

Sustain Strategy
2026–2030

sustain
the alliance for better food and farming

About Sustain

Sustain is a powerful alliance of organisations and communities working together for a better system of food, farming and fishing. 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 programmes, aiming to catalyse permanent changes in policy and practice, and to engage more people, organisations and communities in being food system change-makers.

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Right - Hackney School of Food by Jim Stephenson



Vision

Everyone has access to healthy and sustainably produced food that protects people, animals and planet.

Mission

To catalyse systemic change in the UK's food and farming system – securing a healthy, fair, and sustainable future for all people, nature and a stable climate.

Values

- Collaborative Action
- Trusted Expertise
- Connected Care
- Fairness Together
- Courageous Change

Collaborative Action

We bring people and organisations together across the food system, working in alliance and partnership to create fair, healthy and sustainable food and farming.

Trusted Expertise

We are leaders in food system change, using clear and honest knowledge grounded in lived experience, practitioner know-how, evidence and policy insight to guide our choices and advocacy.

Connected Care

We act with compassion and responsibility, recognising historic and current harms, and championing food and farming systems that nourish the interconnected wellbeing of people, nature, and communities.

Fairness Together

We stand up for justice and equity in how food is produced, traded and accessed, promoting agroecology and working to ensure everyone has a voice and is treated with dignity.

Courageous Change

We speak up boldly for a better food and farming future, challenging harms and injustice while inspiring meaningful action on solutions that bring long-term, positive change for people and planet.

Sustain's theory of change

Sustain seeks to achieve our mission by fostering collaborative action and driving evidence-based advocacy for transformational and lasting improvements in policy and practice.

Coalition-building, strategic partnerships and vibrant communities of practice are central to how Sustain members and allies work together, and with others, to achieve our shared vision.

Together, these approaches ensure we work in common purpose to transform the food system for the long term.

- **We demonstrate and provide evidence of what our vision looks like in practice** - showing what works, how it works, and how others can adopt it.
- **We apply clear public-interest principles** - ensuring our work prioritises equity, health, sustainability and transparency.
- **We work across diverse communities and the political spectrum** - building broad, inclusive support for food and farming system change and elevating the work of pioneers.
- **We push to embed strong legal, accountability, regulatory and standards-based frameworks** - ensuring that key food system actors take responsibility for their role and maintain long-term commitment to priority goals.



Credit: Eleanor Church

Sustain's track record of change-making

Over the five-year period of our previous strategy, Fertile Future, Sustain led on or strongly contributed to many significant milestones.

Sustainable farming, fishing and supply chains

Working in alliance, Sustain has:

- Greatly influenced adoption and implementation of the UK Government's public money for public goods approach to farm subsidies – the principles and the details; including active tests and trials of better models of farm support.
- Secured better support for horticultural production to supply healthy and sustainable diets, including by making the case for public investment in local food infrastructure to help sustainable farming become more economically viable.
- Established the case for **market gardens in the urban fringe**, and planning policies to support them, to create an accessible supply of fruit, veg and jobs in food growing.
- Helped secure high-level public and political attention in **post-Brexit** food and farming, including amplifying support for the work of **Pesticide Action Network**, the **Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics** and **Compassion in World Farming** to win higher standards in trade deals.
- Catalysed establishment of the **Trade and Agriculture Commission** in 2020 to advise government on food and farming standards in trade deals, including for climate and nature. To influence this, Sustain's Chief Executive Kath Dalmeny set up and chaired the **Future British Standards Coalition** to highlight the deficit in UK Government policy to defend British food and farming standards in trade deals.

- Played an instrumental role in a **landmark planning decision** that led to the precedent of a UK local authority rejecting planning permission for a new intensive livestock mega-farm on climate grounds.
- Established renewed understanding among decision-makers that farmers receive less than 1p profit on typical packs of everyday food due to unfair trading, in our perennially referenced **Unpicking Food Prices** report.
- Won fair supply chain trading legal measures in the Agriculture Act (2020), and high-profile exposure of the impact of unfair trading on farmers and farm workers; and successfully defended the **Groceries Code Adjudicator** from being axed (which the alliance originally campaigned for and secured).
- Launched and promoted the collaborative **Local Food Growth Plan**, setting out a roadmap to expand the local food sector.
- Worked with marine conservation groups to achieved remarkable shifts in the UK supply chain, resulting in **caterers that serve over 1 billion meals per year** – and the main wholesale supplier to the UK foodservice market – adopting demonstrably sustainable fish buying standards.

Healthy and sustainable food, accessible to all

Working in alliance, Sustain has:

- Developed the collaborative **Recipe for Change** campaign to introduce levies on unhealthy food, building on the tremendous success of our earlier landmark win of the **Soft Drinks Industry Levy** (sugary drinks tax).
- Continued to win step-by-step restrictions on unhealthy food advertising and promotion, including laying the ground for the long-promised **9pm watershed** on unhealthy food advertising to children, broadcast and online, and **an increasing number of local authorities** to develop unhealthy food advertising restrictions on their estates and transport networks.
- Continued to win, or contribute to, step-by-step improvements in key measures to improve **household food security** and reduce food poverty, for example increased eligibility for **Healthy Start** fruit and veg vouchers, the **School Fruit & Veg Scheme** and **Free School Meals** for children from millions of families living on a low income.
- Successfully influenced the criteria for how the new £3bn **Crisis and Resilience Fund** will be spent by local authorities to support people in crisis to afford necessities such as adequate and nutritious food.

- Developed the capacity of hundreds of community food growing gardens to become established, well-run, inclusive, anti-racist, and cultivate biodiversity, as part of our thriving **Capital Growth** network and national **Good to Grow** volunteering days.
- Played an instrumental role in a **landmark legal case** to force Government to fund access to adequate food for children from low-income households during the Covid-19 pandemic, and helped secure £500m for wider support for people on a low income, to address the Covid-19 food emergency.
- Helped hundreds of bakers and communities to develop the skills, business models and customers that are driving the revival of **Real Bread**, made with natural ingredients and traditional skills and methods.
- Convened the food and farming movement to respond to and vocally support several iterations of the 2020-21 National **Food Strategy**, with very broad and vocal buy-in, and the revival of this work towards a new national **Food Strategy** in 2025, which this time includes local action on food due to our advocacy with **Sustainable Food Places**.
- Strived to take a leadership role on equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism – see our **progress reports** – including a significant programme of work on **Diversity Outreach**, supporting alliance programmes, members and others to improve opportunities for people from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and with other diverse personal characteristics, to get involved and have their voices heard.

Across all of our work, we have also:

- Supported over 120 Local Food Partnerships in the Sustainable Food Places network to take **action on healthy and sustainable food**; over 40 Local Authorities in London and the North East to **benchmark their progress**; and **35 city regions** across Europe to improve their local food systems.
- Contributed **briefings and evidence** to numerous parliamentary events, select committee inquiries and debates on themes of critical importance to climate- and nature-friendly farming, establishing warm and productive relationships with MPs, civil servants and parliamentary researchers.

Sustain's Strategic Goals

This Strategy is based around six goals – broad, longer-term areas in which we will work to generate impact – real change in the world – that we will seek to achieve through implementation of the Strategy and within the Strategy timeframe:

- Goals 1 to 4 are our external change goals. They set out our priorities for improving policy and practice across key food and farming issues.
- Goal 5 sets out the relationships Sustain needs in order to achieve the change set out in Goals 1 to 4.
- Goal 6 focuses on internal change – what we need to strengthen within our own organisation and alliance, so we can deliver our external change goals and remain a strong effective force for change.

Goal 1

Accelerate the UK's transition to agroecological farming, growing and land use.

Goal 2

Shift the UK to healthy, equitable and sustainable diets.

Goal 3

Improve the conditions for fair, diverse and resilient farmer-focused supply chains for healthy and sustainable food to thrive.

Goal 4

Secure effective food system governance and accountability at local, regional and national levels.

Goal 5

By 2030, Sustain will have established working relationships with all identified organisations and key individuals that share our change agenda and who influence decision-makers, creating a powerful and enduring network for collective action on food and farming system change.

Goal 6

By 2030, Sustain will have the organisational capacity, financial resilience, and equitable culture approach needed to deliver Goals 1 to 4 effectively and sustainably, functioning as a strong force for collective changemaking as an alliance and with the wider food and farming movement.



Photo - Mixed farming landscape Yorkshire by James Woodward.

Goal 1

Accelerate the UK's transition to agroecological farming, growing and land use

Strategic objective 1.1

We will advocate for edible horticulture to become a key growth sector of the UK farming industry, enhancing UK nutritional security, resilience and environmental protection.

Strategic objective 1.2

We will influence government to secure well-funded agri-environmental land management schemes that drive and incentivise the transition to agroecology.

Strategic objective 1.3

We will secure improvements to national and local planning policy that support agroecological farming and food growing, whilst also securing regulation and reduction of the most damaging methods of food production.

Strategic objective 1.4

We will build the evidence and demonstrate how to make more land available and accessible for new entrant small and medium agroecological growers, farmers and market gardeners.

Strategic objective 1.5

We will support campaigns for international trade deals that uphold, and do not undermine, high food and farming standards, which reduce and control their impact on people and planet.

Strategic objective 1.1

We will advocate for edible horticulture to become a key growth sector of the UK farming industry, enhancing UK nutritional security, resilience and environmental protection. This will:

- Generate and present the evidence of the needs and benefits of thriving and diverse edible horticulture sector, in a compelling way that secures the support of key food system actors and decision-makers.
- Promote policies and practices that demonstrably increase production and consumption of UK-grown fruit, pulses, legumes and vegetables, especially those grown using organic, nature-friendly methods.
- Champion a renaissance in community and field-scale market gardening.
- Secure policies, procurement commitments and investment that enable local food infrastructure and agroecological supply chains and networks of supply to thrive.
- Ensure that policies and incentives drive soil and nature restoration and radically reduce reliance on damaging agro-chemical inputs and peat.

Strategic objective 1.2

We will influence government to secure well-funded agri-environmental land management schemes that drive and incentivise the transition to agroecology. This will:

- Embed the 'public money for public goods' principle in government funding for farm support and other sources of finance, such that these deliver on accelerated transition to agroecological farming, climate, nature and nutrition security.
- Help secure adequate government funding for agroecological farm support and other sources of finance.
- Ensure that policies, finance and other incentives are aligned and integrated with principles and standards in relation to:
  - Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
  - Restoration of nature.
  - More edible horticulture, field-scale vegetables, fruit, pulses, nut growing and orchards.
  - Less intensive livestock production.
  - High standards of animal welfare.
  - Hardy livestock breeds integrated into nature-friendly land management.
  - Radically reduced use of farm antibiotics.
  - Whole-farm approaches.
  - A diversity of farm sizes and types.
  - Farmer-led advice, skills, training and education, independent of the agro-chemical and veterinary pharmaceutical industries and other vested interests.

Strategic objective 1.3

We will secure improvements to national and local planning policy that support agroecological farming and food growing, whilst also securing regulation and reduction of the most damaging methods of food production. This will introduce or strengthen policies that:

- Protect and enhance existing farmland and food growing spaces and facilities.
- Enable access to land to create market gardens and community food growing spaces and facilities, including in urban and peri-urban areas accessible to diverse and under-served populations.

- Improve the economic viability of farmers and fishers using climate- and nature-friendly methods, including planning and other support for appropriate infrastructure.
- Block further development of damaging intensive livestock production ('factory farming') on the grounds of pollution and climate and nature impact.
- Create replicable models of policy and statutory guidance, actively shared and taken up via relevant professional groups and communities of practice.

Strategic objective 1.4

We will build the evidence and demonstrate how to make more land available and accessible for new entrant small and medium agroecological growers, farmers and market gardeners. This will:

- Identify opportunities to double the amount of land used for edible horticulture, market gardens and community food growing.
- Champion community-supported and cooperative ventures to support land access for new entrant farmers and growers, including people from underrepresented backgrounds.
- Ensure the Right to Grow is adopted in more places and regions across the UK, enabling easier access to land for community food growing.

Strategic objective 1.5

We will support campaigns for international trade deals that uphold, and do not undermine, high food and farming standards, which reduce and control their impact on people and planet. The campaigns and policy activity we support will uphold:

- Restoration of nature and prevention of deforestation.
- Mitigation of – and adaptation to – climate change.
- Demonstrably sustainable fishing.
- British standards of animal welfare, farm antibiotic use and pesticides.
- Ethical labour practices and eradication of modern slavery.
- Fair trade, especially with lower income countries of the Global South accessing British markets.
- Scrutiny by suitably qualified and independent experts, and by democratically elected governments that are transparent about the principles and standards, and protected from the influence of vested interests.

Read the alliance's approach to healthy and sustainable food, farming and networks of supply **here**.



Credit: Sustain, Recipe for Change.

Goal 2

Shift the UK to healthy, equitable and sustainable diets

Strategic objective 2.1

We will elevate the standard and status of food in schools and early years settings to become increasingly a proud beacon of healthy and sustainable food, embedded in policy, standards and practice.

Strategic objective 2.2

We will drive measurable progress on how key food systems actors use their role, powers and opportunities, and how institutions adopt their duties and responsibilities for achieving household food security, towards the long-term aim of ending the mass reliance on charitable food aid, and enabling dignified access to good food.

Strategic objective 2.3

We will convince Government to strengthen regulation of the food industry to accelerate a shift to affordable, healthy diets, especially to protect infants, children and young people, also with population-wide benefits.

Strategic objective 2.4

We will win introduction of a new national, statutory levy on food products high in fat, salt and/or sugar, or will have elevated this to a convincing stage of development and public and political support.

Strategic objective 2.5

We will ensure that local authorities, regional leaders and their partners are deploying enhanced policies and powers to make healthier food accessible and affordable, and to protect their communities from the flood of harmful unhealthy food marketing.

Strategic objective 2.1

We will elevate the standard and status of food in schools and early years settings to become increasingly a proud beacon of healthy and sustainable food, embedded in policy, standards and practice. This will:

- Enable and require local authorities, nurseries and schools to deliver stronger food standards that make healthy, sustainable and culturally appropriate food accessible to all children.
- Remove means-testing, stigma and complex enrolment systems.
- Support farmers, growers and fishers to provide sustainably produced food to public sector institutions.
- Deliver the ingredients, education and hands-on experience for children and young people of a healthy and sustainable diet – and the farming and wider system that produces it – as a foundation of agency, skills and active participation.

Strategic objective 2.2

We will drive measurable progress on how key food systems actors use their role, powers and opportunities, and how institutions adopt their duties and responsibilities for achieving household food security, towards the long-term aim of ending the mass reliance on charitable food aid, and enabling dignified access to good food. This will:

- Drive change in policy and practice by national and local government and public health bodies, and the organisations that work with them.
- Secure key financial, practical and institutional commitments, policies and mechanisms to enable dignified, equitable and universal access to adequate, nutritious and culturally appropriate food.
- Strengthen and roll out approaches such as Good Food Local and Sustainable Food Places local partnerships, embedding and benchmarking an inclusive and equitable food access and dietary health focus, to create lasting and structural change.

This will be implemented in line with our alliance's four-pillar approach to dignified food access that provides the framework for national government, local authorities, food enterprises, and the community and voluntary sectors, to play their due part, which:

- Prioritises cash-first solutions.
- Provides nutritional security.
- Supports community food assets and infrastructure.
- Implements good food governance.

Read the alliance's Four Pillars of Dignified Food Access **here**.

Strategic objective 2.3

We will convince Government to strengthen regulation of the food industry to accelerate a shift to affordable, healthy diets, especially to protect infants, children and young people, also with population-wide benefits. This will:

- Strengthen the definitions and mechanisms that can enable robust regulation, guidance and standards, as well as contractual requirements and standards for food companies, institutions and catering services.
- Close loopholes; create better incentives; improve transparency; and set enforceable standards, targets and penalties for business.
- Introduce a 9pm watershed for unhealthy food in broadcast advertising, and make restrictions on online advertising and promotions more robust.
- Drive systematic reformulation of food and drink products and healthier recipes.
- Improve food labelling and marketing to provide clear, accessible, consistent and helpful information and to encourage and enable healthier choices.

Strategic objective 2.4

We will win introduction of a new national, statutory levy on food products high in fat, salt and/or sugar, or will have elevated this to a convincing stage of development and public and political support. This will:

- Expand on the successful UK Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL).
- Drive healthier product reformulation.
- Raise large-scale and ring-fenced national public funds to invest in health promotion and in equitable and affordable access to healthy and sustainable food.

Objective 2.5

We will ensure that local authorities, regional leaders and their partners are deploying enhanced policies and powers to make healthier food accessible and affordable, and to protect their communities from the flood of harmful unhealthy food marketing. This will:

- Enable healthy and accessible, sustainable food interventions.
- Prevent and control unhealthy food advertising, promotion and marketing.
- Be supported by the Good Food Local benchmarking framework and the Sustainable Food Places local partnerships model.
- Provide policies, actions and evidence that drive measurable and demonstrably beneficial food system change.

Read more about the alliance's Children's Food Campaign **here**.

Find out about the alliance campaign for an industry levy to make food healthier **here**.

Explore our work and ideas for securing dignified food access for everybody **here**.



Photo - Organic North, by Sustain

Goal 3

Improve the conditions for fair, diverse and resilient farmer-focused supply chains for healthy and sustainable food to thrive

Strategic objective 3.1

We will contribute to the measurable increase in market share for local and sustainably produced food.

Strategic objective 3.2

We will secure stronger regulation of mainstream food wholesale, manufacturing and supermarkets in order to ensure better livelihoods for farmers, growers and fishers at home and abroad.

Strategic objective 3.3

We will advocate with local and national government for support for the growth and resilience of a vibrant local food economy characterised by diverse food SMEs, cooperatives, retailers, caterers and proven models of community- and farmer-focused food enterprise.

Strategic objective 3.4

We will achieve the adoption and effective implementation of at least one major strategic intervention by national government to make healthy food accessible and affordable.

Strategic objective 3.5

We will ensure food and nutrition security are recognised and integrated into national and local food security and resilience planning.

Strategic objective 3.1

We will contribute to the measurable increase in market share for local and sustainably produced food. This will:

- Help scale-up and scale-out shorter, values-led and relational supply chains and networks of supply.
- Promote the most promising and replicable models of farmer-focused and fisher-focused trading and routes to market.
- Help secure public sector food procurement standards and commitments that can offer fair, flexible and reliable orders and contracts to local and sustainable food growers and farmers.
- Enable more farmers, growers, fishers and workers to provide healthy, climate- and nature-friendly food.
- Generate good farming and fishing incomes and livelihoods that stimulate the ability, confidence and motivation to participate in agroecological transition.

Strategic objective 3.2

We will secure stronger regulation of mainstream food wholesale, manufacturing and supermarkets in order to ensure better livelihoods for farmers, growers and fishers at home and abroad. This will:

- Enforce transparency and reporting.
- Promote farmgate prices that meet and adequately reward the cost of sustainable production and the ability to provide decent livelihoods and working conditions.
- Uphold fair dealing.
- Secure adequate capacity, powers and robust regulatory mechanisms, investigations and enforcement by key statutory bodies such as the Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA), the Agricultural Supply Chain Adjudicator (ASCA) and the Gangmasters Licensing Authority (GLA).

Strategic objective 3.3

We will advocate with local and national government for support for the growth and resilience of a vibrant local food economy characterised by diverse food SMEs, cooperatives, retailers, caterers and proven models of community- and farmer-focused food enterprise. This will:

- Enable the buying, selling and distribution of fresh, affordable, minimally processed, healthy and agroecological food.
- Build community assets, wealth and health.
- Promote models organised through collaboration and cooperation.
- Secure policy and investment in planning, infrastructure, funding and marketing, at local and national level.
- Be actively supported to succeed by local food partnerships, including those in the Sustainable Food Places network, supported to deliver a national programme of growth in the local food sector.

Strategic objective 3.4

We will achieve the adoption and effective implementation of at least one major strategic intervention by national government to make healthy food accessible and affordable. This will be:

- Integrated with climate- and nature-friendly food supply chains and networks of supply.
- Scaled up and adopted into policy and rolled out by a national service or agency, and/or in one or more region.
- Built around a well-evidenced, evaluated and replicable model, such as:
  - Fruit and veg on prescription rolled out as part of the NHS and GP and community nutrition support services; and/or
  - Systematic work demonstrating how to move a place or region to population-level nutritional security through multiple complimentary food system interventions.

Strategic objective 3.5

We will ensure food and nutrition security are recognised and integrated into national and local food security and resilience planning. This will include:

- Identifying key elements of the food and farming system infrastructure, buffer capacities and supply chain facilities that must be created and protected as long-term critical national and local infrastructure.
- Engaging with key national and local food system actors who need to be prepared to respond to supply chain disruption, and the duties and responsibilities that need to be placed on them.
- Supporting development of scenario-based guidance for how authorities need to respond to likely scenarios of food supply chain disruption, with public interest, health, environmental protection and equitable access principles baked in.

Read the alliance's approach to healthy and sustainable food, farming and networks of supply **here**.

Read the alliance's approach to local, sustainable and farmer-focused food retail **here**.



Photo: Sustainable Food Places at Parliament by Jonathan Goldberg

Goal 4

Secure effective food system governance and accountability at local, regional and national levels

Strategic objective 4.1

We will advocate to secure new framework legislation that provides food systems governance fit to deliver the transition to climate- and nature-friendly farming, fishing and healthy and sustainable diets.

Strategic objective 4.2

We will catalyse the growing number of local and regional authorities and areas with devolved powers to adopt a suite of proven interventions that drive beneficial food and farming system change.

Strategic objective 4.3

We will campaign for and win introduction of – or amendment to improve – key policies and regulations.

Strategic objective 4.4

We will stimulate public debate, and influence the attitudes, beliefs and public statements of decision-makers.

Strategic objective 4.5

We will generate momentum among key food system actors to take concerted action for food system transformation across Sustain's external change agenda.

Strategic objective 4.1

We will advocate to secure new framework legislation that provides food systems governance fit to deliver the transition to climate- and nature-friendly farming, fishing and healthy and sustainable diets. This will:

- Introduce duties, expectations and accountability for public officials at local, regional and national levels.
- Generate the impetus for a growing cohort of food system actors to be motivated, supported, well-informed and duty-bound to take action in common cause.
- Robustly protect against policy influence by vested interests less willing to support – or which actively block – policy improvements in the public interest, and at the pace and scale needed.

Strategic objective 4.2

We will catalyse the growing number of local and regional authorities and areas with devolved powers to adopt a suite of proven interventions that drive beneficial food and farming system change. This will include measuring and report on their impact and progress, and embedding policies that maintain and secure progress over time, building on our Good Food Local and Sustainable Food Places frameworks.

Strategic objective 4.3

We will campaign for and win introduction of – or amendment to improve – key policies and regulations that unlock the potential for accelerating the transition to agroecological farming, sustainable fishing and healthy and sustainable diets. This will also include integration of food and farming concerns into key climate change policy and legislation.

Strategic objective 4.4

We will stimulate public debate, and influence the attitudes, beliefs and public statements of decision-makers, resulting in a marked shift towards understanding that food system change cannot be left to market forces, and that legislation and policy interventions are needed, desirable and have public support.

Strategic objective 4.5

We will generate momentum among key food system actors to take concerted action for food system transformation across Sustain's external change agenda, with a high level of knowledge of their role and the policies and practicalities that can achieve beneficial outcomes, and adoption of proven solutions, supported by the work of the alliance.

Read more about Sustain's **national policy positions**.

Read more about the alliance's local policy work on the **Sustainable Food Places** website and on **Good Food Local**.



Credit: Sustain

Goal 5

By 2030, Sustain will have established working relationships with all identified organisations and key individuals that share our change agenda and who influence decision-makers, creating a powerful and enduring network for collective action on food and farming system change

Strategic objective 5.1

Sustain will strengthen and deepen our alliance as a powerful force for food and farming system change.

Strategic objective 5.2

Throughout 2026-2030, Sustain will establish and deepen strategic partnerships characterised by deep collaboration, co-delivery, and shared resources.

Strategic objective 5.3

Sustain will build strong relationships with decision-makers in government and key public bodies, and those that influence them, to advance our policy goals.

Strategic objective 5.4

Sustain will strengthen connections between research, policy, and practice to build a stronger evidence base for food and farming system change.

Strategic objective 5.5

Sustain will strengthen the funding ecosystem for food and farming system change.

Note: Goal 5 focuses on building the relationships, partnerships, and influence needed to deliver Goals 1 to 4. Our alliance, strategic partnerships, access to decision-makers, and connections across research, practice, and funding communities are the foundation for collective action and policy change. These strategic objectives work together: a strong alliance (5.1); enables more powerful partnerships (5.2); which in turn creates greater access and influence (5.3); supported by strong evidence (5.4); and adequate resourcing (5.5).

Strategic objective 5.1

Sustain will strengthen and deepen our alliance as a powerful force for food and farming system change. Throughout 2026-2030:

- Alliance membership will grow progressively to 135+ organisations (from 90 + 14 Observers in 2025), with members actively engaged in our policy, advocacy and campaigning and/or projects.
- From 2026, members will report increased value from alliance participation, with measurable improvements in engagement, collaboration, and shared impact.
- Communities of practice and interest will bring together diverse food and farming system actors to share learning, develop joint initiatives, and champion policy change.
- Membership criteria will be expanded (by 2027) to increase reach and influence in priority sectors while maintaining our independence and ethical standards.

These developments will strengthen our collective voice, broaden our reach across food and farming system actors, and increase our ability to influence policy and practice.

Strategic objective 5.2

Throughout 2026-2030, Sustain will establish and deepen strategic partnerships characterised by deep collaboration, co-delivery, and shared resources. By 2030, we will have:

- Alliance members engaged as strategic partners: A subset of our membership collaborating at partnership depth through funded projects, joint campaigns, and co-delivery initiatives (target: 40 to 50 member organisations, c.35 to 40% of the alliance)
- Non-member strategic partners: Organisations outside our alliance with whom we collaborate strategically, whose work addresses complementary issues.

These partnerships will enable joint campaigns, shared advocacy, collaborative research, co-delivered projects, and will have leveraged resources that advance our external Goals 1 to 4 strategic objectives. We will also create accessible pathways for supportive individuals and groups to contribute meaningfully to our work.

Note: Strategic partnerships represent the deepest level of collaboration - sustained engagement, resource sharing, and co-delivery. Not all alliance members will be strategic partners; membership offers value through many forms of engagement (see 5.1).

Strategic objective 5.3

Sustain will build strong relationships with decision-makers in government and key public bodies, and those that influence them, to advance our policy goals. From 2026, we will:

- Establish Sustain as a recognised, trusted, credible voice with national government (ministers, and senior civil servants in their advisory capacity) and with MPs and Peers in Parliament, especially key Select Committees.
- Demonstrably strengthen our influence with local government and public health bodies on food policy and practice.
- Develop effective working relationships with regulators, sector bodies, and professional associations that shape food and farming system governance.

Our influencing work will centre the lived experience of people and communities affected by food and farming system problems and solutions wherever possible; and amplify diverse voices and provide platforms for their leadership through our research, communications, events, and advocacy platforms.

Strategic objective 5.4

Sustain will strengthen connections between research, policy, and practice to build a stronger evidence base for food and farming system change. By 2030, we will:

- Collaborate with academic partners to address evidence gaps related to Goals 1 to 4.
- Ensure key research insights are accessible and influential with policymakers and practitioners.
- Contribute to shaping research priorities where opportunities arise through our academic alliance members, partners and networks.

This will enhance the credibility and impact of our advocacy and enable evidence-informed improvements in policy and practice.

Strategic objective 5.5

Sustain will strengthen the funding ecosystem for food and farming system change. By 2030, we will:

- Have influenced philanthropic and public funding priorities to increase investment in food and farming systems change aligned with Goals 1 to 4.
- Support our alliance members and the wider food movement to have greater opportunities to access funding and build fundraising capacity.
- Convene funders and practitioners to identify funding gaps and catalyse new investment.

This will ensure adequate resources flow to the collective work of transforming the UK food and farming system.

Goal 6

By 2030, Sustain will have the organisational capacity, financial resilience, and equitable culture approach needed to deliver Goals 1 to 4 effectively and sustainably, functioning as a strong force for collective changemaking as an alliance and with the wider food and farming movement

Strategic objective 6.1

Sustain will strengthen our monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) systems to demonstrate impact, enable continuous improvement, and provide compelling evidence that influences policy and practice.

Strategic objective 6.2

Sustain will strengthen governance to provide strategic oversight, effective risk management, and accountability for delivery of this Strategy.

Strategic objective 6.3

Sustain will evolve our organisational systems, structure, and culture to enable effective delivery of this Strategy.

Strategic objective 6.4

Sustain will achieve financial sustainability to deliver this Strategy and build resilience for the future.

Strategic objective 6.5

Sustain will embed equity, diversity, inclusion and racial justice across all of our work, making measurable progress both in our external change goals and within our organisation and alliance.

Strategic objective 6.1

Sustain will strengthen our monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) systems to demonstrate impact, enable continuous improvement, and provide compelling evidence that influences policy and practice. By 2030:

- Our MEL approach will credibly demonstrate progress against all strategic goals and prove the effectiveness of our work to funders, policymakers, and stakeholders, with measures and communication that speak to the priorities and decision-making of these audiences.
- Learning will be systematically integrated into strategy reviews and decision-making.

We will be recognised as an evidence-based voice in food and farming policy.

Strategic objective 6.2

Sustain will strengthen governance to provide strategic oversight, effective risk management, and accountability for delivery of this Strategy. By 2030, our governance will:

- Meet Charity Governance Code standards (by 2028).
- Ensure the Council has the skills, diversity, and capacity needed to guide our work.
- Provide robust oversight of financial sustainability, organisational performance, and strategic risk.
- Include alliance voice in governance as appropriate.

Strategic objective 6.3

Sustain will evolve our organisational systems, structure, and culture to enable effective delivery of this Strategy. By 2030:

- Our structure and ways of working will facilitate both specialist expertise and cross-cutting collaboration to deliver Goals 1 to 4.
- Systems and digital infrastructure will support efficient operations, effective campaign mobilisation, and data-driven decision-making, where needed.
- Sustain will be an attractive employer that recruits, develops, and retains diverse talent with the skills needed to catalyse food and farming system change.

Our organisational culture will embody our values and support staff wellbeing, development, and impactful delivery.

This work will also be guided by our EDI and racial justice commitments (see 6.5).

Strategic objective 6.4

Sustain will achieve financial sustainability to deliver this Strategy and build resilience for the future. By 2030, we will:

- Secure cumulative total income of £7.5m by 2028 (2026/2027 – 2028/2029) through diversified funding sources, avoiding reliance on any single income stream.
- Increase unrestricted income to provide greater operational flexibility.
- Build up an 'investment in activities' fund that can support key Strategy delivery work that might otherwise struggle to gain financial support.
- Generate a greater proportion of our core and cross-cutting costs through fundraising and other means.
- Strengthen financial management and planning to support strategic decision-making.

Note: Specific financial targets will be defined in annual operational plans based on detailed budget modelling for strategy delivery.

Strategic objective 6.5

Sustain will embed equity, diversity, inclusion and racial justice across all of our work, making measurable progress both in our external change goals and within our organisation and alliance. By 2030:

In our external work (Goals 1 to 4):

- Our campaigns, policy advocacy, and communications will centre equity and racial justice, amplifying marginalised voices and seeking to address systemic inequity in food and farming systems.
- We will be recognised as one of the main organisations that lead on equity in the food and farming movement.

Through the Sustain alliance:

- We will work collaboratively with alliance members and others in communities of practice to advance equity, diversity, inclusion and racial justice across the food movement through shared learning, resources, and collective action.

Within our organisation:

- Our team, leadership, and Council will reflect diversity with reference to external benchmarks and good practice.
- Our culture, policies, and practices will demonstrably support equity, diversity, inclusion and racial justice.
- The staff team and others engaging in key processes such as recruitment will report a positive experience of diversity and inclusion.

Note: We will develop and embed appropriate monitoring and evaluation for these commitments, incorporated into work planning, reporting annually on progress.

Read Sustain's commitment to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Racial Justice **here**.

Note: Goal 6 is supported by an in-depth and detailed internal Organisation Development Plan.

Sustain alliance memberships

Sustain alliance members:

- Action on Salt / Action on Sugar
- Action Against Allergy
- Alexandra Rose Charity (ARC)
- Baby Milk Action
- Behaviour Change
- Better Food Traders
- Beyond GM
- Bio-Dynamic Agriculture Association
- Bio-Dynamic Agriculture College
- British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry
- British Dietetics Association
- Caroline Walker Trust
- Centre for Agroecology Water and Resilience at Coventry University (CAWR)
- Centre for Food Policy – City St. George's University of London
- Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)
- Chefs in Schools
- Commonwork Trust
- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Network
- Compassion in World Farming
- CPRE The Countryside Charity
- Diabetes UK
- Dung Beetles for Farmers
- Eating Better
- Faculty of Public Health
- Fairtrade Foundation
- FareShare (merging with The Felix Project)
- Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group SW
- First Steps Nutrition Trust
- Food Foundation
- Food Matters
- Food Sense Wales
- Food Systems and Policy Group, University of Hertfordshire
- FoodCycle
- Foodrise
- Forum for the Future
- Friends of the Earth
- Gaia Foundation
- Garden Organic
- Global Justice Now
- GM Freeze
- Green Christian
- Growing Communities
- Health Education Trust
- Incredible Edible
- Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN)
- Landworkers' Alliance
- Magic Breakfast
- Marine Conservation Society
- National Federation of Women's Institutes
- National Trust
- Nature Friendly Farming Network (NFFN)
- Open Food Network UK
- Oral Health Foundation
- Organic Farmers & Growers

- Organic Growers Alliance
- Pasture-fed Livestock Association
- Permaculture Association
- Pesticide Action Network (PAN) UK
- Rare Breed Survival Trust
- Real Farming Trust (runs the Oxford Real Farming Conference)
- Royal Academy of Culinary Arts, Chefs Adopt a School Trust
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- School Food Matters
- School of Artisan Food
- Scotland The Bread
- Scottish Pantry Network
- Shared Assets
- Slow Food in the UK
- Social Farms and Gardens
- Soil Association
- Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK)
- Stockfree Farming
- Sustainable Food Trust
- Sustainable Healthy Food Group, University of Oxford
- Sustainable Soils Alliance
- The Country Trust
- The Kindling Trust
- The Orchard Project
- Think Through Nutrition
- Transform Trade
- Unison – the public service union
- Unite the union – rural and agricultural sector
- Vegan Society
- Vegetarian Society
- Whole Health Agriculture
- Women's Environmental Network
- Women in the Food Industry
- World Cancer Research Fund
- Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF)

Sustain alliance observer members:

- Child Poverty Action Group
- ClientEarth
- Food Ethics Council
- GMB
- Green Alliance
- Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF)
- Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)
- Nourish Scotland
- Obesity Health Alliance
- Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH)
- Which?
- Wildlife and Countryside Link
- WWF - Scotland
- WWF - UK

How to be part of delivering the goals of this Strategy

Transforming the UK's food system requires coordinated action across government, civil society, industry and communities. Everyone has a part to play.

In pursuit of Sustain's work to change the food and farming system, the following groups each have a critical role to play in achieving our alliance's goals of accelerating agroecology; shifting diets; strengthening fair supply chains and networks of supply; and securing effective food system governance. We generally work most closely with people and organisations well placed to support, promote or implement change, including:

- Sustain alliance members
- Public health and environment practitioners
- National government and local and regional authorities
- Universities, researchers, advisors and experts
- Civil society at national, local and regional levels
- Funders and philanthropists
- Farmers, growers, fishers and food workers
- Communicators, journalists and thought leaders
- Food businesses, retailers, caterers and supply chain
- Individuals and community groups interested in a better food and farming system
- Public sector institutions

Networks and organisations we collaborate with

Sustain works closely with, for example: sister 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 Education Network; 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 work also crosses over into related policy themes, some examples being climate change policy, public health, poverty, and international trade. Where we can usefully contribute a food and farming perspective, and learn from and support their approach, we work with groups who lead on specialist themes.

Across the UK Nations, we work with sister organisations: Food Sense Wales; Nourish Scotland; and policy advocates and food system practitioners in Northern Ireland. We also work with over 120 UK towns, cities and regions and their Sustainable Food Place partnerships and/or food poverty alliances and/or local authorities.

Sustain is a UK-wide alliance working for better food and farming, in policy and practice, across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. We recognise and value the distinct policy landscapes created by devolution and work through a mix of UK-wide advocacy and, where useful and appropriate, in collaboration with nation-specific, regional and local partners and allies.

We also champion place-based policies and food partnerships and celebrate the diversity, identity and pride in place of communities across the UK.

Our work connects local policy, practice and experience with national policy, engaging both local authorities and devolved and UK governments. This approach is now recognised as essential to food and farming system change, and means that we are UK-wide in purpose while also rooted in the strengths, needs and ambitions of local places and regions.

Sustain funders

We are very grateful to the numerous organisations and people who have supported Sustain's work financially over recent years.

We have not listed here every source of funding (see our Annual Reports for such detail), but many of them have placed their faith and finance in our work with significant multi-year investments, core and development support, and repeat funding. These have included, for example:

Trusts, foundations and research grants

- Aberdeen Financial Fairness Trust
- AFN Network+
- Aurora Trust (previously known as the Ashden Trust)
- Big Lottery Fund and National Lottery Community Fund
- British Heart Foundation
- City Bridge Foundation
- Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
- Environmental Funders Network
- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- European Climate Foundation
- Farming the Future
- Friends Provident Foundation
- Impact on Urban Health
- Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
- Kenneth Miller Trust
- Lund Trust
- Movements Trust
- Network for Social Change
- Nutritional Wellbeing Foundation
- Oak Foundation
- Rothschild Foundation
- Samworth Foundation
- Thirty Percy Foundation
- Trust for London
- Vital Strategies
- Wellcome Trust

Local authorities and local funders

Increasingly over recent years, we have worked with numerous local authorities and local funders to help develop local food strategies and implementation initiatives.

Philanthropic individuals and public donations

We are very grateful to several individuals for having donated significant philanthropic funds, and to people who have undertaken individual or group fundraising activities in support of Sustain's work.

We are also grateful to the large number of people and groups who make smaller financial contributions, make a donation for downloading publications or participate in activities, pay to attend events, and subscribe as project supporters. All contributions matter – large and small!