

Annual report

Review and accounts for the year
ended 31 March 2024

Company registered number: 02673194

Charity registered number: 1018643

sustain
the alliance for better food and farming

Foreword

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Professor Mike Rayner
Chair of Sustain's Council of Trustees

Trustees during the financial year covered by this report:

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

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

Djenai Delerue* (elected 19/12/23)

David Edwards (resigned 19/12/23)

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

Mollie Gupta (resigned 19/12/23)

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

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

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

Andre Kpodonu (resigned 19/12/23)

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

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

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

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

Ele Saltmarsh* (elected 19/12/23)

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

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

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

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

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

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

Company registered number: 02673194

Charity registered number: 1018643

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

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

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

Our year in numbers

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

41

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



11,000+
letters from constituents ask MPs to #GetFairAboutFarming



95
food partnerships in Sustainable Food Places network



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

1,000+
people

sign letter to Defra on Real Bread standards



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

48 MPs

engaged in Sustainable Food Places day of action



1.4m

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



5

food and farming fringe events held at national political party conferences



350

people attend Sustain Annual Conference on General Election tactics



Over 900

good food jobs advertised on Roots to Work platform



13

new and diverse Children's Food parent ambassadors



20

organisations join new food and racial justice working group



1.4m

visits to Sustain websites



234,000
tonnes

of CO₂ saved by 59 Food for the Planet local authorities

Find out more about Sustain's success stories and achievements at:
www.sustainweb.org/about/success-stories

Good food production

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

May

June

July

August

September

October

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

Sustainable Enterprise Wellbeing Network (SEWN) fosters community garden collaboration

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

November

December

January

March

April

House of Lords Horticulture report published, integrating our suggestions

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

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

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

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

Good food economy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

April

May

July

August

September

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

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

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

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

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



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

Member of Sustain’s Bridging the Gap Collaboration Group

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

Hannah Ewan, Scotland The Bread

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

Bridging the Gap runs its first webinars with 300 people attending

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

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

Connecting Community Food Enterprise toolkit launched at popular webinar

November

January

February

March

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

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

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

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

Good food for all

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Lewisham Council launches food justice action plan, with our support

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

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

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

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

April

May

June

July

September

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

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

Welsh Government announces new restrictions on unhealthy food promotions

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

New Recipe for Change campaign launched with 35 coalition partners

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

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

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

Bimpe Oki, Public Health Consultant, Lambeth



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

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

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

Recipe for Change campaign events at Conservative and Labour Party conferences

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

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

Good Food Local programme launches in North East and Cumbria

Sustain joins 120 organisations calling for extension of Household Support Fund

October

November

December

January

February

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

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

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

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

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

Climate and nature emergency

Local Action

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

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

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

Planning for the Planet

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

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

Food procurement

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

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

National advocacy

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

Just transition

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



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

Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb



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

Key moments

» Spring 2023

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

» June 2023

We award 5 International climate action grants to grassroots activists.

» July 2023

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

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

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

» August 2023

20th place joins Planning for the Planet campaign.

» September 2023

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

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

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

» October 2023

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

» November 2023

Sustain wins MySociety Award for climate action.

» December 2023

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

» January 2024

We convene inaugural Just Transition workshop.

» February 2024

50th place joins Planning for the Planet campaign.

» April 2024

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

National influence

Engagement with MPs and policy makers

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

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

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

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

Public affairs support at key influencing moments

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

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

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

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

Sustain Annual Conference

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

Supporting policies, legislation and national strategy processes

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

Digital and press

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

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

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

Key moments

» May 2023

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

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

» June 2023

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

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

» July 2023

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

» Summer 2023

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

» September 2023

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

» October 2023

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

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

» November 2023

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

» December 2023

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

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

» March 2024

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

Local action

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

Sustainable Food Places goes from strength to strength

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

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

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

Paul Brookhouse, Coordinator, Sustainable Food Derby

National action for local benefit

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

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

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

Local action in London

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

Taking our approach to the regions

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

Local action on food and climate change

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

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

International action at a local level

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

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

Raluca Barbu, Highclere Consulting,
FoodSHIFT partner in Romania



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

Key moments

» May 2023

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

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

» June 2023

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

» July 2023

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

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

» September 2023

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

» November 2023

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

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

» December 2023

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

» January 2024

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

» February 2024

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

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

» March 2024

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

Building our communications and reach

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

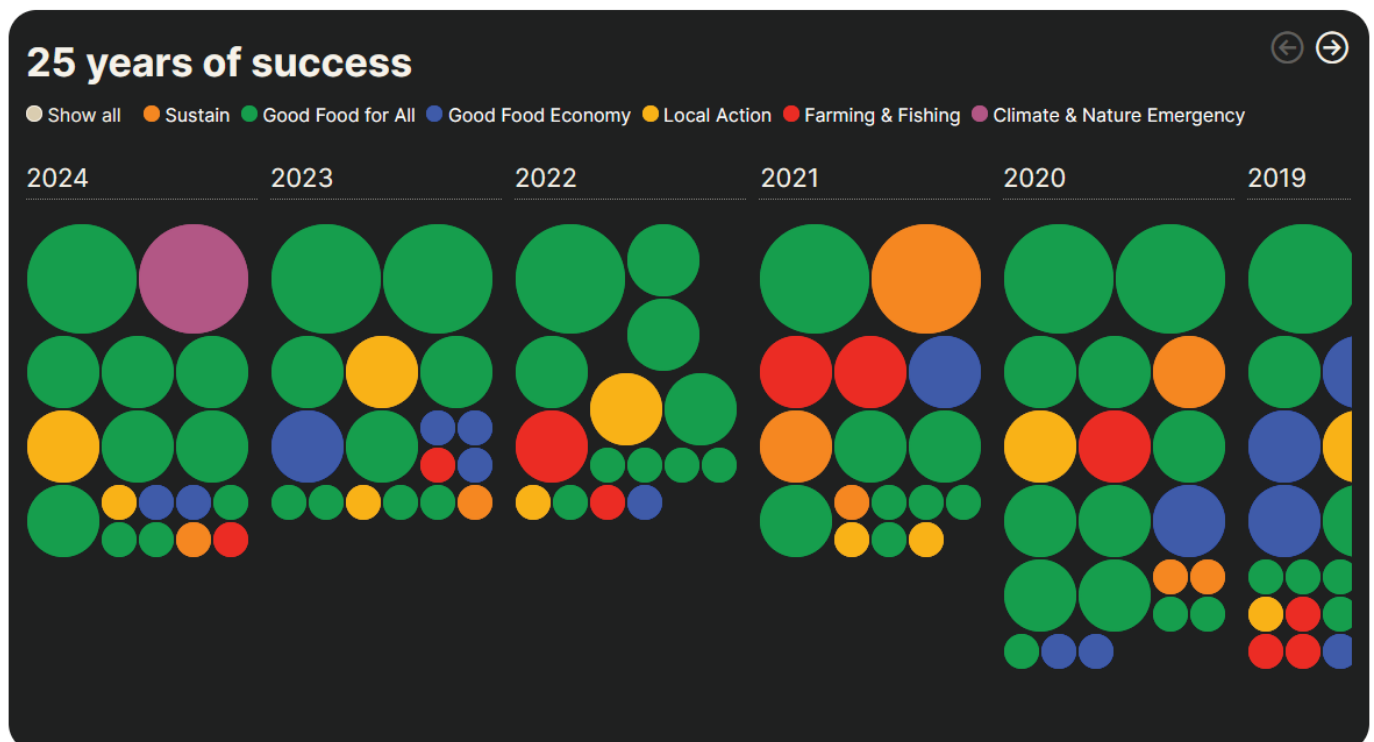
Our good food jobs site, Roots to Work rootstowork.org, has become an essential tool, receiving 400,000 page views and becoming our largest source for email list signups, significantly boosting awareness of Sustain and its initiatives.

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

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

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

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



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

Diversity, equity, inclusion and racial justice

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Who we work with

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

Sustain alliance members

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

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

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

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

Interested in becoming a Sustain member?

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

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

Find out about Sustain membership here: www.sustainweb.org/membership/become_a_sustain_member/
Join one or more of Sustain's mailing lists here: www.sustainweb.org/email/

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

Tilly Jarvis

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

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

Jonathan Pauling

Chief Executive, Alexandra Rose Charity

What people say about us...

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

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

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

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

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

Speaker at Roots to Work careers in food and farming event

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

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

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

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

"Typically excellent blog from @will_white_10 here, highlighting urgency of supply chain regulation (and really pleased to see the diagram I designed with @UKSustain is being so widely used)."

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

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

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

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

Regather Sheffield

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Children's Food Ambassador

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Food Cooperatives Coordinator, London Borough of Tower Hamlets

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

Birmingham local food partnership

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"You are making the world better."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Internal developments

Sustain's governance

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Managing changing times

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

Risk management

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

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

Office premises

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

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

Cost of living increases

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

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

Fair pay

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

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

Staff team

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Skills, mentoring and training

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

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

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

Policies and procedures

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sustain's funding

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

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

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

Passing on grants to others

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

Changes in alliance membership

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

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

Strategic review

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

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

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

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

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

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

Financial review

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

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

Reserves policy

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

Investment policy

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

Risk management

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

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

- Good governance – financial and organisational;
- Weathering ongoing turbulence and uncertainty in UK politics, economics and international political and trading relationships, posing financial and strategic risks;
- Impact of external events: e.g. cost-of-living crisis, war in Ukraine and Middle East, climate change, biodiversity loss, flooding, extreme weather events
- Meeting Sustain's objectives;
- Securing sufficient income;
- Controlling expenditure;
- Addressing HR and staffing issues;
- Health and well-being (including infectious disease, e.g. Covid-19 pandemic);
- Health and safety, including office management and working from home;
- Supporting diversity, equity, inclusion and racial justice;
- Tackling challenges specific to alliances;
- Protecting Sustain's reputation;
- Ensuring regulatory compliance and good practice;
- Avoiding or handling disputes;
- Managing IT security and data protection;
- Mitigating administrative burdens.

Trustees' responsibilities

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

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

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

Setting staff pay

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

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

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

Fair pay

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

Public benefit

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

Auditors

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

This report was approved by the Council of Trustees on 20 November 2024 and signed on its behalf, by:



Professor Mike Rayner
Chair of the Council of Trustees

Auditor's report

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food and Farming (the 'Charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, statement of cash flows and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

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

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

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

Responsibilities of the trustees

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

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees

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

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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

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

regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.

- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

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

Use of our report

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



Anthony Epton (Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of

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

20 November 2024

Statement of financial activities

(incorporating and income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2024

		Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	2	67,753	41,872	109,625	43,097
Charitable activities					
Health and Welfare	3	347,058	2,310,367	2,657,425	1,778,931
Investments	4	12,842	-	12,842	4,422
Total income		427,653	2,352,239	2,779,892	1,826,450
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	5	19,865	-	19,865	18,455
Charitable activities					
Health and Welfare	5	220,514	1,933,880	2,154,394	1,763,421
Total expenditure		240,379	1,933,880	2,174,259	1,781,876
Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments		187,274	418,359	605,633	44,574
Net gains / (losses) on investments		-	-	-	-
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	6	187,274	418,359	605,633	44,574
Transfers between funds		(42,062)	42,062	-	-
Net income / (expenditure) before other recognised gains and losses		145,212	460,421	605,633	44,574
Net movement in funds		145,212	460,421	605,633	44,574
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		894,400	232,740	1,127,140	1,082,566
Total funds carried forward		1,039,612	693,161	1,732,773	1,127,140

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

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2024

	Note	£	2024 £	£	2023 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	11		-	-	-
			-	-	-
Current assets:					
Debtors	12	225,108		364,782	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,887,518		1,302,232	
			2,112,626	1,667,014	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	379,853		539,874	
			1,732,773	1,127,140	
Net current assets			1,732,773	1,127,140	
Total net assets less current liabilities			1,732,773	1,127,140	
The funds of the charity:	17				
Restricted income funds			693,161		232,740
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		258,582		246,233	
General funds		781,030		648,167	
			1,039,612	894,400	
Total unrestricted funds			1,039,612	894,400	
Total charity funds			1,732,773	1,127,140	

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

Approved by the trustees on 20 November 2024 and signed on their behalf by


Professor Michael Rayner
Chair


Victoria Williams
Treasurer

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024	2023
		£	£
Cash flows from operating activities	18		
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities		572,444	(173,729)
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		12,842	4,422
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities		12,842	4,422
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		585,286	(169,307)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,302,232	1,471,539
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	19	1,887,518	1,302,232

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1 Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

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

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

b) Going concern

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

c) Income

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

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

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

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

d) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

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

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

e) Interest receivable

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

f) Fund accounting

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

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

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

1 Accounting policies (continued)

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

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

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

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

h) Allocation of support costs

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

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

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

i) Operating leases

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

j) Tangible fixed assets

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

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

Office equipment	25% straight line
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k) Debtors

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

l) Cash at bank and in hand

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

m) Creditors and provisions

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

n) Financial instruments

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

o) Pensions

The charity operates workplace pension scheme.

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Donations	67,753	41,872	109,625	43,097
Total income from donations 2024	67,753	41,872	109,625	43,097
Total income from donations 2023	23,941	19,156	43,097	

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
<u>Grant income</u>				
AuroraTrust	-	37,500	37,500	-
BIG grant	-	-	-	24,946
City Bridge Foundation	-	79,000	79,000	83,000
Connect Fund (Barrow Cadbury Trust)	-	74,067	74,067	6,733
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (various)	50,000	-	50,000	110,000
European Climate Foundation	-	77,917	77,917	33,333
European Union	-	24,221	24,221	56,457
Farming the Future	-	51,682	51,682	49,969
Friends Provident Foundation	-	-	-	33,894
Greater London Authority (various)	-	25,500	25,500	36,500
ICLEI European Secretariat GmbH	-	16,414	16,414	-
Impact on Urban Health	-	656,210	656,210	284,901
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	-	41,250	41,250	28,750
Kenneth Miller Trust	-	53,333	53,333	26,458
Lancashire County Council	-	-	-	12,500
Movements Trust	-	33,750	33,750	-
Network of European Foundations	-	20,814	20,814	-
National Lottery Community Fund (Growing Great Ideas)	-	493,200	493,200	214,575
Nutritional Wellness Foundation (previously known as the AIM Foundation)	-	38,494	38,494	14,584
Oak Foundation (various)	-	194,412	194,412	154,400
Rothschild Foundation	-	76,250	76,250	-
Royal Parks Foundation	-	-	-	31,317
Samworth Foundation	55,000	-	55,000	50,000
Sustainable Food Places (Big Lottery Fund and Esmee Fairbairn Foundation)	-	202,043	202,043	236,322
Thirty Percy Foundation	150,000	-	150,000	150,000
Trust for London	-	60,000	60,000	60,000
Vital Strategies	-	52,000	52,000	-
<u>Other income</u>				
Conference and workshops	9,587	2,310	11,897	1,953
Membership fees	37,650	-	37,650	31,225
Sales and publications	6,909	-	6,909	5,585
Subscriptions	37,912	-	37,912	41,529
Total income from charitable activities 2024	347,058	2,310,367	2,657,425	1,778,931
Total income from charitable activities 2023	390,292	1,388,639	1,778,931	

4 Income from investments

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Investment income	12,842	-	12,842	4,422
Total income from investments 2024	12,842	-	12,842	4,422
Total income from investments 2023	4,422	-	4,422	

5 a. Analysis of expenditure

	Cost of raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support costs £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Staff costs (Note 7)	17,455	1,251,402	174,521	1,443,378	1,263,325
Direct cost					
Payable to partner organisations	-	362,480	-	362,480	285,402
Consultancy costs	-	114,942	-	114,942	48,309
Volunteers	-	-	-	-	98
Printing and photocopying	-	8,326	-	8,326	8,807
Postage and distribution	-	4,005	-	4,005	7,894
Travel, meeting and expenses	-	80,278	-	80,278	40,635
Other charitable expenditure	-	71,551	-	71,551	38,406
Support cost					
Telephone and fax	-	-	1,492	1,492	258
Office costs	-	-	79,407	79,407	80,342
Audit fees	-	-	8,400	8,400	8,400
	17,455	1,892,984	263,820	2,174,259	1,781,876
Support costs	2,410	261,410	(263,820)	-	
Total expenditure 2024	19,865	2,154,394	-	2,174,259	
Total expenditure 2023	18,455	1,763,421			

Of the total expenditure, £240,379 was unrestricted (2023: £374,689) and £1,933,880 was restricted (2023: £1,407,187).

The amount payable to partner organisations is made up of several different payments - Bridging the Gap Partners (£106.2k); Childrens Food Campaign Partners (£57.1k); Food for the Planet Partners (£76k); Good Food Enterprise Partners (£42.4k); Good Food Local Partners (£35k); Grant Conduit for Member Organisation (£35k) and Peri-Urban Farming Partners (£10.8k).

b. Analysis of expenditure from previous reporting period

	Cost of raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support costs £	2023 Total £
Staff costs (Note 7)	15,886	1,088,358	159,081	1,263,325
Direct cost				
Payable to partner organisations	-	285,402	-	285,402
Consultancy costs	-	48,309	-	48,309
Volunteers	-	98	-	98
Printing and photocopying	-	8,807	-	8,807
Postage and distribution	-	7,894	-	7,894
Travel, meeting and expenses	-	40,635	-	40,635
Other charitable expenditure	-	38,406	-	38,406
Support cost				
Telephone and fax	-	-	258	258
Office costs	-	-	80,342	80,342
Audit fees	-	-	8,400	8,400
	15,886	1,517,909	248,081	1,781,876
Support costs	2,569	245,512	(248,081)	-
Total expenditure 2023	18,455	1,763,421	-	1,781,876

6 Net income/ (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	48,029	46,635
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	7,000	6,700
	<u>7,000</u>	<u>6,700</u>

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

Staff costs were as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Salaries and wages	1,259,122	1,095,023
Social security costs	122,356	115,804
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	61,900	52,498
	<u>1,443,378</u>	<u>1,263,325</u>

No employee earned more than £75,000 during the year (2023: nil).

The total employee benefits including national insurance and pension contributions of the key management personnel were £207,936 (2023: £219,088).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2023: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2023: £nil).

Trustees' expenses represents the payment or reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs totalling £73 (2023: £0) relating to attendance at meetings of one trustee.

8 Staff numbers

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

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
Raising funds	0.4	0.4
Health and Welfare	26.6	25.7
Support	3.7	3.7
	<u>30.7</u>	<u>29.8</u>

9 Related party transactions

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

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

Sustain received a grant of £315,499 (2023: £221,333) via the Soil Association, which is the overall programme manager for the Sustainable Food Places network – a programme run jointly by Food Matters, Soil Association (both Sustain members) and Sustain. Three of Sustain's trustees are (or were) a member of staff for the Soil Association and Food Matters. Separately, the Soil Association paid Sustain £500 for an A4 page in Good Food Local: London report 2024. The Soil Association was paid £360 as part of the Bridging the Gap project.

Food Matters received £5,000 for their work on the FoodSHIFT project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for Food Matters. Sustain's Chief Executive is on the board at Food Matters.

Sustain paid the Obesity Health Alliance £20,879, who are partners on the Recipe for Change project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the Obesity Health Alliance. A member of Sustain's management team is a Steering Group member for the Obesity Health Alliance.

David Edwards was a trustee of both Sustain and the Food Foundation, who are partners on the Recipe for Change project that Sustain leads on. Sustain paid the Food Foundation £33,190 as part of that project budget.

Sustain paid Feedback Global £8,500, who are partners on the Good Food Enterprise project. A Sustain trustee was a member of staff for Feedback Global.

Sustain paid the Landworkers' Alliance £1,800, who are partners on the Peri-Urban Growing project. Three Sustain trustees are members of staff for the Landworkers' Alliance, or closely associated with LWA in other ways.

The Real Bread Campaign also received annual membership fees of £49.50, as well as £369 for copies of the Knead to Know more books from the School of Artisan Foods. A Sustain Trustee is the owner and on the board at these respective organisations.

Finally, Sustain paid £16,175 to Growing Communities, who are project partners on the Bridging the Gap project. Sustain's Chief Executive is on the board at Growing Communities.

10 Taxation

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

11 Tangible fixed assets

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

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

12 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Other debtors	26,901	166,733
Prepayments	4,779	4,779
Accrued income	193,428	193,270
	<u>225,108</u>	<u>364,782</u>

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Other creditors	117,412	43,732
Accruals	8,400	8,400
Deferred income	254,041	487,742
	<u>379,853</u>	<u>539,874</u>

14 Deferred income

Deferred income comprises of grants from the following: Aurora Trust £12,500, Compassion in World Farming International £5,851, European Climate Foundation £6,250, Kenneth Miller Trust £20,625, Movements Trust £56,250, Nutritional Wellness Foundation £24,996, Oak Foundation £121,319 and Rothschild Foundation £6,250.

	2024 £	2023 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	487,742	471,751
Amount released to income in the year	(487,742)	(471,751)
Amount deferred in the year	254,041	487,742
Balance at the end of the year	<u>254,041</u>	<u>487,742</u>

15 Pension scheme

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

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

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

17 Movements in funds

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

Purposes of restricted funds

Income that is received for specific projects, as – for example – grants, donations and earned income, is accounted for as restricted funds, with expenditure usually attributed over a specific period of time. We manage restricted funds carefully, keep expenditure under regular review, and aim to keep to the specified budget. If project funds are projected to be overspent for an unavoidable reason, we take action early to reduce expenditure and/or raise more funds to cover the potential shortfall. If we continue to project and incur an unavoidable overspend, a transfer is made from Sustain's unrestricted funds. The balances on restricted funds as at 31 March 2024 arise from income received for specific projects on which some expenditure is still to be incurred in the coming financial year. Each of Sustain's projects is described in more detail below:

Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

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

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

Capital Growth: Run by Sustain's London Food Link network, this offers practical support to communities around London to help more people grow more food, and to have greater access to land, skills and growing spaces for community and environmental benefit.

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

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

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

Food Poverty: Sustain's programme of work seeking to tackle the root causes of food poverty, and encouraging policies and practices that would enable everyone to eat well. This includes the London Food Poverty Campaign: promoting steps local authorities can take to support people and communities to address the root causes of food poverty 'beyond the food bank'; which produces an annual league table comparing London Borough good practice. This also includes work on policy at local, regional and national level to enable people on a low income to access the healthy and sustainably produced food they need.

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

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

Sustainable Farming and Land Use: Advocates for improvements in policy and practice to support better farming livelihoods, more and better jobs in sustainable food production, fair trading practices, and the subsidies, policies and industry practices that would incentivise change towards healthy, fair and environmentally sustainable food production. Also includes our Fringe Farming campaign in partnership with Landworkers Alliance for more peri-urban horticulture.

Sustainable Food Places: The Sustainable Food Places Network – organised jointly by Food Matters, Soil Association and Sustain – helps people and places share challenges, explore practical solutions and develop good practice on key food issues. It encourages public, private and third-sector groups and local communities to work together to improve their food system. Sustain helps the network to run a series of campaigns, this year including:

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

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

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	605,633	105,490
Dividends, interest and rent from investments	(12,842)	(670)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	139,674	90,477
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(160,021)	141,108
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	572,444	336,405

19 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	At 1 April 2023	Cash flows	Other changes	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£
Cash in hand	1,302,232	585,286	-	1,887,518
Total cash and cash equivalents	1,302,232	585,286	-	1,887,518

20 Operating lease commitments

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

21 Legal status of the charity

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

22 Notes from 2023 accounts (prior year)

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

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Net current assets	648,167	246,233	232,740	1,127,140
Net assets at the end of the year	648,167	246,233	232,740	1,127,140

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

	At the start of the year £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
Restricted funds:					
Bridging the Gap	-	214,575	(93,313)	-	121,262
Campaign for a Better Food Britain	8,133	53,604	(20,547)	-	41,190
Capital Growth	27,713	114,317	(123,400)	-	18,630
Children's Food Campaign	23,496	346,354	(477,910)	-	(108,060)
Climate and Nature	14,033	134,128	(134,485)	-	13,676
FoodSHIFT 2030	18,667	56,457	(46,526)	-	28,598
Food Poverty	33,165	111,680	(124,027)	10,000	30,818
Local Food Retail	-	-	(1,012)	7,364	6,352
London Food Link	-	22,250	(17,568)	-	4,682
Sustainable Farming and Land Use	50,247	112,813	(150,757)	5,417	17,720
Sustainable Food Places	33,897	241,617	(217,642)	-	57,872
Total restricted funds	209,351	1,407,795	(1,407,187)	22,781	232,740
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Employment Liabilities	125,267	-	-	60,966	186,233
Innovation and Activities Fund	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
Match Funding Contingency	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Total designated funds	185,267	-	-	60,966	246,233
General funds	687,948	418,655	(374,689)	(83,747)	648,167
Total unrestricted funds	873,215	418,655	(374,689)	(22,781)	894,400
Total funds	1,082,566	1,826,450	(1,781,876)	-	1,127,140

Funders

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

Aurora Trust (previously known as the Ashden Trust)
Big Lottery Fund
City Bridge Foundation
Connect Fund (Barrow Cadbury Trust)
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (various)
European Climate Foundation
European Union - Horizon 2020
Farming the Future
Friends Provident Foundation
Greater London Authority (various)
Guy's and St Thomas' Charity (also known as Impact on Urban Health)
ICLEI European Secretariat GmbH
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
Kenneth Miller Trust
Kestrelman Trust
London Borough of Waltham Forest
Movements Trust
National Lottery Community Fund (Growing Great Ideas)
Network of European Foundations
New Wellness Foundation (previously known as the AIM Foundation)
Oak Foundation
Rothschild Foundation
Samworth Foundation
Sustainable Food Places
Thirty Percy Foundation
Trust for London
Vital Strategies

Annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2024

A Sustain publication

November 2024

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



Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming

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

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