

# Annual report

Review and accounts for the year ended  
31 March 2025

Company registered number: 02673194

Charity registered number: 1018643

**sustain**  
the alliance for better food and farming

# Foreword

The range and quality of work being undertaken across the Sustain alliance is impressive. As has been our readiness to respond to emerging developments such as the 25-year farming roadmap, 10-year NHS health plan, the national Food Strategy and the transition to a new government following the 2024 General Election.

This year, our events in parliament, at political party conferences in the autumn, at the sustainable farming gatherings Oxford Real Farming Conference and Groundswell, and engagement with the new cohort of MPs, Select Committee Chairs and Ministers, resulted in our policy recommendations being taken up in influential processes.

We also faced significant challenges, not least the intense downward pressure on government budgets due to international trade disputes and global conflict. HM Treasury budget decisions contributed to tense relations between the new government and farmers. Sustain played a key role in encouraging third-sector environment and conservation groups to respond in a way supportive of farmers, focusing on the need to retain environmental farm payments and prioritise farm profitability through fair dealing and diversification in the supply chain.

Sustain's powerful ability to link practice to policy, and local to national, came strongly to the fore this year. Our innovative Bridging the Gap programme launched 10 pilots to demonstrate how to make

nature-friendly food affordable and accessible to diverse communities, through schemes such as fruit and veg vouchers and school food procurement. Our Recipe for Change campaign set out how millions of pounds generated from new levies on unhealthy food could drive reformulation and pay for beneficial initiatives. The Sustainable Food Places network, now in its 10th year, grew to 114 places implementing food system change at a local level, with local authority areas in London and the North East demonstrating their progress through our Good Food Local benchmarking. Such work has generated great interest from MPs and the Defra Food Strategy team.

We have been making progress on many fronts. Sustain has also restructured and welcomed new senior staff to the team, strengthening our approach to both operations and impact. It is now time for our alliance to decide on our shared priorities for the next strategy period. We have a treasure chest of tried-and-tested practical and policy solutions to some of the most difficult challenges that face our society and our planet. As an alliance, we are ready to step up with renewed confidence to put these centre-stage in policy-making at local and national levels.



**Professor Mike Rayner**  
Chair of Sustain's Council of Trustees

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## Trustees during the financial year covered by this report:

Mark Ainsworth\*\* (elected 20/11/24)  
Sara Azeem\* (elected 20/11/24)  
Josie Cohen (re-elected 14/12/22)  
Djenai Delerue\* (resigned 13/05/25)  
Amy Deptford\* (elected 20/11/2024)  
Jyoti Fernandes\*\* (re-elected 29/12/23)  
Kerry Geldart (elected 20/11/24)  
Kawther Hashem (re-elected 29/11/23)  
Bridget Henderson (resigned 20/11/24)  
Tilly Jarvis (elected 20/11/24)  
Katharine Jenner (re-elected 14/12/22)

Shafalee Loth (re-elected 29/11/23)  
Emma Österberg\* (elected 20/11/24)  
Rob Percival\*\* (elected 14/12/22)  
Raksha Mistry\* (resigned 20/11/24)  
Professor Mike Rayner (re-elected 20/11/24)  
Ele Saltmarsh\* (elected 19/12/23)  
Stephanie Slater (resigned 20/11/24)  
Alison Swan Parente (re-elected 20/11/24)  
Nick Weir\*\* (re-elected 19/12/23)  
Victoria Williams (re-elected 14/12/22)  
Dee Woods\*\* (re-elected 20/11/24)

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.

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**Charity registered number:** 1018643

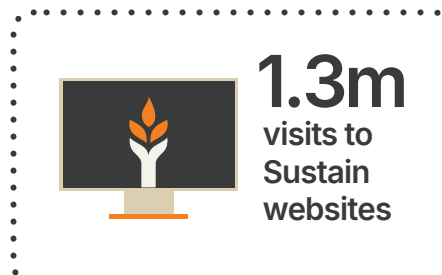
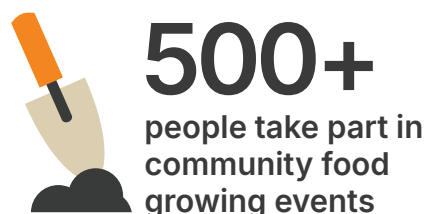
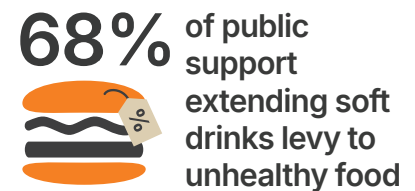
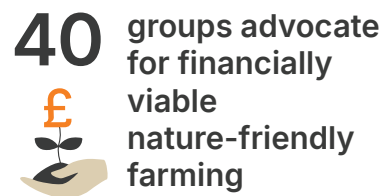
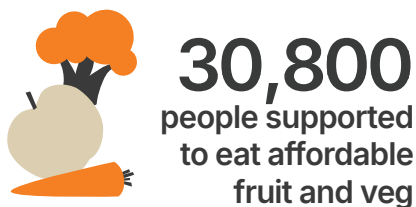
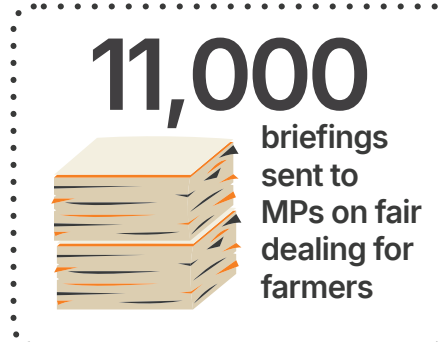
**Registered office:** The Green House, 244-254 Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9DA

**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 2024 to March 2025:



Find out more about Sustain's success stories and achievements at:  
[www.sustainweb.org/about/success-stories](http://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 cultivated relationships with the new cohort of MPs, Ministers and their teams, promoting policies to accelerate the transition to nature-friendly farming. We co-hosted *A Taste of Agroecology* in Parliament, attended by 51 MPs and Minister for Farming Daniel Zeichner; and Sustain's Chief Executive attended a Farm to Fork reception at 10 Downing Street. Our recommendations on whole-farm planning were adopted by the National Audit Office, and we coordinated a [joint consultation response](#) to the government's proposed Land Use Framework.

Concerned that the new government's Budget risked alienating farmers, we led on carefully curated alliance communications on the controversial farm inheritance tax and changes to farm support. Our communications were among the top five Google results for over 10 days. We also worked closely with influential conservation and climate groups on media work to protect the farming budget.

Our partnership with Riverford Organics mobilised 11,000 briefings being sent to MPs on fair dealing for farmers. Our policy demands were reflected in parliamentary debates and party manifestos, and paved the way for Defra's Farm Profitability Review. We also coordinated a [landmark open letter](#) on fair

supply chains to the new Environment Secretary, a first for major conservation bodies.

We published new research with the Open University on [employee ownership and agroecology](#), and co-authored [Home Grown](#) – a roadmap for horticulture – launched at the Groundswell regen farming conference and featured in *The Times*.

At the Oxford Real Farming Conference in January 2025, we once again curated the policy room with a packed programme, including a Q&A with the Director of Defra's Farming Programme.

Sustain's Chief Executive serves on the steering group of the Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics, whose [research this year](#) showed that supermarkets are not yet complying with new legislation that prohibits using antibiotics to prop up poor farming practices.

At local level, our Capital Growth campaign continued to support hundreds of London's community food-growing spaces and local councils through training, events, and advice. Over 2,000 people joined our Good to Grow and Urban Harvest festivals, and our Growing for Nature survey informed the Greater London Authority's *Nature Recovery Strategy*.

Over 1,500 people take part in events and webinars in our Good to Grow Week

Sustain CEO attends Number 10 Downing Street 'Farm to Fork' reception

Over 300 people attend our panel sessions on ELMs and horticulture at Groundswell

Urban Harvest festival hosts 30 events with 500+ attendees and 25 community gardens

April

May

June

July

September

October

We host a 'Six Inches of Soil' film screening and panel debate with 150 attendees

Positive communications on farm inheritance tax appear in top 5 Google results for over 10 days

Launch of 'Home Grown' UK horticulture report with Soil Association and Wildlife Trusts

SEWN Together North event in London connects 40 community food growers with local council officers

“ Sustain was absolutely all over the Oxford Real Farming Conference!

**Barnaby Coupe, Senior Land Use Policy Manager, The Wildlife Trusts**

“ Thank you for a great and very informative day. The facilitators were brilliant!

**Attendee at Capital Growth's bumblebee identification workshop**



Photo: Our Sustainable Farming Campaign co-hosted A Taste of Agroecology in Parliament, attended by new Farming Minister Daniel Zeichner and over 50 MPs. Pictured (left to right): Jyoti Fernandes, Landworkers Alliance; Daniel Zeichner MP, Minister for Farming; Will White, Sustain's Sustainable Farming Campaign Coordinator; Martin Lines, Nature Friendly Farming Network

13 local council officers discuss support for urban food growing at our Inter-Council Forum

We submit evidence to EFRA inquiry on supply chain fairness

Sustain welcomes 1,000+ attendees in sessions at the Oxford Real Farming Conference Policy Room and new entrants networking event

Capital Growth launches 8 training workshops, including soil and pollinator care

We attend key DEFRA stakeholder meeting on the 25-year Farming Roadmap

Joint briefing published on Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) access for under-5-hectare farmers and growers

November

December

January

February

March

'A Taste of Agroecology' event hosted in Parliament with alliance members NFFN, LWA, Pasture for Life and Soil Association

Farmers Against Farmwashing e-action sends 11,000+ fair farming briefings to MPs; cited in parliamentary debates

EFRA Committee quotes our key policy points in letter to DEFRA on Groceries Code Adjudicator reform

DEFRA attends Q&A and stakeholder session on Land Use Framework at our Sustainable Farming working party

Capital Growth facilitates anti-racism learning set with 5 community food growing leaders from London

# Good food economy

Our vision is of 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.

Our Bridging the Gap programme established 10 pilot projects to explore how to make climate- and nature-friendly food affordable and accessible to all. The team released an [International Policy Review](#), held two thought-provoking webinars on [public sector food](#) and [fruit and veg on prescription](#) and presented our [Bridging the Gap film](#) to a packed session at the Oxford Real Farming Conference in January 2025. We are now turning our findings into advocacy for policies to support more people to access climate- and nature-friendly food.

This year saw publication of the draft [Local Food Growth Plan](#), coordinated by Sustain, working with the Landworkers Alliance (LWA); Food, Farming & Countryside Commission; Pasture for Life; Sustainable Food Trust; and our Local Food working party. This provided case studies of successful local food retail models, and policy proposals to help grow the sector. Our snapshot review of challenges highlighted priorities for policy and infrastructure across retail, procurement and supply chains, which was picked up with interest by Defra's national food strategy team. This was followed by detailed engagement on solutions for growing the sector, with people from retail, marketing, food partnerships and business support organisations.

Sustain's long-standing and perennially popular [Real Bread Campaign](#) continued to champion culturally diverse engagement, recruiting 14 new ambassadors from diverse backgrounds and running the 12th annual Sourdough September, with participation from over 45 countries. The campaign published a Real Bread Manifesto and relaunched the Real Bread Map to help community bakeries connect with local customers. The campaign also continued to challenge misleading marketing practices and claims by UK supermarkets, submitting complaints to local authorities, with Morrisons and Co-op improving their practices as a result.

Now in its 7th year, our [Roots to Work](#) jobs platform launched a careers resources page for those seeking work and employers in the sustainable food sector. We introduced 'inclusion indicators' on job listings, promoting the disability confident, ethnicity confident and Living Wage Employer schemes, as well as promoting other positive recruitment practices considered to be helpful for equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). The website continued to profile a diverse range of people working in the sector and hosted networking events, collectively resulting in a growth in the audience for this work.

Policies to help community bakeries championed in Real Bread Manifesto

New report asks the NHS and GPs to put fruit and veg on prescription

Popular webinar examines fruit and veg vouchers to promote health and horticulture

Pilots launched for organic vegetable supply to schools in Wales, Aberdeen and East London

Roots to Work promotes Living Wage, disability confident and ethnicity confident schemes

April

May

June

July

August

Public sector food procurement webinar promotes plant-based meals

Snapshot published of barriers and solutions for local food sector

Improved Real Bread Map relaunched, connecting bakers with customers

Roots to Work careers resources launched to help build good food sector

Review published of international policies to promote affordable fruit and veg

Pilots of affordable organic fruit and veg launched in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Carrickfergus



“ It was heart-warming to know that there are so many passionate candidates who want to make a real difference in the world. Roots to Work is clearly reaching the right audience.

**Sustainable Merton, who advertise their vacancies on Sustain's Roots to Work jobs platform**

“ It's been one of my dreams to be able to use affordable, locally farmed organic produce in my primary schools and thanks to Growing Communities, it's finally happening.

**James Taylor, School Chef and participant in Hackney School Food pilot, part of Sustain's Bridging the Gap programme**

Teviot Centre Food Co-op in Tower Hamlets, east London, supported to trade in affordable organic fruit and veg by Sustain's Bridging the Gap programme. Credit: Sylvie Belbouab

People from 45 countries participate in 12th annual Sourdough September

Real Bread Campaign ambassador Aidan Monks named Baker of the Year

137 people attend Roots to Work networking event at ORFC2025

Real Bread Week encourages people to 'Bake, Buy and Boost' Real Bread

Draft Local Food Growth Plan shared at celebratory event

September

October

November

January

March

Bridging the Gap presents at Soil Association Organic Trade Conference

Tower Hamlets residents enabled to buy organic fruit and veg in vouchers pilot

Bridging the Gap film launched at packed ORFC2025 session

70 farmers, millers, bakers, academics and broadcasters discuss support for Real Bread

# 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 services, and for it to become unacceptable and expensive to market, sell or serve unhealthy, unethical and unsustainable produce, over the alternative.

The **Recipe for Change** campaign for a levy on unhealthy food staged packed-out panel events at the Labour and Conservative party conferences. We published a new tool showing a 'menu of options' for spending levy revenue, and our evidence was quoted in the Chief Medical Officer's (CMO's) annual report and by House of Lords Select Committee on Food, Diet and Obesity.

We continue to put the voices of diverse families, parents, carers and children at the forefront of our work. Our Children's Food Ambassadors launched their parent manifesto ***Our Children, Our Future***, with national polling showing high parental support for healthy school food expansion, an energy drinks ban, and honest food labelling and packaging. Ambassadors discussed their manifesto with school food minister Stephen Morgan MP.

150 people attended our **Children's Food Summit**, with a lively cross-party MP panel chaired by youth activist Dev Sharma. 'Yummy' food heroes were celebrated in the Children's Food Awards for work on early years feeding, community engagement, diversity and inclusion, and school food; whilst less healthy products and brands targeting babies and toddlers came under fire in our 'Yucky' awards.

We continue to advocate for universal healthy school meals, relaunching the **Superpowers of School Meals report** in Parliament. We also continue to push for increased eligibility and value of Healthy Start, as well as automatic enrolment of eligible families with babies and children under 4.

This year, 25 of 30 London councils improved their results in our **Beyond the Food Bank** measures. Sustain also co-delivered the Greater London Authority funded Food Roots 2 programme with Food Matters and The Social Investment Company. We engaged 21 London food partnerships and food poverty alliances, supporting them to address food insecurity and develop their partnership.

Ten local authorities passed **local healthy food advertising policies** with our support, bringing the total to 22 plus Transport for London. Hounslow Council became the first to restrict unhealthy commercial baby food advertising. We collaborated with Obesity Health Alliance to respond to several Advertising Standards Authority and Ofcom consultations on food advertising regulation. Our work is also gaining international attention, with keynote speeches at high-profile events, including in Australia and New York.

Two Recipe for Change parliamentary roundtables engage MPs, early years groups and think tanks

Westminster Council commits to permanent universal primary meals and expands secondary free meals

Menu of spending options tool explores how revenue from a new levy should be spent

Recipe for Change campaign events at Labour and Conservative party conferences

Autumn Budget delivers on our calls to update the Soft Drinks Industry Levy

April

May

June

July

September

October

Launch of parents' manifesto for healthy children's food, backed by national poll of 2,000+ parents

Commitments on food advertising, energy drinks and school meals secured in party manifestos

New research shows soft drinks industry levy reduces children's sugar consumption

Government extends Household Support Fund for 6 months, following campaign pressure

House of Lords report backs healthier children's food and expansion of unhealthy food levies



# Our Children Our Future

“ All of you here this morning will be aware of Sustain’s invaluable work as they continually fight to ensure that everyone has access to healthy and sustainably produced food. And, as many across the country are still feeling the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis, Sustain’s Children’s Food Campaign is more essential than ever.

**Sharon Hodgson MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on School Food**

“ The Children’s Food Summit really was a day of positivity, possibility and a pleasure to hear about all the brilliant people and projects making life better for children through good food.

**Stephanie Slater, Chief Executive, School Food Matters**

Parent ambassadors present their manifesto for healthy children’s food in Parliament with Sharon Hodgson MP and Baroness Rosie Boycott (front, centre). Credit: Matt Crossick

- Hounslow Council adopts first healthier baby food advertising policy with our support
- Chief Medical Officer report backs our calls for levies on unhealthy food and drinks
- 7 leading public health groups back our calls for expansion of school meals, Healthy Start and a levy on unhealthy food products
- 150 people attend Children’s Food Summit, including several MPs and Peers
- Superpowers of School Meals parliamentary event and new report launch

## November      December      January      February      March

- Poll shows 2 in 3 adults support a levy on unhealthy food
- Children’s Food Campaign parent ambassadors present their manifesto in Parliament
- 100 councils and organisations, including Sustain, call for auto-enrolment for free school meals
- Good practice celebrated in our ‘Yummy’ Children’s Food Awards; unhealthy products slammed as ‘Yucky’
- 100+ people attend launch of Good Food Local: London at City Hall, including reps from 31 of the capital’s 33 councils

# Climate and nature emergency

## Local Action

Local authorities are showing leadership. Our [Every Mouthful Counts toolkit](#) for local authorities supported 59 places to embed food in local climate plans, ensuring that food is recognised as both a climate challenge and a solution. With our support, councils and food partnerships are also influencing government reviews, advocating with elected officials, and delivering local improvements.

## National policy

We have helped food gain traction in national climate policy. The UK's [7th Carbon Budget](#), published in January 2025, setting much clearer targets for food and farming. Following campaign pressure, all major political parties committed to sustainable food procurement in their 2024 General Election manifestos, with Labour pledging that 50% of public sector food will be 'local or sustainable'.

## Factory farms

We stepped up our support for local community action this year, to prevent expansion of damaging factory farms. This year, we achieved a powerful milestone win in [Methwold, Norfolk](#), where we helped the community to block one of the largest proposed megafarms in Europe. Working with Foodrise and other alliance members, we successfully persuaded the local planning authority that the application was unlawful on climate grounds, setting important precedent.

Alongside litigation, we are systematically exposing harms caused by factory farming, including revealing widespread breaches of environmental permitting rules, working with the Bureau of Investigative Journalism. Our new report [Stink or Swim](#) revealed that 10 agribusinesses produced more waste than the UK's 10 largest cities. In November, our interactive [Muck Maps](#) became the first research to reveal the spread of factory farm waste across the UK. The maps, developed with Compassion in World Farming, Friends of the Earth and Materiality, attracted widespread national press coverage. We also launched [Toxic Trade-Off](#) – an analysis of intensive livestock's impact on housebuilding targets - at our event at the Labour Party conference.

Beyond Methwold, over 60 councils have joined 'Planning for the Planet' – and several have adopted text in local planning policy to enable sustainable farming and protect communities from industrial agriculture pollution.

## Food procurement

Procurement remains a key focus for our [Food for the Planet](#) campaign. A new council signed the London Food Purchasing Commitment, and the Greater London Authority recommended it as part of free school meal funding. Our joint briefing with Foodrise made a strong case for healthier, plant-rich public sector menus and supported alliance-wide advocacy.

We have also advanced work on climate-friendly food advertising via a partnership with the University of Oxford. This new research hub will provide important research for the development of climate-friendly food policies.

## Diverse ambassadors

We have prioritised ensuring diverse voices shape the food and farming transition. We launched the ['Back the Future'](#) young farming ambassadors programme with Nature Friendly Farming Network (NFFN), Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK), the Landworkers Alliance and the National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs. Six young ambassadors will champion just, sustainable farming policies throughout 2025. [Roots of Change](#) – a collaboration of the Institute for Development Studies and Sustain – is building just transition perspectives through agricultural rewilding.



“ Today’s victory really marks the beginning of the end for these types of atrocious megafarms. Congratulations on this stunning victory!

**Carina Millstone, Executive Director of Foodrise (formerly Feedback)**

“ Thank you all so much. For the climate, for the people who would have eaten this poor nutrition, and most of all for the millions of animals spared a miserable life.

**Alister Scott, Executive Director, Global Rewilding Alliance and Foodrise (formerly Feedback)**



Local campaigners opposing a new ‘mega’ factory farm await outside King’s Lynn and West Norfolk Council for a decision from the planning authority. With the support of Sustain and others, the community was successful in blocking the development on the grounds of climate impact.  
Credit: Lily O’Mara

## Key moments

### » April 2024

Stink or Swim report launched exposing shocking pollution from top agribusinesses

### » June 2024

Public sector food procurement standards secured in all major political party manifestos

### » July 2024

Sign-ups to London Food Purchasing Commitment grows to 5 councils

### » August 2024

Sustain warns national planning policy overhaul puts farmland and rivers at risk

### » September 2024

Packed event at Liberal Democrat conference highlights factory farming’s huge role in river pollution

Labour Party conference event shows impact of factory farm pollution on housebuilding and nutrient neutrality

### » October 2024

We champion integration of food and farming policies in national planning consultation

### » November 2024

Muck Maps released revealing faecal and nutrient pollution from factory farms

### » January 2025

Climate and Nature team secure Bertha Fellowship to help communities resist factory farm expansion

### » February 2025

Roots of Change project launched with University of Sussex to support agricultural rewilding

Back the Future project recruits 6 young farming ambassadors

Investigative journalists work with Sustain to expose environmental permit violations by agribusinesses

### » March 2025

Historic victory! Megafarm in Norfolk rejected, explicitly citing climate impacts

# Local action

## Sustainable Food Places

The **Sustainable Food Places network** grew to 114 members this year as we marked our 10th anniversary as a network with a record 14 places receiving awards recognising their innovation and leadership on healthy and sustainable food.

When the General Election was called, we pivoted to provide resources and training to support local food partnership coordinators to engage with prospective parliamentary candidates and their newly elected MPs. Our Westminster **Day of Celebration and Action** in November 2024 welcomed a record 55 MPs, as well as members of the Defra Food Strategy Team.

The report on UK's under-preparedness for food systems shocks, commissioned by the **National Preparedness Commission** recognised the central role of food partnerships in both preparing communities and helping them to navigate food supply disruptions and other food systems shocks.

## Policy

This year also saw a marked increase in engagement between food partnerships and MPs representing their constituencies, both before and after the July 2024 General Election. Toward the end of 2024, the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland (DAERA) launched the first ever NI Food Strategy Framework, and UK Defra Secretary of State Steve Reed announced development of a national Food Strategy, with place-based action identified as a vital part of implementation.

## Good Food Local: London

Participation in our **Good Food Local** benchmarking grew, with all Councils in the North East and nearly all London Councils taking part.

We provided advice and support to London councils, to make progress on key policies and initiatives to improve their local food system. In September 2024, we launched our survey of progress at City Hall. Over 100 people attended, with 30 of 33 London councils represented, alongside food partnerships and partner organisations.

We commissioned the University of Nottingham to conduct an impact evaluation in London, showing that 80% of respondents found the Good Food Local approach helpful in prioritising actions and 72% recognising it made a significant contribution to adopting a whole food systems approach.

## Good Food Local: North East

We continued to roll out our Good Food Local approach in the North East, convening councils, food partnerships and local organisations to make systematic progress on key measures for food system change. All councils in the region, plus Cumberland Council, participated in the initial benchmarking. In November. Our website showcased actions, scoring criteria, case studies and recommendations. 11 of 13 councils published their data.

We consulted local authorities and partners to create a national platform and self-assessment tool for driving change through Good Food Local.



Representatives from 75 local food partnerships met with 55 MPs in Parliament to celebrate the role of local action in transforming food systems. We are increasingly confident that the local food partnership approach is gaining traction in Defra's emerging food strategy  
Credit: Sustain

## Food Roots 2

Sustain co-delivered the **Food Roots 2** learning and support programme for London's local food partnerships and food poverty alliances. This included seven workshops supporting food partnership development; Healthy Start promotion; working with Councils; campaigning and advocacy; and creating a legacy toolkit.

We also conducted 10 online workshops, good practice sharing sessions, and three online drop-in sessions. Sustain led three action learning sets for new food partnerships and provided individual support as needed. We engaged consistently with 20 of the 21 grantees.

We also contributed to development and promotion of the Alliance for Dignified Food Support's Dignity Toolkit, and Sheffield University's Food at Home research into disabled and older people's access to food in their own home.

“ Every year the Good Food London survey is an opportunity for us as a borough to understand where we are, set targets for what we could be doing next and, importantly, acknowledge and celebrate what we have achieved. The report, and the brilliant team at Sustain behind it, have been with us every step of the way as we have taken forward a whole systems approach to food, bringing together boroughs facing similar challenges, driving the sharing of best practice and, however big the task or challenge has sometimes appeared, encouraging us to take a bite out of it and to keep going.

**Andy Gold, Head of Food Strategy, London Borough of Newham**

“ The connections and learnings that have come from Food Roots 2 have been incredibly valuable – it's so reassuring to know we'll still have this after the programme.

**Local Food Partnership coordinator and participant in the Food Roots 2 programme**

## Key moments

### » May 2024

Westminster Debate on auto-enrolment for Healthy Start uses Sustain data from Healthy Start Uptake Map

### » June 2024

Good Food Local benchmarking committee marks start of Good Food Local national roll out

21 food partnerships and food poverty alliances engage in Food Roots learning and support

### » September 2024

NE event celebrates first year of regional partnership; all NE councils attend

Greater London Authority commissions an additional 6 months of Food Roots 2

Following campaign pressure, Government extends Household Support Fund

### » November 2024

First NE local authority benchmarking published; 11 of 13 councils publicly share their results

75 local food partnerships and 55 MPs meet in Parliament to recognise the role of local action in transforming food systems

DAERA Minister launches NI's first Food Strategy Framework, referencing local action

Middlesbrough becomes first UK town to achieve Gold Sustainable Food Places Award

### » December 2024

30 of 33 London boroughs submit data on food system actions and policies, our highest engagement yet

### » February 2025

National Preparedness Commission report on UK food resilience cites central role of food partnerships in delivering UK food security

### » March 2025

Launch event and report publication for Good Food Local: London, held at City Hall

### » March 2025

Collaborative work starts on development of a Food Roots legacy toolkit

# National influence

This year, we have seen a significant increase in Sustain's engagement with senior government officials and their teams, following extensive groundwork during the General Election period and the entry of a large cohort of new MPs into Westminster. We built warm and productive connections with MPs, select committees, civil servants and ministerial teams on key processes such as the [National Food Strategy](#), NHS 10-Year Health Plan, 25 Year Farming Strategy and Defra horticulture team. Several national Food Strategy leads on themes relevant to our specialisms have sought us out for our expert input and connections, and we have high hopes this will lead to tangible progress during 2025 and beyond.

The announcement of the General Election to be held in July 2024 necessitated a swift and strategic response from the team. In consultation with alliance members, we produced Sustain's '[Manifesto Tracker](#)', which evaluated how political party pledges aligned with our own [Sustain Manifesto for Better Food and Farming](#). This involved significant input from campaign leads specialising in themes such as farming, climate, public health, and local action. The tracker revealed some key alignments across the political spectrum with Sustain's own manifesto, including on healthy and sustainable public sector food procurement, pesticide and antibiotic use reduction, and establishment of a food partnership in every area. These gave us key footholds for parliamentary engagement, media work and securing commitments.

We also produced the [Sustain General Election Toolkit](#). This provided our networks at national and local level with the necessary information, tools, and resources to engage with their Prospective Parliamentary Candidates (PPCs). The Sustain team hosted a popular Sustainable Food Places (SFP) [training session](#) to explain how local food partnership coordinators could engage with their local candidates. Post-election, the toolkit was updated to facilitate engagement with the huge cohort of newly elected MPs.

The team played a leading role in arranging and running the Sustainable Food Places (SFP) [Day of Action and Celebration](#) in Parliament, November 2024. The event enabled parliamentarians – MPs, their teams and ministerial advisors – to engage with local food partnerships. Emma Lewell-Buck MP kindly hosted this much-appreciated event, who is adept in cross-party working and building consensus, and has been a long-term champion of equitable access to healthy and sustainable food, through national policy and local action.

We ran or partnered on three events at the main political party conferences in autumn 2024, including a popular event on river pollution at the Liberal Democrat conference with WWF and River Action. The team also updated the 'Engaging with your MPs toolkit' to promote good food policies to new and returning MPs.

The team found numerous ways to engage parliamentary attention on the Sustain alliance's concerns in relation to the economics of sustainable farming, including a joint submission coordinated by Sustain to [HM Treasury's forthcoming Budget](#). The team also submitted evidence and engaged with several select committee processes, particularly around the incoming Chairs of committees of interest, including the new Chair of the EFRA Committee, to highlight issues of particular concern for the committee's attention.

The team's efforts resulted in several notable achievements. The Sustain manifesto tracker and General Election toolkit were well-received, with very positive feedback from our target audience.

“ I got to meet an MP, share experiences with others, and have a renewed vision of what a sustainable food movement can do. This helps boost our credibility with local organisations.

**Jenny Salter, Gloucestershire Food Partnership Coordinator**

“ It was an honour to attend the parliamentary event and present our parents' manifesto. It was an amazing experience to be able speak as a parent and a privilege to represent all parents on such an important issue. I really felt that the passion in the room, from everyone involved, was palpable. It was exciting to be in the Houses of Parliament too! And I felt so lucky to be shown around by my MP.

**Mary Needham, Children's Food Campaign parent ambassador**

# Building our communications and reach

The Sustain family of websites collectively received over 1.3 million visits this year, with sustainweb.org accounting for over 800,000 of these visits.

An impressive 10% of our web users provide us with their email address via a call to action or event sign up, and 5% join an email list. This year, we overhauled storage of this data, allowing fresh insight to be gleaned about our supporters, improving data hygiene, and positioning Sustain well for realignments of outreach priorities in 2025 and beyond.

Our continued efforts on supporter growth has led to 16,000 new additions to our email newsletter lists this year. We have recorded over 33,000 engaged supporter interactions and sent more than 12,000 action emails to Members of Parliament and other targets. A notable highlight is the 'Supermarkets STOP Farmwashing' campaign, conducted in partnership with Riverford Organics.

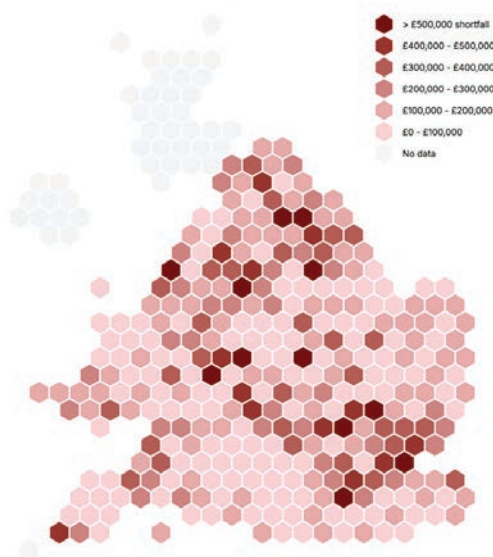
The Sustain Annual Conference held in March 2025 and streamed live via the Sustain lounge set, has become a crucial and highly anticipated event, this year with over 400 attendees and exceptionally positive feedback.

Our jobs platform **Roots to Work** continues to bloom with a 16% growth this year. **Good Food Local's** reach is now national with the launch of a new streamlined platform targeted at reaching over 100 local authority areas. Additionally, we've launched the **Planet Card** platform as part of the Bridging the Gap programme. The platform (launched October 2024) has already recorded over 600 part-funded transactions and supported well over 100 people.

Social engagement remains steady on our main channels, with LinkedIn continuing to show the most growth, with 9,773 followers for the Sustain account. However, where Sustain's campaigns and strategic narrative gains the most impressions is via posts by our individual campaigners.

Our new account on Bluesky is growing steadily, with 2,968 at time of writing. Some Sustain campaigns also have accounts on Instagram such as the Real Bread Campaign with 21,900 followers, Roots to Work with 4,851 followers, Capital Growth at 1,167 and Children's Food Campaign at 314. Future activity is being assessed by Sustain's Communications team as we evaluate an ever-changing social media landscape and the impact of AI search.

**Healthy Start map:**  
Estimated loss to families in 2024



From top left: Healthy Start map developed by Sustain's digital and food poverty team; view from Sustain's Live Lounge during the 2025 Sustain Annual Conference; snapshot from Sustain's Summer Reception in June 2024, celebrating our campaigns and successes.

# Equity, diversity, inclusion and racial justice

We built on the foundational work of our Diversity Outreach programme to focus on embedding lasting change to advance equity, diversity, inclusion and racial justice across the sector. This work spanned internal reflection and capacity-building, creating opportunities for underrepresented groups, to externally focused work on improving wider sector thinking and practice.

Internally, we introduced mandatory training modules for all staff on equity, diversity and inclusion, disability awareness and unconscious bias, to be integrated into staff inductions and refreshers. We also continued to embed anti-racism in our organisational culture through a pilot Action Learning Set, offering space for colleagues running projects and campaigns to reflect on practice and identify actions for meaningful change.

The launch of our [Careers in Sustainable Food and Farming](#) resource on our jobs platform [Roots to Work](#) in May 2024 significantly boosted engagement with universities and prompted a series of student workshops, with more planned. Our jobs platform [Roots to Work](#) continues to support inclusion by spotlighting stories of Black and people of colour (BPOC) in the sector. We introduced inclusivity indicators for job listings, such as employers offering ethnicity or disability confidence schemes and/or paying Living Wages, and now require salaries/pay to be shown. Further inclusive recruitment guidance is in development.

We have created a cross-organisational internship opportunity for a person from a marginalised background, due for recruitment in autumn 2025.

In September 2024, we launched a movement-building programme supporting 13 national and grassroots organisations with one-to-one mentoring, peer learning and anti-racism training. The success of our [How to Be an Anti-Racist Organisation workshops](#), delivered with Eating Better and the Social Justice Collective, showed the importance of tailored support. Feedback

from participants highlighted a strong appetite for continued collaboration and accountability.

The Food and Racial Justice Working Group, co-convened with Eating Better, met regularly and co-created [The Gathering Table](#): a summit on racial justice in food and farming, planned for June 2025. We are also collaborating on [Culture Roots Collective](#), an online hub for BPOC in the sector, with Eating Better, AFN+ and Navaratnam Partheeban.

Sustain contributed to wider systemic change by supporting partner organisations, including Sustainable Food Places, Food Sense Wales and the Soil Association with EDI consultancy and planning.

**Careers in sustainable food and farming**



In May 2024, we launched a new Careers in Sustainable Food and Farming resource on our Roots to Work jobs platform, significantly boosted engagement with universities and prompting a series of student workshops.



# 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	Garden Organic	Soil Association
Alexandra Rose Charity	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 Agriculture Association	Incredible Edible	The Kindling Trust
Bio-Dynamic Agriculture College	Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN)	The Landworkers' Alliance
British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry	International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)	The Orchard Project
British Dietetics Association	Magic Breakfast	The Real Farming Trust
Caroline Walker Trust	Marine Conservation Society	The Scottish Pantry Network
Centre for Agroecology Water and Resilience (CAWR)	National Federation of Women's Institutes	Think Through Nutrition
Centre for Food Policy – City University	National Trust	Transform Trade
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)	Nature Friendly Farming Network	Unchecked
Chefs in Schools	Nourish NI	Unison – the public service union
Commonwork Trust	Open Food Network UK	Unite the union – rural and agricultural sector
Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Network	Oral Health Foundation	Vegetarian Society
Compassion in World Farming	Organic Farmers & Growers	Whole Health Agriculture
CPRE The Countryside Charity	Organic Growers Alliance	Women's Environmental Network
Diabetes UK	Organic Trade Board	World Cancer Research Fund
Dung Beetles for Farmers	Oxford Climate Alumni Network (OXCAN)	Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF)
E.coli 0157	Pasture-fed Livestock Association	<b>Sustain alliance observers</b>
Eating Better	People Need Nature	Child Poverty Action Group
Faculty of Public Health	Permaculture Association	ClientEarth
Fairtrade Foundation	Pesticide Action Network (PAN) UK	Food Ethics Council
FareShare	Plantlife	GMB
Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group SW	Rare Breed Survival Trust	Green Alliance
First Steps Nutrition Trust	Royal Academy of Culinary Arts, Chefs Adopt a School Trust	Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF)
Food Foundation	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)	Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)
Food Matters	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	Nourish Scotland
Food Sense Wales	School Food Matters	Obesity Health Alliance
Food Systems and Policy Group, University of Hertfordshire	School of Artisan Food	Royal Society for Public Health
FoodCycle	Scotland The Bread	Which?
Foodrise	Shared Assets	Wildlife and Countryside Link
Forum for the Future	Slow Food in the UK	WWF - Scotland
Friends of the Earth	Social Farms and Gardens	WWF - UK
Gaia Foundation		

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; 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 100 UK towns, cities and regions and their Sustainable Food Place partnerships and/or food poverty alliances and/or local authorities; and our newsletters have over tens of thousands of sign-ups, with tens of thousands more followers via social media.

### 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](http://www.sustainweb.org/membership) or email the Sustain team on [sustain@sustainweb.org](mailto: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.

The Sustain alliance helps organisations interested in food and farming system change to join up, champion solutions that have the backing of a powerful coalition and to campaign effectively for change. By joining the Sustain alliance, organisations can:

- Present and publicise your work and expertise as part of the system of solutions to the big challenges that face us in food, farming, nature, climate and public health.
- Participate in working groups or more formally in impactful partnership programmes.
- Help design and champion initiatives that can bring real benefit, on national policy and for local communities.
- Have opportunities to network and contribute to events.
- Add your voice and expertise to joint submissions, consultations and media work.
- Influence the criteria our alliance uses to develop standards and measure success.

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Find out about Sustain membership here: [www.sustainweb.org/membership/become\\_a\\_sustain\\_member/](http://www.sustainweb.org/membership/become_a_sustain_member/)  
Join one or more of Sustain's mailing lists here: [www.sustainweb.org/email/](http://www.sustainweb.org/email/)

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“ Having worked alongside Sustain for many years, Chefs in Schools values the opportunity to become a member of the alliance in order to further support Sustain and other organisations within the sector to improve both access and quality in relationship to school food. Chefs in Schools firmly believes in the power of organising together and sharing best practice as a way of creating lasting change.

**Naomi Duncan, Chief Executive of Chefs in Schools**

“ Incredible Edible's vision is to create kind, confident, connected communities through the medium of local food. We're excited to work with the Sustain alliance of like-minded people to build a fairer society where access to good food is everyone's right. Our campaign for a community Right to Grow on public land is strengthened through this alliance, supporting the positive changes needed for health and well-being.

**Pam Warhurst, Incredible Edible founder**

# What people say about us...

"It has been great to collaborate with Sustain as part of our programme of work on food, farming and nature. Your insights and knowledge in this space has been invaluable in what was a very challenging political period."

**European Climate Foundation**

"I was so happy to hear that the Sustain screening was a brilliant evening."

**Claire Mackenzie, Producer of the Six Inches of Soil film, for which Sustain organised a screening and panel discussion**

"It's great to have something specifically linking business and asset ownership to a fairer food system – it's a key component of agroecology that is often overlooked in the UK."

**Bonnie Hewson, Director of Farming the Future Fund, commenting on Sustain's employee ownership report**

"A really skilful letter and good to avoid the inheritance tax issue. I have picked up from some that they support the Government, not all I have to say. Farming is so key to our work, and I would say, our health."

**Martin Spray, Chair of Wildlife & Countryside Link, on joint letter supporting pro-farmer policies**

"Thank you again for helping us get re-started on the Harvest-o-meter! The Year 3 children really enjoyed working out all the weights and totalling it all up and learning about how many meals they have helped create!"

**London school teacher, supported by Sustain's Capital Growth community food-growing network**

"It's been an absolute pleasure working with you. Today's victory really marks the beginning of the end for these types of atrocious megafarms. Congratulations on this stunning victory, and huge gratitude."

**Feedback following local planning authority decision to turn down factory farming application on climate grounds**

"It's been one of my dreams to be able to use affordable, locally farmed organic produce in my primary schools and thanks to Growing Communities, it's finally happening."

**James Taylor, school chef participating in Hackney School Food pilot as part of Bridging the Gap**

"At its heart, Welsh Veg in Schools (part of the Bridging the Gap programme) is about getting sustainably produced, local veg into schools to nourish children via their school meals – the more progress we make, the more benefit we can deliver to them."

**Katie Palmer, Programme Manager, Food Sense Wales**

"This is such a fantastic way for me to enjoy local produce, the discount encourages me to do so. I have mostly benefited from the little roast veg packs, which are so cheap and seriously tasty. The flavours of the local produce are unbelievable – I had a celeriac that was out of this world! Many thanks for making this available for us all."

**Carrick Friendly Food Club member, participating in a Bridging the Gap pilot**

"Really excellent and detailed piece of work. Shocking figures."

**Bureau of Investigative Journalism, commenting on Sustain's Stink or Swim report and Muck Maps revealing pollution from factory farms**

"This has been like group therapy for us [council officers]. It reminds me of why I do my job."

**Participant in SEWN North community food growing event connecting growers and council officers**

"Being able to display The Real Bread Loaf Mark, gives my customers assurance that they are purchasing a quality product. I am very proud to have it on show."

**Liz Wilson, owner, Ma Baker, Overton on Dee**

"Thank you so much for putting it on – really good. We NEED to connect more farmers and bakers of every scale in their local area."

**Participant feedback, BATCH: Stroud event organised by Sustain's Real Bread Campaign**

"Great to feel connected and part of a wider movement of gardens across the city!"

**Community gardener participating in Sustain's Capital Growth network**

"Thanks so much for managing such a great platform!"

**Helena Houghton, Chefs Adopt a School, feedback on Sustain's Roots to Work jobs platform**

"Thank you so much for the help your books have given me in opening up a tiny microbakery on our small island of not quite 90 residents but a huge number of tourists – 3,000 and up."

**Daphne Lischke, The Motley Way, Orkney**

"We love that Sustain's sustainable food recruitment website Roots to Work have introduced a tag for jobs with a Living Wage employer."

**Living Wage Foundation, feedback on Sustain's Roots to Work jobs platform**

"The Local Food Growth Plan report was very useful and the project is important and needed in the sector."

**Peter Russell, Chief Executive of Ooooby e-commerce platform for small farms and veg boxes**

"It was an amazing experience to be able speak as a parent and a privilege to represent all parents on such an important issue. It was exciting to be in the Houses of Parliament too! And I felt so lucky to be shown around by my MP."

**Mary Needham, Parent Ambassador for Sustain's Children's Food Campaign**

"[You have] unlocked the ability for all of us to do this work. I have put a gold star next to Sustain because they are the one place you need to go to for support."

**Kate Cressall, Public Health manager, Luton Council, following a presentation on local healthier food advertising policies at OHID North East**

"We gain a lot from being a part of the Children's Food Campaign and look forward to doing more together in the coming years as early years nutrition has become a more mainstream concern than it once was."

**Vicky Sibson, Executive Director, First Steps Nutrition Trust**

"I cannot speak of Sustain's work highly enough."

**Jamie Perry, The Rothschild Foundation, commenting on Sustainable Food Places**

"We're incredibly pleased to have the opportunity to shine a light on some of our region's approaches to good food, the benchmarking process allows us to celebrate our achievements whilst also highlighting opportunities for improvement helping us to make the case to continue taking action on food for our people and communities."

**Lucy Chapman, Programme Manager for the Association of Directors of Public Health North East and Chair of the Good Food Local North East Steering Group**

"It was a watershed moment for me hearing [about the UK's local healthier food advertising policies]. As we heard today, we need to learn from our colleagues in Great Britain."

**Mike Freeland, Australian MP, on keynote speech at the Australian Public Health Conference, by Sustain's Commercial Health Determinants Coordinator**

"All of you will be aware of Sustain's invaluable work as they continually fight to ensure that everyone has access to healthy and sustainably produced food. And, as many across the country are still feeling the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis, Sustain's Children's Food Campaign is more essential than ever."

**Sharon Hodgson MP, Chair of School Food APPG (All Party Parliamentary Group)**

"It was great to see such well-attended and thoughtful discussions. I can't imagine how much work went into them, but it definitely felt worthwhile and an important part of growing momentum on the issue."

**Mark Heffernan, Impact on Urban Health, on our Recipe for Change events at political party conferences**

"I am grateful to the Sustainable Food Places Network for all the work you are doing locally to support vulnerable households facing food poverty."

**Jo Churchill MP, Minister for Employment, in response to Sustainable Food Places letter on Household Support Fund**

"It was a great day. My MP was very receptive and already has a fair understanding of the whole food chain. I also talked further with him and his assistant over lunch."

**Charlotte Bailey, Secretary for Winchester Food Partnership, following Sustainable Food Places day of celebration and action in parliament**

"Thank you for this brilliant statement and for explicitly acknowledging islamophobia and the impact on Muslim women. Many statements shied from including this."

**Sustain supporter, following our statement of solidarity for people affected by racist violence against refugees in the UK**

"This is the best anti racism training I've attended so far!"

**Participant in Sustain's anti-racism workshop series**

# 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, 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 cultural and ethnic backgrounds, personal characteristics and identities. We work to ensure that this provides the best possible experience for participants, and can offer remuneration for some activities for those in role-share positions to help overcome barriers to participation.

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 encourage at least one meeting fully in-person each year, to enable personal connections and engagement.

Trustees often support key areas of our work, with valuable contributions such as:

- Serving on interview panels for new jobs and staff at Sustain
- Chairing events, policy roundtables 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 note at each meeting that the arrangements enable satisfactory participation, discussion and scrutiny of the matters to be addressed.

In 2025, the Council of Trustees has agreed to work towards meeting the good practice set out in the Charity Governance Code, as a process of continuous improvement over the next three years.

## Organisational restructure

During 2024 and 2025, following several team changes, Sustain took the opportunity to undertake a restructure of our senior leadership and management teams. We reviewed all of the role descriptions for our senior team and established lead responsibilities for a range of strategic and operational needs.

The restructure included successful recruitment of a Director of Policy and Advocacy to lead on our influencing programme and join our senior leadership team. We also created and successfully recruited to a new role, Head of HR and Operations, who set to work to overhaul Sustain's employment policies and systems, and to prepare for a raft of employment legislation and enhanced responsibilities for employers due to be updated under the new government.

We also undertook a spring-clean the way we work to form a series of internal groups to take responsibility for developing our work on matters such as learning and skills; health and wellbeing; EDI and racial justice; and operational planning, each with its own terms of reference.

## Organisation Development Plan (ODP)

The newly formed Operations Group developed a one-year transitional Organisation Development Plan (ODP). Each chapter is led by a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT), with chapter headings as follows:

- **Communications:** with a goal to improve Sustain's effectiveness with refinement of its public offering, increased stakeholder engagement, and an intelligence driven focus on outcome. We aim for Sustain to be equipped to be a thought leader, shaping and influencing the discourse across our areas of operation.
- **Learning and development:** with a goal to equip campaigners, project staff, change makers and colleagues working on cross-cutting activities with effective skills and training and build Sustain's organisational knowledge. We will also strengthen our alliance, and the wider movement, through training, learning and development opportunities for Sustain staff, interns and volunteers, alliance members and the people and groups within our networks.
- **Funding:** with a goal to secure adequate funding to pursue the objectives set out in our strategy and enable our ambitions for development. In 2025, we will review our systems and improve staff skills towards a consistent, proactive, shared and diversified approach to fundraising, helping Sustain be strong, confident and better equipped to achieve our goals, demonstrate our value, be resilient to change, and provide more freedom to be creative and bold.
- **Membership:** with a goal to centre the importance of alliance working and collaboration in everything we do, and to increase the strength, depth, reach and engagement of the Sustain alliance to ensure that we have a working relationship with all organisations with shared aims.
- **Influence:** with a goal to strengthen the influence, profile and reputation of Sustain and the alliance with policymakers. We will ensure Sustain is working to good practice in advocacy, policy, campaigning as well as public affairs, government relations and relations with local and regional decision-makers.
- **Diversity:** with a goal to increase the number of projects, campaigns and activities that are developing, piloting and/or integrating EDI and racial justice actions into their work, and able to report on such activities for monitoring, evaluation and learning processes. And also to provide collegiate support and take specific steps to support effective pursuit of the objectives and workplan of the Diversity Outreach role and programme at Sustain.

In Autumn 2025, we will start the process to review this ODP, in line with Sustain's new Strategy. Our aim longer term is to move towards an annual and 3-year organisational planning cycle that will support impactful delivery of Sustain's new Strategy from 2026 onwards, strengthening our organisational and operational infrastructure to enable success.

## Risk management

The Operational Group also oversees a revised risk register to ensure that we are actively managing risks across our key areas of operation and delivery, including:

- Ensuring Sustain meets its obligations for impartiality, public communications and advocacy expenditure during a year featuring local elections and a General Election.
- 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; adverse industry influence; general lack of food system governance.
- Government, Treasury and industry resistance to policies that may have savings in the longer-term, but cost implications in the short-term.
- 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.
- Compliance with key legislation, regulation and statutory guidance, including from the Charity Commission, Information Commissioners Office, and the Electoral Commission.
- World events: cost of living, war in Ukraine and Gaza, extreme weather events, climate and nature emergency.
- Virus, malware, fraudulent attack on systems – which needs constant vigilance.

With a General Election held in July 2024, we were highly cognisant of the importance of ensuring that Sustain's activities complied 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 were also

built into the job description and induction for the new Director of Policy and Advocacy, and will be a key area of responsibility for the Public Affairs Manager to be recruited in 2025.

## 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.

We are delighted to report that The Ethical Property Company has taken on board requests from Sustain and other tenants for a dedicated private prayer room and quiet space, for use by people from diverse backgrounds and for diverse personal needs – which has refurbished and is available via an online booking system.

Many staff have expressed their preference for a mixture of the opportunity to work at home as well as enjoy the benefits of in-person meetings, connections, social activities and events. We are continuing to support flexible working, whilst also encouraging 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.

This year, we undertook a thorough spring clean, benefited from donations of new furniture, and are introducing various equipment and office arrangements to support people with diverse needs to feel comfortable and productive.

## 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 Living Wage accreditation via our Good Food Local – London and North East reports and league table of local authority areas, as one of the key ways local authorities can help to reduce food poverty. This year, we also introduced real Living Wage employer tags into our jobs platform Roots to Work, to promote inclusive employment and raise awareness among employers.

For the eighth 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 paid by Sustain to interns and contributors with lived experience), 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 initiatives. We congratulate new arrivals for fitting in so well and soon becoming valued staff members and an important part of the Sustain team and culture.

Last year, we reported on initial progress with our review of Sustain's leadership and operational needs, through a process we called 'Ship-Shape'. This year, we implemented the key recommendations arising from that process, including:

- Refreshed job descriptions for members of the senior leadership and senior management teams.
- Creation of groups led by the senior team to share and allocate management of various key tasks and processes, whilst maintaining cross-organisational communication and continuity.
- Recruitment of two new posts: Director of Policy and Advocacy; and Head of HR and Operations (see below).
- Planning towards recruitment of a Public Affairs Manager in summer 2025.
- We continue to note gaps in our capacity, including strategic communications; event management; and senior-level fundraising and development.

Our new Director of Policy and Advocacy is Glen Tarman, a non-profit leader with over 30 years' experience in advocacy, campaigning, policy, communications and digital for charities and international development, human rights and environmental NGOs. Glen previously headed advocacy globally for the INGOs CARE International and Action Against Hunger and he was Advocacy, Policy and Campaigns Director for Bond, the UK network of international NGOs. A co-founder of Make Poverty History, one of the biggest campaigns Britain has seen, Glen has led many coalitions and campaigns in the UK and internationally that have combined lobbying and citizen action to win change on social justice causes (including Sustain sister alliance the Trade Justice Movement).

Our new Head of HR and Operations is Danila Ardé, who has worked in HR for over 30 years both in the UK and abroad, having held similar roles previously in the health, charity and higher education sectors. Danila has a post-graduate qualification in Human Resource Management and is CIPD accredited. Her experience spans both small charities and large multi-site organisations. Supporting people who want to make a real difference in the world combines her love of HR and the belief that we all have a responsibility to our environment and each other. Recent project management and community engagement work include coordinating local community projects and green spaces, and working with local school teachers, children and community groups to encourage positive participation in environmental projects designed to address climate change and pollution and encourage social cohesion.

## Recruitment

Our Head of HR and Operations has introduced a new recruitment pack, better showcasing the charity during the recruitment process, along with a newly implemented application process allowing for a better applicant experience and improved data collection.

We also made special efforts this year to further embed equity, diversity and inclusion into all of our recruitment processes, including new guidance, training for interview panellists, and implementation of our disability confident and ethnicity confident schemes.

## HR and people

We have continued to provide and improve our range of benefits to staff which include:

- An Employee Assistance Programme run by Health Assured, which provides professional, confidential, 24-hour helpline support service for personal, financial, or legal challenges. The cover is for Sustain staff members and extends to spouses/partners and children aged 16-24 in full-time education, all whom live in the same household.
- Membership of CSSC offering staff access to a range of savings, free events, benefits and discounts for galleries, historic buildings, sporting and cultural events.
- Access to free organic fruit in our office, which is appreciated by staff.

We have revised our staff appraisal system with a greater focus on staff development, and more closely aligned with organisational objectives and our new organisational development goals. A revised voluntary peer appraisal system was also trialled this year.

In response to our staff survey in July 2024, Sustain introduced a popular staff suggestion scheme, used by one third of employees already. Sickness absence allowances, a new sabbatical policy and our approach to flexible working have been adapted in response to staff suggestions. We also supported a new staff health group, which aims to discuss issues around health and appropriate support, steered by a staff member, HR and a recently revised terms of reference to keep the group focused and on track. Referrals to Access to Work and purchases of specialist equipment have also been made to further support staff.

Sustain now also has our first Human Resource Information System (HRIS), allowing for more data accuracy and compliance with legislation. The new system has been designed and implemented by the Head of HR and is GDPR compliant.

## Skills and learning

We continued to run tailored training sessions and our popular skills share programme enabling Sustain staff and external contributors to run sessions to share insights and expertise. The Head of HR also introduced this year the IHASCO platform for mandatory and development training with 100% completion rates. A new training records system show over 270 hours of recording staff training from September 2024 to April 2025. A new training needs analysis questionnaire for all staff will enable Sustain to assess and plan training across the team.

We have an ambition to understand and implement AI (Artificial Intelligence) where this will enhance our work. A small group of staff have been trialling MD Co-pilot and the charity now has a new Information Management Group which meets fortnightly to share learning.

## Strategic review

Sustain continues to implement our strategy Fertile Future, 2021 to 2025 through a range of policy groups, project working groups and project and campaign activities. This strategy was developed in the period post-Brexit associated with huge upheaval to the food and farming system; during the Covid pandemic during which Sustain pivoted to support the emergency food response, and before the cost-of-living crisis and recent rise in global conflict impacting supply chains and prioritisation of national security in policy-making.

Clearly, a great deal has changed in our sector since our current strategy was put in place! Hence, from 2024 we started to develop our strategy for the period 2025 to 2030, to be implemented from January 2026. This has proved to be a helpful and creative process. We ran strategy sessions with the staff team, several alliance working groups and Sustain's Council of Trustees throughout the year, and will develop this input further for consultation with alliance members and other allies during 2025.

When the General Election was called for July 2024, we pivoted to package our strategic priorities in ways that could be used to advocate with manifesto writers, to use in advocacy and public communications activities, and to brief our networks and the new intake of parliamentarians. The emerging priorities of the new government will also influence our strategy, as this is the new context within which we will champion food system change in the UK over the next 3 to 5 years.

Sustain's Annual Conference took place online in March 2025 and was once again a great success, with the theme: How we change the UK food system for good. Sessions included:

- A keynote address from Professor Tim Lang on food system resilience, are we prepared? Followed by considered responses from Kath Dalmeny, Chief Executive of Sustain, and alliance members Katharine Jenner of the Obesity Health Alliance, and Dee Woods, Independent Food Aid Network.
- Securing the new Food Strategy we need. Chaired by Sustain's Director of Policy Glen Tarman, with Anna Taylor of the Food Foundation and Baroness Joan Walmsley, Chair of the House of Lords Food, Diet and Obesity Committee.
- What is the action agenda on the ground, locally and regionally, for a better UK food system? Chaired by Sustain's Director of Programmes Sarah Williams, with Katie Palmer, Food Sense Wales; Nikki Dravers, Gateshead local food partnership; Charlotte Molyneux, Devon County Council; and Lee Robb, Carrick GreenGrocers – all sharing lessons from local action for food system change.

The web page sharing conference recordings, links and resources is [here](#).



The Sustain team of staff and trustees at our strategy away day in 2024. Photo credit: Sustain

# 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 2025. 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 2025 was £810,597 (2024: £781,030) on unrestricted general reserves. The designated reserves at 31 March 2025 was £264,312 (2024: £258,582). The restricted reserves on continuing projects were £939,298 at 31 March 2025 (2024: £693,161). 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 annually by Trustees and quarterly by 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, food system 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;
- 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 19 November 2025 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 2025 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 2025 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](http://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

19 November 2025

Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food and Farming

# Statement of financial activities

(incorporating and income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	2	41,855	33,579	<b>75,434</b>	109,625
Charitable activities					
Health and Welfare	3	284,625	2,286,825	<b>2,571,450</b>	2,657,425
Investments	4	15,567	-	<b>15,567</b>	12,842
<b>Total income</b>		<b>342,047</b>	<b>2,320,404</b>	<b>2,662,451</b>	<b>2,779,892</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	5	21,307	-	<b>21,307</b>	19,865
Charitable activities					
Health and Welfare	5	281,792	2,077,918	<b>2,359,710</b>	2,154,394
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>303,099</b>	<b>2,077,918</b>	<b>2,381,017</b>	<b>2,174,259</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments</b>		<b>38,948</b>	<b>242,486</b>	<b>281,434</b>	<b>605,633</b>
Net gains / (losses) on investments		-	-	-	-
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the year</b>	6	<b>38,948</b>	<b>242,486</b>	<b>281,434</b>	<b>605,633</b>
Transfers between funds		(3,651)	3,651	-	-
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before other recognised gains and losses</b>		<b>35,297</b>	<b>246,137</b>	<b>281,434</b>	<b>605,633</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>35,297</b>	<b>246,137</b>	<b>281,434</b>	<b>605,633</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		1,039,612	693,161	<b>1,732,773</b>	1,127,140
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>1,074,909</b>	<b>939,298</b>	<b>2,014,207</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>

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 2025

	Note	£	2025 £	£	2024 £
<b>Fixed assets:</b>					
Tangible assets	11		-	-	-
			-	-	-
<b>Current assets:</b>					
Debtors	12	218,174		225,108	
Cash at bank and in hand		2,152,624		1,887,518	
		2,370,798		2,112,626	
<b>Liabilities:</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	356,591		379,853	
		2,014,207		1,732,773	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<b>2,014,207</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>	
<b>Total net assets less current liabilities</b>			<b>2,014,207</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>	
			<b>2,014,207</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>	
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>	17				
Restricted income funds			939,298	693,161	
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		264,312		258,582	
General funds		810,597		781,030	
		1,074,909		1,039,612	
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>			<b>1,074,909</b>	<b>1,039,612</b>	
<b>Total charity funds</b>			<b>2,014,207</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>	
			<b>2,014,207</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>	

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 ...19 November 2025... and signed on their behalf by



Professor Michael Rayner  
Chair



Victoria Williams  
Treasurer

# Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	2025	2024
		£	£
Cash flows from operating activities	18		
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>		<b>249,539</b>	<b>572,444</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		15,567	12,842
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities</b>		<b>15,567</b>	<b>12,842</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		<b>265,106</b>	<b>585,286</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,887,518	1,302,232
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	19	<b>2,152,624</b>	<b>1,887,518</b>

# Notes to the financial statements

## For the year ended 31 March 2025

### 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.

# Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food & Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

### 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
------------------	-------------------

#### 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.

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food &amp; Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

**2 Income from donations and legacies**

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Donations	41,855	33,579	75,434	109,625
Total income from donations 2025	<b>41,855</b>	<b>33,579</b>	<b>75,434</b>	109,625
Total income from donations 2024	67,753	41,872	109,625	

**3 Income from charitable activities**

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
<b>Grant income</b>				
AFN Network+	-	4,200	4,200	-
AuroraTrust	-	50,000	50,000	37,500
Bertha Foundation	-	13,525	13,525	-
British Heart Foundation	-	15,000	15,000	-
City Bridge Foundation	-	6,815	6,815	79,000
Connect Fund (Barrow Cadbury Trust)	-	-	-	74,067
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (various)	-	116,667	116,667	50,000
European Climate Foundation	-	43,750	43,750	77,917
European Union	-	13,969	13,969	24,221
Farming the Future	-	22,000	22,000	51,682
Greater London Authority (various)	-	15,500	15,500	25,500
ICLEI European Secretariat GmbH	-	6,833	6,833	16,414
Impact on Urban Health	-	558,404	558,404	656,210
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	-	55,000	55,000	41,250
Kenneth Miller Trust	-	65,625	65,625	53,333
Lund Trust	-	12,500	12,500	-
Movements Trust	-	56,250	56,250	33,750
Network of European Foundations	-	-	-	20,814
National Lottery Community Fund (Growing Great Ideas)	-	595,900	595,900	493,200
Nutritional Wellbeing Foundation (previously known as the AIM Foundation)	-	30,247	30,247	38,494
Oak Foundation (various)	-	172,561	172,561	194,412
Rothschild Foundation	-	73,750	73,750	76,250
Samworth Foundation	55,000	-	55,000	55,000
Sustainable Food Places (Big Lottery Fund and Esmee Fairbairn Foundation)	-	197,546	197,546	202,043
Thirty Percy Foundation	150,000	-	150,000	150,000
Trust for London	-	62,500	62,500	60,000
Vital Strategies	-	-	-	52,000
Wellcome Trust	-	98,283	98,283	-
<b>Other income</b>				
Conference and workshops	3,094	-	3,094	11,897
Membership fees	34,200	-	34,200	37,650
Sales and publications	5,163	-	5,163	6,909
Subscriptions	37,168	-	37,168	37,912
Total income from charitable activities 2025	<b>284,625</b>	<b>2,286,825</b>	<b>2,571,450</b>	2,657,425
Total income from charitable activities 2024	347,058	2,310,367	2,657,425	

**4 Income from investments**

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Investment income	15,567	-	15,567	12,842
Total income from investments 2025	<b>15,567</b>	-	<b>15,567</b>	12,842
Total income from investments 2024	12,842	-	12,842	

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food &amp; Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

## 5 a. Analysis of expenditure

	Cost of raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support costs £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
<b>Staff costs (Note 7)</b>	18,806	1,289,166	180,053	<b>1,488,025</b>	1,443,378
<b>Direct cost</b>					
Payable to partner organisations	-	502,278	-	<b>502,278</b>	362,480
Consultancy costs	-	156,822	-	<b>156,822</b>	114,942
Printing and photocopying	-	7,815	-	<b>7,815</b>	8,326
Postage and distribution	-	4,454	-	<b>4,454</b>	4,005
Travel, meeting and expenses	-	59,500	-	<b>59,500</b>	80,278
Other charitable expenditure	-	62,677	-	<b>62,677</b>	71,551
<b>Support cost</b>					
Telephone and fax	-	-	1,491	<b>1,491</b>	1,492
Office costs	-	-	89,310	<b>89,310</b>	79,407
Audit fees	-	-	8,400	<b>8,400</b>	8,400
Bank charges	-	-	245	<b>245</b>	-
	18,806	2,082,712	279,499	<b>2,381,017</b>	2,174,259
Support costs	2,501	276,998	(279,499)	-	
<b>Total expenditure 2025</b>	<b>21,307</b>	<b>2,359,710</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,381,017</b>	
Total expenditure 2024	<b>19,865</b>	<b>2,154,394</b>			

Of the total expenditure, £303,099 was unrestricted (2024: £240,379) and £2,077,918 was restricted (2024: £1,933,880).

The amount payable to partner organisations is made up of several different payments – Bridging the Gap Partners (£305k); Childrens Food Campaign Partners (£110.9k); Food for the Planet Partners (£22.3k); Good Food Local Partners (£25k); Grant Conduit for Member Organisation (£35k) and Local Food Retail Partner (£4k).

## b. Analysis of expenditure from previous reporting period

	Cost of raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support costs £	2024 Total £
<b>Staff costs (Note 7)</b>	17,455	1,251,402	174,521	1,443,378
<b>Direct cost</b>				
Payable to partner organisations	-	362,480	-	362,480
Consultancy costs	-	114,942	-	114,942
Printing and photocopying	-	8,326	-	8,326
Postage and distribution	-	4,005	-	4,005
Travel, meeting and expenses	-	80,278	-	80,278
Other charitable expenditure	-	71,551	-	71,551
<b>Support cost</b>				
Telephone and fax	-	-	1,492	1,492
Office costs	-	-	79,407	79,407
Audit fees	-	-	8,400	8,400
	17,455	1,892,984	263,820	2,174,259
Support costs	2,410	261,410	(263,820)	-
<b>Total expenditure 2024</b>	<b>19,865</b>	<b>2,154,394</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,174,259</b>

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food &amp; Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

**6 Net income/ (expenditure) for the year**

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	48,029	48,029
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	7,000	7,000
	<u>7,000</u>	<u>7,000</u>

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

Staff costs were as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Salaries and wages	1,305,283	1,259,122
Social security costs	115,795	122,356
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	66,947	61,900
	<u>1,488,025</u>	<u>1,443,378</u>

The emoluments of members of staff, including benefits in kind, are within the range of;

	2025	2024
£60,001 – £70,000	3	2
£70,001 –£80,000	–	1
£80,001 –£90,000	1	–

The total employee benefits including national insurance and pension contributions of the key management personnel were £226,419 (2024: £207,936).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2024: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2024: £nil).

Trustees' expenses represents the payment or reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs totalling £94 (2024: £73) relating to attendance at meetings of three trustees.

**8 Staff numbers**

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

	2025	2024
	No.	No.
Raising funds	0.4	0.4
Health and Welfare	26.1	26.6
Support	3.5	3.7
	<u>30.0</u>	<u>30.7</u>

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food & Farming

### Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

#### 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 £251,737 (2024: £315,499) 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 a member of staff for the Soil Association and Food Matters. Separately, Sustain paid the Soil Association £30,589 as part of the Bridging the Gap project, as well as £600 for the Sustainable Farming campaign.

Food Matters received £67 for travel expenses to attend an event organised by Sustain. 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 £21,891, who are partners on the Recipe for Change project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the Obesity Health Alliance.

Sustain paid the Action on Salt and Health; Action on Sugar £6,092, who are partners on the Recipe for Change project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the Action on Salt and Health; Action on Sugar.

Sustain received £600 from Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK) for project work. Sustain paid SOS-UK £75 for a RACE Summit supporter ticket. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the SOS-UK.

The Landworker's Alliance paid Sustain £10,520 for work on the Sustainable Farming Campaign and the Local Food Retail project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the Landworker's Alliance.

The Real Bread Campaign also received annual membership fees of £49.50, as well as £148.79 for copies of the Knead to Know more books from the School of Artisan Foods. A Sustain Trustee is on the board at the School of Artisan Foods.

Sustain paid £34,936 to Alexandra Rose Charity, who are project partners on the Bridging the Gap project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the Alexandra Rose Charity.

Open Food Network was paid a bursary of £60 during 24/25 as part of the Local Food Retail project. A Sustain trustee is a member of staff for the Open Food Network.

Better Food Traders paid Sustain £6,000 as part of the Farming the Future Collaboration project. Sustain paid Better Food Traders £1,750 as part of the Local Food Plan support. A member of Sustain's Senior Leadership Team is on the board (unpaid) at Better Food Traders.

Finally, Sustain paid £43,678 to Growing Communities, who are project partners on the Bridging the Gap project. A member of Sustain's Senior Leadership Team is on the board (unpaid) 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.

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food &amp; Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

**11 Tangible fixed assets**

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

	2025 £	2024 £
Other debtors	<b>97,977</b>	26,901
Prepayments	<b>4,779</b>	4,779
Accrued income	<b>115,418</b>	193,428
	<u><b>218,174</b></u>	<u>225,108</u>

**13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2025 £	2024 £
Other creditors	<b>61,574</b>	117,412
Accruals	<b>8,400</b>	8,400
Deferred income	<b>286,617</b>	254,041
	<u><b>356,591</b></u>	<u>379,853</u>

**14 Deferred income**

Deferred income comprises of grants from the following: Aurora Trust £12,500, Bertha Challenge Fellowship £4,508, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation £58,333, Greater London Authority £75,000, Kenneth Miller Trust £30,000, Lund Trust £37,500, Nutritional Wellbeing Foundation £26,257 and Sustainable Food Places £42,519.

	2025 £	2024 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	<b>254,041</b>	487,742
Amount released to income in the year	<b>(254,041)</b>	(487,742)
Amount deferred in the year	<b>286,617</b>	254,041
Balance at the end of the year	<u><b>286,617</b></u>	<u>254,041</u>

**15 Pension scheme**

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

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food &amp; Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

## 16 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Net current assets	810,597	264,312	939,298	2,014,207
<b>Net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>810,597</b>	<b>264,312</b>	<b>939,298</b>	<b>2,014,207</b>

## 17 Movements in funds

	At the start of the year £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Bridging the Gap	319,446	598,700	(537,123)	-	381,023
Campaign for a Better Food Britain	7,560	49,602	(57,162)	-	-
Capital Growth	24,320	14,315	(36,549)	-	2,086
Children's Food Campaign	144,827	653,434	(611,488)	-	186,773
Climate and Nature	33,102	275,892	(200,606)	-	108,388
Diversity Outreach	11,363	2,500	(27,738)	-	(13,875)
FoodSHIFT 2030	(14,357)	13,969	-	388	-
Food Poverty	17,750	84,349	(70,603)	3,263	34,759
Local Food Retail	37,936	74,180	(86,561)	-	25,555
London Food Link	15,164	8,000	(5,354)	-	17,810
Sustainable Farming and Land Use	47,021	312,917	(224,741)	-	135,197
Sustainable Food Places	49,029	232,546	(219,993)	-	61,582
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>693,161</b>	<b>2,320,404</b>	<b>(2,077,918)</b>	<b>3,651</b>	<b>939,298</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds:</b>					
Designated funds:					
Employment Liabilities	198,582	-	-	5,730	204,312
Innovation and Activities Fund	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
Match Funding Contingency	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Total designated funds	258,582	-	-	5,730	264,312
General funds	781,030	342,047	(303,099)	(9,381)	810,597
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>1,039,612</b>	<b>342,047</b>	<b>(303,099)</b>	<b>(3,651)</b>	<b>1,074,909</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>	<b>2,662,451</b>	<b>(2,381,017)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,014,207</b>

**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 2025 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:** This long-standing initiative, supported by the Mayor of London, offers practical support to hundreds of community gardens around London to help more people grow food, and to have greater access to land, skills, nature 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:** 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: benchmarking local authorities on their actions to help people and communities move 'beyond the food bank'; producing an annual league table of London Borough action to drive change and share 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 farm payments, policies and supply chain practices that would incentivise change towards healthy, fair and environmentally sustainable food production.

**Sustainable Food Places:** The Sustainable Food Places Network – organised jointly by Food Matters, Soil Association, Sustain, Food Sense Wales, Nourish Scotland and Nourish NI – 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 form local food partnerships to work together to improve their food system. Sustain helps the network to run focused initiatives, 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.

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food &amp; Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

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

	2025	2024
	£	£
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)</b>	<b>281,434</b>	605,633
Dividends, interest and rent from investments	<b>(15,567)</b>	(12,842)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	<b>6,934</b>	139,674
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	<b>(23,262)</b>	(160,021)
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>249,539</b>	572,444

**19 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents**

	At 1 April 2024	Cash flows	Other changes	At 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£
Cash in hand	1,887,518	265,106	-	<b>2,152,624</b>
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>1,887,518</b>	<b>265,106</b>	-	<b>2,152,624</b>

**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.

## Sustain: The Alliance For Better Food &amp; Farming

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

## 22 Notes from 2024 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	781,030	258,582	693,161	1,732,773
<b>Net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>781,030</b>	<b>258,582</b>	<b>693,161</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>

## 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 £
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
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
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>232,740</b>	<b>2,352,239</b>	<b>(1,933,880)</b>	<b>42,062</b>	<b>693,161</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds:</b>					
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
<b>Total designated funds</b>	<b>246,233</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12,349</b>	<b>258,582</b>
<b>General funds</b>	<b>648,167</b>	<b>427,653</b>	<b>(240,379)</b>	<b>(54,411)</b>	<b>781,030</b>
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>894,400</b>	<b>427,653</b>	<b>(240,379)</b>	<b>(42,062)</b>	<b>1,039,612</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>1,127,140</b>	<b>2,779,892</b>	<b>(2,174,259)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,732,773</b>

# Funders

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

AFN Network+  
Aurora Trust (previously known as the Ashden Trust)  
Bertha Foundation  
Big Lottery Fund  
British Heart Foundation  
City Bridge Foundation  
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (various)  
European Climate Foundation  
European Union - Horizon 2020  
Farming the Future  
Greater London Authority (various)  
ICLEI European Secretariat GmbH  
Impact on Urban Health (part of Guy's & St Thomas' Foundation)  
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust  
Kenneth Miller Trust  
Lund Trust  
Movements Trust  
National Lottery Community Fund (Growing Great Ideas)  
Nutritional Wellbeing Foundation (previously known as the AIM Foundation)  
Oak Foundation  
Rothschild Foundation  
Samworth Foundation  
Sustainable Food Places  
Thirty Percy Foundation  
Trust for London  
Wellcome Trust

# Annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2025

## A Sustain publication

November 2025

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