



OUR IMPACT

FOOD FOR LIFE SCOTLAND

2022 – 23



Public sector caterers in Scotland continue to operate in a hugely challenging environment. While food and energy prices have risen, the climate emergency means dietary change is essential.

It can feel like an impossible challenge. But we continue to be inspired by the innovation, motivation and commitment we see from Scottish caterers, who continue to deliver food that's good for health, the environment and the economy every day.

Food for Life Scotland is funded by the Scottish Government to help get more fresh, local, and sustainable food onto public sector plates through the Food for Life Served Here award. It's a recognised and respected mark of quality, certified at three levels: Bronze, Silver, and Gold.

The hard work and dedication of Scotland's public sector caterers has meant that this year, despite the challenges, Food for Life

Scotland has welcomed new award holders, supported local authorities to upgrade and upscale their Food for Life Served Here (FFLSH) award, and, through our Public Sector Expansion Pilot programme, collaborated with non-school public sector settings for the very first time.

We're thrilled to showcase Food for Life Scotland's successes in this report, which include many firsts for the programme, as well as continuing our collaboration with local authorities. Thank you to all who partner with us. We look forward to continuing to work with public sector catering teams across Scotland in the year ahead.



SARAH DULEY
HEAD OF FOOD,
FOOD FOR LIFE SCOTLAND

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW AWARD HOLDER EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE

In December 2022, East Dunbartonshire Council gained the Food for Life Served Here Bronze award for all 33 primary schools in the local authority area – that's around 5,800 Food for Life meals served every single day.

"To gain the Food for Life Served Here Bronze award, we worked with suppliers to understand the provenance of the produce we were purchasing," says Gemma Magee, FM Lead, Catering at East Dunbartonshire Council. "As part of this, we've had suppliers come into schools to give talks to pupils about how their food is grown, and the Catering and Education departments are joining forces to add learning about food into the curriculum."

"We are upskilling our catering staff through training sessions with the Food for Life Scotland team and have developed school menus to increase the percentage of school meals freshly prepared from raw ingredients. Going for the award also encouraged catering teams to get more involved with pupils through speaking about the foods being served. It's amazing how it's given staff a new lease of life and we now see them wanting to get involved with menu planning, and trialling new recipes. Staff within catering teams develop so much more confidence in what they are serving. This generates a better working environment, builds connections with the education department, and creates a positive lunchtime experience for the pupils."

HERE'S HOW WE'VE MADE A DIFFERENCE IN 2022-23:

125,000

DAILY FFLSH MEALS SERVED
IN SCOTTISH SCHOOLS

1,345

FFLSH SITES
IN SCOTLAND

19

EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE
COUNCIL BECAME THE
19TH FFLSH AWARD
HOLDER IN SCOTLAND

60%
OF
MEALS

ACROSS SCOTTISH
PRIMARY SCHOOLS ARE
FOOD FOR LIFE MEALS

22

SCHOOL CATERERS
APPOINTED FOOD
FOR LIFE SCOTLAND
AMBASSADORS

395

CATERERS
ATTENDED
FOOD FOR LIFE
SCOTLAND TRAINING,
EITHER IN PERSON
OR ONLINE

1 UPGRADE

EAST LOTHIAN
COUNCIL GAINED THE
FFLSH SILVER AWARD

2 SCHOOL MEAL
MENU REVIEWS

8 FFLSH
AWARD
RENEWALS

1 UPSCALE

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE
COUNCIL GAINED
THE FFLSH BRONZE
AWARD FOR ALL EARLY
YEARS, PRIMARY AND
SECONDARY SETTINGS

2 PUBLIC
SECTOR
SITE GAP
ANALYSES



“At East Dunbartonshire Council, we are committed to providing our young people with a healthy school meal that helps shape eating and drinking habits and encourages positive eating choices. With all 33 of our primary schools meeting the criteria for the Food for Life Served Here Bronze award, our aim now is to achieve the award in all our secondary schools.”

**COUNCILLOR PAUL FERRETTI, CONVENER OF THE PLACE,
NEIGHBOURHOOD & CORPORATE ASSETS COMMITTEE,
EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL.**



EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL UPGRADES TO SILVER

As part of East Lothian Council's recent upgrade to the Food for Life Served Here Silver award, the Council is now using 5 per cent of its school meals ingredient spend on organic produce, buying Scottish organic milk and dairy products, and swapping to local organic flour from Mungoswells farm in Drem.

Tracey McConnachie, Assistant Area Officer, East Lothian Council, said, "The Menu and Catering Skills team at Food for Life Scotland suggested sourcing Mungoswells flour as part of East Lothian's journey towards achieving the Silver award. Our supplier, George Anderson & Sons, helped to get everything in place and the transition was very smooth.

"The price was slightly higher, but it was agreed this was the right thing to do in order to support a local business and to align with East Lothian Council's environmental goals. Food for Life Scotland helped us to work on the menu so we could make savings in other areas to balance the extra cost of the organic flour.

"As well as the move to organic, we're also sourcing potatoes from the Borders, strawberries from Fife and leeks from East Lothian. It's great to know the money the Council is spending is going back into the local community."

AS PART OF THE FOOD FOR LIFE SCOTLAND PROGRAMME, SCOTLAND'S PUBLIC SECTOR AWARD HOLDERS ARE:

- contributing to better health by putting more fresh fruit and vegetables, fish, and wholegrains on the menu
- protecting the environment for the future by reducing food miles and championing sustainable producers
- supporting a thriving local economy by putting more Scottish food on the table.

**FIND OUT MORE
ABOUT THE FOOD
FOR LIFE SERVED
HERE STANDARDS AT
[www.soilassociation.org/
FFLScotland](http://www.soilassociation.org/FFLScotland)**

NEW FOR 2022-23

FOOD FOR LIFE SCOTLAND AMBASSADORS PROGRAMME

In May 2022, a group of 22 catering staff from 18 Scottish local authorities that hold the FFLSH award were named Food for Life Scotland Ambassadors. This was the culmination of a six-month programme, in which our Menu and Catering Skills team worked with the Ambassadors to support them to promote the 'good food cause', act as changemakers within their local communities, and share learning and best practice with their peers.

The programme is having a direct impact on communities through the Ambassadors' action plans, which include growing projects, cooking clubs for parents and working with students to select seasonal recipes for schools.

Action plans also include upscaling FFLSH awards (see page 9) and a range of other activities which align with award criteria, such as fostering stronger engagement with schools and local communities, working with local suppliers and reducing food waste.

Our Food for Life Scotland Ambassadors put their all into providing the best possible meals for Scotland's young people every single day. They show what's possible in school meals and inspire others to join in the mission of creating a 'Good Food Nation' in Scotland.

"I would like to congratulate the newly awarded Food for Life Scotland Ambassadors who have been selected as a result of their commendable work within their schools, communities and local authorities. It's great to see their achievements being recognised as we celebrate them as changemakers within our local communities."

**MAIRI GOUGEON, CABINET SECRETARY
FOR RURAL AFFAIRS AND ISLANDS,
SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT.**



CATERER SPOTLIGHT

Local authority catering teams across Scotland are serving award winning meals that are good for health, the environment and the economy. For International School Meals Day in March 2023, Food for Life Scotland put the spotlight on three caterers who embody the values of the Food for Life Served Here award.

IN HIGHLAND, ANJA FUGLESTAD IS ON A GOOD FOOD MISSION

Anja Fuglestad, Head Cook at Croy Primary School in Highland and Food for Life Scotland Ambassador, was named Employee of the Year at the first-ever Scottish School Food Awards in November 2022.

Anja is working hard to raise standards in school meals, and the recognition she has had this year shows the huge impact she is having. As part of the FFLS Ambassador programme, she set up a growing project at her school, through which pupils learnt to prepare seasonal dishes and developed their understanding of how food is grown and what's in season throughout the year.

“I've noticed that if students become more involved in growing ingredients and preparing food, they're more likely to try eating new things. They realise the effort that goes into growing things and the variety that's available, and they suddenly become more interested. That realisation that a seed can turn into a tomato or a courgette is something really magical. We need to educate children about food and open their eyes to how much fun cooking can be.”

ANJA FUGLESTAD



DONALD MCINNES PRIORITISES FRESH INGREDIENTS IN WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

At Clydebank High School in West Dunbartonshire, Catering Manager Donald McInnes has been putting more freshly prepared food on the menu (see page 9). With high school pupils having the choice to buy food off site, Donald's goal is to make sure the pupils that choose to come to the dining hall have something tasty and nutritious to eat. As well as hot food, the school offers a café-style cold section, with salads, sandwiches and snacks, such as yogurts and popcorn, that meet the Scottish nutritional regulations and the Food for Life Served Here Bronze award criteria. The results show in footfall, with an increase of around 10 per cent. “We're now freshly preparing 92 per cent of our food, including sauces for pizza and pasta, which is feeding 400–500 kids each day,” says Donald.



“The big reward for me is making sure that West Dunbartonshire Council is doing the best it can to make sure that nutritionally we're putting good food on the plate every single day of the week in school. I'm a great believer that people who join Food for Life are joining because they want to do better for their own schools and their own children.”

DONALD MCINNES

IN MORAY, ELAINE MCRAE IS SOURCING LOCAL, SEASONAL PRODUCE

The Food for Life principles of fresh, local and sustainable food are at the heart of the school meals service in Moray. Catering Manager, Environmental and Commercial Services Elaine McRae says that, since gaining the Food for Life Served Here Bronze award for primary and early years settings, the Council's relationships with local suppliers have developed. They source meat from local butchers Fraser Brothers and Andersons, source fish from Whitehills in Aberdeenshire and buy as much local fruit and veg as they can. “Since signing up to the Food for Life Served Here Award, we're regularly in contact with our suppliers about what's in season,” says Elaine.

“Our staff have learnt a lot about seasonality and provenance as part of this process. We have seasonality charts and posters in our dining halls, and this helps students and staff to understand more about the journey their food has been on from farm to fork. Our caterers are also giving presentations at parents' evenings to promote school meals, as well as at the induction events for P1. There's no doubt our staff now feel more valued and involved and get more recognition for the work that they do.”

ELAINE MCRAE

NEW FOR 2022-23

THE FOOD FOR LIFE PUBLIC SECTOR EXPANSION PILOT

In August, we launched the Food for Life Public Sector Expansion pilot to bring fresh, local and sustainable meals to new public sector settings across the city, with the aim of scaling the programme in other areas of Scotland in the future, thanks to increased funding from Scottish Government.

The aim of the pilot was to research expanding the Food for Life Scotland programme into other public sector settings, including the NHS, prisons, care homes, further and higher education settings, and council-run leisure and culture facilities. Through a combination of place-based activity in Glasgow and national intelligence gathering, we wanted to investigate a scalable framework for bringing Food for Life to other parts of Scotland in the future.

“Working closely with existing Food for Life Served Here award holders, we’ve seen how the hard work of local authorities in Scotland

means school caterers are leading the way in delivering good food in the public sector,” says Sarah Duley, Head of Food at Food for Life Scotland. “With these values embedded in the City of Glasgow’s food culture, it’s a fantastic time to build upon this success and deliver the benefits of the Food for Life programme in new settings.”

“This expansion is a great opportunity to continue working with Food for Life Scotland to bring more good food to Glasgow that will improve health, support the environment and benefit the economy,” adds Stephen Sawers, Head of Catering and Facilities Management, Glasgow City Council. “We’re keen to continue working in partnership with the Food for Life Scotland team to set out what else we can do to further support sustainable food being procured, prepared and served in Glasgow.”

The pilot will continue into 2023-24.

“Through serving food that’s nutritious, sustainably-sourced and local, we have an opportunity both to tackle climate change and to make sure children are healthy and are resilient to future pandemics or supply chain shocks.”

STEPHEN SAWERS, HEAD OF CATERING & FACILITIES MANAGEMENT, GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL.



WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL UPSCALES FOOD FOR LIFE SERVED HERE AWARD

Having achieved the Food for Life Served Here Bronze award for primary and early years school meals in 2021, a West Dunbartonshire Council pilot, spearheaded by Catering Manager and Food for Life Scotland Ambassador, Donald McInnes, gained the FFLSH Bronze award for Clydebank High School. This was rolled out to all high schools in the region, making West Dunbartonshire the first Scottish urban local authority area to hold the FFLSH Bronze award for all its education settings. The Council received the award for serving 5,000 daily school meals that are healthy, sustainable and locally sourced in its 38 schools and 29 early learning and ASN centres.

The benefits of the whole-network approach are clear. “The work that’s going into a lot of the primary school menus is definitely having an impact when the Primary 7s come into S1 or S2,” says Donald. “They’ve seen the main courses, they’ve seen the ParentPay process and how it

works. So it’s an automatic transition. For most of the kids, they’ll come up and see a freshly prepared chicken and sweet potato curry, for example, and it’s not worrying them because they’ve eaten similar food at primary school. By sticking to the guidelines that Food for Life put in across the school network, from nurseries right up to high school in West Dunbartonshire, we know that every child is eating better quality food.”

The extension of the Food for Life Served Here Bronze award to also include secondary schools demonstrates West Dunbartonshire Council’s ongoing commitment to providing pupils with nutritionally balanced breakfasts, lunches and snacks. Ellen McFarlane, Catering Manager, West Dunbartonshire Council says “We don’t see FFLSH as an award but as a useful framework ensuring we achieve a good standard for the children and keep that standard up. Everyone is entitled to good food.”



FOOD FOR LIFE SCOTLAND CATERER TRAINING

The Food for Life Scotland team offers training sessions for award holders, which focus on the Food for Life Served Here Standards and on seasonality. Offered in person and online, the training sessions are a great opportunity for Catering Leads and Head Cooks to refresh their knowledge and skills, or to learn about the Food for Life Served Here award for the first time.

Our online standards training offers an in-depth introduction to the Food for Life Served Here award standards at Bronze, Silver and Gold, through information and interactive activities to solidify knowledge. Our in-person seasonality sessions offer a deep dive into seasonality concepts through practical exercises in a friendly environment. Training sessions are free to award holders, and are led by our Menu and Catering Skills team.

This year, 395 caterers completed Food for Life Scotland training, either in person or online, with in-person training taking place in Edinburgh, East Renfrewshire and Glasgow.

TRAINING TESTIMONIALS

“The course is very informative and keeps you up to date with the Standards ... It would be useful for all staff to complete as part of their basic training.”

TRAINING PARTICIPANT,
ORKNEY ISLANDS COUNCIL.

“The online course gave me more insight to the way forward for healthy eating in schools. Thank you.”

TRAINING PARTICIPANT,
ORKNEY ISLANDS COUNCIL.

“I feel inspired to talk about and use more fresh and local ingredients. It was enjoyable to try different recipes that were seasonal.”

TRAINING PARTICIPANT,
EAST RENFREWSHIRE
COUNCIL.



CATERER SUPPORT: MENU DEVELOPMENT

“Food for Life Scotland offers a free menu development support service. We assist with recipe development, testing and costing, and much more. Food for Life Served Here menus use seasonal produce from local Scottish suppliers, meaning public sector sites, such as schools, can serve more fresh, local and sustainable meals that are good for health, the environment and the economy.”

SUE MCVEY, MENU AND CATERING SKILLS OFFER,
FOOD FOR LIFE SCOTLAND.



NEW FOR 2022-23

PUBLIC SECTOR FOOD ON DISPLAY AT SCOTHOT

In a Food for Life Scotland first, the Scottish Culinary Championships' Food for Life Challenge in March put public sector caterers to the test. This was part of leading showcase for the food and drink, and hospitality industries, ScotHot, which returned for the first time since the pandemic.

We designed the Food for Life Scotland Challenge to change perceptions of public sector food in Scotland today. Public sector chefs were invited to prepare a main course appropriate for a public sector setting. The competition criteria were inspired by the Food for Life Served Here award standards. Dishes had to include one organic ingredient, use less but better meat, and make the most of seasonal and local produce.

East Ayrshire Council's Eleanor Geddes was named Best in Class for her winning dish, 'Bean fishin'. Eleanor, who is Catering Manager at Shortlees Primary School in East Ayrshire, cooked a chickpea flatbread, beans, breaded fish and pea and spinach mash. Eleanor focused on Scottish sourcing, using fish from family run business J Pieroni in Ayr, free range eggs from Corrie Mains farm in Mauchline, fruit and vegetables from East Ayrshire's A&A Spittal, and beans, passata and dried ingredients from Glasgow-based social enterprise Locavore.



Cooking alongside Eleanor were:

- School caterer **Maria Millar** from East Lothian, who took second place with her fish pie.
- Chef **Grzegorz Dubiel**, from Rossie Young People's Trust. He was awarded Merit for his fish and chips – battered monkfish tail served with Pont Neuf potatoes, mushy peas, punchy tartare sauce and carrot and kale coleslaw.
- **Jamie Kimmett**, Catering Supervisor at Strathblane Primary School in Stirling. Jamie's vegetable kofta dish was awarded Merit by the judges.

“I came into the public sector because I liked the idea of cooking for children, and the best part of my job is knowing I am getting good food to those who need it. My hope for the future of public sector food is that there'll be more recognition of the high-quality food served in school meals.”


ELEANOR GEDDES, CATERING MANAGER,
SHORTLEES PRIMARY SCHOOL, EAST AYRSHIRE.



Find out more about
Food for Life Scotland:

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