

# A Food Strategy for Brent

*for a fairer, healthier, and more sustainable  
food system*

**Health and Wellbeing Board - Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2026**



# Contents

- What is a Food Strategy and why do we need one? ..... 3-4
- What does Brent’s new Food Strategy look like? ..... 5
- What was the process of developing a Food Strategy? ..... 6-7
- Governance and Delivery of the Food Strategy and Action Plan ..... 8
- Priorities for Year 1 – what will we focus on? ..... 9-10
- Good Food Movement – how are we contributing? ..... 11-12
- What’s next? ..... 13
- In conclusion ..... 14

# What is a Food Strategy and why do we need one?

## What Is a Food Strategy?

- A **long-term plan** that brings together statutory organisations, the VCS sector, the private sector, and residents **to improve how food is produced, accessed, consumed, and disposed of**
- It **sets key priorities** and action across **health, sustainability, and equity**, ensuring alignment of policies and interventions across relevant sectors

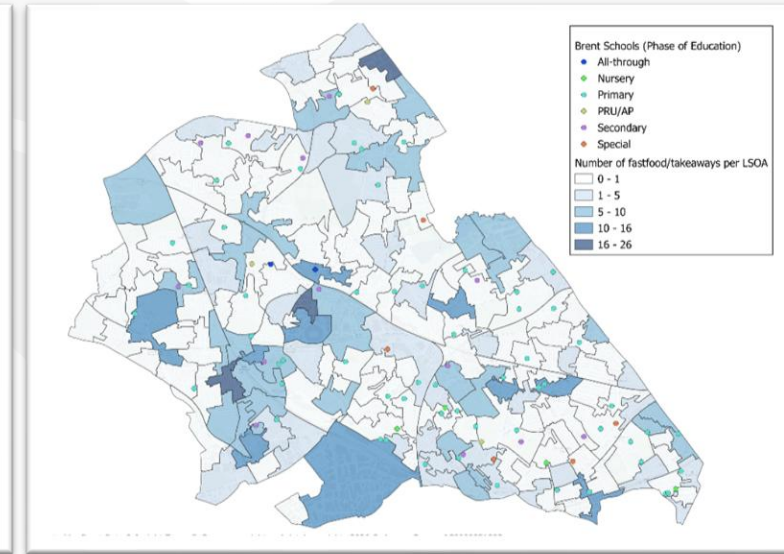
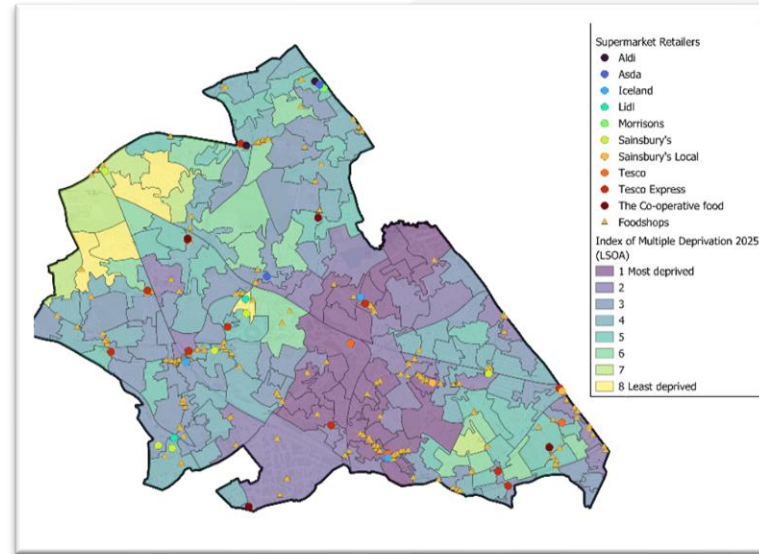
## What are its shared values?

- **Food is foundational.** It impacts every aspect of life
- **Equity is central.** We must ensure that everyone in Brent can eat well
- **Dignity matters.** We must develop approaches that centre agency and promote dignity
- **Partnership is powerful.** Joining up work across sectors leads to lasting change
- **Environments shape our choices.** The structural context dictates our connection to food
- **Food builds community.** It acts as a tool for social connection, learning and wellbeing

# What is a Food Strategy and why do we need one?

## Why do we need one?

- Brent faces significant challenges: rising **food insecurity**, **diet-related ill health**, and **environmental pressures**
- Poor diets contribute to obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, placing strain on health services and reducing quality of life
- At the same time, the cost-of-living crisis and unequal access to healthy food deepen health inequalities
- A **coordinated approach is essential** to address these issues and create a food system that works for everyone



### Type 2 Diabetes

In 2024/25, Brent recorded **8.1%** type 2 diabetes prevalence, higher than the London average of 7.2%

### Hypertension

In 2026 Brent's hypertension rate is **13.3%**, higher than the London average of 10.6%

### Weight in Children

As of 2024/25, **38.1%** of Year 6 Brent pupils were overweight or obese, which is higher than the London average of 24.8%

### Poverty

33% of people in Brent live in poverty, (roughly 116,483 residents)

### Food Aid (Brent Hubs)

From Jan 2025 to Jan 2026, there were 1,866 visits to Brent Hubs for food related support

### Free School Meals

Of the 48,780 Brent pupils, 21.8% received FSM in 2025

### Healthy Start

In 2025, 57% of eligible Brent families received cash support through the Healthy Start scheme to help them purchase fresh fruit and vegetables

### Universal Credit

As of May 2025, over 60,000 people claimed Universal credit in Brent (17% of Brent residents)

# What does Brent's Food Strategy look like?

## Structure

- The strategy is built around **six Food Missions** which seek to address the most pressing food-related challenges in Brent
- The Food Strategy highlights a **deeply interconnected food system** with common threads and shared values
- Every Food Mission has **three core objectives**, each with **three distinct solutions**

## Summary

**Mission 1:** We will improve access to healthy and affordable food, and tackle diet-related health inequalities.

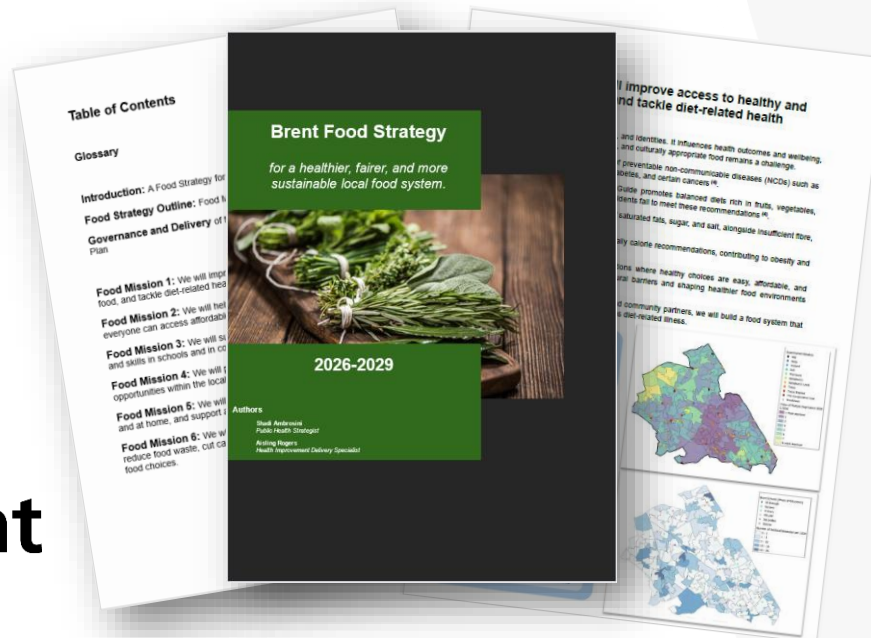
**Mission 2:** We will help reduce food insecurity and ensure everyone can access affordable and healthy food with dignity.

**Mission 3:** We will support the development of food literacy and skills in schools and in communities.

**Mission 4:** We will promote good food jobs, skills training, and opportunities within the local food economy.

**Mission 5:** We will encourage growing food in the community and at home, and support access to resources.

**Mission 6:** We will empower residents and institutions to reduce food waste, cut carbon emissions, and support more sustainable food choices.



# What was the process of developing a Food Strategy?

**2021**  
Brent launches  
Right to Food  
campaign



**2023**  
Food Visioning  
Workshop



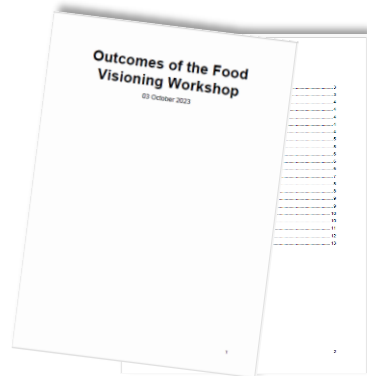
**2024**  
Brent Food  
Partnership  
Priorities



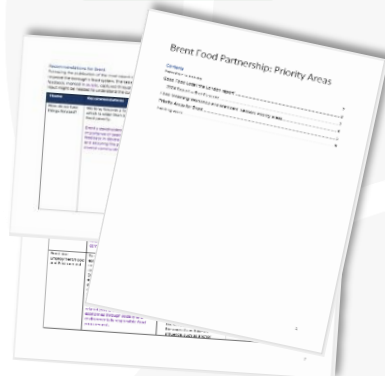
**2025**  
Brent Council  
appoints  
Public Health  
Strategist  
Food Strategy  
Workshop



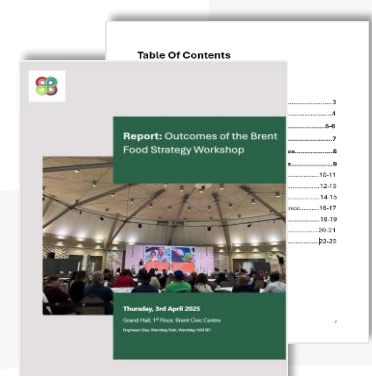
**2026**  
Task and Finish  
Groups  
HWB  
presentation



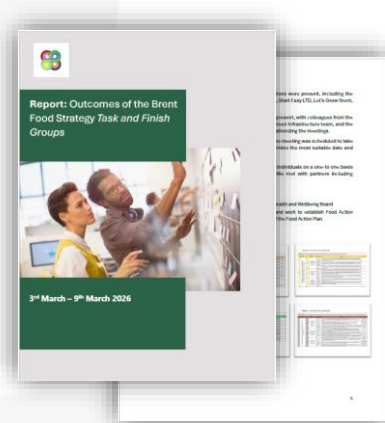
This initial engagement led to the development of **seven Strategic Themes** which informed initial priority setting. The **Food Partnership Steering Group** was then formed.  
**Engaged:** 55 people, 37 organisations.



The Steering Group identified **core priorities**, which later informed the development of key **Objectives** and recommended areas of action.



The seven Strategic Themes became **six Food Missions**, each with three distinct objectives, and nine proposed solutions.  
**Engaged:** 67 people, 28 organisations.



Task and Finish Groups were held between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> March, to finalise a draft Food Action Plan.  
**Engaged:** 41 stakeholders.



# What was the process of developing a Food Strategy?

## Consultations and Community Engagement

- Community Events (n=8)
- Communities of Practice and Professional Networks (n=7)
- Local Authorities and Food Partnerships (n=10)



## Food Partnership Steering Group

- Food Partnership Steering Groups Meetings (n=10)
- Review progress, agree priorities, oversee process, support with engaging wider stakeholders

“[...] this draft is very thorough and comprehensive. It reflects our steering group discussions and the themes emerging from the visioning event. The branching structure leading from Mission, to Objectives, Outcomes and Solutions makes sense and conveys the complex ambition of the strategy”

“We welcome this ambitious and comprehensive strategy. We particularly welcome the robust commitment to procurement policy being linked with sustainability; a great opportunity for the council to show leadership”

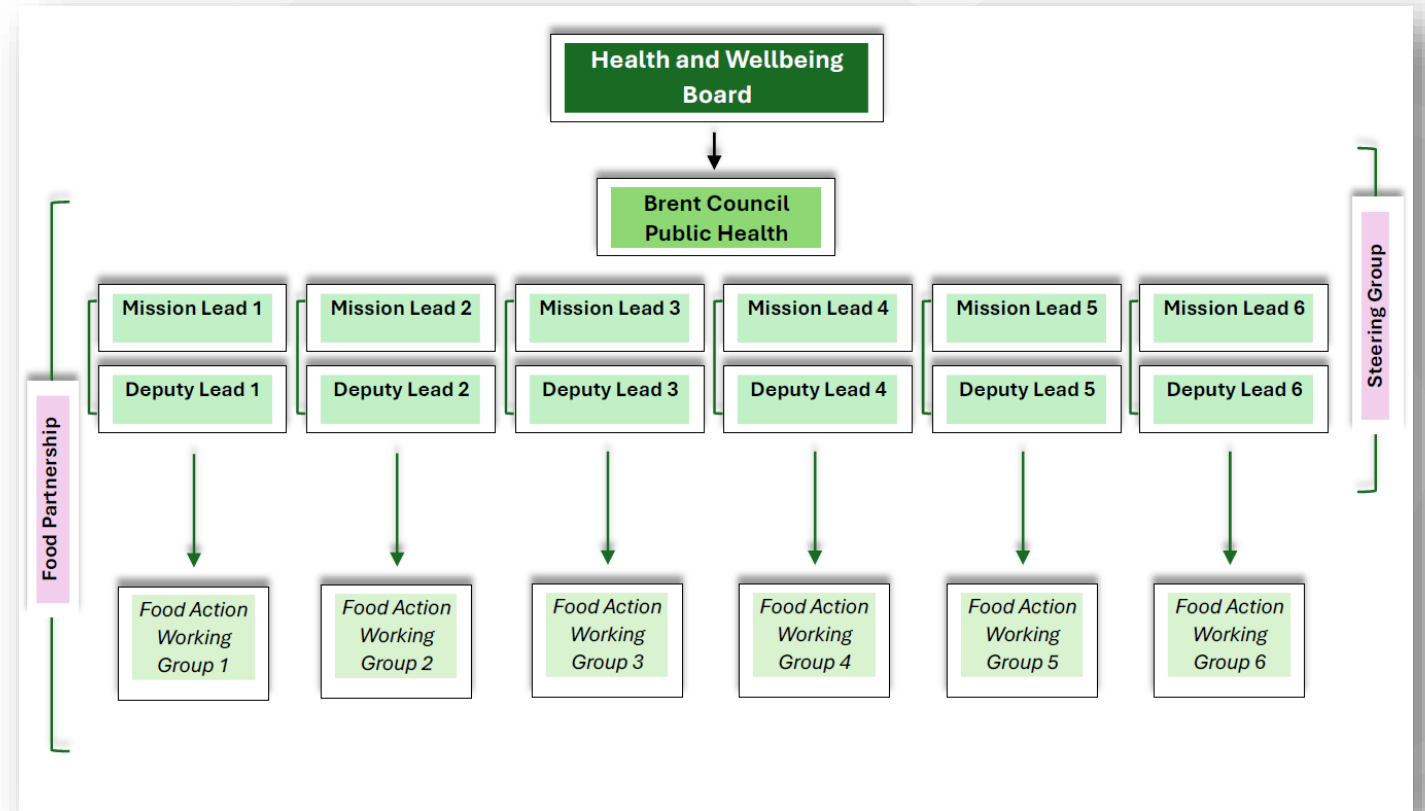
## Strategy Development and Implementation Planning

- Draft 1 shared with SG in Jan 2026
- Draft 2 shared with key stakeholders in Feb 2026
- Draft 3 reviewed through TFGs, ready for HWB by April 2026



# Governance and Delivery of the Food Strategy

- The **Health and Wellbeing Board** will provide strategic oversight and ensure that the commitments within this Strategy remain anchored to Brent's broader ambitions around health equity, climate action, community cohesion, and economic resilience
- The **Steering Group** will offer strategic direction for delivery, coordinate work across Food Missions, oversee performance, assess risks, and share learnings while maintaining strong links with the Health and Wellbeing Board
- The **Food Action Working Groups** will lead the operational delivery for each Food Mission and deliver mission-specific interventions by ensuring practical, inclusive and community-led implementation, monitoring progress and escalating issues where appropriate
- The **Food Partnership** will act as the borough-wide convening body that will work to strengthen the local food system through collective action, fostering collaboration and engagement, shared leadership, joint problem-solving



- Brent Public Health is committed to **exploring resourcing options** with relevant stakeholders to support the delivery on the proposed actions supported by the new Food Strategy
- An allocation from the **Public Health Grant** will be made as appropriate, with the Public Health Strategist exploring suitable additional funding streams with relevant partners

# Priorities for Year 1 – what will we focus on?

- Together, the six Food Missions of the Food Strategy take a **whole-system approach to improving Brent’s food environment** by promoting health, resilience, economic inclusion, sustainability, and equity
- Through task & finish groups, we explored the feasibility of the proposed actions, partnership opportunities, resource needs, and the system changes required to embed food within health, education, climate, and community priorities

The collective insights from consultations and strategic engagements provide clear direction for the **Year 1 Food Action Plan**, centred on practical, high-impact actions that:

- Strengthen food security
- Improve diet-related illness
- Boost food literacy and skills
- Expand food-growing opportunities
- Enhance good food jobs
- Accelerate Brent’s transition to a more sustainable, climate-friendly food system

# Priorities for Year 1 – what will we focus on?



- **Acting within Brent’s sphere of influence** – prioritising actions the Council and partners can directly deliver or meaningfully shape
- **Embedding poverty alleviation and cash-first principles** – recognising financial insecurity as a major barrier to healthy food access
- **Strengthening cross-sector collaboration** – working across schools, VCS organisations, health services, local businesses, and community groups
- **Building education and workforce capacity** – equipping residents, frontline staff, and the wider food workforce with the skills and confidence to drive change
- **Advancing climate and sustainability goals** – promoting plant-rich diets, sustainable procurement, reduced food waste, and shorter supply chains
- **Ensuring cultural relevance and dignity** – adopting inclusive, community-led approaches that reflect Brent’s diverse cultures, preferences, and lived experiences

# Good Food Movement – how are we contributing?

  
Department  
for Environment,  
Food & Rural Affairs

Policy paper

## A UK government food strategy for England, considering the wider UK food system

Published 15 July 2025

It sets out 10 priority outcomes to build a food system that grows the economy, protects the environment, and celebrates British food and culture.

The food strategy will outline how we the Government will work to create a healthier, more affordable, sustainable, resilient food system that [...] supports delivery of the Plan for Change and other national missions.



**A network of 114 food partnerships from across the UK** that are driving innovation and best practice on all aspects of healthy and sustainable food.

The logo consists of the word 'sustain' in a bold, black, lowercase sans-serif font. A small orange flame-like icon is positioned above the letter 'i'. Below the word, the tagline 'the alliance for better food and farming' is written in a smaller, orange, lowercase sans-serif font.

An alliance of organisations and communities working together for a healthy and sustainable food system, which is publicly accountable and socially and environmentally responsible.

**Through Good Food Local: The Local Report**, Sustain continue to work closely with London councils, to track their action on food and share examples of good practice from across the capital. 11

# Good Food Movement – how are we contributing?



**Overall Score: 79%**



**Overall Score: 82%**



6 Good Food Local: the London report

**Overall league table**  
Which councils are showing leadership on a whole-systems approach to food?

	Food governance and strategy	Food growing	Community food action	Addressing food poverty	Healthier food environments	Sustainable food economy	Catering and procurement	Food for the Planet	Ethnic and cultural diversity in the food system	Overall Score
Newham	Green	Dark Blue	Yellow	Blue	Light Green	Dark Green	Pink	Teal	Red	95%
Southwark	Green	Dark Blue	Yellow	Blue	Light Green	Dark Green	Pink	Teal	Red	93%
Lambeth	Green	Dark Blue	Yellow	Blue	Light Green	Dark Green	Pink	Teal	Red	93%
Greenwich	Green	Dark Blue	Yellow	Blue	Light Green	Dark Green	Pink	Teal	Red	91%
Islington	Green	Dark Blue	Yellow	Blue	Light Green	Dark Green	Pink	Teal	Red	89%
Hammersmith and Fulham	Green	Dark Blue	Yellow	Blue	Light Green	Dark Green	Pink	Teal	Red	89%
Ealing	Green	Dark Blue	Yellow	Blue	Light Green	Dark Green	Pink	Teal	Red	88%
Merton	Green	Dark Blue	Yellow	Blue	Light Green	Dark Green	Pink	Teal	Red	88%
Camden	Green	Dark Blue	Yellow	Blue	Light Green	Dark Green	Pink	Teal	Red	86%
Brent	Green	Dark Blue	Yellow	Blue	Light Green	Dark Green	Pink	Teal	Red	82%
Tower Hamlets	Green	Dark Blue	Yellow	Blue	Light Green	Dark Green	Pink	Teal	Red	82%



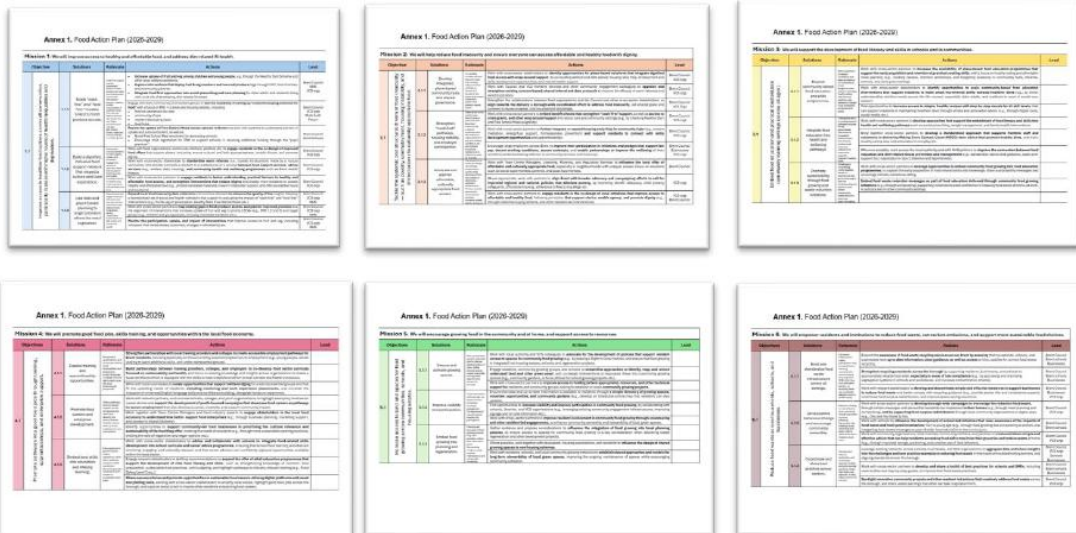
# What's next?

## Implementation Planning, Community Engagement, and Partnership building

- Finalise the **Food Action Plan**, including KPIs, roles, resourcing considerations etc.
- Continue to **seek meaningful engagement** with residents, organisations, and other stakeholders to ensure interventions are feasible, impactful, and centre lived experience
- Continue to **identify strategic partners** that can support in realising the vision of the Food Strategy

## Strengthen Governance and Delivery Structures

- Establish **Food Action Working Groups (FAWGs)**
- Establish a borough-wide **Food Partnership**, that goes beyond the current Steering Group, and that engages delivery partners
- Work with the Steering Group and colleagues to determine and allocate **resources** appropriately



## Sustainable Food Places Bronze Award

- Work towards achieving Bronze status through the Sustainable Food Places award scheme

# In conclusion...

- With the appropriate governance, planning, and resource allocation, Brent can drive meaningful progress toward a food system that improves health outcomes, advances climate and sustainability goals, and enables resilience
- It is advised to begin by focusing on building strong foundations to ensure that Brent's good food movement has longevity and can support long-term impact
- In the first year of implementation, key priorities will include building an appropriate operational structure, further developing the action plan to include KPIs, engaging key stakeholders and partners, trialling interventions, supporting food policy advocacy, achieving Sustainable Food Places Bronze/Silver accreditation, and improving Brent's Good Food Local score in the London league table
- This should be done by strengthening partnerships with committed partners, leveraging existing assets, and prioritising actions that:
  - Strengthen system-wide alignment
  - Reduce duplication
  - Build local capacity
  - Shift power to communities
  - Deliver tangible improvements in food security, health, and sustainability

# Any questions?

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