



Our impact

2025–2026



At Food for Life Scotland (FFLS), our vision is to make good food the easy choice for everyone.

This has been a pivotal year for food policy in Scotland, with the development of the First National Good Food Nation Plan signalling a shared ambition to put good food at the heart of public life – for health, climate, nature and local economies – and the vital role of the public sector in leading that change.

This was also a year of transition for Food for Life Served Here (FFLSH), with many caterers renewing their certification on our refreshed bronze standards (page 4). These standards were developed in collaboration with caterers as a framework to support caterers to make a meaningful difference and contribute to making Scotland a Good Food Nation by providing food that benefits public health and the climate, whilst strengthening local supply chains and economies.

It has also been encouraging to see new public sector certification holders and the further expansion of FFLSH this year. We celebrate the Food for Life Served Here certified providers in further and higher education, courts, care homes, workplaces and visitor attractions and local authorities who together show the public sector as a beacon of good food.

Read about how Crosslet House case home, in West Dunbartonshire Council, have further embedded the FFLSH standards in their catering service since gaining the award in 2024, improving quality of life for residents (page 10). In higher education, Glasgow Caledonian University’s partnership with BaxterStorey demonstrates how large-scale catering can create a sustainable sourcing and food culture change (page 11).

We would like to thank all our partners for their continued commitment to serving fresh, local and sustainable food to Scotland’s public sector, and for the vital role you play in helping make Scotland a Good Food Nation.

As always, the Food for Life Scotland team remains on hand to provide support, answer questions, and help you make the most of the training and resources available.



Sarah Gowanlock,
Programme Manager,
Food for Life Scotland

Here’s how we’ve made a difference in 2025–26



25 FFLSH
certification holders
in Scotland

1,531 FFLSH
certified sites in
Scotland



16 local
authorities

1,506 local
authority sites



9 public sector
certification holders

25 other public
sector sites



108,700 FFLSH
school meals
served daily across
Scotland*

*Number of meals served in early years settings and public sector sites certified as part of the FFLS programme expansion are not included due to availability of data.

Sustainable catering in schools

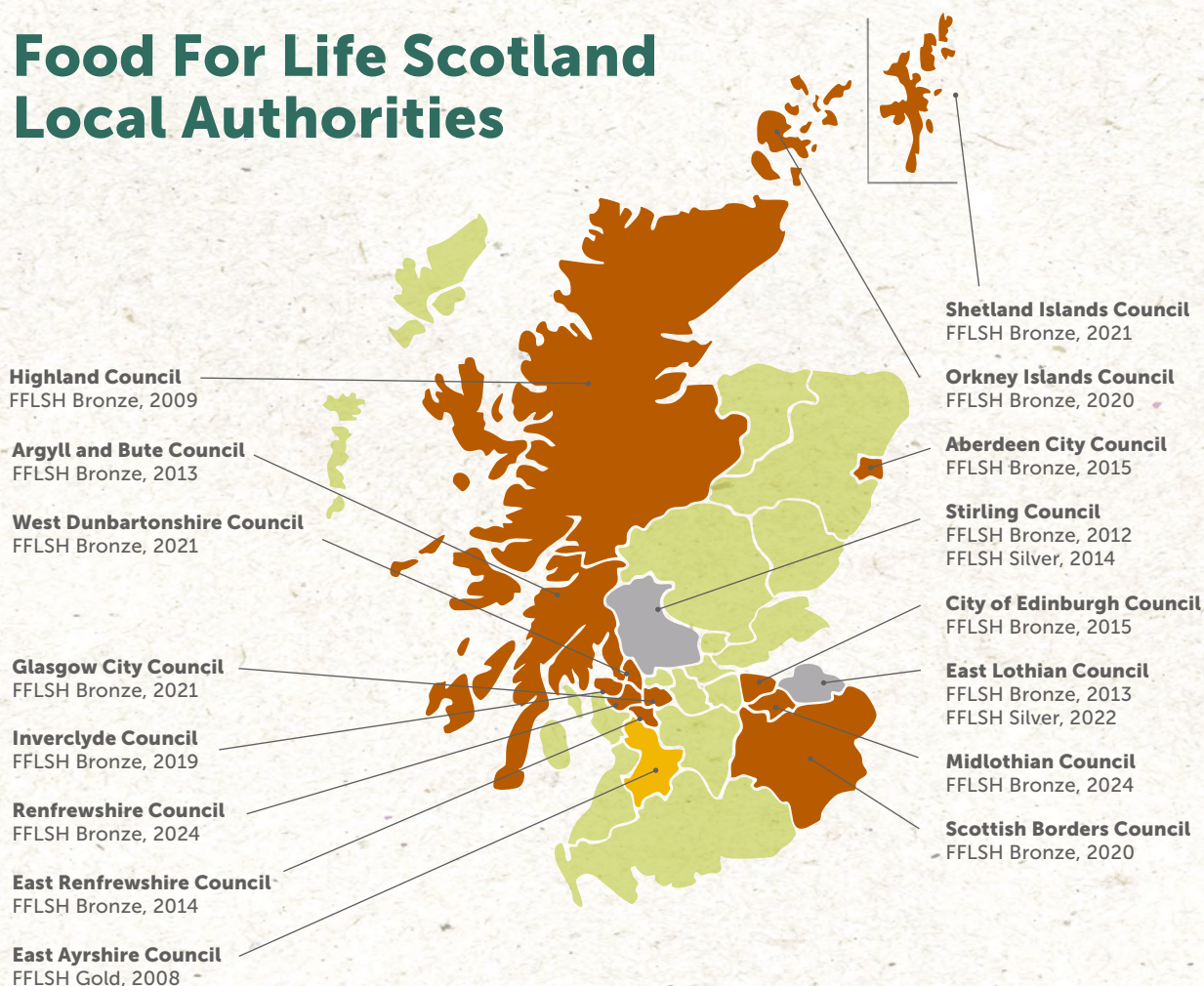
Food for Life Scotland supports Scottish local authorities to achieve the FFLSH certification for school meal services. There are 16 local authorities that hold the certification at bronze, silver or gold – from East Ayrshire Council, which gained FFLSH Gold back in 2008, to Midlothian Council, which gained FFLSH Bronze for the first time in 2024.

This year, we were delighted to celebrate the renewal of many of our certification -holders, including Renfrewshire Council for the second year after returning to

the programme, Shetland Council for the fifth year, Orkney Islands Council for the seventh year, and Highland Council for the 17th year. Each renewal is a milestone in Scotland's journey toward becoming a Good Food Nation.

Across Scotland, we have witnessed the hard work and dedication from our partners and stakeholders to serve up good food to our young people that benefits the local economy and our environment.

Food For Life Scotland Local Authorities



Refreshed Standards resources and training available

One year on from the introduction of our refreshed Food for Life Served Here Bronze certification standards, we are seeing the positive impact of a framework shaped through consultation with caterers.

These standards continue to support the delivery of scratch-cooked, local and sustainable food across sites, contributing to improved health outcomes, environmental sustainability and local economic growth.

Over the past year, we have also refreshed the support available to certification holders. In particular, we have developed new training, designed to help caterers confidently implement the refreshed standards. These include both in-person and online training sessions, offering practical guidance on every aspect of the FFLSH Bronze certification. These fun, interactive trainings show staff the power of the good food they serve as a certified caterer.

Beyond training, local authorities benefit from tailored support, including guidance on supply chains, help developing menus and recipes for everyday delivery, as well as data analysis to identify opportunities and impact. Our digital handbook offers a comprehensive reference for all standards. With Scottish Government funding, public sector sites like local authorities can access all of this support at no additional cost.

Local authority school catering teams have also received the updated Food for Life Scotland School Caterer's' Guide. This guide brings together the full set of refreshed standards in a practical, user-friendly format, supporting day-to-day delivery, staff inductions, menu planning, and engagement with school communities.

Sign up to training, download the latest handbook and resources, and use them to support your day-to-day delivery. Our team is here to help – whether you have a question, need guidance, or want to explore your next steps.

**Contact contact@soilassociation.org
to find out more**



Renfrewshire Council renews FFLSH Bronze with refreshed standards



Renfrewshire Council was the first local authority in Scotland to renew their Food for Life Served Here certification on the refreshed bronze standards, including the new Standard 1.11, food waste reduction strategies are in place.

Food waste reduction has been a long-standing focus for Renfrewshire Council. Across primary schools, pupils use weighing scales to measure and track plate waste at the end of lunch, supported by clear visual displays in dining halls that show progress over time. This work is underpinned by

strong collaboration between catering teams, education staff and school eco committees.

A range of established initiatives support this approach, including targeted messaging such as “Take what you eat and eat what you take” and the Clean Plate Club, alongside practical systems to ensure food waste is correctly separated and recorded. Staff training, consistent use of monitoring tools, and electronic food waste recording across sites help maintain accuracy and accountability.



To meet standard 1.11, we ask you to share your organisation’s food waste policy, or to complete the FFL Food Waste Minimisation plan. You can also meet this standard by achieving Green Kitchen Standard or if you are actively using Cool Food Pro to monitor your food waste. If you have any questions, please do reach out to the FFLS team for further guidance – we are always here to help!



**Esra Büyükbingöl,
Menu & Catering Skills Officer**



Working with our stakeholders

Over the past year, the Food for Life Scotland team has taken part in a range of national and sector events, including COSLA, SOLACE, APSE and ASSIST, to stay connected with local authorities and partners, share what's working in practice, and keep good food firmly on the agenda.

Across these conversations, we've shared a clear and consistent message – food matters. Whether the focus is public health, tackling inequality or supporting local economies, access to fresh, healthy and sustainable food is increasingly recognised as part of the solution.



Congratulations to our certification-holder Glasgow City Council for winning The Special Award and Sustainable School of the Year Award at the Scottish School Food Awards.



We're proud to have supported Aberdeen City Council in sourcing local Scottish ingredients for their menus – helping secure the Community Benefits Award. Congratulations!

Through the FFLS programme, we support the public sector in Scotland to put these principles into action – serving fresh, local and sustainable food in public sector sites every day. Our support includes menu development, catering skills, data analysis and training, helping partners to deliver on shared ambitions and progress on their Good Food Nation journey.

We're proud to be part of a movement that helps keep policy, practice and delivery moving in the same direction – and ensures that good food continues to play a central role in Scotland's public services.



Congratulations to our Senior Partnerships Manager Margaret Gilmour, who received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Scottish School Food Awards. For more than 40 years, Margaret has been a tireless champion of good food in the public sector – and especially in Scottish schools.



Menu and Catering Skills Officer Esra Büyükbingöl, along with Gillian Pagani from Glasgow City Council, presented how the Council and Food for Life Scotland worked together as part of the Full of Beans campaign to strengthen skills, boost confidence, and increase the use of beans and pulses across Glasgow school meals.

What our partners value

Food for Life Scotland works closely with local authorities, supporting a shared ambition of a Good Food Nation in Scotland. Here is what our partners value:



We place significant value on holding the Food for Life certification, as it enables us to offer parents, carers, and young people confidence that the food we provide meets standards that support positive health, environmental and economic outcomes. Our collaboration with the Food for Life Scotland team strengthens our ability to meet these objectives, bringing additional expertise and resource when required.

**Vanessa Sanal, Service Manager,
East Lothian Council**



We value holding the Food for Life Served Here certification and being able to provide confidence to our parents, carers, and young people that the food we serve meets standards that ensure we're doing all we can to support good health, environment, and economic outcomes.

**Christine Boyle, Senior Manager,
Argyll and Bute Council**



Inverclyde have worked in partnership with the Food for Life Scotland team for over seven years, and having the Food for Life Served Here. We serve nearly one million healthy, nutritious and balanced meals every year.

**Linda Knox, Food and Nutrition
Coordinator, Inverclyde Council**



The support, advice and expertise offered by the Food for Life Scotland team is invaluable and plays an important role in helping us to continuously improve and deliver the best possible service across our schools.

**Janette Lothian, Facilities
Management, Scottish Borders Council**



We place considerable value on our partnership with the Food for Life Scotland team and on maintaining the Silver certification for our service. The team provides vital support and a strong external endorsement of the outstanding work our frontline teams deliver every day. The guidance and expertise offered by the Food for Life Scotland team are truly invaluable to us.

**Karen Cockburn, Team Leader,
Stirling Council**



The Food for Life Scotland team helps us to achieve our objectives bring additional resource and expertise to the table when needed. This also provides confidence to our parents, carers and young people that the food we serve meets standards that ensure that we comply with the nutritional guidelines and that we're doing all we can to support good health, environment, and economic outcomes.

**Craig Gillie, Facility Services Manager,
Midlothian Council**



Welcome new certification holders



BaxterStorey gains Bronze at Queen Margaret University

Congratulations to BaxterStorey at Queen Margaret University (QMU) who gained FFLSH Bronze certification for Guthrie’s Kitchen. Caterers at Guthrie’s Kitchen serve around 200 fresh, local and sustainable meals each day.

All meat served at Guthrie’s Kitchen is now farm assured, including Specially Selected Pork supplied by Linlithgow’s Campbell Prime Meats. Eggs used at the location are now all free range, milk is supplied by Scottish dairy Graham’s, while the team source fresh and seasonal Scottish produce from wholesaler Mark Murphy’s, including potatoes and Arran cheddar cheese.

The catering team work with Waste Knot, a company that supplies surplus fruit and vegetables from farmers’ fields,

incorporating this produce into their dishes, which helps reduce food waste. Caterers say that working with the Food for Life Scotland team to gain the certification has made them more conscious about the food that they’re selling and opened their eyes to changing things for the better.

Nicola Frew, General Manager, BaxterStorey said: “At BaxterStorey Queen Margaret University, we are proud to have achieved the Food for Life Served Here Bronze certification. Being part of the Soil Association community means we are contributing to a healthier future for people, and we are ready to grow and evolve in partnership with the team at Food for Life Scotland.”

FFLS in the wider public sector



April 2023
BaxterStorey
Scottish Courts
Bronze



December 2023
BaxterStorey Glasgow
Caledonian University
Bronze



November 2023
Sodexo
Scottish
Bronze



March 2023
BaxterStorey Scottish
Government Workplaces
Bronze



July 2023
BaxterStorey
City of Glasgow College
Bronze



May 2024
BaxterStorey
Scottish Government
Workplaces Upgrade
Silver

The University of Glasgow goes for Bronze

Caterers at the University of Glasgow achieved the Food for Life Served Here (FFLSH) Bronze certification this year. Across campus, the six certified sites serve an estimated 231,591 meals each year.

This certification is a key part of the University of Glasgow’s continued commitment to environmental sustainability and responsible practices. Their catering team has introduced a range of impactful initiatives designed to reduce their ecological footprint and support the local economy.

Alongside this, they are actively working to minimise food waste through creative, sustainable kitchen practices, including transforming surplus vegetables into soups and using offcuts of fruit to prepare fresh smoothies.

Christie Bone, Business Service Manager at the University of Glasgow, said: “We are thrilled to have received our Food for Life Served Here Bronze certification. Over the past year, we have made significant changes to our operation and menus to ensure the food we serve is fresh, nutritious and sustainably sourced.


“This certification recognises the commitment of our team who have embedded sustainable practices across catering. During the process we implemented strategies for reducing food waste, prioritising seasonal and local ingredients, expanding our plant-based and low-emission options and promoting food provenance within our services.”




September 2024

Scottish Parliament

 **February 2025**
West Dunbartonshire Council Care Homes
Bronze

 **May 2025**
BaxterStorey,
Queen Margaret University
FFLSH Bronze

 **December 2024**
Royal Botanic Gardens
Edinburgh
2 Bronze 1 Silver

 **March 2025**
Baxter Storey
Glasgow Caledonian University Upgrade
Silver

 **August 2025**
University of Glasgow
FFLSH Bronze

Cooking with purpose at Crosslet House

Scratch-cooked, local and sustainable food has become a central part of care.

As part of West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership, the team took a whole-home approach to achieving the Food for Life Served Here Bronze certification by making practical, lasting changes to how food is prepared, served and valued.

Menus were refreshed to remove artificial additives and prioritise higher welfare meat, free-range eggs and sustainably sourced produce. Meals are now prepared from scratch, with daily soups, home baking and specialised dishes for residents with additional needs. This approach has not only improved taste and choice but also created a more positive food environment.

The team also had to consider the varying and often complex health needs of Crosslet House residents. For those requiring dysphagia diets, IDDSI (International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative) meals are provided and carefully tailored to each individual's care needs.

Importantly, this has been achieved within existing budgets. By focusing on seasonality and reducing food waste – for example, reusing prepared vegetables in soups and modified meals – the team has been able to offset the cost of higher-quality ingredients.

The impact is clear. Following these changes, Crosslet House achieved the highest possible Care Inspectorate score 6 for Health and Wellbeing. The team credits both their food approach and Food for Life Served Here (FFLSH) certification with supporting this outcome, helping them evidence good practice and strengthen engagement with residents and families.

“By having the certification, we were able to show how we're meeting each Bronze standard and in turn, how it is helping us meet our health and wellbeing goals,” says Catering Manager Robert Patterson. “It's great as it encourages you to showcase the work you and the team are doing in the best light.”



“

Having the Food for Life Served Here certification has been brilliant for showcasing the great work we do, from advertising posters around Crosslet House to speaking to families of residents and sharing information with them about the programme, so they know their loved ones are getting delicious food.

”

**Robert Patterson, Catering Manager,
West Dunbartonshire Council**

Glasgow Caledonian University's journey with FFLSH

At Glasgow Caledonian University, the journey towards sustainable catering has been one of gradual but determined change, led by a close partnership with BaxterStorey.

Starting with the FFLSH Bronze certification, the team set their sights higher, working towards Silver by fundamentally rethinking their approach. With a minimum of 5% organic ingredients, free-range eggs, sustainably sourced fish, and higher-welfare meat, the service looked to strengthened its commitment to locally sourced Scottish produce and transparent supply chains – all while continuing to serve over 200,000 meals each year.

Ingredients had to be traceable and responsible, met by using local produce like Mossgiel Organic Dairy milk from Ayrshire and Mungowells Organic Flour from East Lothian. Simple changes, applied creatively, began to add up.

A key part of the transformation was the development of the team. Six chefs completed training through BaxterStorey's Chef Academy, building skills and knowledge in cooking seasonally and sustainably to meet the higher standards required by the FFLSH certification.

The team isn't stopping at Silver. Plans are already underway to work toward Food for Life Served Here Gold certification – reducing food waste, increasing plant-based and organic produce on the menu, and embedding biodiversity further.



BaxterStorey Scotland really value working in partnership with the Food for Life Scotland team as part of our ongoing sustainable nutrition strategy. The Food for Life Scotland programme provides us with a solid framework to provide sustainable, nutritious, and local food for our clients and customers across our Scottish locations.



Stuart Aitken,
Head of Food Scotland,
BaxterStorey



Find out more about
Food for Life Scotland

www.soilassociation.org/FFLScotland

in [linkedin.com/company/soilassociationscotland](https://www.linkedin.com/company/soilassociationscotland)

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