cities draw up local Fringe Farming action plans with our support

# Good food economy

We want to see fair supply chains support a flourishing diversity of supply, manufacturing, retail and catering enterprises – at home and overseas – that create good jobs and livelihoods; helping agroecological farmers and sustainable fishers to thrive and making good food the easiest choice.

Sustain has continued to catalyse action to stimulate a good food economy, as well as securing resources to increase our work and influence in this important area over the coming years. We have presented evidence for the benefits of shorter supply chains, working with our alliance to make the case for local food. We also developed two exciting new areas of work: plans to create and support implementation of a local food retail growth strategy; and Bridging the Gap, which will work with food enterprises and communities to make agroecological food affordable to all.

In London, we showcased inspirational ethical food businesses in our Jellied Eel magazine and helped Impact Hub's Feeding the City programme to advise innovative food start-ups. We also brought together local authorities to provide peer support on promotion of Good Food Retail, going on to advise Southwark Council on engagement of small food enterprises as part of their food strategy.

Our Real Bread Campaign came out of lockdown even stronger, with more followers and more engagement in Real Bread Week and Sourdough September. Following years of mobilising support

for an Honest Crust Act (to improve bread composition, labelling and marketing standards), Defra established a Bread and Flour Technical Working Group to advise on regulatory review. The crowdfunder for our microbakery handbook, Knead to Know... more, raised over £12k. With the School of Artisan Food using this guide in their teaching, we launched Friends in Knead to help subsidise course places for people on low or no income.

Following our huge success in persuading caterers that serve 1 billion meals to buy only demonstrably sustainable fish, our attention shifted to improving supply to meet demand. Our Net Worth report, and parliamentary activities, made the case for Government investment of £400m per year in sustainable fishing to create over 14,000 jobs and generate £2 billion per year in the UK, for the benefit of coastal communities.

Roots to Work, our platform and communications tool to promote good food jobs, continues to grow. This year, we hosted almost 1,000 jobs from around 400 organisations. This has also proved one of our most engaged communities for taking action on Sustain campaigns.

Post-pandemic report sets out what Good Food Enterprises need

Welsh language version of The Real Bread Loaf Mark launched

12 new and diverse Real Bread Campaign ambassadors announced

Six London councils share what they did with our support on Good Food Retail

Over 4,300 #SourdoughSeptember tagged Instagram posts from over 60 countries promote Real Bread

June

July

August

September

October

Scottish Bread Championship awards recognise Real Bread bakers

Our Net Worth report quantifies the value of sustainable fish buying to British fishers

Joint RSPB-Sustain initiative 'The Case for Local Food' launched with Parliamentarians

Social enterprises pitch their ideas to Feeding the City panel

Our Beyond the Farmgate research shows benefits to farmers of farmer-focused supply chains

“ Do you want to turn your baking hobby into a microbusiness? Because if you do, you should get this book.”

**Dame Prue Leith**, author, cook, TV presenter and Sustain patron, in praise of the Real Bread Campaign’s new book ‘Knead to Know... more’



“ One of our trainees last year went on to an assistant grower job she found on Roots to Work, which we’re all very pleased about!”

**Jane, Plotgate Community Farm**, commenting on Sustain’s jobs service Roots to Work

Photo: Real Bread Campaign ambassador Eddy Sleiman running a Real Bread Week class, credit: Chris Young

Real Bread Campaign co-founder Andrew Whitley wins Slow Food UK ‘Person of the Year’ award

Meeting hosted of London councils to support Good Food Retail

Real Bread Week supports increase in sales for Real Bread bakers

We run Good Food Economy consultation for Southwark Council, as part of their wider food strategy

Good Food for All Londoners measures London boroughs on action to improve food

November

December

January

February

March

‘Knead to Know... more’ guide published promoting baking for a hobby or microbusiness

1,000th organisation posts good food job on Roots to Work since its launch in 2017

Friends in Knead scheme subsidises bakery training for people on low or no income

Major new Bridging the Gap programme receives Lottery funding, to make agroecological food affordable for lower-income communities

# Good food for all

We want to see healthy, sustainable food accessible and affordable to all, through a diverse array of outlets, and for it to become unacceptable and expensive to market unhealthy, unethical and unsustainable produce, over the alternative.

Sustain's major Food Power programme supporting 85 local food poverty alliances over four years, concluded in June 2021. Our evaluation showing that all alliances had valued the support from peer mentors, plus sharing of good practice via events, webinars, toolkits and exchanges. Over 1,000 people took part in our vibrant Food Power Festival in May 2021. In London, we also helped provide enhanced support to local food partnerships in 10 London boroughs to strengthen their responses to household food insecurity.

This year, our Children's Food Campaign ramped up its public campaign and advocacy work for universal school meals and the #FeedtheFuture campaign. Our Food Poverty team also exposed low uptake of government Healthy Start vouchers for fruit, vegetables, milk and infant formula for low-income families of babies and young children. Our campaign spotlighted major problems with digitisation of the scheme, costly telephone helplines, families losing eligibility and delays in processing, as well as calling for voucher value and eligibility to be increased.

In a milestone win for the Children's Food Campaign and many others, legislation restricting location-based and multi-buy price promotions of products

high in fat, salt and/or sugar (HFSS) was passed in December 2021; followed by proposals for legislation to introduce a 9pm watershed and restrictions on online advertising of junk foods.

We also continued to work with local authorities on healthy food advertising policies, following the successful Transport for London policy, and over 70 local authorities signed up to our workshops and new toolkit over the year. With our partner Food Active, we monitored junk food sponsorship deals and advertising at sporting events and tournaments, and polled our Parents' Jury, to produce the report Kicking Out Junk Food.

We worked extensively on the National Food Strategy. The publication in July 2021 included welcome recommendations for further use of industry levies to promote healthy food, as well as expansion of free school meals, Healthy Start and the National Fruit and Vegetable scheme. We are now developing advocacy on fiscal incentives for healthier food. Working with partners, our Veg Cities campaign, which celebrated its 500th member in June 2021, ensured the Government reinstated the school fruit and vegetable scheme for the new school year.

Queen's Speech confirms legislation for 9pm watershed on junk food advertising

70 local areas register for workshop on local healthy food advertising policies

Over 200 people register for Children's Food Campaign webinar on Universal School Meals

Over 300 people participate in Parents' Jury survey on sports sponsorship by food brands

National Food Strategy backs Sugar and Salt Reformulation Tax and doubling of School Fruit and Veg Scheme

May

May

June

July

Our Food Roots Incubator supports 8 boroughs to address household food insecurity

Over 1,000 people take part in Food Power Festival, celebrating interventions on food poverty

Number of organisations registered with Veg Cities exceeds 500

Children's Food Campaign makes case for snack tax as part of the National Food Strategy

Sustain and partners win reinstatement of primary school Fruit & Veg Scheme for 2021/22

“ Thank you for all the great resources Sustain creates – they have helped our food poverty work hugely over the last few years!”

Anna Gavurin, Caritas Westminster

“ What an inspiration you all are. There are so many incredible people and organisations working to improve the food in our schools, and as a parent, your work is really appreciated.”

Jo Dawson, Dental Nurse and parent

Photo: Low carbon lunch event in Sheffield organised by Regather, credit: Sustain

The End Child Food Poverty Campaign scoops Third Sector Excellence award for Big Impact

Sustain and Food Active's 'Kicking Junk Food Out of Sport' gains national media coverage

Transport for London's healthy food advertising policy evaluation shows 1,000 fewer calories in household weekly food purchases

Our public poll shows 2 in 3 adults support free school meals for all primary school children

September

October

November

December

February

March

Sustain exposes lack of action on access to Healthy Start for families with no recourse to public funds

Children's Food Campaign runs policy-maker roundtable on 'A Time and A Place for Treats'

Healthy Food Advertising Policy toolkit launched with policy webinar for local authorities

150 organisations and health professionals sign letter calling for action on Healthy Start

# Local action



Sustain and Sustainable Food Places held an event at COP 26 in Glasgow to call for action from Local Authorities on food and climate change, credit: Sustainable Food Places

Our Sustainable Food Places (SFP) and London Food Link (LFL) networks bring together people and organisations in 80 places across the UK to build a better food system.

We were delighted by recognition of the value of local food partnerships and the SFP programme in the National Food Strategy. During the 2021 elections period, local election candidates across political parties also pledged their support for food partnerships, including manifesto commitments from London Mayoral candidates.

We worked to ensure local action on food is understood as a key solution for the climate emergency. From low-carbon lunch events around the country to a 'Food Talks' special event, our networks geared up to the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, where we launched Food for the Planet, a new campaign to help local authorities reduce the environmental impact of food through action on food and farming.

Our annual Good Food for All Londoners report and league table showed how London's councils are applying key policy and practice to improve access to healthy and sustainable food. We also received interest from other areas of the country in replicating this approach.

Demand for our expertise on local issues has grown. We provided detailed support to planning officers in Pennine Lancashire on a healthy food environment; delivered training to public health registrars in the Midlands on food and climate change; and supported SSW Council in developing a Sustainable Food Strategy. We have also grown our role in guiding local food partnerships to access government funds. Several sustainable food projects were successful in the first round of Levelling Up funding, including the emerging food partnership in Monmouthshire, which received £620k. This year, Sustain also helped to set up the Buckinghamshire Food Partnership, now an independent charity.

Our SFP team finalised a Good Food Movement framework, supporting our networks to diversify individuals and organisations getting involved in food system transformation.

Internationally, Sustain is a network partner in the FoodSHIFT2030 project funded by EU Horizon 2020. Sustain's role is to help participants share knowledge and experience relevant to sustainable food systems and multi-actor partnerships. Average attendance is around 150-200 people from many countries, with some reaching 400 participants. Sustain has also supported recruitment of a further 33 city-based or city region food partnerships to join the network.

## Local action:

# Key moments

## Q1

Local election candidates pledge food partnership support in Hull, Plymouth, Knowsley, Shropshire and North Tyneside

Co-operative Party becomes first national party to back a food partnership in every local area

Vote Good Food campaign wins commitments in London Mayoral candidate manifestos

## Q2

SFP Day of Climate Action: Places organise climate-friendly lunch events involving councillors, food businesses and community groups

Buckinghamshire Food Partnership spins off from Sustain as an independent charity

60 Sustainable Food Places sign open letter to Environment Secretary on food and climate in COP-26

National Food Strategy references SFP and calls for a food plan in every local area

## Q3

30 UK places sign the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration for COP-26

Food for the Planet campaign launched at COP26, coordinating action by local councils

## Q4

'Planning for Healthy Food Environments' toolkit published

28 out of 33 London boroughs show progress in our Good Food for All Londoners league table

“Where local food strategies have already been developed, these have benefited communities and forged partnerships that increased their resilience in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The evidence from more than 50 cities, boroughs and counties that now have a local food strategy or partnership is that they can increase food security in the long -as well as short-term, support improvements in public health and wellbeing, and generate significant investment and innovation.”

**National Food Strategy, page 262**



Photo credit: Glasgow Food Policy Partnership

# Climate and nature emergency

How and what we farm, fish, eat and dispose of are some of the biggest contributors to dangerous climate change and precipitous loss of nature. Sustain has joined others in declaring a climate and nature emergency and our commitment to a fair and just transition. This approach now drives our strategy, priorities and sense of urgency, agency and common purpose.

The food system currently uses up the UK's entire annual carbon budget. To have any hope of tackling the climate and nature emergency, we must transform how food is grown and transported, and what we eat. Sustain is demanding and supporting solutions to the climate emergency that improve our dietary health, tackle inequality, and help restore nature.

Public sector food procurement was a key focus for our campaign activities in 2021, as a key way that public policy and money could support climate- and nature-friendly food, at national and local level. In 2020, the Efra select committee launched an inquiry into public sector catering, with Sustain called to give oral evidence. The inquiry's findings, published in April 2021, echoed many of Sustain and our members' calls, including an overhaul of buying rules to reflect the climate emergency, improved monitoring and enforcement, and the adoption of new 'dynamic procurement' systems that can benefit smaller and agroecological food farmers and growers.

The Independent National Food Strategy, launched in July 2021, agreed with the Efra select committee, and recommended new and strengthened food standards. The government responded by launching a review of public sector food, with public consultation. Sustain set up the Public Food Task Force, with members including WWF, Eating Better, RSPB, Compassion in World Farming and the Soil Association, to advocate for the adoption of the recommendations of the National Food Strategy and Efra select committee. As part of this, we launched the 'Back British Farmers' campaign and e-action in autumn 2021, calling for mandatory standards that support farmers and the environment. Hundreds of people wrote to their MP, several responded, and questions on the topic were asked in Parliament.

In November 2021, world leaders gathered in Glasgow for the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26). We were instrumental in getting several cities, including the Mayor of London, to sign up to the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration. Partnering with Sustainable Food Places, Sustain ran an event on Cities Day, inviting local councils and other sub-national actors to progress 'from

declaration to action' emphasising food as a key way to cut climate emissions and improve health. During COP26, Sustain wrote an open letter to Prime Minister Boris Johnson, co-signed by 50 alliance members, calling for more action on food and climate change.



In September 2021 we launched Sustain's major new Food for the Planet campaign. This is supporting local councils and food partnerships to cut the climate footprints of food locally. The campaign includes the interactive Every Mouthful Counts toolkit, which allows councils publicly to benchmark actions they take to cut food-related climate emissions. During 2021-22, 18 places registered on the toolkit, publishing their progress.

“ Glasgow's Food Growing strategy is one of the most forward thinking in Scotland. The council team behind it are truly committed to working with community growers and allotment holders to implement it, which is so refreshing and makes our work as community food activists much easier”

**Abi Mordin, Glasgow Community Food Network**, contributing to a Sustain blog

“ We've just published a climate change strategy and food is a big part of that. Local authorities can be slow recognising those connections. The evidence is quite clear and I often wish they would come to the realisation a lot faster”

**Councillor Alex Collis, Executive Councillor for Open Spaces, Sustainable Food and Community Wellbeing, Cambridge City Council**

# Parliament and public affairs

We worked extensively this year to coordinate responses to, and inform the development of, the National Food Strategy. We convened a third-sector working group and launched an online hub to corral Sustain alliance responses. We also hosted platforms for partners and members and made it the theme of our Annual Conference, which attracted 340 attendees. The event helped us rally the alliance behind National Food Strategy priorities, including dynamic food procurement and the need for mandatory business reporting and a Food Bill; the latter winning support from senior parliamentarians.

Sustain ran three impactful parliamentary events on matters of strategic importance to the alliance, in partnership with members and generating cross-party interest. These were attended by over 100 people, including over 30 parliamentarians. The events addressed pesticide standards in trade deals, in our Toxic Trade partnership initiative working with Pesticide Action Network UK; launch of *The Case for Local Food* report working with RSPB; and our *Levelling Up food and farming* event, making the case for investment in local infrastructure to help farmers and food enterprises to thrive. Speakers included Efra Committee Chair Neil Parish MP; International Trade Committee Chair Angus MacNeil MP; Shadow Secretary of State for food and farming Luke Pollard MP; Food and Farming Shadow Minister, Daniel Zeichner MP; and participants included a range of backbench MPs, civil servants, and Peers.

Working in coalition with fellow NGOs, chefs, activists and well-known farmers like Jimmy Doherty and Joe Stanley, we led a parliamentary and media push on food standards and trade. Across the coalition, more than 2 million people signed petitions on the issue. While the government has largely ignored these concerns, the advocacy has continued and has been picked up by the EFRA Committee, ITC Committee,

International Agreements Committee, Climate Change Committee and the National Food Strategy. The potential impact on pesticide standards and antibiotic stewardship, which we lobbied consistently on, were picked up as key issues by parliamentarians. We were called to give evidence at the EFRA Committee and spoke at All Party Parliamentary Groups on trade, food and health.

We worked closely with senior and influential MPs in government and the opposition, who tabled multiple Parliamentary Questions (PQs) for us, and helped us secure a roundtable for our members with Farming Minister Victoria Prentis, who committed to an organic standard in ELMs as a result. We also generated over 20 PQs to the Department of Health regarding their botched Healthy Start voucher digitisation process which left thousands of low-income families without their entitlement. Our sustained pressure, helped with national and regional media, resulted in a commitment to backdate vouchers, helping more families with babies and young children to eat well.



# Diversity, equity, inclusion and racial justice

Sustain staff members, alliance members and many other people in the food and farming system have a profound commitment to promoting equity and justice, meaning we want to promote diversity and inclusion across a wide range of characteristics. As part of this we are working towards being explicitly anti-racist and consciously working to remove oppressive and excluding attitudes and practices. We recognise there are entrenched and structural causes of inequity and so want to play a part in tackling these, and to be allies to people and organisations leading the way. In particular, we recognise the extent and depth of racial inequity and racial injustice in the food system and want to do what we can to help address this.

Sustain has made a commitment to publishing an annual report on our progress on diversity, equity, inclusion and racial justice. We include a brief summary here in our Annual Report, but more detailed information is available here: [www.sustainweb.org/about/diversity-equality-inclusion/](http://www.sustainweb.org/about/diversity-equality-inclusion/)

## Good governance and senior leadership

Sustain's Council of Trustees (19 people filling 15 trustee places; some as role shares for leadership development), either continuing in post or elected at the December 2020 AGM, are: two-thirds women; one third Black people and people of colour, as well as representation from people of Jewish, Muslim, Christian and non-theist heritage, and people with diverse identities related to gender

and sexuality, as well as those with long-term health conditions or disabilities.

Sustain's Chief Executive is personally responsible and accountable for pursuing the DEI and racial justice agenda within Sustain, reporting to the Council of Trustees and alliance members.

“ Every Sustain Council meeting I attend is like a masterclass in governance. This is building my understanding, my capacity as a potential future charity leader. I don't think I would have got into board-level matters for quite a while if it hadn't been for the role-share opportunity”

**Sustain Trustee elected to a role-share for cultivating new talent and leadership in 2020, now a full Trustee in their own right**

## Recruitment for diversity

In common with many third-sector organisations working on health and environment, Sustain's staff team is majority White British, majority female, and has more work to do to improve our inclusivity for people across a broader range of characteristics. We want to recruit for diversity, and to help our movement take positive action to welcome and employ more people from diverse backgrounds.

Sustain has started to thoroughly overhaul our approach to recruitment this year, with a special focus on recruiting for diversity, including how we write job descriptions, advertise, run selection processes, interview and induct and provide ongoing support for new members of staff. We have successfully piloted our new Ethnicity Confident scheme, offering guaranteed interviews to people of diverse ethnic heritages, if they meet essential criteria and have told us that they wish to be considered in this way. We will now roll out Ethnicity Confident to all of our recruitment and promote this approach to our wider movement.



Sustain also committed to participate in The RACE Report, and to encourage the environment-focused members of our alliance to join in. The four founding partners of The RACE Report are Hindu Climate Action, Nature Youth Connection and Education, South Asians for Sustainability and is coordinated by Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK), a Sustain alliance member.

## Project and campaign leadership

We have integrated reflection and training on diversity issues into our staff training programme (see separate section on Learning and Skills). We have also started to undertake 'deep dives' with individual thematic project and campaign coordinators to look at the specific ways in which we can address diversity, equity, inclusion and racial justice in their own work. We began with our Real Bread Campaign and Capital Growth community food growing network, which are among our most public-facing activities. The range and depth of actions they have taken as a result are included in our first annual diversity progress report, published in December 2021 (access via link above). We are now developing 'deep dives' with our Children's Food Campaign and parliamentary and public affairs team.

Last year, we updated our funding policy to embed diversity into the way we design programmes and, where we act as a partner or funder, to ensure that diversity and anti-racism approaches and requirements are built in. This year, for example, diversity was part of key criteria for our grant programmes run as part of the Sustainable Food Places network and Food for the Planet campaign.

## Diversity style guide

During 2021, Sustain published our Diversity Style Guide (download here: [www.sustainweb.org/news/aug21-sustain-diversity-style-guide/](http://www.sustainweb.org/news/aug21-sustain-diversity-style-guide/)). It sets out how Sustain writes about and portrays diversity, including words and phrases that we use and

avoid, and how we describe people with a range of personal, ethnic and cultural characteristics. It also covers the sorts of films and imagery we choose to



portray diversity; and how we will provide platforms for people from diverse backgrounds to be seen and heard. The guide was welcomed by project and campaign staff and by alliance members.

We recognise that communications play a big role in influencing people's beliefs and attitudes. Our communications should portray diversity as a normal and positive characteristic of the food and farming system. We should help people feel embraced, welcome and included. Our overall purpose is to ensure that in Sustain's approach to communications, we support, celebrate and promote diversity in food, farming and fishing, and in local and national approaches to building the movement for change.

“ Sharing Sustain's work on the Diversity Style Guide, recruitment and whole approach has been hugely helpful. We're a much smaller organisation, so it's hard to make the headspace and have staff time to start from scratch.”

**Member of the Sustain alliance, participant in the Anti-Oppressive Practice learning programme run by Feedback (in which several Sustain staff also participated)**

## Respecting expertise

Sustain allocated a diversity budget from our core funds to overcome barriers to change and pay for input from respected expertise. Over the year, this has enabled actions such as:

- Bringing in specialist expertise, such as speakers and facilitators, to challenge us out of habitual ways of thinking and doing.
- Paying people from diverse backgrounds and those with lived experience of discrimination or disadvantage – especially those on low income or from cash-strapped groups – to lead or contribute to training sessions, events, webinars and communications.
- Paying for skills and resources to help us communicate about, or portray, diversity in line with our Diversity Style Guide, for example photography and editorial.
- Enabling events and activities that focus on or include diversity themes.

# Supporter development

Sustain's Organisation Development Plan sets out our aim of increasing our number of organisational and individual supporters and the quality of engagement with them.

Sustain's most important supporters are our alliance members and members of the specialist networks we engage with, such as Sustainable Food Places. One of our key Development Plan aims is to encourage higher levels of engagement with our supporters. This year, we ran an audit on our members' engagement with our work to help us identify stronger and weaker areas of interaction, and which members appear to be more or less engaged. This is helping us to prioritise our efforts. Some key findings of his review were that half of our alliance members are part of one or more of our expert working parties; half had downloaded at least one Sustain publication over the past year; and over half had signed a joint letter on a campaign theme over the last year. Over half attended the Sustain annual conference; over half had posted a job on our Roots to Work good food jobs platform; with over 70% receiving one or more of our e-newsletters (with all members receiving our monthly membership newsletter Digest). All of these findings are positive and encouraging, and also helped us to identify gaps. We have taken action to send personal invitations to some members to get involved in specialist work; and to arrange meetings with others to refresh priorities. The one area where alliance members did not appear to be engaging so much was in participating in e-actions (e.g. emails to government) and we will investigate the reasons further, and any changes we may need to make.

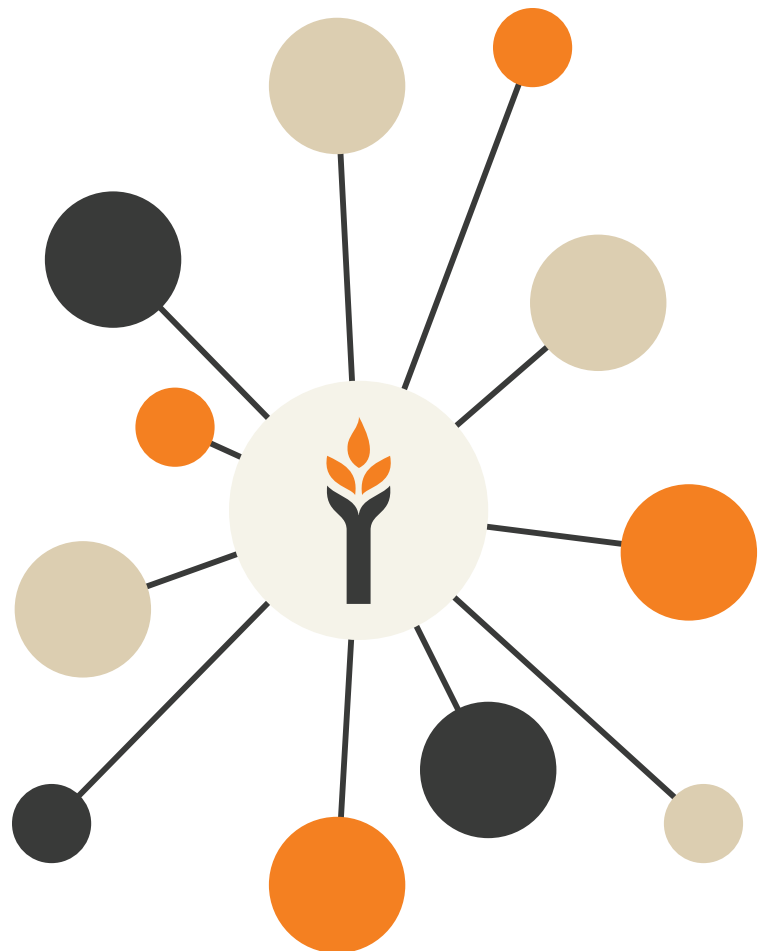
Sustain also has individual supporters – traditionally associated with our thematic projects and campaigns, but increasingly interested in our work across the food and farming system. We have this year focused on building and consolidating our mailing lists and treating Sustain more as a 'brand' in its own right. In addition to a wide range of thematic, project and campaign-based newsletters, we have now developed a general Sustain supporters' newsletter, and prioritised its profile across our platforms. We already have over 1,500 individuals signed up to this in its first months of operation. We have also improved our processes and systems linked to our supporter base to increase numbers and ensure up-to-date contacts, alongside actions to ensure we have a better picture of our engagement with supporters, such as synchronising our supporter data with

other sources of information, including event sign-up information (via the event management platform Eventbrite), all undertaken with due respect to consent and data protection regulations (GDPR).

We have also started to explore how to work in more depth with some of our most engaged supporters working across the country, a group we have called "local changemakers". As this group is diverse in its interests and ability to support our work and the aims of the Sustain alliance, we are now exploring what opportunities there are to provide some systematic support or skills development to help them to be champions for the cause of better food and farming.

“ All roads lead to Sustain when it comes to food and farming”

**Christopher Yap, Research Fellow, Centre for Food Policy, City, University of London**



# Building our communications and reach

Sustain's email list grew by 8,600 sign-ups this year. We received over a quarter of a million page views on our core website Sustainweb.org, with read times up 6% compared on the same period last year, which is an encouraging sign that people are engaging with our material online more than ever. Traffic to our Roots to Work good food jobs platform was also up by 140% compared to last year.

The footprint of Sustain's website and multiple micro-sites has continued to be sizeable, with over 1.25 million page views this year. We took the time to undertake a review of the quality and relevance of content to what people are looking for, which is often highly relevant, but can be variable. Following the review, we removed close to 500 pages of outdated content to improve the quality of visitor experience. We also introduced a new content editor and publishing system to help our project and campaign teams produce the best possible content and reduce dependency on IT and communications staff. This has liberated our expert project coordinators to be able to publish relevant content; and for our campaigners and public affairs staff to be nimble and responsive during important media moments.

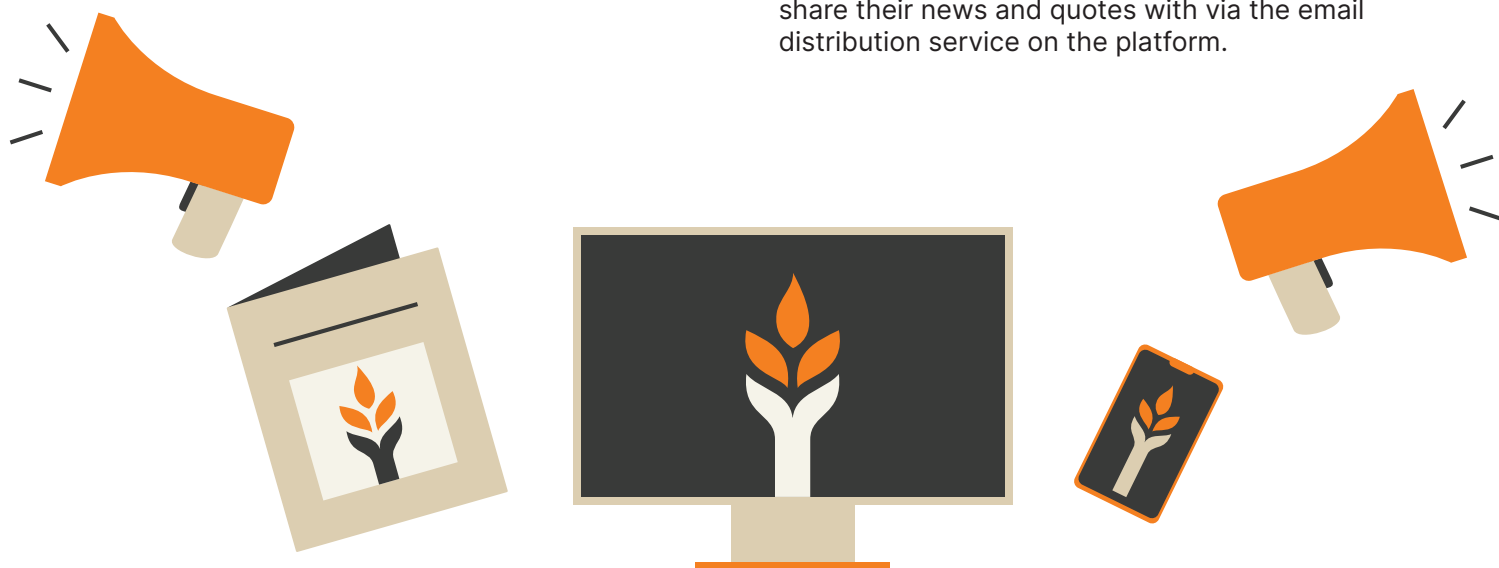
These changes, backed with a new image management system, have pushed our online content up a notch and we hope this will further boost the reputation and reach of Sustain online. We have also introduced functionality to better understand the behaviour of visitors so we can attract a greater number of visitors to join Sustain's supporter database. Currently our

combined mailing list across projects stands at well over 80,000 people, up 7% from last year.

We recognise the vital role of digital communications and graphical representations in underpinning our campaign work and impact. A highlight this year is our data visualisation tool allowing Sustain to display data on an interactive map. Our first mapping shows the amount of money that each electoral constituency is missing out on through poor promotion and uptake of Healthy Start vouchers. This has enabled our Food Poverty team and Children's Food Campaign to make the case with local authorities, councillors, MPs and government ministers for greater support for a scheme that puts money for healthy food into the pockets of low-income families with babies and young children.

We also updated our Good Food for All Londoners interactive map, greatly improving the ability of people to see how well their borough is doing on key food policies and services; and our exciting new Food for the Planet platform, which captures data and calculates carbon savings from local authorities, food partnerships and businesses across the country taking action on food, farming and climate change.

To underpin our improved communications, we set up an account with press and PR tool Vuelio. This gives us access to comprehensive database of parliamentary and media contacts, to help our projects and campaigns with their communications and influencing work. We have created press release templates and our campaigners will be building up their new lists of media contacts to share their news and quotes with via the email distribution service on the platform.



# Who we work with

As an alliance, Sustain is as strong as its membership. Alliance membership is open to national organisations that do not distribute profits to private shareholders and which operate in the public or their members' interest. The organisations must be wholly or partly interested in food or farming issues and support the general aims and work of the alliance.

\*Those marked with a star were welcomed this year as members of Sustain – agreed by Sustain's Council, with ratification by Sustain's membership either confirmed or pending

## Sustain alliance members

Action on Salt / Action on Sugar	FoodCycle	Soil Association
Alexandra Rose Charity	Forum for the Future	Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK)
Aquaculture Stewardship Council	Friends of the Earth	Sustainable Food Trust
Association of Public Analysts	Gaia Foundation	Sustainable Soils Alliance
Baby Milk Action	Garden Organic	The Country Trust
Behaviour Change	Global Justice Now	The Kindling Trust
Beyond GM	GM Freeze	The Landworkers' Alliance
Bio-Dynamic Agricultural College	Growing Communities (and Better Food Traders)	The Orchard Project
Bio-Dynamic Agriculture Association	Health Education Trust	The Real Farming Trust
British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry	Hubbub	Think Through Nutrition
British Dietetic Association	Hyperactive Children's Support Group	This Is Rubbish
Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)	Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN)	Transform Trade
Caroline Walker Trust	International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)	Unchecked
Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience (CAWR)	Keep Britain Tidy	Unison – the public service union
Centre for Food Policy	Magic Breakfast	Unite the union – rural and agricultural sector
Centre on Population Approaches for Non-Communicable Disease Prevention	Marine Conservation Society	Vegetarian Society
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	National Federation of Women's Institutes	Women's Environmental Network
City to Sea CIC	National Trust	World Cancer Research Fund
Commonwork Trust	Nature Friendly Farming Network*	Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF)
Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Network	Open Food Network UK	
Compassion in World Farming	Oral Health Foundation	<b>Sustain alliance observers</b>
Diabetes UK*	Organic Farmers & Growers	Agricultural Christian Fellowship
Dung Beetles for Farmers*	Organic Research Centre - Elm Farm	Allergy Alliance
E.coli 0157	Organic Trade Board	Child Poverty Action Group
Eating Better	Pasture-fed Livestock Association	Community Food and Health (Scotland)
Faculty of Public Health	People Need Nature	Food Ethics Council
Fairtrade Foundation	Permaculture Association	GMB (Britain's General Union)
Family Farmers' Association	Pesticide Action Network UK	Green Alliance
FareShare	Plantlife	Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF)
Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group SW*	Rare Breeds Survival Trust	Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)
Farms not Factories	Royal Academy of Culinary Arts, Chefs Adopt a School Trust	Nourish Scotland
Feedback	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) (covers RSPCA Assured)	Obesity Health Alliance*
First Steps Nutrition Trust	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH)
Food Foundation	School Food Matters	Which?
Food Matters	School of Artisan Food	Wildlife and Countryside Link
Food Systems and Policy Group, University of Hertfordshire	Shared Assets	WWF - Scotland
	Slow Food in the UK	WWF - UK
	Social Farms and Gardens	

Sustain works closely with, for example: colleague alliances and initiatives working on cross-cutting food, farming, fishing, environmental and social policy – including: the Alliance to Save our Antibiotics; Eating Better Alliance; Food Research Collaboration; Green Alliance; Food, Farming and Countryside Commission; Green Care Coalition; Obesity Health Alliance; Sustainable Soils Alliance; Trade Justice Movement; and Wildlife and Countryside Link. Our connections and work with such organisations is described in more detail here: [www.sustainweb.org/about/sister-alliances-we-work-with/](http://www.sustainweb.org/about/sister-alliances-we-work-with/).

Across the UK Nations, we work with sister organisations: Food Sense Wales; Nourish Scotland; and Nourish Northern Ireland. We also work with over 80 UK towns, cities and regions and their Sustainable Food Place partnerships and/or food poverty alliances; the London Food Board; and our newsletters have over 80,000 sign-ups, with tens of thousands more followers via social media.

Sustain coordinates the Food Learning Forum, working with food-sector organisations in receipt of Lottery funds, to tackle issues of common concern. Further, we work with 7 municipalities, 7 NGOs and 7 research institutes in 12 European countries, with Sustain playing the communications and learning role in a Europe-wide programme called FoodShift2030 to promote healthy and sustainable food systems. Another 33 city regions and food partnerships have joined FoodShift2030 this year.

## Interested in becoming a Sustain member?

If your organisation is interested in becoming a Sustain alliance member or observer, download an application form at: [www.sustainweb.org/membership](http://www.sustainweb.org/membership) or email the Sustain team on [sustain@sustainweb.org](mailto:sustain@sustainweb.org) to speak to Chief Executive Kath Dalmeny or Deputy Chief Executive Ben Reynolds for a conversation about how to get involved. When you submit an application, this is reviewed by the Sustain team and we may ask you for further information or clarification; we will make an initial assessment, ask you any questions necessary for clarification, and take it to the Sustain Council of Trustees with a recommendation (the Council is elected by Sustain's members). If they approve your application, this will be circulated to Sustain members via our alliance newsletter Digest for any comments or questions before ratification.

If your work is local or international rather than national, or you are an individual or represent a company or other profit-making organisation, you may prefer to get involved with a specific project or campaign, get on one or more of our mailing lists, publicise your healthy and sustainable food and farming events on our events calendar, or join a project or campaign advisory Working Party. Get in touch and we'll help you decide how best to join in and share your unique perspectives.

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Find out about Sustain membership here: [www.sustainweb.org/membership/become\\_a\\_sustain\\_member/](http://www.sustainweb.org/membership/become_a_sustain_member/)  
Join one or more of Sustain's mailing lists here: [www.sustainweb.org/email/](http://www.sustainweb.org/email/)

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“ Dung Beetles for Farmers is excited to be joining the Sustain alliance as they advocate for healthy and sustainable food systems. By becoming a member, we believe we can further increase the awareness of how important dung beetles are and their vital ecosystem services within UK agriculture.”

**Claire Whittle**, farm vet, from Dung Beetles for Farmers, which joined the Sustain alliance in 2021

“ We have been working closely with Sustain in driving progress on agriculture policies post-Brexit and their support over the years has been invaluable in helping the NFFN become what it is today. We are delighted to become a member of the alliance so we can deepen this working relationship. We look forward to working with Sustain and its many members to drive forward a shared and powerful vision for a better food and farming system.”

**Martin Lines**, UK Chair, Nature Friendly Farming Network, which joined the Sustain alliance in 2022

# What people say about us...

"I really appreciate all the work the Children's Food Campaign team does in this area! We need it so badly."

**Dela Foster, Development Manager, School Food Matters**

"Big thanks to all at Sustain for their terrific support for Dynamic Food Procurement in the public sector. Your support has been a massive help."

**Rich Osborn, Fresh Range**

"Sustain is clearly the 'go to' organisation on all things food and obesity."

**Paul Ogden, Local Government Association**

"We are excited to be partnering with Sustain on the Fringe Farming project. We hope that the additional capacity Sustain can bring will help us to influence key people, and enable us to achieve our goal of setting up a community farm on a former municipal golf course."

**Abi Mordin, Glasgow Community Food Network**

"Thank you so much to the team! It is truly a pleasure. And what an issue, it's stunningly informative, diverse and inspiring!!!"

**Chef Tom Hunt, in response to London Food Link's Jellied Eel magazine**

"The Real Bread Campaign has been an amazing resource for me since I started last year and I enjoy the feeling of being part of the baking community."

**Cath Lloyd Williams, The Doorstep Baker**

"I love it when someone more eloquent than me can put into words what I am thinking. So many points here hit home with me. Phew, maybe I'm not going crazy."

**Response on Twitter to Regenerative Farming blog by Vicki Hird, Sustain Head of Farming**

"I really value the chance to meet, share and learn from members of the forum. Members bring a broad range of ideas, opinions and expertise that we can learn from, which is why the collaborative/feedback/sharing elements are so important."

**Member of the Food Learning Forum run by Sustain**

"Big thank you to Sustain for convening – it has been a really useful group and brought a really vital issue higher on our radars!"

**Cath Ellison, Jamie Oliver Group, participating in discussions on trade and health**

"You were super inspiring! I love what you guys are doing. I love your resources online, and your chat gave me so many new ideas."

**Rebecca Wilson, GoodNESS Project, Inverness**

"Superb essay about ultra-processed food, what it is and what it does to you @childrensfood."

**Dr Chris van Tulleken, on Twitter, about a Children's Food Campaign article**

"Thank you for the very useful blog you wrote on UK Funding. I have used it to create this brief tailored to Wales which I will be circulating around our Food partnerships and Food Power Alliances as well as more widely."

**Katie Palmer, Food Sense Wales, on Sustain's blog about government funding for a good food economy**

"I just wanted to say thank you for all of your time and input during 2021 and what an inspiration you all are. There are so many incredible people and organisations working to improve the food in our schools, and as a parent, to let you know that your work is really appreciated".

**Jo Dawson, Dental specialist and parent, to Sustain's Children's Food Campaign**

"Many thanks for organising this group, it has been great to be a part of and has achieved some brilliant things. I'm looking forward to seeing what comes next!"

**Rulan Vasani, UK Public Health Forum, participating in discussions on trade and health**

"Thank you very much for all the great resources Sustain creates – they have helped our food poverty work hugely over the last few years!"

**Anna Gavurin, Caritas Westminster**

"What a great issue – all aspects of the Real Bread business from the technical to the social, the aesthetic and the commercial."

**Andrew Guest, on the Real Bread Campaign's True Loaf magazine**

"Knead To Know has been hugely important and inspirational book for everyone at Regather. I'm really proud to support the new edition and play a part in supporting the amazing work of the Real Bread Campaign, and of Sustain. Keep up the fantastic work folks!"

**Gareth Roberts, ShefFood**

"Following your meetings, I always feel very inspired to take what I have learnt back to the partnership to implement changes. The incubator covers a wide range of topics which is great."

**Participant in the Food Roots Incubator programme run by Sustain for the Greater London Authority**

"Being part of the network gives us credibility when delivering Sugar Smart workshops and some great resources too."

**Tami Skelton, Food is Fun CIC, Food Plymouth**

"We have many schools and early years settings which are bold and proud about being Sugar Smart. Also it has been a part of our Workplace Health programme so many organisations share their great work with us."

**Shelley Jamieson, Cornwall Council**

"Sharing Sustain's work on the Diversity Style Guide, recruitment and whole approach has been hugely helpful. We're a much smaller organisation, so it's hard to make the headspace and have staff time to start from scratch."

**Participant with Sustain in the Anti-Oppressive Practice programme run by Feedback**

"London food link is a great resource as despite the gloomy news it keeps one grounded on the healthy way to live and fosters a community spirit which is very important now."

**Supporter of London Food Link, a network of Sustain**

"The City Region and Sheffield City Council must get behind the Fringe Farming action plan. There are sound health, wellbeing, educational, environmental and economic reasons to support this sustainable and vital industry."

**Cllr. Alison Teal, Executive Member for Sustainable Neighbourhoods, Sheffield**

"Thank you again for all your support with this project, it really has been transformative for the Borough."

**Alex Britten, Islington Food Partnership on Food Power's support for their food co-op pilots**

"Being involved with Urban Harvest helped us engage with new members of the community."

**Participant in Urban Harvest 2021**

"All roads lead to Sustain when it comes to food and farming"

**Christopher Yap, Research Fellow, Centre for Food Policy, City, University of London**

"Really buzzy and so useful and well-choreographed with the drumbeat messaging around the Food Bill throughout! Well done!"

**Jo Lewis, Policy Director of the Soil Association, on Sustain's Annual Conference**

"Peter was delighted to have been invited to the event – he found it very useful, and hopes that the guests found his contribution of interest. We would be delighted to continue to work with both yourself and your colleagues in the future, and if there's anything else we can do please do get in touch."

**Office of Peter Fox, Member of the Senedd, on Sustain's Annual Conference**

"I know Daniel found the event really useful and enjoyed participating. It would be great to get a recording/note, Daniel has recommended I have a listen as he said there were some great speakers."

**Office of Daniel Zeichner, Shadow Minister for Food, Farming and Fisheries, on Sustain's Annual Conference**

"Hackney School of Food would like to send some big love and huge thanks to Capital Growth for making our open day not only possible but free to our local area as part of their Spotlight Garden campaign."

**Tom Walker, Hackney School of Food**

"You really were absolutely instrumental in getting the Mayor's Healthy Food Advertising policy developed and over the line, so thank you once again."

**Jamie Izzard, Acting Head of Health, GLA on the TfL Healthier food advertising policy evaluation**

"This session has brightened my day and I leave it with a lot more hope than I came with. Thank you."

**David Garlick, participant in Community Wealth Building webinar**

"The Real Bread Campaign is a true voice for all Real Bread bakers. Lovingly Artisan is passionate about our support to the campaign and the future of Real Bread making."

**Aidan Monks, Lovingly Artisan bakery**

"Excellent all round, cannot wait to do it again."

**Christina Nilsen Wheatley, Edible Rotherhithe, reflecting on Good to Grow Day**

"I think what you have done and are doing is fantastic."

**Hilda Mulrooney, University of Kingston, on Sustain's trade and health work**

# Internal developments

## Sustain's governance

Sustain is governed by its membership, which is open to national organisations that do not distribute profits to private shareholders and thus operate in the public interest. Members must be wholly or partly interested in food and/or farming issues and support the general aims and work of the alliance.

Sustain's membership usually meets once a year in a general session at the Annual Conference, with business matters of the Annual General Meeting undertaken electronically to enable diverse and inclusive participation. Many alliance members also attend a range of specialist policy and project working party meetings, which are chaired either by a Sustain Council member or an expert representative of a member organisation, as well as specialist events tackling issues of common concern. Sustain Council members are elected by the membership (and a minimum of one third of the Council must stand down each year) to form a governing body of up to 15 Trustee places. At the December 2020 AGM, Sustain introduced 5 role-share places to support new talent and diversity in leadership. This opportunity is now routinely part of our Trustee recruitment and election process, clearly signalling our intention to welcome and support people from diverse backgrounds. All Trustees and role-shares declare any relevant financial interests when they are elected, and at the beginning of each quarterly meeting, and these interests are publicly available on Sustain's website.

Sustain's Council of Trustees meets quarterly to guide the work of the alliance, subject to approval by the members. As the Trustees are drawn from Sustain's membership, all of whom are third-sector organisations, they are already familiar with structures and governance in this sector. Quarterly meetings of Sustain's Council of Trustees were held either online or hybrid throughout the year, and we will continue with the hybrid in future as this has enabled greater participation and engagement. Meetings are well attended and have been noted as a source of great support throughout the Covid-19 pandemic by both Trustees and Sustain's Senior Leadership Team.

This year, we refreshed our 'adoption of roles' system to identify a Lead Trustee for key areas of our work, with valuable contributions such as:

- Serving on interview panels for new jobs and staff at Sustain
- Chairing events and working parties
- Providing expert and 'critical friend' comments on policies and documents
- Connecting us with excellent contributors, especially experts from diverse backgrounds, on food, farming and movement-building issues

In line with Charity Commission guidance, Trustees will continue to note at each meeting that the arrangements enabled satisfactory discussion and scrutiny of the matters to be addressed.

For the second year running, Sustain's AGM business and voting procedures were undertaken wholly by electronic communications (email), with the prior approval of our auditor, in line with procedures for extraordinary circumstances and advice from the Charity Commission. As we have found this to be a more efficient and inclusive process, enabling greater participation and likelihood of quoracy, we will consider continuing with electronic communications in future.

## Covid-19 pandemic

As for many other organisations in our sector, Sustain has continued to work with our staff team to manage the risks and practicalities of the Covid-19 pandemic. We want to ensure that people are safe, that our work continues effectively, and that we do not generate new problems such as the mental health impacts of working in isolation.

Nevertheless, several people on our team faced especially challenging personal circumstances relating to personal or family illness. This is understandable given the very difficult ongoing circumstances and the extraordinary amount and quality of work that Sustain staff continued to undertake. We adopted a flexible approach and promoting use of compassionate leave, unpaid leave and flexible working arrangements, encouraging people to raise issues and requests, and underlining that Sustain would take a non-judgemental and compassionate approach to any issues raised.

We commend our wonderful staff for continuing to weather a very difficult period with solidarity, team spirit, adaptability, creativity and good humour.

## Managing times of crisis

We took a range of practical actions this year to ensure people maintain personal and professional connections in a productive way, as the Covid-19 crisis moved almost seamlessly into the beginnings of the cost-of-living crisis. With the oversight of our trustees, we implemented a range of recommendations identified through consultation with staff and other organisations facing similar challenges. As a result, we allocated a budget to enable people to work more flexibly in the longer term, through purchase of equipment and furniture to be used at home. We also introduced a new system of risk assessment for home working to ensure that people are taking steps to ensure their safety and wellbeing and are aware of the support available. We continue to speak openly about mental health to reassure people that there will be no stigma for talking about the personal impact of personal, family, national and global events.

We continued to implement and review robust systems for ensuring that our financial transactions are fully secure. We continued to implement sign-off procedures with in-built double and triple checks for authenticity. This has served us well. In the wider world, there has been yet more growth in hacking attempts, phishing and fraud. However, Sustain has weathered these risks and has so far not experienced any serious breach. We remain vigilant and these matters are reviewed regularly as part of risk management, including at Trustee meetings.

During lockdown periods, we continued to pay for Sustain's office premises as if they were occupied. As restrictions eased somewhat, several staff expressed gratitude for being able to use the office (on a restricted basis) to help manage their personal situations. As infection rates decreased, many staff members have returned to the office more regularly and we began to be able to run in-person meetings, social activities and events, whilst maintaining inclusivity wherever possible for those unable to participate for personal or health reasons. We followed government guidance and good practice for Covid risk management throughout, in consultation with the staff team.

We extend the most enormous thank you to our very considerate funders for understanding the need for us to pivot our work and granting us the flexibility to do what we needed to do.

## Office premises

We are grateful to our landlord, Ethical Property Company, for the range of actions that they took throughout the Covid-19 pandemic to support health, well-being and risk management. Ethical Property Company decided to freeze office rents for the coming year, to help their third-sector clients manage economic uncertainty, which is a welcome development.

## Sustain staff

Across the year, we welcomed several new members of staff to the Sustain team. We congratulate new arrivals for fitting in so well and soon becoming part of the Sustain family.

This year, Sustain entered into a voluntary recognition agreement with the IWGB Union. A key development for Sustain, championed by the Union group, is a move towards greater use of permanent contracts for staff members. There is a perennial challenge within the voluntary sector of short-term project funding and precarity of employment contracts, making it difficult for staff members to feel secure, gain rental agreements and loans, and make life plans. This year, we started a major review of how Sustain can move towards more permanent contracts and adopt a fundraising and financial management model that can support such ambitions. We also worked on documenting our procedure to create a more consistent, robust and accountable timetable with allocated tasks for contract management and end-of-contract notification, notice periods and provision of information about redundancy entitlement.

Sustain's Senior Leadership Team received external support during the year to help manage an organisation going through growth, change and times of national crisis. Sustain chief executive Kath Dalmeny undertook a series of sessions of leadership coaching with Susanna Abse of the Ballint Consultancy (also former chief executive of the Tavistock Institute), which she found immensely helpful. Sustain also joined the Association for Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO), which enabled coaching sessions for our Deputy Chief Executive Ben Reynolds and Director of Programmes Sarah Williams, which they have both found valuable. We also recruited Executive Assistant Sophie Davies, a new role for Sustain, who provides very valuable support in terms of planning, strategic outreach, meeting organisation and diary management.

Sustain has grown in size, complexity and influence over the past three years. This requires greater attention to staffing and structure, as described in our previous Annual Report, yet without becoming too top heavy and less nimble. This year, we formalised and extended a level within our job titles and salary scale in recognition of the seniority and responsibilities of key people heading up our sustainable farming and public affairs teams, who are now described as 'Head' of their relevant area.

We established a new Line Managers Forum, to help develop and enhance our skills, culture and processes for effective line management. This has become a useful space for coordinating and documenting our work, to embed and communicate good practice and ensure consistency. One of this group's first joint work was to update the annual appraisal template. We also worked together to develop and offer members of staff a Personal Development Framework document as a tool for thinking through any skills, training or work experience the person may wish to pursue.

Developments in relation to training and skills; diversity, equity, inclusion and racial justice; and in relation to development of our recruitment and staff induction systems, are reported in other sections.

## Fair pay

Sustain renewed our annual commitment and licence to declare ourselves a registered London Living Wage Employer; as have our landlords Ethical Property Company, so cleaning and other staff are included. We are proud to be part of the growing Living Wage movement as a key response to poverty, food poverty and health equity. Sustain also promotes London Living Wage accreditation via our Good Food for All Londoners report and league table of boroughs, as one of the key ways local authorities can help to reduce food poverty.

For the fifth year, Sustain's Annual Report contains an independently audited Pay Ratio Analysis. We are pleased to report that Sustain's Pay Ratio is between 2:1 (highest to lowest salaries) and 3:1 (highest salary to London Living Wage), well within the Wagemark benchmark of 8:1 considered to be good practice.

## Policies and procedures

Last year, we reported on Sustain's growth and restructure, as well as our response to evolving staff expectations. This year, we continued to update a range of policies and procedures, including:

- Ran a staff consultation on Sustain's Flexible Working policy and Working from Home request form.
- Undertook a consultation to refresh Sustain's Mental Health in the Workplace policy and Safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Started work on an extensive process of reviewing Sustain's employment contracts and contract management procedures to enable greater use of permanent contracts and limit precarity.
- Adopted an enhanced Sickness and Absence policy as part of our 'extraordinary period' during Covid-19.
- Created a Menopause policy.
- Developed and consulted on our new Diversity Style Guide.
- Published a toolkit for diversity and anti-racism in developing projects and campaigns.

We also undertook a major piece of work to overhaul Sustain's intranet, which serves as our Staff Handbook, with the wide range of policies, guidance and documents developed over recent years. Further, we have published a range of key policies on the Sustain website to enable scrutiny and to ensure that candidates for jobs can review key employment information.

## Sustain's funding

Sustain needs adequate financial and other resources to pursue our work effectively. The majority of Sustain's income is from charitable grants from trusts and foundations, listed in this Annual Report. Project proposals and funding bids are developed by Sustain staff, in consultation with Sustain and working party members. A minority of Sustain's income comes from alliance membership fees, subscriptions, book and publication sales and unsolicited voluntary donations from individual supporters or supporting organisations. Sustain occasionally actively solicits donations from campaign supporters.

We are grateful to our funders for supporting development of work on Sustain's priorities, across a range of important themes, including sustainable farming, sustainable fishing, the green food economy and the climate and nature emergency. Multi-year grants from several of our funders, offered in a flexible way, continue to mark a welcome shift in the relationship between Sustain, funders and other donors keen to invest in strategic partnership programmes driving ambitious change in policy and practice. Due to a welcome new level of staffing and financial stability, we have been able to continue to pay much more attention to investing in Sustain's cross-cutting capacities, such as communications, public affairs, parliamentary engagement, influence and work on the climate and nature emergency.

## Temporary uplift in turnover

During the previous financial year, Sustain distributed a substantial amount of grant money on behalf of others, to help people and communities most in need, to ease the burden of the frontline response to the Covid food emergency. This temporarily inflated Sustain's apparent turnover by over £750k for that year. Our accounts this year show Sustain returning to our more typical scale and turnover.

## Awards won by Sustain staff

The incredible efforts to mobilise increased food support during the Covid-19 pandemic were strongly in the spotlight at 2021's Third Sector Excellence Awards, as the End Child Food Poverty Coalition scooped the top prize in the Big Impact category. Sustain played a leading role in the coalition, spearheaded by the Food Foundation and supported by many members of our alliance including School Food Matters, Bite Back 2030 and Chefs in Schools. Judges awarding the prize described the End Child Food Poverty Coalition as "a far-reaching, data-driven, successful campaign, which not only addressed the immediate crisis but also brought about long-term change".

The coalition of over 30 organisations mobilised across the UK to call firstly for effective free school meal provision to families at home during lockdown, then for continued support during holiday periods, as well as expansion of eligibility to more children experiencing food insecurity – a call taken up and championed by Premier League footballer Marcus Rashford's End Child Food Poverty campaign.

## Strategic review

Sustain continues to implement our strategy Fertile Future, 2021 to 2025 through a range of policy groups, project working parties and campaign activities.

In between Covid lockdowns, we were pleased to bring Sustain staff and trustees together for a lively and productive strategy day in September 2021 to help us review our progress and generate ideas for the future. We were delighted to be able to visit Oasis City Farm in the Waterloo area of London, and to see each other after protracted periods of working online and in isolation. It was also a wonderful opportunity to meet several new staff members in person, as they had been recruited during lockdown and had previously interacted with Sustain only online. The strategy day covered:

- What we'd like to leave behind, and what we'd like to bring with us from the Covid-19 lockdown period.
- Ideas on what we'd love to see Sustain achieve in the next 1 to 2 years, especially in relation to core themes in the Sustain Strategy 2020 to 2025.
- Organisational Development Plan themed world café, with four themes: Influence; Diversity; Supporters and Skills.
- A session on how we relate to and involve Sustain alliance members and observers.

Sustain strategy days are a chance to step back from the day-to-day project delivery work and for everyone to help shape the organisation's direction over the coming year. We work with a highly creative team, who generate excellent ideas for how we meet our organisational priorities – both in terms of impact on policy and practice; and in terms of staff, systems and operational capacity. We ran sessions on the ambitions we would set and the actions we would take, over the coming year in relation to our Organisation Development Plan themes: Influence; Diversity; Supporters and Skills (details in other sections of this report).

The Sustain Annual Conference provided an opportunity for alliance members to come together and review on of our strategic priorities. On the theme of *Keeping Food on the Political Plate*, the well-attended conference took place in December 2021, online. Given the context of the National Food Strategy white paper being due early in 2022, the conference was a timely opportunity for our network to come together, galvanise momentum

for our ideas and keep the pressure on government to aim for a food bill to provide the accountability framework for change.

Sustain's annual conference in December 2021 was once again a great success, tackling the important theme: Keeping food on the political plate, featuring speakers from across the food and farming sector. We thank several Sustain Trustees for having expertly chaired or contributed to a number of the sessions. Recordings of the conference are online at: [www.sustainweb.org/webinars/annual-conference-2021](http://www.sustainweb.org/webinars/annual-conference-2021). Sessions included:

- Building the case for dynamic procurement and serving better food in our public sector
- Proposals for food governance and reporting
- The political year ahead: Exploring the solutions to keep food issues on the political plate – seven

short pitches from Sustain campaigns and alliance member organisations

- Food legislation in the devolved nations – involving UK Nation representatives
- And a keynote panel discussing the next steps Parliament should take to deliver a transformative food system for people and planet, with cross-party panellists from the House of Lords, Efra Select Committee, Shadow Defra team and the Scottish National Party.



Photo: Sustain's chief executive Kath Dalmeny addresses funders, supporters and advocates at an allotment garden gathering in Regent's Park, credit: Stephanie Kennedy

# Financial review

The Council of Trustees (who are the Directors of the Charity for company law purposes) present their report and the audited financial accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022. The Trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the requirements of the Charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

The fund balance carried forward at 31 March 2022 was £687,948 (2021: £614,095) on unrestricted general reserves. The designated reserves at 31 March 2022 was £185,267 (2021: £159,863). The restricted reserves on continuing projects were £209,351 at 31 March 2022 (2021: £203,118). The full Statement of Financial Activities is set out in the accounts below.

## Reserves policy

In accordance with guidelines from the Charity Commissioners, the Trustees have adopted a reserves policy that should ensure that: Excluding those funds represented by fixed assets, general reserves do not exceed more than six months' anticipated expenditure. The Trustees review amounts regularly, monitor progress in relation to target levels quarterly, and deemed in the financial year covered by this report that there were adequate funds to ensure the charity was able to meet all current, known and some estimated possible future liabilities.

## Investment policy

Under the memorandum and articles of association, the charity has the power to invest the monies of the company not immediately required for the furtherance of its objects in or upon such investments, securities or property as may be thought fit, subject nevertheless to such condition (as any) and such consents (if any) as may for the time being be imposed or required by law. At the present time, the Trustees' policy is to maintain such monies on deposits earning a market rate of interest, in a bank or banks with ethical credentials. No further 'social investment' is currently planned.

## Risk management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the company is exposed, in particular those related to operations and finances of the company, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to major risks. The Sustain rolling risk register and risk management process, reviewed formally at least quarterly by Trustees and Sustain's senior management team, and additionally as necessary, considers possible risks and prudent ways to avoid such risks arising, as well as mitigation should problems occur, grouped under the following broad themes:

- Covid-19 Coronavirus pandemic;
- Good governance – financial and organisational;
- Weathering ongoing turbulence and uncertainty in UK politics, economics and international political and trading relationships, posing financial and strategic risks;
- Meeting Sustain's objectives;
- Securing sufficient income;
- Controlling expenditure;
- Addressing staffing issues;
- Tackling challenges specific to alliances;
- Protecting Sustain's reputation;
- Ensuring regulatory compliance;
- Avoiding or handling disputes;
- Mitigating administrative burdens.

## Trustees' responsibilities

Company and charity law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its financial activities for that year. In preparing those accounts, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts;
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the company has appropriate systems of control, financial or otherwise. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and which enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Setting staff pay

Sustain operates a fair and transparent fixed salary scale for setting staff pay, including key management personnel – the persons with authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. This salary scale cannot be changed without Trustee approval. Sustain's salary scale is grouped under four ascending grades – Administrative and Project Officer; Project Coordinator; Senior Manager; Chief Executive. New recruits start at the salary grade suited to their post, as advertised, and usually at entry level for that grade. Subject to satisfactory annual appraisal, staff move up a salary level within their grade until the top level is reached. On the exceptional occasions when a new recruit has the experience and credentials to warrant appointment at a higher salary than the entry level for their grade, this offer and decision remains in line with the standard salary scale, except starting at a higher level, and with the knowledge and agreement of at least one Sustain Trustee, who

has usually participated in the recruitment process. In addition to the salary scale, salaries (and hence the levels in the salary scale) also rise in line with inflation, calculated annually on the actual inflation rate in the preceding year.

As a not-for-profit organisation and registered charity, Sustain covers normal expenses, requires evidence of such claims and expenditure and keeps good records. Sustain does not pay bonuses to staff.

## Fair pay

Sustain is a registered Living Wage employer, committed to paying at least the Living Wage or the London Living Wage, as calculated by the Living Wage Foundation, which reflects the cost of living. This year, we have also continued to apply a Pay Ratio analysis as part of the Annual Report process, seeking to ensure that Sustain maintains a fair pay ratio between the highest and lowest earners, benchmarked against sector good practice.

## Public benefit

The Trustees are aware of Charity Commission guidance on public benefit reporting as set out in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011. They believe Sustain fulfils a fundamental public benefit by promoting both the health and welfare of people and animals, improving the environment and promoting sustainable development. How Sustain achieves these objectives is described in more detail throughout this annual report and on the Sustain website.

## Auditors

So far as the directors (Trustees) are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware. Additionally, the directors have taken all of the necessary steps that they ought to, as directors, to make themselves aware of all the relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information. A proposal to re-appoint Goldwins as auditors for the forthcoming year will be put forward at the Annual General Meeting.

This report was approved by the Council of Trustees on 14 December 2022 and signed on its behalf, by:



**Professor Mike Rayner**  
Chair of the Council of Trustees

# Auditor's report

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food and Farming (the 'Charity') for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, statement of cash flows and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

### Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2022 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

## Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

## Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Annual Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

## Responsibilities of the trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the Charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

## Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
- identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
- The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements

or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.

- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [[www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities)]. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

## Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



**Anthony Epton (Senior Statutory Auditor)**

for and on behalf of

Goldwins Limited  
Statutory Auditor  
Chartered Accountants  
75 Maygrove Road  
West Hampstead  
London NW6 2EG

14 December 2022

# Statement of financial activities

(incorporating and income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2022 Total funds	2021 Total funds
	Note	£	£	£	£
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	3	40,296	9,704	50,000	72,044
Charitable activities					
Health and Welfare	4	395,568	1,127,231	1,522,799	2,496,141
Other trading activities		-	-	-	-
Investments	5	670	-	670	1,260
Other		-	-	-	-
<b>Total income</b>		<b>436,534</b>	<b>1,136,935</b>	<b>1,573,469</b>	<b>2,569,445</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	6	18,094	-	18,094	8,494
Charitable activities					
Health and Welfare	6	319,183	1,130,702	1,449,885	2,230,708
Other		-	-	-	-
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>337,277</b>	<b>1,130,702</b>	<b>1,467,979</b>	<b>2,239,202</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments</b>		<b>99,257</b>	<b>6,233</b>	<b>105,490</b>	<b>330,243</b>
Net gains / (losses) on investments		-	-	-	-
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the year</b>	7	<b>99,257</b>	<b>6,233</b>	<b>105,490</b>	<b>330,243</b>
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before other recognised gains and losses</b>		<b>99,257</b>	<b>6,233</b>	<b>105,490</b>	<b>330,243</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>99,257</b>	<b>6,233</b>	<b>105,490</b>	<b>330,243</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		773,958	203,118	977,076	646,833
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>873,215</b>	<b>209,351</b>	<b>1,082,566</b>	<b>977,076</b>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 18 to the financial statements.

# Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2022

	Note	£	2022 £	£	2021 £
<b>Fixed assets:</b>					
Tangible assets	12		-	-	-
			-	-	-
<b>Current assets:</b>					
Debtors	13	102,196		192,673	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,471,539		1,134,464	
		1,573,735		1,327,137	
<b>Liabilities:</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	491,169		350,061	
		1,082,566		977,076	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<b>1,082,566</b>	<b>977,076</b>	
<b>Total net assets less current liabilities</b>			<b>1,082,566</b>	<b>977,076</b>	
			<b>1,082,566</b>	<b>977,076</b>	
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>	18				
Restricted income funds			209,351	203,118	
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		185,267		159,863	
General funds		687,948		614,095	
		873,215		773,958	
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>			<b>873,215</b>	<b>773,958</b>	
<b>Total charity funds</b>			<b>1,082,566</b>	<b>977,076</b>	
			<b>1,082,566</b>	<b>977,076</b>	

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the trustees on 14 December 2022 and signed on their behalf by



Professor Michael Rayner  
Chair



Victoria Williams  
Treasurer

# Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	2022	2021
		£	£
Cash flows from operating activities	19		
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>		<b>336,405</b>	<b>175,100</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		670	1,260
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities</b>		<b>670</b>	<b>1,260</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		<b>337,075</b>	<b>176,360</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,134,464	958,104
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	20	<b>1,471,539</b>	<b>1,134,464</b>

# Notes to the financial statements

## For the year ended 31 March 2022

### 1 Accounting policies

#### a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102 – effective 1 January 2015) – (Charities SORP FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

#### b) Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. Key judgements that the charitable company has made which have a significant effect on the accounts. The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

#### c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

#### d) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

#### e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

#### f) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

## 1 Accounting policies (continued)

### g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services, undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

### h) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure.

Where such information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is also provided to potential donors, activity costs are apportioned between fundraising and charitable activities on the basis of area of literature occupied by each activity.

### i) Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

### j) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Office equipment	25% straight line
------------------	-------------------

### k) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

### l) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account. Cash balances exclude any funds held on behalf of service users.

### m) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

### n) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

### o) Pensions

The charity operates workplace pension scheme.

### 3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Donations	40,296	9,704	50,000	72,044
Total income from donations 2022	<b>40,296</b>	<b>9,704</b>	<b>50,000</b>	72,044
Total income from donations 2021	50,569	21,475	72,044	

### 4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
<b>Grant income</b>				
AIM Foundation	-	10,417	10,417	-
Ashden Trust	-	22,486	22,486	15,000
Baring Foundation	-	-	-	26,473
BIG grant	-	87,986	87,986	365,009
City Bridge Trust	-	84,500	84,500	31,164
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (various)	100,000	2,450	102,450	163,613
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund & Marine Management Organisation	-	-	-	106
European Union	-	-	-	107,380
Farming the Future	-	47,534	47,534	41,430
Friends Provident Foundation	-	31,535	31,535	14,400
Greater London Authority (various)	-	126,840	126,840	45,000
Guy's and St Thomas' Charity	-	112,639	112,639	124,301
Heart of Bucks	-	8,407	8,407	3,204
Hull City Council	-	23,100	23,100	23,000
John Ellerman Foundation	-	41,667	41,667	50,000
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	-	50,000	50,000	37,500
Kenneth Miller Trust	-	60,000	60,000	25,000
Kestrelman Trust	-	-	-	20,000
Lancashire County Council	-	12,500	12,500	-
London Borough of Southwark	-	5,950	5,950	-
Network for Social Change	-	-	-	10,000
Oak Foundation	-	23,076	23,076	-
Open University	4,500	-	4,500	-
Rothschild Foundation	-	25,000	25,000	53,000
Royal Parks Foundation	-	30,254	30,254	20,143
Samworth Foundation	50,000	-	50,000	50,000
Sustainable Food Places (Big Lottery Fund and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation)	-	243,240	243,240	223,448
Thirty Percy Foundation	150,000	-	150,000	150,000
Trust for London	-	60,000	60,000	57,500
Unicef	-	17,650	17,650	757,461
<b>Other income</b>				
Conference and workshops	942	-	942	3,000
Membership fees	34,194	-	34,194	28,012
Sales and publications	9,002	-	9,002	2,153
Subscriptions	46,930	-	46,930	48,844
Total income from charitable activities 2022	<b>395,568</b>	<b>1,127,231</b>	<b>1,522,799</b>	2,496,141
Total income from charitable activities 2021	452,009	2,044,132	2,496,141	

### 5 Income from investments

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Investment income	670	-	670	1,260
Total income from investments 2022	<b>670</b>	-	<b>670</b>	1,260
Total income from investments 2021	1,260	-	1,260	

## 6 a. Analysis of expenditure

	Cost of raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support costs £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
<b>Staff costs (Note 8)</b>	15,100	977,793	147,490	<b>1,140,383</b>	974,362
<b>Direct cost</b>					
Payable to partner organisations	-	99,665	-	<b>99,665</b>	1,020,220
Consultancy costs	-	72,820	-	<b>72,820</b>	119,195
Volunteers	-	161	-	<b>161</b>	533
Printing and photocopying	-	12,961	-	<b>12,961</b>	6,579
Postage and distribution	-	5,769	-	<b>5,769</b>	5,949
Travel, meeting and expenses	-	23,372	-	<b>23,372</b>	6,479
Other charitable expenditure	-	17,441	-	<b>17,441</b>	23,681
<b>Support cost</b>					
Telephone and fax	-	-	25	<b>25</b>	36
Office costs	-	-	87,582	<b>87,582</b>	74,368
Audit fees	-	-	7,800	<b>7,800</b>	7,800
	15,100	1,209,982	242,897	<b>1,467,979</b>	2,239,202
Support costs	2,994	239,903	(242,897)	-	
<b>Total expenditure 2022</b>	<b>18,094</b>	<b>1,449,885</b>	-	<b>1,467,979</b>	
Total expenditure 2021	8,494	2,230,708			

Of the total expenditure, £337,277 was unrestricted (2021: £159,006) and £1,130,702 was restricted (2021: £2,080,196).

The amount payable to partner organisations is made up of several different payments – the majority being payments passed onto Buckinghamshire Food Partnership (£7k); Food Roots partners (£16.4k); Food Power partners (£30.6k); Capital Growth partners (£1.1k); Peri-Urban Farming partners (£9.4k); and acting as grant conduit for Cambridge Sustainable Food Partnership (£35k).

## b. Analysis of expenditure from previous reporting period

	Cost of £	Charitable £	Support £	2021 Total £
<b>Staff costs (Note 8)</b>	7,643	824,610	142,109	974,362
<b>Direct cost</b>				
Payable to partner organisations	-	1,020,220	-	1,020,220
Consultancy costs	-	119,195	-	119,195
Volunteers	-	533	-	533
Printing and photocopying	-	6,579	-	6,579
Postage and distribution	-	5,949	-	5,949
Travel, meeting and expenses	-	6,479	-	6,479
Other charitable expenditure	-	23,681	-	23,681
<b>Support cost</b>				
Telephone and fax	-	-	36	36
Office costs	-	-	74,368	74,368
Audit fees	-	-	7,800	7,800
	7,643	2,007,246	224,313	2,239,202
Support costs	851	223,462	(224,313)	-
<b>Total expenditure 2021</b>	<b>8,494</b>	<b>2,230,708</b>	-	<b>2,239,202</b>

## 7 Net income/ (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Depreciation	-	-
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	45,968	40,471
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	6,200	6,200
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

## 8 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Salaries and wages	1,005,809	857,622
Redundancy and termination costs	4,030	317
Social security costs	80,889	75,293
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	49,655	41,130
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	<u>1,140,383</u>	<u>974,362</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year (2021: nil).

The total employee benefits including national insurance and pension contributions of the key management personnel were £203,544 (2021: £190,721).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2021: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2021: £nil).

Trustees' expenses represents the payment or reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs totalling £118 incurred by 1 member (2021: £100) relating to attendance at meetings of the trustees.

## 9 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2022	2021
	No.	No.
Raising funds	0.4	0.2
Health and Welfare	24.9	21.2
Support	3.7	3.6
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	<u>29.0</u>	<u>25.0</u>

## 10 Related party transactions

The following declaration provides transparency on related party transactions and, as appropriate, are also routinely declared by Sustain's Trustees at their quarterly meetings and publicly on the Sustain website.

A number of trustees and management team members hold prominent positions in other organisations.

Sustain received a grant of £243,240 (2021: £223,448) via the Soil Association, which is the overall programme manager for the Sustainable Food Places network – a programme run jointly by Food Matters, Soil Association (both Sustain members) and Sustain. Three of Sustain's trustees are a member of staff for the Soil Association and Food Matters. The Chief Executive of Sustain is a board member of Food Matters. Furthermore, Food Matters received £23,400 from Sustain for work on Buckinghamshire Food Partnership, FoodSHIFT and Food Roots.

The Real Bread Campaign also received annual membership fees of £45 from Welbeck Bakehouse as well as the School of Artisan Foods. In addition, the Real Bread Campaign also received a donation of £1,000 from Welbeck Bakehouse for the 'Knead to Know more...' publication Crowdfunder appeal. A Sustain Trustee is the owner and on the board at these respective organisations.

Sustain received a payment of £2,000 from Pesticide Action Network UK for work on the Toxic Trade report. Two of Sustain's trustees are members of staff at Pesticide Action Network.

Finally, Sustain received £4,200 from Growing Communities in relation to our work on Better Food Traders, which is a member of the Sustain alliance. Sustain's Chief Executive is on the board at Growing Communities, a social enterprise, on a voluntary basis.

## 11 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

## 12 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings and Equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>		
At the start of the year	33,658	33,658
Additions in year	-	-
Disposals in year	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At the end of the year	33,658	33,658
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At the start of the year	33,658	33,658
Charge for the year	-	-
Eliminated on disposal	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At the end of the year	33,658	33,658
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net book value</b>		
<b>At the end of the year</b>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At the start of the year	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

**13 Debtors**

	2022 £	2021 £
Other debtors	38,537	120,946
Prepayments	4,779	4,779
Accrued income	58,880	66,948
	<u>102,196</u>	<u>192,673</u>

**14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2022 £	2021 £
Other creditors	5,058	29,577
Accruals	14,360	24,095
Deferred income	471,751	296,389
	<u>491,169</u>	<u>350,061</u>

**15 Deferred income**

Deferred income comprises of grants from the following: AIM Foundation £14,584, Big Lottery Fund £24,946, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation £50,000, European Union £56,457, Farming the Future £49,969, Kenneth Miller Trust £10,417, Oak Foundation £115,378 and Thirty Percy Foundation £150,000.

	2022 £	2021 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	296,389	526,700
Amount released to income in the year	(296,389)	(526,700)
Amount deferred in the year	471,751	296,389
	<u>471,751</u>	<u>296,389</u>

**16 Pension scheme**

The charity operates workplace pension scheme and has no pension liability as at the year end.

## 17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Net current assets	687,948	185,267	209,351	1,082,566
<b>Net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>687,948</b>	<b>185,267</b>	<b>209,351</b>	<b>1,082,566</b>

## 18 Movements in funds

	At the start of the year £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Campaign for a Better Food Britain	6,664	44,117	(42,648)	-	8,133
Capital Growth	17,900	134,754	(124,941)	-	27,713
Children's Food Campaign	14,286	197,577	(188,367)	-	23,496
Climate and Nature	-	23,076	(9,043)	-	14,033
FoodSHIFT 2030	69,867	-	(51,200)	-	18,667
Food Poverty	42,840	252,556	(262,231)	-	33,165
London Food Link	5,909	13,000	(18,909)	-	-
Sustainable Farming and Land Use	25,831	160,055	(135,639)	-	50,247
Sustainable Food Places	19,821	311,800	(297,724)	-	33,897
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>203,118</b>	<b>1,136,935</b>	<b>(1,130,702)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>209,351</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds:</b>					
<b>Designated funds:</b>					
Employment Liabilities	109,863	-	2,690	12,714	125,267
Innovation and Activities Fund	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
Match Funding Contingency	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
<b>Total designated funds</b>	<b>159,863</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,690</b>	<b>22,714</b>	<b>185,267</b>
General funds	614,095	436,534	(339,967)	(22,714)	687,948
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>773,958</b>	<b>436,534</b>	<b>(337,277)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>873,215</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>977,076</b>	<b>1,573,469</b>	<b>(1,467,979)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,082,566</b>

### Purposes of restricted funds

Income that is received for specific projects, as – for example – grants, donations and earned income, is accounted for as restricted funds, with expenditure usually attributed over a specific period of time. We manage restricted funds carefully, keep expenditure under regular review, and aim to keep to the specified budget. If project funds are projected to be overspent for an unavoidable reason, we take action early to reduce expenditure and/or raise more funds to cover the potential shortfall. If we continue to project and incur an unavoidable overspend, a transfer is made from Sustain's unrestricted funds. The balances on restricted funds as at 31 March 2022 arise from income received for specific projects on which some expenditure is still to be incurred in the coming financial year. Each of Sustain's projects is described in more detail below:

### Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

**Campaign for a Better Food Britain** (includes Sustain's work relating to Brexit): The campaign helps Sustain's alliance to make their voices heard in important discussions about the future of the UK's approach to food, farming and fishing, particularly with regard to health, ethics and sustainability.

**Capital Growth:** Run by Sustain's London Food Link network, this offers practical support to communities around London to help more people grow more food, and to have greater access to land, skills and growing spaces for community benefit.

**Children's Food Campaign:** Advocates for better food and food teaching for children in schools, protection of children from unhealthy food marketing, high food standards for health and well-being, and clear food labelling that can be understood by everyone.

**Climate and Nature Emergency:** Catalyses large-scale and systematic solutions in the food and farming system as one of the key ways to avert climate change and restore nature, with a special focus on national and local policy, and institutional responsibilities at all levels, for taking measurable action.

**FoodSHIFT 2030** is an EU-funded Horizon 2020 consortium programme involving 10 city-region projects across Europe. Sustain's role is to share experiences of campaigning and movement building on healthy and sustainable food, involving a wide range of places.

**Food Poverty:** Sustain's programme of work seeking to tackle the root causes of food poverty, and encouraging policies and practices that would enable everyone to eat well. This includes:

- . **Food Power:** working with Church Action on Poverty to support towns, cities and rural areas around the UK to implement strategies tackling the root causes of food poverty.
- . **London Food Poverty Campaign:** promoting steps local authorities can take to support people and communities to address the root causes of food poverty 'beyond the food bank'; which produces an annual league table showing London Borough good practice.
- . **Right to Food:** seeking to instate into UK law and good governance the Right to Food, to help our country take progressive steps towards the eradication of hunger, and towards the development of fair and balanced systems for sustainable farming and fishing that works for both food producers and consumers alike.

**Good Food Trade:** Advocating for international trade agreements that guarantee a supply of food that is safe, affordable and good for our health, animal welfare, the environment and decent farming livelihoods, here and abroad. We want to see precious natural resources protected and damaging emissions that cause climate change reduced.

**London Food Link:** The umbrella for all of Sustain's initiatives in the capital. London Food Link (LFL) is a network of organisations and individuals in London who grow, make, cook, sell, save and simply enjoy good food in the capital.

**Real Bread Campaign:** Champions locally baked, additive-free bread, finding and sharing ways to make all loaves better for us, better for our communities and better for the planet.

**Sustainable Farming and Land Use:** Advocates for improvements in policy and practice to support better farming livelihoods, more and better jobs in sustainable food production, fair trading practices, and the subsidies, policies and industry practices that would incentivise change towards healthy, fair and environmentally sustainable food production. Also includes our Fringe Farming campaign for more peri-urban horticulture.

**Sustainable Fish Cities:** The campaign to protect precious marine environments, fish species and promote sustainable fishing livelihoods, calling for fish to be bought only from verifiably sustainable sources. We show at large scale what can be done if people and organisations make a concerted effort to change their buying habits. working with UK towns. cities. businesses and institutions.

**Sustainable Food Places:** The Sustainable Food Places Network – organised jointly by Food Matters, Soil Association and Sustain – helps people and places share challenges, explore practical solutions and develop good practice on key food issues. It encourages public, private and third-sector groups and local communities to work together to improve their food system. Sustain helps the network to run a series of campaigns. this year including:

- . **Food for the Planet,** helping local authorities, businesses and organisations take simple actions to tackle the climate and nature emergency through food.
- . **Veg Cities,** led by Sustain in partnership with the wider Peas Please initiative, to increase availability and consumption of vegetables.
- . **SUGAR SMART,** helping local authorities, schools, restaurants, hospitals and independent companies to reduce the amount of sugar we all consume.

**19 Reconciliation of net income / (expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities**

	2022	2021
	£	£
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)</b>	<b>105,490</b>	330,243
Dividends, interest and rent from investments	<b>(670)</b>	(1,260)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	<b>90,477</b>	53,822
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	<b>141,108</b>	(207,705)
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>336,405</b>	175,100

**20 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents**

	At 1 April 2021	Cash flows	Other changes	At 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£
Cash in hand	1,134,464	337,075	-	<b>1,471,539</b>
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>1,134,464</b>	<b>337,075</b>	-	<b>1,471,539</b>

**21 Operating lease commitments**

The charity has no future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases.

**22 Legal status of the charity**

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

## 23 Notes from 2021 accounts (prior year)

## a. Summary analysis of assets and liabilities by funds of previous reporting period

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Net current assets	614,095	159,863	203,118	977,076
<b>Net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>614,095</b>	<b>159,863</b>	<b>203,118</b>	<b>977,076</b>

## b. Details of movement in funds during the previous reporting period

	At the start of the year £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Campaign for a Better Food Britain	4,943	73,613	(71,892)	-	6,664
Capital Growth	13,634	84,807	(81,030)	489	17,900
Children's Food Campaign	4,701	192,301	(182,716)	-	14,286
FoodSHIFT 2030	(1,024)	107,380	(36,489)	-	69,867
Food Poverty	105,189	1,215,443	(1,279,792)	2,000	42,840
London Food Link	20,263	16,825	(29,179)	(2,000)	5,909
Real Bread Campaign	17,028	-	-	(17,028)	-
Sustainable Farming and Land Use	55,894	95,480	(125,543)	-	25,831
Sustainable Fish Cities	58	106	(164)	-	-
Sustainable Food Places	13,560	279,652	(273,391)	-	19,821
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>234,246</b>	<b>2,065,607</b>	<b>(2,080,196)</b>	<b>(16,539)</b>	<b>203,118</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds:</b>					
Designated funds:					
Employment Liabilities	-	-	-	109,863	109,863
Innovation and Activities Fund	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
Total designated funds	-	-	-	159,863	159,863
<b>General funds</b>	<b>412,587</b>	<b>503,838</b>	<b>(159,006)</b>	<b>(143,324)</b>	<b>614,095</b>
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>412,587</b>	<b>503,838</b>	<b>(159,006)</b>	<b>16,539</b>	<b>773,958</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>646,833</b>	<b>2,569,445</b>	<b>(2,239,202)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>977,076</b>

# Funders

Sustain would like to thank the following funders for their financial support for our work over the course of this financial year:

AIM Foundation  
Ashden Trust  
BIG grant  
Big Lottery Fund  
City Bridge Trust  
Economic and Social Research Council  
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (various)  
European Union - Horizon 2020  
Farming the Future  
Friends Provident Foundation  
Greater London Authority (various)  
Guy's and St Thomas' Charity (also known as Impact on Urban Health)  
Heart of Bucks  
Hull City Council  
John Ellerman Foundation  
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust  
Kenneth Miller Trust  
Kestrelman Trust  
Lancashire County Council  
London Borough of Southwark  
London Community Response Fund  
Oak Foundation  
Open University  
Rothschild Foundation  
Royal Parks Foundation  
Samworth Foundation  
Sustainable Food Places  
Thirty Percy Foundation  
Trust for London  
Unicef UK

# Annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2022

## A Sustain publication

December 2022

Sustain is a powerful alliance of organisations and communities working together for a better system of food, farming and fishing. We believe everyone should have access to healthy and sustainably produced food that protects people, animals and planet. The Sustain alliance brings together around 100 organisations nationally – and hundreds more at local and regional level – cultivating the movement for change.

# sustain

the alliance for better food and farming

Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming

[sustain@sustainweb.org](mailto:sustain@sustainweb.org)

[www.sustainweb.org](http://www.sustainweb.org)

Sustain, The Green House  
244-254 Cambridge Heath Road  
London E2 9DA  
020 3559 6777

Sustain works as an alliance to achieve our shared vision of a food, fishing and farming system, in which:

- All food is produced in a way that is fair and sustainable
- There is a thriving food supply chain from 'farm to fork'
- Healthy, sustainable diets are accessible and affordable to all
- We have a strong UK food culture that ensures food is valued and enjoyed

**SUSTAIN: THE ALLIANCE FOR BETTER FOOD & FARMING**

England & Wales - Charity number 1018643

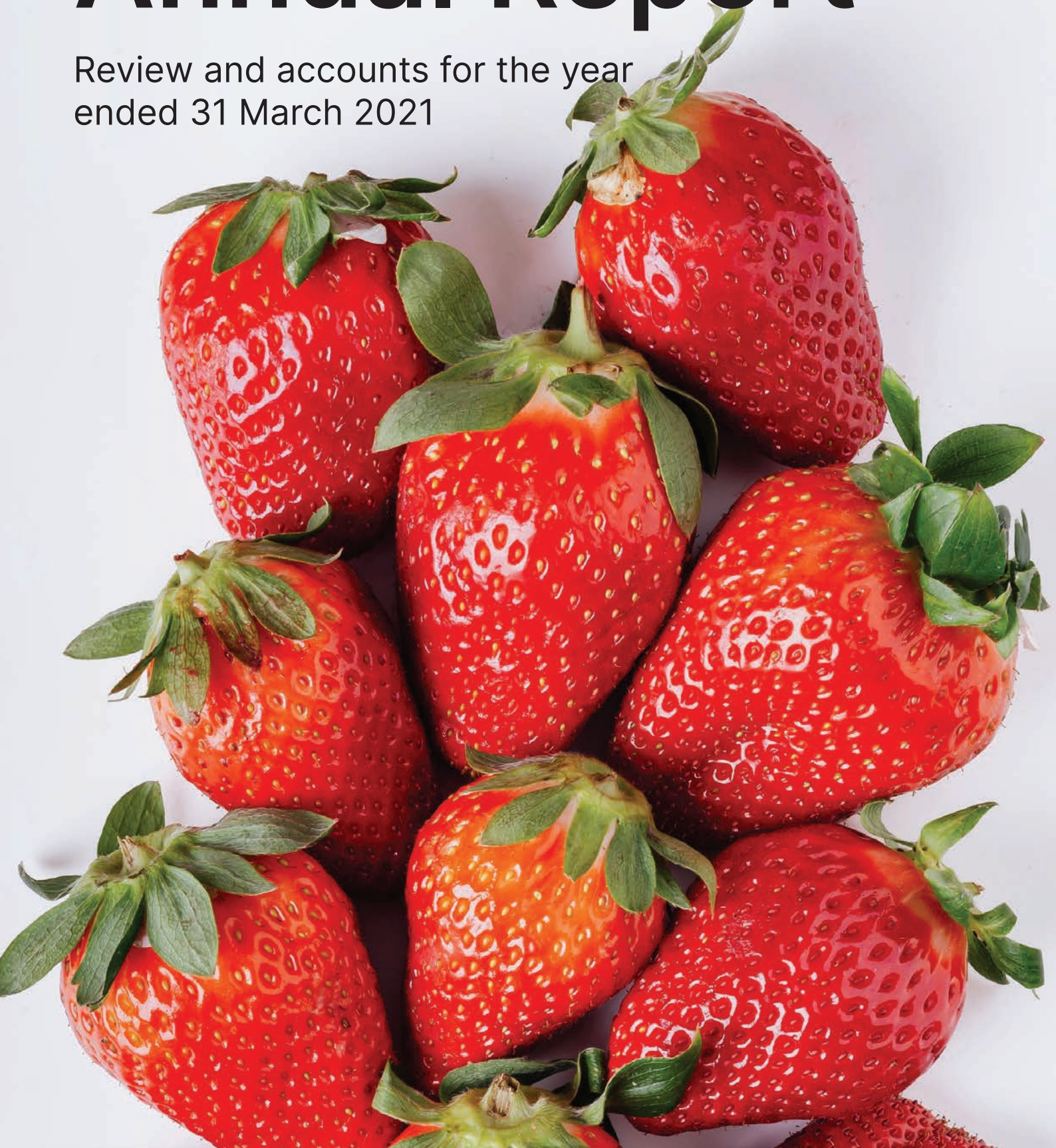
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# Accounts

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# Annual Report

Review and accounts for the year  
ended 31 March 2021



Company registered number: 02673194

Charity registered number: 1018643

**sustain**  
the alliance for better food and farming

# Foreword

My foreword to Sustain's last Annual Report reflected on a time when the first Covid-19 lockdown had only just begun. Sustain's staff team had rapidly relocated to working from home, pivoting their work to play their part in helping the nation respond to the pandemic. We extend a huge thank you to funders and supporters for their flexibility, humanity, understanding and additional grant-making, including to the groups and communities we work with, during this very challenging period.

The work of the Sustain team and alliance members has been intense, influential and admirable across the whole year. I pay tribute to all that you and they have done to support food aid providers, smaller food producers, businesses and local authorities to access the money, support and food they need, and to get this to the people who needed it the most. Hard times require bold action. This year, for the first time, Sustain also participated in legal proceedings against government for failing to extend free school meal provision for hungry children during the school holidays – a campaign memorably won with a winning kick from Premier League footballer Marcus Rashford.

During the year, campaigners from the Black Lives Matter movement and Extinction Rebellion took to the streets calling loudly for action on racial justice and a more concerted response to the climate and

nature emergency. We took these calls to action seriously and have incorporated two cross-cutting themes into our revised Sustain Strategy, to be published this year, aiming to ensure that action on diversity and racial justice, and on the climate and nature emergency, are integrated into all that we do. As a first step and signal of intent to change, we were delighted to welcome many more people from diverse ethnic backgrounds to Sustain's Council of Trustees in December 2020.

All of this took place against a backdrop of other disruptive changes relating to Brexit, weakening food standards and plans for new trade deals. Working intensively in the new Covid-19 world of online organising, Sustain's team convened important policy and campaign work on the Agriculture Bill and Fisheries Bill, as well as responses to key developments such as the National Food Strategy and implementation of the government's Obesity Strategy. It is hugely impressive that our project and campaign coordinators have managed to pull off so much during this period, with Sustain once again demonstrating – arguably more than ever – how powerful and influential it is to work in alliance.



**Professor Mike Rayner**  
Chair of Sustain's Council of Trustees

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## Trustees during the financial year covered by this report:

\*\*Cobi-Jane Akinrele (elected 18/12/2020)  
Professor David Barling (stood down, 18/12/2020)  
Lucy Bjorck (elected 09/12/2019)  
\*Josie Cohen (elected 12/12/2018)  
\*\*David Edwards (elected 18/12/2020)  
Jyoti Fernandes (elected 18/12/2020)  
\*Mollie Gupta (elected 18/12/2020)  
\*Dr Kawther Hashem (elected 18/12/2020)  
Bridget Henderson (re-elected 12/12/2018))  
Clare Horrell (stood down, 18/12/2020)  
Andre Kpodonu (elected 18/12/2020)  
\*\*Katharine Jenner (re-elected 09/12/2019)  
Shefalee Loth (elected 18/12/2020)

\*\*Jo Lewis (elected 09/12/2019)  
\*Raksha Mistry (elected 18/12/2020)  
Laura Mackenzie (stood down, 18/12/2020)  
Professor Mike Rayner (re-elected 12/12/2018)  
Stephanie Slater (re-elected 09/12/2019)  
Shaun Spiers (stood down, 18/12/2020)  
Chris Stopes (stood down, 18/12/2020)  
Alison Swan Parente (elected 12/12/2018)  
\*\*Keith Tyrell (re-elected 12/12/2018)  
\*Nick Weir (elected 18/12/2020)  
Victoria Williams (re-elected 23/11/2017)  
Deirdre (Dee) Woods (elected 09/12/2019)

Note: Those marked with an asterisk (\*) share the trustee role between two people in their organisation as a leadership development opportunity. One in each pair marked with a double asterisk (\*\*) is the nominated Trustee registered with Companies House and the Charity Commission.

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**Company registered number:** 02673194

**Charity registered number:** 1018643

**Registered office:** The Green House, 244-254 Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9DA

**Auditors:** Goldwins, 75 Maygrove Road, West Hampstead, London NW6 2EG

**Bankers:** The Co-operative Bank, PO Box 101, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP and Triodos Bank, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AS

# Our year in numbers

Our projects, campaigns, partnerships and policy work contributed to the following over the year April 2020 to March 2021:

**1** Judicial Review champions free school meals for hungry children




**£500m** secured to address the Covid food emergency



**84** food poverty alliances in the Food Power network



**5** Sustain Trustee role-shares created for leadership on diversity



**Over 30,000** people view Sustain social media ads and films




**1,145** farmers support food standards in Agriculture Bill



**2.6m** signatures and 260,000 MP letters back food standards campaign



**500,000** families benefit from increased Healthy Start voucher value




**29** London Councils measured on food responses, resilience and recovery




**170** people attend ELMs session at Oxford Real Farming Conference



**Over 1,000** community food growers attend Capital Growth training



**1** sell-out Sustain Annual Conference promotes great food ideas for a green economy




**3,600** #RealBreadWeek posts from 44 countries on Instagram



**1** Government confirmation of 9pm watershed for junk food adverts



**75%** of local authorities revealed not to include food in climate emergency plans (yet!)



# Covid-19 food emergency

The past year has been an extraordinary and traumatic period, yet also a time in which the world is waking up to the need for a fair, healthy, sustainable and resilient food system. Sustain worked with alliance members, local authorities, funders and many others to respond to the Covid-19 food emergency. Together, we helped to make the nation's response to food poverty a defining characteristic of the Covid-19 pandemic, with parliamentarians from all of the main political parties joining our call for a legal Right to Food.

Campaigning by Sustain and colleague organisations won over £500m of government funding, allocated to address emergency food needs for people experiencing food poverty – helping children, parents, schools and local authorities. We also brought our first ever legal challenge against the UK Government for its initial decision not to extend free school meal vouchers over the school holidays. We supported successful calls for long-term solutions to holiday hunger and an increase in the value of Healthy Start fruit and veg vouchers for pregnant women and new parents on a low income, whilst also calling for retention of the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme.

Throughout periods of lockdown and Covid restrictions, Sustain provided support to food

partnerships, food poverty alliances, local authorities, markets, community bakers and food businesses across the UK, helping them to share good practice in both short-term food provision and longer-term healthy and sustainable food neighbourhoods. We also helped them to raise their concerns with policy-makers. We launched a meals on wheels campaign to make the case for nutritious, dignified and integrated services to help older and disabled people to eat well.

Working with the Greater London Authority, we adapted our long-standing monitoring and reporting of London councils' action on food to include emergency responses and action to tackle the root causes of food poverty, starting to build a roadmap to food resilience for the future.

We used our position at the heart of a network of food poverty alliances and community organisations to facilitate the UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK) to provide 'Food Power for Generation Covid' grants to food poverty alliances around the UK, to strengthen the local response to the food crisis. We also helped other funders distribute funds and provide emergency support to the people we work with. Our accounts this year reflect the amounts that we acted as a conduit for in this way.

“ My heart is full!  
Who could have predicted so much joy and positivity during such a harrowing time. A testament to the incredible folks that make up our network.”

**Alisa Graham-Brown,**  
Programme Officer  
Sustainable Food Places



Diagram illustrating Sustain's role in addressing the food emergency caused by Covid-19, compounding by existing structural poverty, inequalities and lack of resilience.

Reminded that food is good for the mind as well as the body, we helped community food gardens to stay open, providing green oases and fresh fruit and veg. This developed into a project helping gardens in several cities across the UK grow tonnes of fresh food for neighbours struggling to access food – solidarity through good food. We also won support for a new peri-urban farming initiative, Fringe Farming, to boost veg production and resilience for the future.

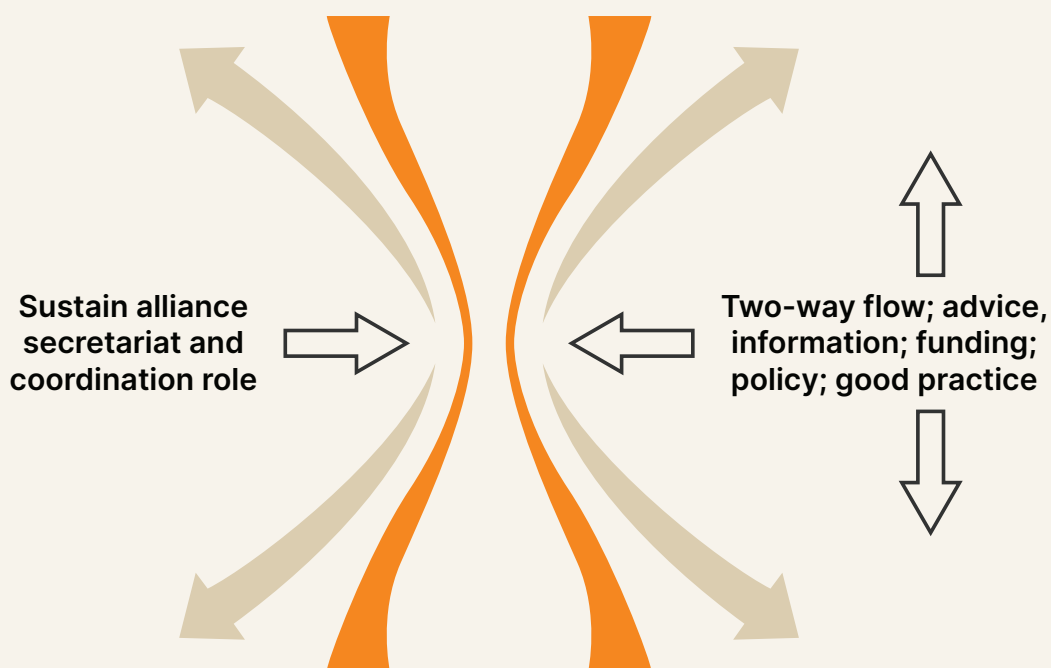
All this experience put Sustain in a good position to submit numerous briefings, and give evidence in person, to several parliamentary Select Committee inquiries into the impact of Covid-19. We have also become a co-investigator in the Sheffield University Food Vulnerability During Covid-19 research project and facilitated the involvement of four food poverty alliances in the research.

The Sustain team stepped up to the challenges of Covid-19 with extraordinary commitment, energy, camaraderie and campaign efforts. We did what we could to help keep food and money flowing; to highlight hunger and get it addressed; and to champion policies that respond to the emergency whilst working towards a better food future as part of a fair, green and resilient recovery.

“ Thank you for your inspirational work which led to the Government’s recent U-turn announcement of a Covid Winter Support Scheme, the extension of its Holiday Activities and Food Programme and an increase in the value of Healthy Start vouchers. It is largely due to your efforts, and those of other campaigners who have brought this issue to the public’s attention, that the Government has reversed its position.”

**Letter from the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan to Sustain’s Children’s Food Campaign, November 2020**

**National government; local authorities; Local Resilience Forums; funders**



**Civil society groups; enterprises; food partnerships; community groups**

Diagram that we used to communicate Sustain’s unique role in addressing the Covid-19 food emergency

# Good food production

We want to see food produced in a way that is fair and sustainable. Fair for farmers, fishers, workers, animals and which sustains the land, biodiversity and natural resources for now and generations to come.

Sustain remained resolute in coordinating efforts to demand high standards for food, safety, animal welfare, the environment and workers. We helped rally large-scale political engagement to influence key elements of legislation and policy governing the UK's approach to farming, fishing and trade as our country continued the process of leaving the EU.

We coordinated a huge campaign on amendments to the milestone Agriculture Bill, securing cross-party support and extensive media coverage. The resulting Agriculture Act includes several changes Sustain campaigned for, including on fair dealing and the inclusion of agroecology. We also worked extensively on the new Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme that promises farmers 'public money for public goods', championing proper integration of agroecology in farm subsidies and other farm support.

Working with the Green Alliance, we established the Future British Standards Coalition to shape and influence the Government's Trade and Agriculture Commission (TAC). The Government conceded to put the Commission on a statutory footing and its first report helpfully advised there should be no backsliding on standards; that it is possible to maintain bans and remain WTO compliant;

and supported a transparent and democratic UK leadership role on climate and nature.

We helped keep trade and food standards high-profile; corralling supermarkets to shun low standard food imports publicly; publishing our *Trick or Trade* report on the impact of trade on child health; helping the Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics keep up pressure for antibiotics stewardship; and publishing a joint report with Pesticide Action Network UK on threats to pesticide standards from trade deals; including lobbying over 500 MPs and holding meetings with senior politicians and officials.

Our new peri-urban Fringe Farming project, with Landworkers' Alliance and Shared Assets, established commitments in London, Bristol, Sheffield and Glasgow to improve access to land for food growing. Meanwhile, our Capital Growth network in London grew to over 3,900 community gardens, with over 1,000 people attending over 40 training sessions online and in person, and our new *Growing Connections* toolkit supporting age-friendly gardening. We also launched the Good to Grow network with partners across the country hosting events to promote community food growing.

Community Harvest launched, helping gardens grow more food during Covid-19

We launch Future British Standards Coalition, responding to Government's Trade and Agriculture Commission

Briefing with Shared Assets: Food production potential in London's urban fringe

Urban Harvest online festival welcomes over 700 community food growers

Sustain alliance campaign steps up during final stages of the Agriculture Bill

May

June

July

August

September

October

Supermarkets corralled to state publicly they support British food standards in trade

Toolkit: Growing Connections guide to age-friendly food growing published



Sustain signs up in support of cross-party Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill

MPs vote against sustainable fish labelling and procurement standards

50 gardens (London, Manchester, Reading) grow 4 tonnes of food for people in need during Covid-19



“Famous farmers lobby MPs in Brexit battle for food standards.”

The Times, 30 October 2020

“1,000 farmers demand MPs uphold food standards in vote.”

Farmers Weekly, 4 November 2020

“Big thank you for all your help with the campaign over the past weeks and months - you’ve been absolutely invaluable to getting the food standards campaign in the media and all of the behind-the-scenes pressure too.”

Cath Elliston, Jamie Oliver Group

Photo credit: x

1,000 farmers sign up to Sustain’s campaign to protect British food standards

Report: overuse of farm antibiotics in countries UK seeks trade deals with

**Milestone win:**

Agriculture Act passed, featuring our key asks: ‘public money for public goods’, agroecology and fair dealing

Sustain runs several sessions at Oxford Real Farming Conference (online)

Report: Trick or Trade, how trade deals could undermine UK obesity strategy

October

November

December

January

February

March

Channel 4 Dispatches ‘Dirty secrets of American food’ features our Toxic Trade report

We protest as Trade Bill rules out protecting human health in trade deals

2.6m petition signatures; 260,000 MP letters on food standards campaign

New: peri-urban Fringe Farming project starts work with 4 cities

Capital Growth’s digital storytelling project begins to promote food growing

# Good food economy

We want to see fair supply chains support a flourishing diversity of supply, manufacturing, retail and catering enterprises – at home and overseas – that create good jobs and livelihoods; helping agroecological farmers and sustainable fishers to thrive and making good food the easiest choice.

When Covid-19 lockdown began, we witnessed how much was being done to support supermarkets and relatively little for smaller fishers, farmers, food businesses, street markets and neighbourhood shops – often serving disadvantaged communities. We worked with sector leaders and trade associations to help their voices be heard by local authorities and government, and to help them pivot their work to stay open and to secure local food supplies. We ran webinars, produced popular briefings and helped disseminate pioneering good practice, which we were pleased to see replicated due to this work. We are now pleased to see such work influencing recovery and resilience plans for helping the food system 'build back better' post-pandemic.

In partnership with the Greater London Authority (GLA), we supported five London councils to run Good Food Retail projects; and worked with the Impact Hub Kings Cross Feeding the City programme and Urban Food Awards to support sustainable food businesses. We shared examples with councils, national government, funders and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), and hosted a well-attended national webinar on the role of LEPs in building a green food economy.

Home bakers remembered the love of Real Bread during lockdown, with our Real Bread Campaign recipes and resources proving more popular than ever. We also supported Real Bread bakeries with well-received peer advice on re-opening, re-building and retaining customers during the pandemic. The annual Real Bread Week was the biggest yet. Throughout the year, we also continued to rally parliamentary support for an Honest Crust Act to protect bread standards.

Our Sustainable Fish Cities campaign is now in its tenth year, having won pledges to use only verifiably sustainable fish from caterers that serve over one billion meals per year. This year, we supported local areas to adopt sustainable fish measures. For example, Aberdeen achieved two stars towards becoming a Sustainable Fish City for local authorities, schools and hospitals, affecting 2 million meals in secondary schools alone.

Sustain's planning specialist worked with planners involved in childhood obesity trailblazer areas to identify how local authorities can coordinate to create a healthy food environment. Sustain's sustainable farming specialists continued to press for the Groceries Code Adjudicator to adopt new supply chain codes of practice.

Report: How wholesalers can help keep people fed during Covid-19

Briefing: Directing Covid-19 public funds to support healthy and accessible food

Aberdeen achieves 2 stars towards becoming a Sustainable Fish City

Urban Food Award winners announced for food change-makers

Webinar: Good food jobs to help people get a foothold on the job ladder

April

May

June

September

November

We help fishers find outlets for Covid-disrupted catering supplies

65% of markets close: We launch campaign to help them stay open through Covid-19

Over 5,700 Instagram posts from c.60 countries during Sourdough September

Webinar: How food partnerships can engage with the English planning system

Webinar: Engaging with Local Enterprise Partnerships on food system change



“Real Bread Week puts bread, bakers and the industry as a whole centre stage.”

Jennifer Burgos, Dough & Daughters, Wales

“Thanks for the excellent work you’re all doing supporting businesses at this difficult time.”

Unpackaged Ltd, a London Food Link network supporter

For photo credits, please see page 23.

**Milestone event:**  
Sustain’s sell-out annual conference promotes great food ideas for a green economy

Ian Mearns MP calls for parliamentary debate on loaf labelling and marketing laws (EDM 1523)

Survey launched:  
How have food enterprises adapted since the pandemic?

Webinar: How councils can support a good food economy by retailer engagement

London Mayoral candidates challenged to take action on food

November      December      January      February      March

Sustain publishes 10 food lessons for future emergency planners

Greater Manchester spatial framework promotes our healthy food places vision

Real Bread Campaign webinar: Baking a better career

Our 12th annual Real Bread Week is celebrated across the UK and 40 other countries

Netflix documentary *Seaspiracy* prompts many downloads of Fish Cities resources

# Good food for all

We want to see healthy, sustainable food accessible and affordable to all, through a diverse array of outlets, and for it to become unacceptable and expensive to market unhealthy, unethical and unsustainable produce, over the alternative.

Covid-19 saw millions of people struggling to access the food they need, compounded by existing poverty and inequalities. Sustain's extensive response is described in an earlier chapter.

The Food Power network of food poverty alliances, facilitated by Sustain, grew to over 80 members. Alliances proved vital to responding to the food crisis as well as championing action on the root causes of food insecurity. Several local areas initiated Right to Food campaigns with our help, including calling for support for marginalised people such as asylum seekers and people with no recourse to public funds. Our Older People's Food Campaign worked with allies to maintain and expand support for meals on wheels services.

Our *Response, Resilience and Recovery* report on action on food by London Councils was well-received, directly influencing creation of the London Food Roots Incubator. This is a London-wide training and funding programme helping food poverty alliances tackle issues of common concern.

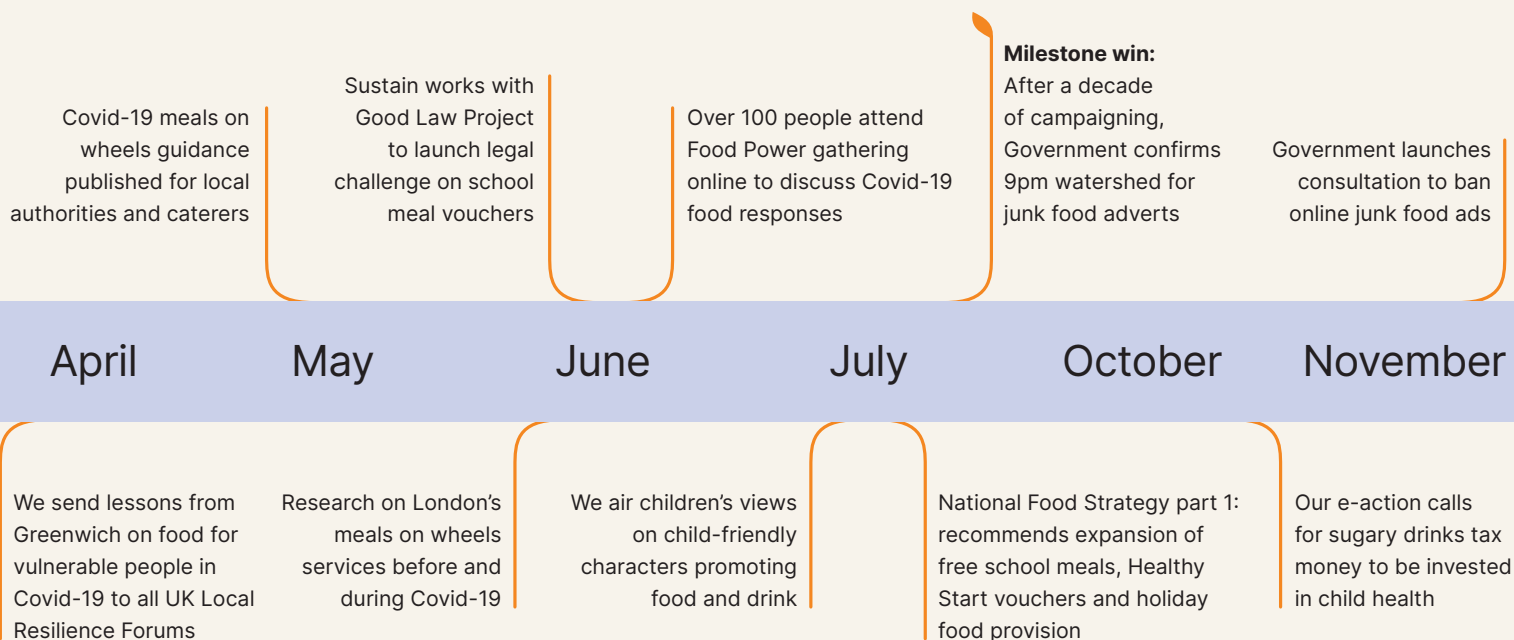
Sustain's Children's Food Campaign celebrated a milestone win this year – after a decade of campaigning, the Government agreed to ban

unhealthy food advertising on television before the 9pm watershed to protect children's health. Sensing a sea-change in policy and public mood, we pressed ahead with calling for the £1.4bn Sugary Drinks Industry Levy to be ring-fenced to improve children's health, securing promising cross-party support.

After our success last year with helping the Mayor of London adopt city-wide restrictions on unhealthy food advertising, we have been working with dozens of local authorities to adopt similar policies, with Bristol Council becoming the second city to do so. Our Veg Cities Campaign worked with Sustainable Food Place to champion the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme. We also continued to host and support a dynamic community of Healthy Start practitioners and, working with others, successfully campaigned for an increase in the value of the vouchers to help low-income families.

As the campaigns lead partner for Sustainable Food Places, we supported food partnerships to run Good Food Movement and Fizz Free February initiatives.

Via the FoodSHIFT 2030 project, we helped communicate and share learning between partners working on similar food system issues across Europe.





“You’re a brilliant example of a charity that achieves a lot and brings together people across all parties to work on these issues.”

**Robert Halfon MP, Chair of the Education Select Committee in Parliament**

“We have really benefitted hugely in Hampshire from all the work being done at Sustain to share evidence, guidance and best practice. We try not to miss any of the webinars!”

**Farihah Choudhury, Hampshire Public Health**

Photo: Keats organics training, credit: Mayya Hussein

We report on London councils’ action on food: Response, Resilience and Recovery

**November**

**Milestone win:** Government announces increase in Healthy Start voucher value

Liverpool becomes England’s first Right to Food city

**January**

Sustainable Food Places supported with local elections campaign toolkit

**February**

Bristol City Council restricts unhealthy food marketing with our support

**March**

Food Power distributes Generation Covid grants to food poverty alliances to help families access food

Sustain helps to establish a Buckinghamshire Food Partnership

Report: Refreshing Investment in Children’s Health: using the sugary drinks tax to improve school food

Fizz Free February campaign promotes sugar reduction for health and climate

London Food Roots Incubator initiated to support 10 food partnerships

# Climate and nature emergency

Sustain declared a Climate and Nature Emergency, committing us to putting climate, nature and the just transition at the heart of all our work. We have responded to, or joined others in responding to, numerous inquiries and initiatives, championing urgent attention on reversing climate change and restoring nature in key policy, finance and legislative initiatives described throughout this report.

We have put special efforts into developing the case for Building Back Better, presenting the jobs and economic case for a healthier food system that delivers on climate and nature objectives. We have championed this with government, MPs, local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, and as part of our advocacy work with the National Food Strategy team.

With world leaders due to meet in Glasgow in November 2021 for the crucial COP26, but we have grown increasingly alarmed that there is little sign of food and farming on the agenda for carbon reduction and nature-based solutions. We have supported Sustain's sister alliance Nourish Scotland in their work with IPES to develop the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration and to champion this with cities in our networks.

We undertook a study of climate emergency action plans by local authorities across the UK and were dismayed to find that food and farming are missing there too, with about half of action plans containing no meaningful mention of food or farming. We therefore began extensive work to turn pledges into action by creating the Every Mouthful Counts Toolkit, for use by local authorities and the Sustainable Food Places Network. We also integrated food in the climate and nature emergency into our Response, Recovery and Resilience report with the Mayor of London, which is influential with London's 33 boroughs and councils and local food strategies. We aim to support local authorities to play their part in addressing the climate and nature emergency through decisive and measurable action on less and better meat in food procurement; more and better plant-based foods; sustainable land use including peri-urban market gardens; support for agroecological farmers and food businesses; and designing out food waste. We will work with partners to ramp up local authority participation over the coming year.

Sustain's well-received annual conference in December 2020 focused on putting food and farming at the heart of the nation's green economic recovery post Covid-19. Food, farming, and fishing sectors have the potential to deliver more jobs and better livelihoods and are central components to the UK's environmental recovery plans. Our

annual conference brought together farmers, food businesses, researchers, civil society groups and government policy leaders from across these sectors, to share insights into how we can boost the economic recovery through sustainable food and farming.

One of the most popular sessions at the conference was an inspiring quick-fire session with specialist speakers from our alliance and networks introducing good food ideas that can reduce carbon, provide good jobs and generate benefits for local communities. These included:

- Agroforestry for integrated agroecology and carbon sequestration.
- Local supply chain infrastructure to make the economics of agroecology work.
- Organic farming for productivity in food, jobs and nature.
- Market gardening for community, biodiversity and better health.
- Dynamic food procurement to support good livelihoods in agroecological food production.
- A return to use of waste food for animal feed, for climate gains and viable pig and chicken production.
- Community food hubs to help values-led food trading to thrive.
- Good food investment zones to help values-led food enterprises gain support.
- A 'build back bluer' plan to let fish stocks recover and boost UK GDP by £600m.

Recordings of the conference are available at: <https://www.sustainweb.org/webinars/annual-conference-2020/>

# Food, diversity and anti-racism

Sustain staff, colleagues, alliance members and many others in the food system have a profound commitment to equity and justice. As part of this, we want to ensure that what we do – and how we do it – promotes diversity and inclusion across a wide range of characteristics. We are also explicit that Sustain is an anti-racist organisation that is consciously working to remove oppressive and exclusionary attitudes and practices. We recognise there are entrenched and structural causes of inequality and want to play a part in tackling these, and to be allies to those leading the way. In particular, we recognise the extent and depth of racial inequality and racial injustice in the food system and want to do what we can to help address this.

This year, we challenged ourselves to think about how we can change ourselves and the organisation, as well as to use our privileged position to influence change more widely.

Sustain has undertaken a root-and-branch overhaul of the way we address and promote diversity internally. These are baby steps and this is work in progress. We will publish a more detailed annual progress report, but in summary we have:

- Set up a core Diversity Working Group, with sub-groups tasked with improving our policies, systems and ambitions on key issues.
- Run numerous learning sessions for the staff team, and through the Food Learning Forum with other third-sector groups, to engage our hearts and minds in the issues.
- Supported four members of staff – including Sustain's Chief Executive – to participate in the Anti-Oppressive Practice programme for leaders of non-governmental organisations in the food and farming sector, convened by Feedback.
- Created 5 role-share Trustee places to provide people from diverse backgrounds at an early stage of their careers with opportunities for experience in the third sector.
- Made changes to our recruitment processes to improve opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to see, be attracted to and gain interviews for vacancies.
- Hosted two young people from diverse ethnic backgrounds as paid interns, as part of the EcoTalent programme run by Feedback.
- Allocated budget from core funds, for example to cover payments and expenses for contributors who might otherwise struggle to participate.

- Updated our HR and other policies to include language and considerations that can help overcome barriers to participation.

Thinking about our projects, campaigns and communications, we have, for example:

- Published an internal toolkit for inclusive campaigns; and an external Diversity Style Guide on how we will promote, describe, portray and create platforms for diversity.
- Commissioned work within the Capital Growth food-growing network to research leadership by Black people and People of Colour in food growing, and how to help cultivate better opportunities for access to land, skills, resources and to influence wider societal change.
- Recruited new ambassadors for the Real Bread Campaign, providing a platform for their work, with an emphasis on diversity of experience, background and culture.

We have also challenged ourselves to 'think big' in terms of exposing and unlocking structural injustices in the food and farming sector, and have begun consulting with our Trustees, advisors and others on what role Sustain could play.

**Sustain will: "Cultivate opportunities for a wide range of people to be involved in and have their voices heard through Sustain's work and our spheres of influence."**

**Diversity as a priority theme in Sustain's Organisation Development Plan, 2020-21**

# Who we work with

As an alliance, Sustain is as strong as its membership. Alliance membership is open to national organisations that do not distribute profits to private shareholders and which operate in the public or their members' interest. The organisations must be wholly or partly interested in food or farming issues and support the general aims and work of the alliance.

\*Those marked with a star were welcomed this year as members of Sustain – agreed by Sustain's Council, with ratification by Sustain's membership either confirmed or pending

## Sustain alliance members

Action on Salt	Friends of the Earth	Shared Assets
Action on Sugar	Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (South West)	Slow Food in the UK
Alexandra Rose Charity	Gaia Foundation	Social Farms and Gardens
Aquaculture Stewardship Council	Garden Organic	Soil Association
Association of Public Analysts	Global Justice Now	Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK)
Baby Milk Action	GM Freeze	Sustainable Food Trust
Behaviour Change	Growing Communities (and Better Food Traders)	Sustainable Soils Alliance
Beyond GM	Health Education Trust	Think Through Nutrition
Bio-Dynamic Agriculture Association	Hubbub	This Is Rubbish
Bio-Dynamic Agriculture College	Hyperactive Children's Support Group	Traidcraft Exchange
British Association For the Study of Community Dentistry	Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN)	Unchecked
British Dietetics Association	International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)	Unison
Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)	Keep Britain Tidy	Unite - Agricultural Workers Group
Caroline Walker Trust	The Kindling Trust	Vegetarian Society
Centre for Agroecology Water and Resilience (CAWR)	Landworkers Alliance	Women's Environmental Network
Centre for Food Policy	Magic Breakfast	World Cancer Research Fund
Centre on Population Approaches for Non-Communicable Disease Prevention	Marine Conservation Society	World-Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	National Federation of Women's Institutes	
City to Sea	National Trust	<b>Sustain alliance observers</b>
Commonwork Trust	New Economics Foundation	Agricultural Christian Fellowship
Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Network	Open Food Network*	Allergy Alliance
Compassion in World Farming	Oral Health Foundation	Child Poverty Action Group
The Country Trust*	The Orchard Project	Community Food and Health (Scotland)
Diabetes UK	Organic Farmers and Growers	Food Ethics Council
Eating Better	Organic Research Centre	GMB (Britain's General Union)
E.coli 0157 (formerly HUSH)	Organic Trade Board	Green Alliance
Faculty of Public Health	Pasture-Fed Livestock Association	Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF)
Fairtrade Foundation	People Need Nature	Marine Stewardship Council
Fairtrade Foundation	Permaculture Association	Natural England
Family Farmers' Association	Pesticide Action Network UK	Nourish Scotland
FareShare	Plantlife International*	Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH)
Farms Not Factories	Rare Breeds Survival Trust	Which?
Feedback	The Real Farming Trust	Wildlife and Countryside Link
First Steps Nutrition Trust	Royal Academy of Culinary Arts, Chefs Adopt a School Trust	WWF – Scotland
Food Foundation	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	WWF – UK
Food Matters	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) (covers RSPCA Assured)	
Food Systems and Policy Group, University of Hertfordshire	School Food Matters	
FoodCycle	School of Artisan Food	
Forum for the Future		

Sustain works closely with, for example: colleague alliances and initiatives working on cross-cutting food, farming, fishing, environmental and social policy – including: the Alliance to Save our Antibiotics; Eating Better Alliance; Food Research Collaboration; Green Alliance; Food, Farming and Countryside Commission; Green Care Coalition; Obesity Health Alliance; Sustainable Soils Alliance; Trade Justice Movement; and Wildlife and Countryside Link. Our connections and work with such organisations is described in more detail here: <https://www.sustainweb.org/about/sister-alliances-we-work-with/>.

Across the UK Nations, we work with sister organisations: Food Sense Wales; Nourish Scotland; and a range of colleagues in Northern Ireland. We also work with over 80 UK towns, cities and regions and their Sustainable Food Place partnerships and/or food poverty alliances; the London Food Board; and we communicate regularly with over 60,000 people and tens of thousands more via social media.

Sustain coordinates the Food Learning Forum, working with food-sector organisations in receipt of Lottery funds, to tackle issues of common concern. Further, we work with 7 municipalities, 7 NGOs and 7 research institutes in 12 European countries, with Sustain playing the communications and learning role in a Europe-wide programme called FoodShift2030 to promote healthy and sustainable food systems.

## Interested in becoming a Sustain member?

If your organisation is interested in becoming a Sustain alliance member or observer, download an application form at: [www.sustainweb.org/membership](http://www.sustainweb.org/membership) or email the Sustain team on [sustain@sustainweb.org](mailto:sustain@sustainweb.org) to speak to Chief Executive Kath Dalmeny or Deputy Chief Executive Ben Reynolds for a conversation about how to get involved. When you submit an application, this is reviewed by the Sustain team and we may ask you for further information or clarification; we will make an initial assessment and take it to the next quarterly Sustain Council of Trustees meeting with a recommendation (the Council is elected by Sustain's members). If they approve your application, it will then be taken to the next Sustain members AGM for ratification.

If your work is local or international rather than national, or you are an individual or represent a company or other profit-making organisation, you may prefer to get involved with a specific project or campaign, get on one or more of our mailing lists, publicise your healthy and sustainable food and farming events on our events calendar, or join a project or campaign advisory Working Party. Get in touch and we'll help you decide how best to join in and share your unique perspectives.

Find out about Sustain membership here:

[www.sustainweb.org/membership/become\\_a\\_sustain\\_member/](http://www.sustainweb.org/membership/become_a_sustain_member/)

Join one or more of Sustain's mailing lists here:

[www.sustainweb.org/email/](http://www.sustainweb.org/email/)

“ It is really superb what Sustain does. Sustain is a magnificent mix of holding the powerful to account and engaging and intervening in the real dynamics of the food system to make a difference. You all are so brilliant and push for what's right so consistently. I am full of admiration. Keep going.”

**Professor Tim Lang,**  
Centre for Food Policy

“ What a moment we're living through! All at Sustain have been doing phenomenal work through the crisis. It's a privilege to be a member.”

**Aoife Allen, Hubbub,**  
a member of the Sustain alliance

# Report on internal developments

## Sustain's governance

Sustain is governed by its membership, which is open to national organisations that do not distribute profits to private shareholders and thus operate in the public interest. Members must be wholly or partly interested in food and/or farming issues and support the general aims and work of the alliance.

Sustain's membership usually meets once a year in a general session at the Annual General Meeting, and many members also attend a range of specialist policy and project working party meetings, which are usually chaired by a Sustain Council member, as well as specialist events tackling issues of common concern.

Sustain Council members are elected by the membership (and a minimum of one third of the Council must stand down each year) to form a governing body of up to 15 Trustee places. All Trustees declare any relevant financial interests when they are elected, and at the beginning of each quarterly meeting, and these interests are publicly available on Sustain's website. Sustain's Council of Trustees meets quarterly to guide the work of the alliance, subject to approval by the members. As the Trustees are drawn from Sustain's membership, all of whom are third-sector organisations, they are already familiar with structures and governance in this sector.

This year, in December 2020, Sustain's AGM business was held wholly online, with the prior approval of our auditor, in line with procedures for extraordinary circumstances and advice from the Charity Commission. At the December 2020 Sustain AGM, of the 16 serving members (two as a role-share, so 15 places), five existing Trustees stood down. We created five potential 'role-share' positions as opportunities for diversity in leadership development; clearly signalled our intention to welcome people from diverse backgrounds; and attracted a large number of applicants.

After Sustain's first ever contested election, in December 2020, Sustain's Council of Trustees are 20 people filling 15 trustee places; some as role shares for leadership development: two-thirds (66%) women; one third (33%) Black people and People of Colour, as well as individual and intersectional representation from people of Jewish, Muslim, Christian and non-theist heritage, and people with diverse gender identities and long-term health conditions or disabilities.

## Covid-19: working from home

When the first Covid-19 lockdown arrived, all Sustain staff moved rapidly to working from home. Staff adapted impressively quickly and smoothly to the new arrangements and helped each other with both practical and compassionate support to manage the impact on work and personal circumstances.

We moved to working through Zoom and MS Teams, and introduced systems such as buddy groups and regular check-ins to ensure that people felt supported and any emerging issues could be dealt with in a collegiate and supportive way. We spoke openly about mental health to reassure people that there would be no stigma for talking about the personal impact of lockdown. Several members of staff were either shielding, or had family members medically vulnerable to Covid-19, so we were abundantly clear that maintaining everyone's safety and well-being was paramount.

As Sustain was able to remain operational, we did not make use of the Government's furlough scheme during 2020. In 2021, the introduction of a flexible furlough arrangement helped several Sustain staff members manage difficult childcare arrangements on a part-time basis in the third lockdown, when schools were once again closed.

Sustain's Trustees and Chief Executive declared an 'extraordinary period' enabling active risk management, responsive decision-making and managed flexibility in our budgets, staffing and working practices. This enabled us to evolve new ways of working for the pandemic period whilst not setting unhelpful precedents and unmanageable expectations for the future. However, we acknowledged that the shift to more working from home was likely to be an expectation longer term, ran a staff consultation, and have put in place a new flexible Working from Home policy that can be implemented post-pandemic.

Sustain's Finance Team worked with the Senior Management Team and IT staff to establish robust systems for ensuring that our financial transactions would be fully secure. We introduced new sign-off procedures with in-built double and triple checks for authenticity. This investment has served us well. In the wider world, there has been a notable upsurge in hacking attempts, phishing and fraud. However, Sustain has weathered these risks and has so far not experienced any serious breach. We remain vigilant and these matters are reviewed regularly as part of risk management, including at Trustee meetings.

Quarterly meetings of Sustain's Council of Trustees were held wholly online throughout the year. In line with Charity Commission guidance, Trustees noted at each meeting that the arrangements enabled satisfactory discussion and scrutiny of the matters to be addressed. Meetings were well attended and were a source of great support throughout the pandemic.

We continued to pay for Sustain's office premises as if they were occupied. Trustees helped us to monitor what other organisations in our sector have been doing, and any guidance on how other similar organisations were managing and keeping costs under control. Our landlord, Ethical Property Company, remained open to discussion of options and kept the service charge to a minimum. As Covid restrictions lifted, several staff and teams chose to return to the office, which has proved a very welcome – if partial – return to normality. We have followed government guidance and good practice for Covid risk management throughout, in consultation with the staff team.

## Covid-19: influencing change

It soon became clear that Sustain's expertise, connections, campaign instincts and coordination skills in the food and farming sectors were needed more than ever. This necessitated Sustain pivoting somewhat from our planned work and throwing the energies of several key staff and teams into tackling the challenges that the pandemic posed to our food and farming system. Structures such as the Food Power and Sustainable Food Places networks, and our links to government, local authorities and community food groups proved their worth in this regard, and Sustain rapidly became a go-to organisation for intelligence and support on a range of food security issues.

We extend the most enormous thank you to our very considerate funders for understanding the need for us to pivot our work and granting us the flexibility to do what we needed to do. Several also stepped up with additional grants for the people and communities we work with, to ease the burden of the frontline response to the Covid food emergency. We are proud of the role Sustain has been able to play in both campaign work and helping to disseminate such funds (with these amounts reflected in our accounts for this year), whilst at the same time keeping up our pressure on government to ensure that disadvantaged people could access social security and welfare assistance payments, free school meal and Healthy Start vouchers, as well as the food they need. The national emergency required both charitable and structural responses.

In many ways – whilst tired and somewhat battered, in common with our fellow citizens – Sustain has emerged from the experience stronger and more resolute than ever.

## Organisation restructure

The combination of working from home, significant work on post-Brexit legislation, and a raft of new demands on our time and expertise due to Covid-19, necessitated a thorough restructure of Sustain's working arrangements.

Sustain's Deputy Chief Executive led on restructuring Sustain's work into a number of teams and themes, as indicated in the diagram on the next page. Whilst this transition continues to be a creative work in progress, it has proved an efficient and productive way of organising our work and bringing clarity to certain roles and processes. It also paved the way for the structure of our new Sustain Strategy and Organisation Development Plan, which we continued to develop throughout the year.

## Sustain staff, volunteers and interns

Across the year, we welcomed several new members of staff to the Sustain team as well as extending several people's contracts to keep them in work during this challenging period, and to maintain services to our members and beneficiaries. We congratulate new arrivals for fitting in so well, despite the difficult circumstances, and soon becoming part of the Sustain family. We also fulfilled a long-standing ambition, which was to hire project officers to work alongside our Head of Public Affairs and Head of Sustainable Farming, to take these areas of work to a new level.

We benefited from the work of many volunteers participating in food growing activities with communities, as well as supporting Sustain's campaign work. We also employed two paid interns from the EcoTalent programme run by Sustain alliance member Feedback, for 18-24-year-olds from diverse backgrounds to gain work experience in non-governmental organisations in the environment sector.

Training and skills remained an important theme throughout the year – both for our staff and our wider networks. We ran an internal programme of training and skills shares, and supported the wider network with a host of well-received webinars, trainings and sessions of the Food Learning Forum to help third-sector organisations address issues of common concern.

### Sustain alliance member and observers

Around 100 national organisations working on healthy, fair and sustainable food, farming and fishing

### Sustain Council of Trustees, elected from Sustain membership

15 Trustee places; 20 people (5 as role-shares)

#### Communications Team

Head of Digital; Communications Coordinator; Digital Officer

#### Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

Chief Executive; Deputy Chief Executive; Programmes Director

#### Finance and Admin Team

Head of Finance; Finance & Admin Officer Executive Assistant

#### Line Managers Group

Currently ten experienced members of staff (including SLT members) who manage or supervise staff and project delivery, as well as leading on specialist policy, projects and campaigns

#### Staff team

Includes project officers, campaigners, finance and administration staff, people working on cross-cutting themes and services, and line managers. Connecting up via staff meetings; staff consultation; Union Liaison Group; groups on development initiatives and skills-share

#### Parliamentary Team

**National** policy, campaigns and public affairs

#### Local Action Team

**Local** action, movement-building, Sustainable Food Places

Strategy theme:

#### Good Food Production

Sustainable Farming Policy	Sustainable Fisheries Policy
Save Our Antibiotics	Community Food Growing + Fringe Farming
Trade and Food Standards	Good Food Planning

Strategy theme:

#### Good Food Economy

Food Co-ops And Better Food Traders	Real Bread Campaign
Save Our Antibiotics	Local Supply Economy
Sustainable Fish Cities	Food in the Green Recovery

Strategy theme:

#### Good Food For All

Children's Food Campaign	Food Power
Sugar Smart	Good Food for All Londoners
Veg Cities	Healthy Food Advertising

Cross-cutting strategy theme: **Climate and Nature Emergency**

Less and Better Meat

Action on Food, Climate and Nature by local authorities and food partnerships

Cross-cutting policy and campaign work

#### Organisation Development Plan (ODP)

Several staff groups develop these cross-organisational themes, with ToRs and targets.

**Influence — Diversity — Supporters — Learning — Funding**

#### Influence

*Strengthening the influence, reputation and profile of Sustain and the alliance*

#### Diversity team

*Sub-group, e.g.: HR and Recruitment; Policies; Campaigns/ projects; Supporting staff*

#### Supporters

*Increasing the number and engagement of Sustain supporters*

#### Learning

*Cultivating skills for change-makers*

#### Funding

*Core Development*

### Sustain Strategy 2021 to 2025

**Fertile Future: Winning changes in policy and practice — Cultivating the movement for change**

## Fair pay

Sustain renewed our annual commitment and licence to declare ourselves a registered London Living Wage Employer; as have our landlords Ethical Property Company, so cleaning and other staff are included. We are proud to be part of the growing Living Wage movement. Sustain also promotes London Living Wage accreditation via our Good Food for All Londoners report (this year, re-branded as Response, Recovery and Resilience) and league table of boroughs, as one of the key ways local authorities can help to reduce food poverty.

For the fourth year, Sustain's Annual Report contains an independently audited Pay Ratio Analysis. We are pleased to report that Sustain's Pay Ratio is between 2:1 (highest to lowest salaries) and 3:1 (highest salary to London Living Wage), well within the Wagemark benchmark of 8:1 considered to be good practice.

## Policies and procedures

Bearing in mind Sustain's growth and restructure, as well as evolving staff expectations, we recruited specialist HR Consultants CBR Solutions to help us undertake a thorough HR Healthcheck. This entailed working through template policies to record Sustain practice in a standard format that can be published on our intranet, available for staff, and able to be reviewed in a more systematic way over time. Across the year, we refreshed a large number of HR policies and procedures in this way, also paying due attention to updating language and approaches to incorporate consideration of diversity, equalities and inclusion.

We paid special attention to updating Sustain's policy for safeguarding vulnerable adults, young people and children, especially in light of our partnership with the UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK) to make substantial 'Food Power for Generation Covid' grants to frontline food organisations working with disadvantaged communities. We also updated our Ethical Funding Policy to remind ourselves of our duty to ensure that such money should be directed to diverse communities, without discrimination, and making special efforts to reach those under-represented in our work.

## Sustain's funding

Sustain needs adequate financial and other resources to pursue our work effectively. The majority of Sustain's income is from charitable grants from trusts and foundations, listed in this Annual Report. Project proposals and funding bids are developed by Sustain staff, in consultation with Sustain and working party members. A minority of Sustain's income comes from alliance membership fees, subscriptions, book and publication sales and unsolicited voluntary donations from individual supporters or supporting organisations. Donations of this kind have increased this year in response to Sustain's work on the Covid-19 food emergency. Sustain occasionally actively solicits donations from campaign supporters.

Significant developments this year relate to Sustain starting to draw down several multi-year grants supporting work on Sustain's priorities, across a range of important themes, including sustainable farming, sustainable fishing, the green food economy and the climate and nature emergency.

These continue to mark a welcome shift in the relationship between Sustain, funders and other donors keen to invest in strategic partnership programmes driving ambitious change in policy and practice.

Due to a welcome new level of staffing and financial stability, we have been able to continue to pay much more attention to investing in Sustain's core capacities, such as communications, policy and parliamentary engagement, influence and movement building.

## Temporary uplift in turnover

This year, Sustain helped distributed grants on behalf of the UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK) to help address household food insecurity during Covid-19 lockdown through emergency food aid via local food poverty alliances. This was a one-off and exceptional arrangement to help play our part during the pandemic, and Sustain does not have any plans to continue directly supporting emergency food aid in this way. We managed £757k in this way, which makes a substantial difference to Sustain's apparent turnover during this period, as noted in this annual report and accounts as a temporary financial peak above Sustain's usual scale of operation.

## Awards won by Sustain staff

Congratulations are due to Sustain's Head of Food Poverty Programme Simon Shaw, who was independently awarded a Churchill Fellowship grant to support work on access to food during hospital discharge, to enable people to live well at home. Simon will work with Sustain's existing Older People's Food Campaign alliance.

Congratulations are also due to Sustain's Chief Executive Kath Dalmeny, who was named as one of the 20 most influential people in public sector catering, following her efforts – working with Sustain's Children's Food Campaign Coordinator Barbara Crowther and Right to Food Coordinator Imogen Richmond-Bishop on the legal challenge to government's decision not to extend free school meal vouchers into the school holidays during the pandemic.

“ Thanks so much for all your time and dedication and that of your colleagues [at Sustain] on this case. A great example of team work unifying law, activism and political nous. The extent of the background research and briefing was really impressive. It was never going to be an easy win legally but the presence of the proceedings built on that research surely helped secure a political result and who knows what might have happened had a certain No 10 not emerged as a campaigner of equal prowess to his goalscoring. Children not going hungry over the school holidays for the first time ever is quite something”

**Jamie Burton, Doughty Street Chambers, responding to the government's decision to extend free school meal vouchers over the August 2020 summer holiday**



Photo credit: Monkey Business Images

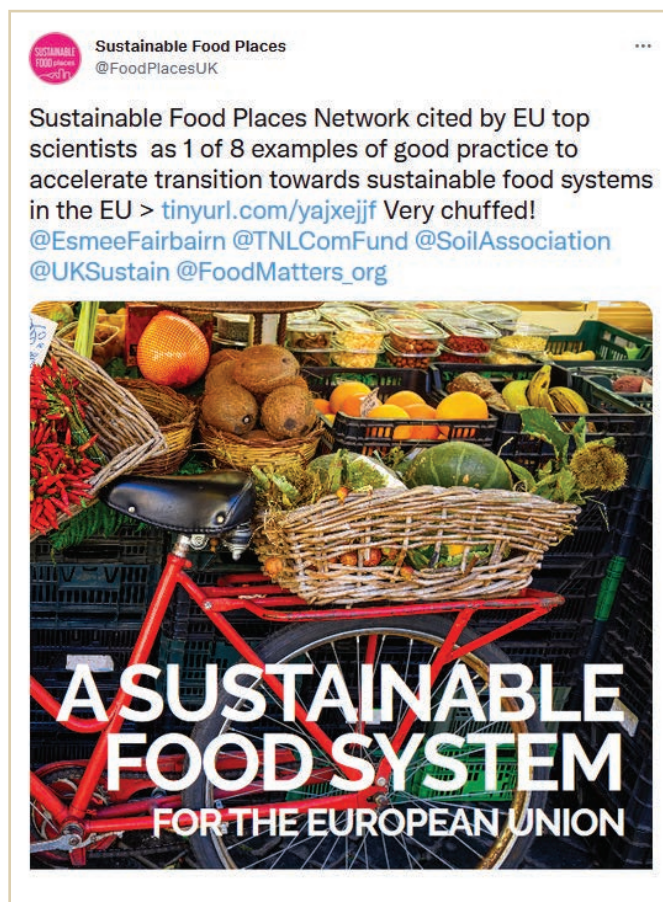
# Building our communications and influence

Sustain's remains committed to ensuring that our work reaches far and wide, with quality outputs that are produced in a timely fashion and to a high standard. Peers in our sector note our ability to quickly respond to current events, provide detailed analysis and be seen as an expert in the field. This is a credit to both our campaign and project staff as well as our highly experienced staff members, especially our Head of Digital, Head of Public Affairs and Communications Coordinator.

December 2020 saw a watershed across the organisation in how we aim for Sustain to be perceived externally with a relaunch of all visual comms, and better practice and consistency of narrative style. This brand unification aims to amplify the voice of Sustain across all campaign communications and news services. This is backed with a suite of tools and protocols to help us better understand how we interact with our diverse audiences.

Head of Digital Gavin Dupée continues to oversee Sustain's significant online presence, family of websites and micro-sites, and publications, with over 7,500 monitored downloads, up 88% from last year. Traffic to our website has also seen significant growth in the last year, with nearly 200,000 people having read a Sustain news item (up 53%), and over 66,000 people reading a Sustain blog, a 230% increase on last year. In addition, over 75,000 people are subscribed to at least one of our mailing lists, up 19% from last year, and a new newsletter was launched this summer to better showcase work across the whole organisation. We are also active on a variety of social media platforms where thousands more now follow Sustain's work. In the last year we have set up further mechanisms to improve tracking of interactions on our websites, with an eye to how we can further improve engagement, facilitate peer learning and inspire involvement in the healthy and sustainable food movement.

As our official data controller, Gavin also continued to oversee upgrades to Sustain's systems to embed compliance with new EU-wide data protection regulation, as well as online security. This proved especially important when Sustain moved to working from home and more online interactions due to Covid-19, and in the face of increased risks to cyber-security.



# What people say about us...

"Thanks for all your good work on this issue."

**Baroness Jones of Whitchurch, House of Lords, who championed amendments to the Agriculture Bill**

"Thank you loads for the great stuff this week on the Ag Bill, it was brilliant - couldn't have written without your help on the issues and your marvellous and pithy quotes."

**Fiona Harvey, The Guardian**

"Awesome to hear so many people got in touch with their MP... The article is actually spot on."

**Hannah Jackson (Red Shepherdess farmer) supporting work on the Agriculture Bill**

"How brilliant this report is. Response, Resilience and Recovery is such a comprehensive record of the work that's taken place on food since the beginning of the pandemic and is crammed with useful information and detailed case studies. As you know, we're already using it to inform our work and I'm sure the same can be said for local authorities and partners across London."

**Liam Weeks, GLA Food Team**

"It's so brilliant that you are bringing people together to champion this cause and to fight for the health of older people. Food is so important at all stages of life and it is brilliant to have an advocate for that."

**Sarah Wren, CEO Hertfordshire Independent Living Service and meals on wheels alliance member**

"There is almost nothing I will say that isn't based on the invaluable Sustain resources on food poverty action plans. They are my bible!"

**Jane Middleton, Labour Hunger Campaign**

"Sustain is such a force to be reckoned with. You have supported so many younger people coming up in the food world who can take things on, and I hope you all feel really proud of what you have achieved and the voice you have."

**Helen Crawley, Director, First Steps Nutrition Trust**

"You in Sustain are true heroes, I saw the legal action and the #uturn, well done!"

**Dr. Ana Moragues Faus, Research Fellow, Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Barcelona**

"Outstanding. No other word for it - thanks for pulling it all together - just what all our members needed."

**Tom Andrews, Director, Sustainable Food Places**

"You and the work of your colleagues have been absolutely instrumental in moving [policy on obesity prevention] forward and wouldn't have happened without you!"

**Richard Sangster, Department for Health and Social Care**

"I honestly think if it was not for the work you and Sustain have done in this area the Government would not have acted, so many congrats on this step forward."

**Suliman Rafiq, Senior Public Health Manager – Healthy Lives, Luton Borough Council**

"By sending campaign material like this it makes it easier for us to engage – keep it coming!!"

**Sonja Woodcock, Leeds Food Partnership Coordinator, Zest Leeds (regarding Fizz Free resources)**

"Thanks for the excellent work you're all doing supporting businesses at this difficult time."

**Unpackaged Ltd a London Food Link supporter, regarding our Jellied Eel articles promoting businesses and our social media promotion**

"Thank you @jelliedeelimg for featuring Migrateful in a round-up of individuals and organisations who are using food to bring communities together and to celebrate diversity!"

**Migrateful**

"Huge thank you for your support and highlighting the work of our volunteers. We really do appreciate you all!!"

**Waste Not Want Not, Battersea**

"I thought the obesity webinar was fantastic, great job and very informative."

**Sharon Treat, Institute of Trade and Agriculture Policy**

"We love what Sustain's farming and trade campaigners have been doing, and greatly appreciate having this channel to the ELMS, parliamentary and trade work."

**Suzi Shingler, Campaign Manager, Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics**

"The sheer scale and range of what you are leading on is mind blowing. I do not know how you do it but we are all in a better world because you do."

**Emma Revie, Chief Executive of the Trussell Trust**

# Strategic review

Throughout the year, Sustain undertook extensive activities to connect with our alliance members, working party members, and the local groups, food partnerships and food poverty alliances we work with. Insights from these connections informed both our immediate workplans and ongoing development of our new Sustain Strategy and revised Organisation Development Plan.

The new five-year strategy for the Sustain alliance, Fertile Future, is due to be launched in 2021, at a time of great change for the future of the UK's food, farming and fishing. Sustain will also be 21 years old, symbolically marking our 'coming of age', with a renewed sense of agency, determination and shared purpose.

This year, Sustain brought together materials from several consultation events over the preceding year, plus insights from our restructure into teams and themes during 2020. We used this to draft the strategy to solicit further consultation and comment, and to ensure its fit with our new ways of working and aspirations on key themes for the Organisation Development Plan.

The Sustain Strategy organises our work under three key themes:

- Good food production
- Good food economy
- Good food for all

The cross-cutting theme of Climate and Nature Emergency and Food Justice are also woven throughout this work.

We have revised our organisational description and mission as follows, recognising Sustain's role in both national policy change, campaigns and public affairs; and local initiatives, campaigns and movement-building:

- Sustain is a powerful alliance of organisations and communities working together for a better system of food, farming and fishing. We believe everyone should have access to healthy and sustainably produced food that protects people, animals and planet.
- The Sustain alliance brings together around 100 organisations nationally – and hundreds more at local and regional level – cultivating the movement for change.
- Working together, we run highly effective and creative campaigns, advocacy, networks and demonstration projects, aiming to catalyse permanent changes in policy and practice, and to help equip more people and communities with skills as change-makers.

To underpin this work, we published (internally) our Organisational Development Plan, which sets out the practicalities, targets and structures with which we plan to implement the strategy and monitor progress.

We also convened a Sustain Refresher Day with the staff team to share and reinforce Sustain's values, how we work together and with the wider world.

Sustain's Chief Executive Kath Dalmeny also gave a Sustain Strategy presentation to Trustees and the staff team, setting out what she had heard and read throughout the strategy consultation, and how this would shape Sustain's work in the five years to come. Such materials have also proved clarifying and useful for communicating with key funders and stakeholders.

**Page 9 photo credits:** Flin t and Fern, Corner Cottage Bakery, Swiss Bread Bakery, Mill Hill Artisan Bakery, Whisk and Rye, Natural Bread, The Bakers' Table, The Doorstep Baker, Bob's Bread Bakery, Angela Morris, Mrs. Mash, Ed Baker, Isobel Hands, Below Decks, Orkney Sourdough, Lace Bakes, White Mountain Sourdough, Malthouse Photography, Terri Atkin, The Bakehouse Nottingham, The Bakehouse Nottingham, Ayo Been Baking, @ljferguson2306, Iza Stuchlik, Best End Baker, Artisan Loaf, Torth Y Tir, Ed Baker, kirstie\_young\_ photography, Essington Farm, Real Clever Food, Cliff Lane Primary, Ipswich, Kari Martens, Peter Weston, Pauline Beaumont, Elissa O'Donohue, Hobz Bakery, The Hampshire Real Bread Co, Bakerlou, The Street Bakeshop, Curly Creek Ranch, Kenny Theysen, Cake and Positivitea, FarmED, Cook Bakes, Elizabeth Stevens, Ruth McGhie, Heyl Bakery, Sourdough Slingers, Hearth and Soul Bakehouse, Banjo's Bread, T2Pan Sourdough Boutique, Pure Knead, Greg Ardoin, Rob Allen, Sapori & Saperi Adventures, Vinish Vivek, Paige Daley, Patrick Kelly, Eloisa Jose-Baquet, Gayathri Chaudhari, Lucy's Loaves, Zuzana Malikova, Winfrith Bakery, Feeding Fish MicroBakery, Mike Rogers, Mike Rogers, Holly Bon Bagel, Café & Bistro V Pekárně, Buzzing Bee Baked Things, Juliet Ferrar, Emma Bowles, Philippa Fairburn, @eduardmichelphotography, Fernhorn Bakery, Strettea Bakery, Ulla Ojanen, Panaderia Rustica, Bread & Roses, Fermenti Kitchen, The Riverside Bakehouse, Blackhill Bakery, Claire's Kitchen, Erföccaccia, Just Sourdough, Slice of Leaven, The Cornish Sourdough Bakery, Will Whittington, Cultured Bread Bakery, Stoneham Bakehouse, Ian Reeves, Ian Reeves, Baking Bread NL, Barchester Queen's Court, One Mile Bakery Exeter, Joan Kirschner, Leanne Chorlton, Ma Baker, Brentwood Care Centre, Jagdish Patel, Jennifer Phillip, Liam Clarke, Emma Friend, Blackbirds Micro Bakery, Sue Brown, Marianne Azar, Bread of Haven, Yasmin Ashi, Derwen College, Vbranch House

# Financial review

The Council of Trustees (who are the Directors of the Charity for company law purposes) present their report and the audited financial accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021. The Trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the requirements of the Charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

The fund balance carried forward at 31 March 2021 was £614,090 (2020: £412,586) on unrestricted general reserves. The designated reserves at 31 March 2021 was £159,863 (2020: £0). The restricted reserves on continuing projects were £203,119 at 31 March 2021 (2020: £234,249). The full Statement of Financial Activities is set out in the accounts below.

## Reserves policy

In accordance with guidelines from the Charity Commissioners, the Trustees have adopted a reserves policy that should ensure that: Excluding those funds represented by fixed assets, general reserves do not exceed more than six months' anticipated expenditure. The Trustees review amounts regularly, monitor progress in relation to target levels quarterly, and deemed in the financial year covered by this report that there were adequate funds to ensure the charity was able to meet all current, known and some estimated possible future liabilities.

## Investment policy

Under the memorandum and articles of association, the charity has the power to invest the monies of the company not immediately required for the furtherance of its objects in or upon such investments, securities or property as may be thought fit, subject nevertheless to such condition (as any) and such consents (if any) as may for the time being be imposed or required by law. At the present time, the Trustees' policy is to maintain such monies on deposits earning a market rate of interest, in a bank or banks with ethical credentials. No further 'social investment' is currently planned.

## Risk management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the company is exposed, in particular those related to operations and finances of the company, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to major risks. The Sustain rolling risk register and risk management process, reviewed formally at least quarterly by Trustees and Sustain's senior management team, and additionally as necessary, considers possible risks and prudent ways to avoid such risks arising, as well as mitigation should problems occur, grouped under the following broad themes:

- Covid-19 Coronavirus pandemic;
- Good governance – financial and organisational;
- Weathering ongoing turbulence and uncertainty in UK politics, economics and international political and trading relationships, posing financial and strategic risks;
- Meeting Sustain's objectives;
- Securing sufficient income;
- Controlling expenditure;
- Addressing staffing issues;
- Tackling challenges specific to alliances;
- Protecting Sustain's reputation;
- Ensuring regulatory compliance;
- Avoiding or handling disputes;
- Mitigating administrative burdens.

## Trustees' responsibilities

Company and charity law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its financial activities for that year. In preparing those accounts, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts;
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the company has appropriate systems of control, financial or otherwise. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and which enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Setting staff pay

Sustain operates a fair and transparent fixed salary scale for setting staff pay, including key management personnel – the persons with authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. This salary scale cannot be changed without Trustee approval. Sustain's salary scale is grouped under four ascending grades – Administrative Grade; Grade 1 (project officer); Grade 2 (senior manager); Grade 3 (chief executive). New recruits start at the salary grade suited to their post, as advertised, and usually at entry level for that grade. Subject to satisfactory annual appraisal, staffs move up a salary level within their grade until the top level is reached. On the exceptional occasions when a new recruit has the experience and credentials to warrant appointment at a higher salary than the entry level for their grade, this offer and decision remains in line with the standard salary scale, except starting at a higher level, and with the knowledge and agreement of at least one Sustain Trustee, who has usually participated in the

recruitment process. In addition to the salary scale, salaries (and hence the levels in the salary scale) also rise in line with inflation, calculated annually on the actual inflation rate in the preceding year.

As a not-for-profit organisation and registered charity, Sustain covers normal expenses, requires evidence of such claims and expenditure and keeps good records. Sustain does not make ex gratia payments to staff, nor does it pay bonuses to staff.

## Fair pay

Sustain is a registered Living Wage employer, committed to paying at least the Living Wage or the London Living Wage, as calculated by the Living Wage Foundation, which reflects the cost of living. This year, we have also continued to apply a Pay Ratio analysis as part of the Annual Report process, seeking to ensure that Sustain maintains a fair pay ratio between the highest and lowest earners, benchmarked against sector good practice.

## Public benefit

The Trustees are aware of Charity Commission guidance on public benefit reporting as set out in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011. They believe Sustain fulfils a fundamental public benefit by promoting both the health and welfare of people and animals, improving the environment and promoting sustainable development. How Sustain achieves these objectives is described in more detail throughout this annual report and on the Sustain website.

## Auditors

So far as the directors (Trustees) are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware. Additionally, the directors have taken all of the necessary steps that they ought to, as directors, to make themselves aware of all the relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information. A proposal to re-appoint Goldwins as auditors for the forthcoming year will be put forward at the Annual General Meeting.

This report was approved by the Council of Trustees on 15 December 2021 and signed on its behalf, by:



**Professor Mike Rayner**

Chair of the Council of Trustees

# Auditors' report

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food and Farming (the 'Charity') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, statement of cash flows and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

### Opinion on financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

## Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to

events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report

## Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Annual Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit

## Responsibilities of the trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the Charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

## Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that

an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
- identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
- The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

## Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



**Anthony Epton (Senior Statutory Auditor)**

for and on behalf of

Goldwins Limited  
Statutory Auditor  
Chartered Accountants  
75 Maygrove Roadw  
West Hampstead  
London NW6 2EG

15 December 2021

# Statement of financial activities

(incorporating and income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2021

		2021	2020		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds		
Note	£	£	£		
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	3	50,569	21,475	72,044	128,721
Charitable activities					
Health and Welfare	4	452,009	2,044,132	2,496,141	1,424,047
Other trading activities		-	-	-	-
Investments	5	1,260	-	1,260	3,464
Other		-	-	-	-
<b>Total income</b>		<b>503,838</b>	<b>2,065,607</b>	<b>2,569,445</b>	<b>1,556,232</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	6	8,494	-	8,494	16,544
Charitable activities					
Health and Welfare	6	150,512	2,080,196	2,230,708	1,490,054
Other		-	-	-	-
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>159,006</b>	<b>2,080,196</b>	<b>2,239,202</b>	<b>1,506,598</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments</b>		<b>344,832</b>	<b>(14,589)</b>	<b>330,243</b>	<b>49,634</b>
Net gains / (losses) on investments		-	-	-	-
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the year</b>	7	<b>344,832</b>	<b>(14,589)</b>	<b>330,243</b>	<b>49,634</b>
Transfers between funds		16,539	(16,539)	-	-
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before other recognised gains and losses</b>		<b>361,371</b>	<b>(31,128)</b>	<b>330,243</b>	<b>49,634</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>361,371</b>	<b>(31,128)</b>	<b>330,243</b>	<b>49,634</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		412,587	234,246	646,833	597,199
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>773,958</b>	<b>203,118</b>	<b>977,076</b>	<b>646,833</b>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 18 to the financial statements.

# Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2021

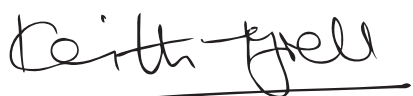
	Note	£	2021 £	£	2020 £
<b>Fixed assets:</b>					
Tangible assets	12		-		-
			<u>-</u>		<u>-</u>
<b>Current assets:</b>					
Debtors	13	192,673		246,495	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,134,464		958,104	
			<u>1,327,137</u>	<u>1,204,599</u>	
<b>Liabilities:</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	350,061		557,766	
			<u>977,076</u>	<u>646,833</u>	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<u>977,076</u>	<u>646,833</u>	
<b>Total net assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>977,076</u>	<u>646,833</u>	
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>	18				
Restricted income funds			203,118		234,246
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		159,863		-	
General funds		614,095		412,587	
			<u>773,958</u>	<u>412,587</u>	
Total unrestricted funds			<u>773,958</u>	<u>412,587</u>	
<b>Total charity funds</b>			<u>977,076</u>	<u>646,833</u>	

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the trustees on 15 December 2021 and signed on their behalf by



Professor Michael Rayner  
Chair



Keith Tyrell  
Treasurer

# Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	2021	2020
		£	£
Cash flows from operating activities	19		
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>		<b>175,100</b>	<b>129,989</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		1,260	3,464
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities</b>		<b>1,260</b>	<b>3,464</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		<b>176,360</b>	<b>133,454</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		958,104	824,650
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	20	<b>1,134,464</b>	<b>958,104</b>

# Notes to the financial statements

## For the year ended 31 March 2021

### 1 Accounting policies

#### a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102 – effective 1 January 2015) – (Charities SORP FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

#### b) Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. Key judgements that the charitable company has made which have a significant effect on the accounts. The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

#### c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

#### d) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

#### e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

#### f) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

## 1 Accounting policies (continued)

### g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services, undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

### h) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure.

Where such information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is also provided to potential donors, activity costs are apportioned between fundraising and charitable activities on the basis of area of literature occupied by each activity.

### i) Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

### j) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Office equipment	25% straight line
------------------	-------------------

### k) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

### l) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account. Cash balances exclude any funds held on behalf of service users.

### m) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

### n) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

### o) Pensions

The charity operates workplace pension scheme.

### 3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Donations	50,569	21,475	72,044	128,721
Total income from donations 2021	50,569	21,475	72,044	128,721
Total income from donations 2020	26,434	102,287	128,721	

### 4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
<b>Grant income</b>				
Ashden Trust	-	15,000	15,000	20,000
Baring Foundation	-	26,473	26,473	49,966
BIG grant	-	365,009	365,009	464,415
Big Lottery Fund	-	-	-	9,349
Centre for Ageing Better	-	-	-	58,832
City Bridge Trust	-	31,164	31,164	-
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (various)	150,000	13,613	163,613	204,193
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund & Marine Management Organisation	-	106	106	43,579
European Union	-	107,380	107,380	-
Farming the Future	-	41,430	41,430	14,583
Friends Provident Foundation	-	14,400	14,400	11,300
Greater London Authority (various)	-	45,000	45,000	65,255
Guy's and St Thomas' Charity	-	124,301	124,301	22,984
Heart of Bucks	-	3,204	3,204	-
JMG Foundation	-	-	-	14,545
John Ellerman Foundation	-	50,000	50,000	50,000
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	-	37,500	37,500	45,000
Kenneth Miller Trust	-	25,000	25,000	25,000
Kestrelman Trust	20,000	-	20,000	-
London Borough of Southwark	-	-	-	20,735
Network for Social Change	-	10,000	10,000	42,513
Rothschild Foundation	-	53,000	53,000	12,000
Royal Borough of Greenwich	-	-	-	8,333
Royal Parks Foundation	-	20,143	20,143	23,860
Samworth Foundation	50,000	-	50,000	-
Sustainable Food Places (Big Lottery Fund and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation)	-	223,448	223,448	67,244
Thirty Percy Foundation Grant	150,000	-	150,000	-
Trust for London	-	57,500	57,500	66,500
Unicef	-	757,461	757,461	-
Yorkshire and Humber	-	23,000	23,000	-
<b>Other income</b>				
Conference and workshops	3,000	-	3,000	9,821
Membership fees	28,012	-	28,012	26,758
Sales and publications	2,153	-	2,153	1,212
Subscriptions	48,844	-	48,844	46,070
Total income from charitable activities 2021	452,009	2,044,132	2,496,141	1,424,047
Total income from charitable activities 2020	143,229	1,280,818	1,424,047	

### 5 Income from investments

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Investment income	1,260	-	1,260	3,464
Total income from investments 2021	1,260	-	1,260	3,464

## 6 a. Analysis of expenditure

	Cost of raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support costs £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
<b>Staff costs (Note 8)</b>	7,643	824,610	142,109	<b>974,362</b>	808,247
<b>Direct cost</b>					
Payable to partner organisations	-	1,020,220	-	<b>1,020,220</b>	464,056
Consultancy costs	-	119,195	-	<b>119,195</b>	59,271
Volunteers	-	533	-	<b>533</b>	2,716
Printing and photocopying	-	6,579	-	<b>6,579</b>	11,250
Postage and distribution	-	5,949	-	<b>5,949</b>	8,647
Travel, meeting and expenses	-	6,479	-	<b>6,479</b>	61,081
Other charitable expenditure	-	23,681	-	<b>23,681</b>	8,967
<b>Support cost</b>					
Telephone and fax	-	-	36	<b>36</b>	311
Office costs	-	-	74,368	<b>74,368</b>	74,252
Audit fees	-	-	7,800	<b>7,800</b>	7,800
	7,643	2,007,246	224,313	<b>2,239,202</b>	1,506,598
Support costs	851	223,462	(224,313)	-	
<b>Total expenditure 2021</b>	<b>8,494</b>	<b>2,230,708</b>	-	<b>2,239,202</b>	
Total expenditure 2020	16,544	1,490,054			

Of the total expenditure, £159,006 was unrestricted (2020: £126,498) and £2,080,196 was restricted (2020: £1,380,100).

The amount payable to partner organisations is made up of several different payments – the majority being payments passed onto Food Power partners (£975.3k); Capital Growth partners (£9.6k); and Peri-Urban Farming partners (£16.5k); and acting as grant conduit for City to Sea (£18.8k).

## b. Analysis of expenditure from previous reporting period

	Cost of £	Charitable £	Support £	2020 Total £
<b>Staff costs (Note 8)</b>	13,181	671,201	123,865	<b>808,247</b>
<b>Direct cost</b>				
Payable to partner organisations	-	464,056	-	<b>464,056</b>
Consultancy costs	-	59,271	-	<b>59,271</b>
Volunteers	-	2,716	-	<b>2,716</b>
Printing and photocopying	-	11,250	-	<b>11,250</b>
Postage and distribution	-	8,647	-	<b>8,647</b>
Travel, meeting and expenses	-	61,081	-	<b>61,081</b>
Other charitable expenditure	-	8,967	-	<b>8,967</b>
<b>Support cost</b>				
Telephone and fax	-	-	311	<b>311</b>
Office costs	-	-	74,252	<b>74,252</b>
Audit fees	-	-	7,800	<b>7,800</b>
	13,181	1,287,189	206,228	<b>1,506,598</b>
Support costs	3,363	202,865	(206,228)	-
<b>Total expenditure 2020</b>	<b>16,544</b>	<b>1,490,054</b>	-	<b>1,506,598</b>

## 7 Net income/ (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Depreciation	-	-
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	40,471	41,430
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	6,200	6,200
	<u>6,200</u>	<u>6,200</u>

## 8 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Salaries and wages	857,622	712,599
Redundancy and termination costs	317	-
Social security costs	75,293	62,272
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	41,130	33,376
	<u>974,362</u>	<u>808,247</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year (2020: nil).

The total employee benefits including national insurance and pension contributions of the key management personnel were £190,721 (2020: £185,071).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2020: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2020: £nil).

Trustees' expenses represents the payment or reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs totalling £100 incurred by 1 member (2020: £44) relating to attendance at meetings of the trustees.

## 9 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2021	2020
	No.	No.
Raising funds	0.2	0.4
Health and Welfare	21.2	19.2
Support	3.6	3.5
	<u>25.0</u>	<u>23.1</u>

## 10 Related party transactions

The following declaration provides transparency on related party transactions and, as appropriate, are also routinely declared by Sustain's Trustees at their quarterly meetings and publicly on the Sustain website.

A number of trustees and management team members hold prominent positions in other organisations.

Sustain received a grant of £223,448 (2020: £155,466) via the Soil Association, which is the overall programme manager for the Sustainable Food Places network – a programme run jointly by Food Matters, Soil Association (both Sustain members) and Sustain. Three of Sustain's trustees are a member of staff for the Soil Association and Food Matters. The Chief Executive of Sustain is a board member of Food Matters. Furthermore, Food Matters received £4,000 from Sustain for work on Bucks Food Partnership.

School Food Matters were paid £35,105 during the year. £35,000 as part of the Food Power grants programme, and £105 for vouchers to school pupils taking part in a webinar. One Sustain trustee is a member of staff at School Food Matters. Sustain's Deputy Chief Executive is chair of the board of School Food Matters.

The Real Bread Campaign also received annual membership fees of £45 from Welbeck Bakehouse as well as the School of Artisan Foods. In addition, the Real Bread Campaign also received a donation of £1,000 from Duke of Portland Charitable Trust. A Sustain Trustee is the owner and on the board at these respective organisations.

Sustain received a payment of £2,000 from Pesticide Action Network for work on the Toxic Trade report. Two of Sustain's trustees are members of staff at Pesticide Action Network.

Finally, Sustain received £3,150 from Growing Communities in relation to our work on Better Food Traders. Sustain's Chief Executive is on the board at Growing Communities.

## 11 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

## 12 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings and Equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>		
At the start of the year	33,658	<b>33,658</b>
Additions in year	-	-
Disposals in year	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At the end of the year	33,658	<b>33,658</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At the start of the year	33,658	<b>33,658</b>
Charge for the year	-	-
Eliminated on disposal	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At the end of the year	33,658	<b>33,658</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net book value</b>		
<b>At the end of the year</b>	-	-
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
At the start of the year	-	-
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

**13 Debtors**

	2021 £	2020 £
Other debtors	120,946	43,492
Prepayments	4,779	4,779
Accrued income	66,948	198,224
	<u>192,673</u>	<u>246,495</u>

**14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2021 £	2020 £
Other creditors	29,577	7,860
Accruals	24,095	23,206
Deferred income	296,389	526,700
	<u>350,061</u>	<u>557,766</u>

**15 Deferred income**

Deferred income comprises of grants from the following: Ashden Trust Grant £5,000, Big Lottery Fund £87,986, City Bridge Trust £21,125, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation £50,000, Farming the Future £37,540, Heart of Bucks Grant £6,407, Kenneth Miller Trust £10,417, Rothschild Foundation £25,000, Sustainable Food Places £35,264 and Unicef £17,650.

	2021 £	2020 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	526,700	322,937
Amount released to income in the year	(526,700)	(322,937)
Amount deferred in the year	296,389	526,700
	<u>296,389</u>	<u>526,700</u>

**16 Pension scheme**

The charity operates workplace pension scheme and has no pension liability as at the year end.

## 17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Net current assets	614,095	159,863	203,118	977,076
<b>Net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>614,095</b>	<b>159,863</b>	<b>203,118</b>	<b>977,076</b>

## 18 Movements in funds

	At the start of the year £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Campaign for a Better Food Britain	4,943	73,613	(71,892)	-	6,664
Capital Growth	13,634	84,807	(81,030)	489	17,900
Children's Food Campaign	4,701	192,301	(182,716)	-	14,286
FoodSHIFT 2030	(1,024)	107,380	(36,489)	-	69,867
Food Poverty	105,189	1,215,443	(1,279,792)	2,000	42,840
London Food Link	20,263	16,825	(29,179)	(2,000)	5,909
Real Bread Campaign	17,028	-	-	(17,028)	-
Sustainable Farming and Land Use	55,894	95,480	(125,543)	-	25,831
Sustainable Fish Cities	58	106	(164)	-	-
Sustainable Food Places	13,560	279,652	(273,391)	-	19,821
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>234,246</b>	<b>2,065,607</b>	<b>(2,080,196)</b>	<b>(16,539)</b>	<b>203,118</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds:</b>					
Designated funds:					
Employment Liabilities	-	-	-	109,863	109,863
Innovation and Activities Fund	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
Total designated funds	-	-	-	159,863	159,863
General funds	412,587	503,838	(159,006)	(143,324)	614,095
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>412,587</b>	<b>503,838</b>	<b>(159,006)</b>	<b>16,539</b>	<b>773,958</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>646,833</b>	<b>2,569,445</b>	<b>(2,239,202)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>977,076</b>

### Purposes of restricted funds

Income that is received for specific projects, as – for example – grants, donations and earned income, is accounted for as restricted funds, with expenditure usually attributed over a specific period of time. We manage restricted funds carefully, keep expenditure under regular review, and aim to keep to the specified budget. If project funds are projected to be overspent for an unavoidable reason, we take action early to reduce expenditure and/or raise more funds to cover the potential shortfall. If we continue to project and incur an unavoidable overspend, a transfer is made from Sustain's unrestricted funds. The balances on restricted funds as at 31 March 2021 arise from income received for specific projects on which some expenditure is still to be incurred in the coming financial year. Each of Sustain's projects is described in more detail below:

## Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

**Campaign for a Better Food Britain** (includes Sustain's work relating to Brexit): The campaign helps Sustain's alliance to make their voices heard in important discussions about the future of the UK's approach to food, farming and fishing, particularly with regard to health, ethics and sustainability.

**Capital Growth:** Run by Sustain's London Food Link network, this offers practical support to communities around London to help more people grow more food, and to have greater access to land, skills and growing spaces for community benefit.

**Children's Food Campaign:** Advocates for better food and food teaching for children in schools, protection of children from unhealthy food marketing, high food standards for health and well-being, and clear food labelling that can be understood by everyone.

**FoodSHIFT 2030** is an EU-funded Horizon 2020 consortium programme involving 10 city-region projects across Europe. Sustain's role is to share experiences of campaigning and movement building on healthy and sustainable food, involving a wide range of places.

**Food Poverty:** Sustain's programme of work seeking to tackle the root causes of food poverty, and encouraging policies and practices that would enable everyone to eat well. This includes:

- **Food Power:** working with Church Action on Poverty to support towns, cities and rural areas around the UK to implement strategies tackling the root causes of food poverty.
- **London Food Poverty Campaign:** promoting steps local authorities can take to support people and communities to address the root causes of food poverty 'beyond the food bank'; which produces an annual league table showing London Borough good practice.
- **Right to Food:** seeking to instate into UK law and good governance the Right to Food, to help our country take progressive steps towards the eradication of hunger, and towards the development of fair and balanced systems for sustainable farming and fishing that works for both food producers and consumers alike.

**London Food Link:** This is the umbrella for all of Sustain's initiatives in London. London Food Link (LFL) is a network of organisations and individuals in London who grow, make, cook, sell, save and simply enjoy good food in the capital.

**Real Bread Campaign:** The Real Bread Campaign champions locally baked, additive-free bread, finding and sharing ways to make all loaves better for us, better for our communities and better for the planet. Note: The campaign has been re-categorised as unrestricted as this more accurately reflects the funds.

**Sustainable Farming and Land Use** (includes the **Million Better Jobs for Better Farming and Land Use** campaign): The sustainable farming campaign advocates for improvements in policy and practice to support better farming livelihoods, more and better jobs in sustainable food production, fair trading practices, and the subsidies, policies and industry practices that would incentivise change towards healthy, fair, humane and environmentally sustainable food production.

**Sustainable Fish Cities:** The campaign to protect precious marine environments, fish species and promote sustainable fishing livelihoods, calling for fish to be bought only from verifiably sustainable sources. We show at large scale what can be done if people and organisations make a concerted effort to change their buying habits, working with UK towns, cities, businesses and institutions.

**Sustainable Food Places (renamed during the year – formerly Sustainable Food Cities):** The Sustainable Food Places Network – organised jointly by Food Matters, Soil Association and Sustain – helps people and places share challenges, explore practical solutions and develop good practice on key food issues. It encourages public, private and third-sector groups and local communities to work together to improve their food system. Sustain helps the network to run a series of campaigns, this year including **SUGAR SMART**, helping local authorities, organisations, workplaces and individuals to reduce the amount of sugar we all consume by winning pledges to become SUGAR SMART from councils and schools to restaurants, hospitals and independent companies.

## 19 Reconciliation of net income / (expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities

	2021 £	2020 £
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)</b>	<b>330,243</b>	49,634
Dividends, interest and rent from investments	(1,260)	(3,464)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	<b>53,822</b>	(103,246)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	<b>(207,705)</b>	187,066
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>175,100</b>	129,989

## 20 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	At 1 April 2020 £	Cash flows £	Other changes £	At 31 March 2021 £
Cash in hand	958,104	176,360	-	<b>1,134,464</b>
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>958,104</b>	<b>176,360</b>	-	<b>1,134,464</b>

## 21 Operating lease commitments

The charity has no future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases.

## 22 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

## 23 Notes from 2020 accounts

## a. Summary analysis of assets and liabilities by funds of previous reporting period

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Net current assets	412,587	-	234,246	646,833
<b>Net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>412,587</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>234,246</b>	<b>646,833</b>

## b. Details of movement in funds during the previous reporting period

	At the start of the year £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Campaign for a Better Food Britain	53,680	149,729	(200,966)	2,500	4,943
Campaign for Better Hospital Food	(44)	-	-	44	-
Capital Growth	21,284	106,497	(114,178)	31	13,634
Children's Food Campaign	4,687	72,985	(76,867)	3,896	4,701
Food Co-ops Network	(21)	9,349	(9,593)	265	-
FoodSHIFT 2030	-	-	(1,024)	-	(1,024)
Food Poverty	111,570	603,701	(610,082)	-	105,189
London Food Link	19,986	28,100	(27,823)	-	20,263
Real Bread Campaign	11,913	47,543	(42,428)	-	17,028
Sustainable Farming and Land Use	8,692	115,823	(68,621)	-	55,894
Sustainable Fish Cities	(10,114)	73,579	(65,907)	2,500	58
Sustainable Food Places	372	175,799	(162,611)	-	13,560
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>222,005</b>	<b>1,383,105</b>	<b>(1,380,100)</b>	<b>9,236</b>	<b>234,246</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds:</b>					
<b>General funds</b>	<b>375,194</b>	<b>173,127</b>	<b>(126,498)</b>	<b>(9,236)</b>	<b>412,587</b>
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>375,194</b>	<b>173,127</b>	<b>(126,498)</b>	<b>(9,236)</b>	<b>412,587</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>597,199</b>	<b>1,556,232</b>	<b>(1,506,598)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>646,833</b>

# Funders

Sustain would like to thank the following funders for their financial support for our work over the course of this financial year:

Ashden Trust  
Baring Foundation  
BIG grant  
Big Lottery Fund  
City Bridge Trust  
Compassion in World Farming  
Economic and Social Research Council  
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (various)  
European Union - Horizon 2020  
Farming the Future  
Friends Provident Foundation  
Greater London Authority (various)  
Guy's and St Thomas' Charity  
Heart of Bucks  
Hull City Council  
John Ellerman Foundation  
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust  
Kenneth Miller Trust  
Kestrelman Trust  
London Community Response Fund  
Network for Social Change  
Rothschild Foundation  
Royal Parks Foundation  
Samworth Foundation  
Sustainable Food Places  
Thirty Percy Foundation  
Trust for London  
Unicef UK

# Annual Report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

## A Sustain publication

December 2021

Sustain is a powerful alliance of organisations and communities working together for a better system of food, farming and fishing. We believe everyone should have access to healthy and sustainably produced food that protects people, animals and planet. The Sustain alliance brings together around 100 organisations nationally – and hundreds more at local and regional level – cultivating the movement for change.



Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming

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Sustain works as an alliance to achieve our shared vision of a food, fishing and farming system, in which:

- All food is produced in a way that is fair and sustainable
- There is a thriving food supply chain from 'farm to fork'
- Healthy, sustainable diets are accessible and affordable to all
- We have a strong UK food culture that ensures food is valued and enjoyed