



Swansea Bay University Health Board

Healthy and Sustainable Catering Strategy

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	3
1.1 Regulatory Context	
2. Vision	4
2.1 Scope	
2.1 How we define healthy and sustainable food environment	
3. Position	5
3.1 Commercial Sales Analysis	
3.2 In-patient Menu Options	
3.3 Procurement	
3.4 Waste Management	
3.5 Communications and Engagement	
4. Financial Considerations	6
5. Governance and Monitoring	7
6. Referenced Documents	8
7. Appendices	8
7.1 Appendix 1: Review of challenges and opportunities of our current catering services	
7.2 Appendix 2: Graph 1. % sales of meal options across 3-months (Sept, Oct, Nov 2023) at Singleton, Morriston, and NPTH restaurants/cafes.	
7.3 Appendix 3: Action Plan	

1. INTRODUCTION

This strategy outlines measures for creating a healthy and sustainable food environment across Swansea Bay University Health Board's (SBUHB) catering services. The primary objective is to minimise the climate impact of our catering operations while enhancing the health and well-being of our staff, patients, and visitors.

In response to the climate emergency, SBUHB has developed a Carbon Action Plan (CAP) aligned with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan. Recognising the importance of the CAP, the Health Board's catering department, in collaboration with associated groups, has developed this Healthy and Sustainable Catering Strategy to meet our commitments and align with Health Board and national climate objectives.

1.1 Regulatory Context

As a care provider, we support staff, visitors, and the community in making healthier and more sustainable choices. Aligned with the Welsh Government's Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales strategy, we promote positive lifestyle choices through our catering services. The SBUHB's Population Health Strategy outlines actions to improve local health, including a 4-pillar model (Healthcare Provider, Employer, Anchor Institution, and Productive Partner) outlining opportunities for action as a large NHS provider and public sector organisation. The Health Board will follow the national agenda for healthy eating and steer this strategy accordingly.

Understanding the critical role of proper nutrition in patient recovery, the Health Board adheres to the All-Wales Nutrition and Catering In-Patient Guide when designing in-patient menus to meet essential nutritional requirements. In our commercial areas, the Health Board follows the Welsh Government's Eat Well Plate Guide and the Health Promoting Hospital Vending Guidance to ensure the nutritional needs of staff and visitors, thereby enhancing overall health and well-being.

Following the 2023 Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act, the Health Board has removed various single-use plastic items, such as cutlery and takeout containers, adopting sustainable alternatives instead as part of phase 1. By Spring 2026, the Health Board will further reduce single-use plastic in line with phase 2 of the Act. Additionally, the Health Board complies with the Workplace Recycling (Waste) Regulations 2023, which require businesses and organisations in Wales to separate key recyclable materials before collection, aiming for large public sector organisations to achieve compliance by April 2026. Notably, the regulation bans food waste disposal in sewers, a ban that has been applied to the Health Board since April 2024.

2 VISION

SBUHB's "One Bay Way" ten-year vision is to become a high-quality organisation. To achieve this through our catering services we will create a 'healthy and sustainable' food environment with the following strategic objectives:



Health and Nutrition

Provide high-quality, nutritious, sustainable food and drink across our catering services



Sustainable Procurement and Consumption

Enhance sustainability practices within our catering services and minimise carbon emissions through responsible procurement



Communication and Engagement

Promote positive behaviour change and encourage healthier, and more sustainable habits

These strategic objectives are based on an analysis of our current challenges and opportunities (Appendix 1). This strategy is supported by an action plan (Appendix 3) outlining specific actions and focus areas to achieve our objectives.

2.1 Scope

- Locations: Across all catering services at all sites.
- Stakeholders involved: Staff, patients, visitors, and other relevant stakeholders.

2.2 How we define a healthy and sustainable food environment

The Health Board defines a healthy and sustainable food environment as:

'Healthy food environments in health care settings provide a diverse range of accessible and delicious food and drink options which benefit the health of the consumer; have surrounding environments which encourage healthy eating; and serve food produced in a way which is sustainable and ethical for the planet, humans, and animals' ~ *Global Centre for Healthy Food Environments Report, Sprink*

In line with this definition, we will partner with NHS Wales Shared Services (NWSSP) Procurement Services to prioritise Welsh produce as our primary choice, ensuring that the produce we offer aligns with relevant regulation standards. Where these regulations pose limitations, we will seek out British produce or other alternatives.

Impact of healthy and sustainable food environment on healthcare

By introducing a healthy and sustainable food environment we can boost patient outcomes, enhance staff well-being, and benefit the community. By reducing ultra-processed foods and promoting fruits, high-fibre, and low-fat options in our menus, we can help improve individual health and potentially reduce strain on the Health Board. Vegan and vegetarian menus that prioritise beans and lentils over ultra-processed meat alternative options have been shown to have a positive impact on supporting health outcomes and faster recovery for patients¹. Additionally, prioritising sustainable food options, such as locally sourced produce and reduced animal products can have a major impact on the reduction of carbon footprint for the Health Board.

3 POSITION

3.1 Commercial Sales Analysis

Following a meal sales analysis from September to November 2023 at our three main sites, revealed a majority of meat-based sales (61.81%), with vegetarian and vegan meals representing 8.60% and 6.82% of sales, respectively (Appendix 2). Healthier meal options—defined as meals containing 300 calories or less—account for just 6.82% of total sales. These findings indicate a strong consumer preference for meat-based meals suggesting that there is an opportunity to shift consumer behaviour towards healthier and more sustainable food choices.

3.2 In-Patient Menu Options

In-patient are offered a two-week menu which includes 140 meal selections across lunch and dinner, with 30 vegetarian and 20 vegan options. Key features of both menus include lighter meal options, salt is offered on request, drinking water is always available, and fresh fruit is consistently one of the two sweet alternatives.

To streamline patient meal ordering the All-Wales Catering Management Information System (CMIS) has been implemented at two major sites. Currently, the system used features bedside electronic patient meal ordering and delivery. With future opportunities, the system will expand to include stock planning, production planning, menu and recipe costing, financial management, and commercial area analysis. Though CMIS is new to the Health Board, ongoing development and updates are expected to yield substantial benefits over time.

3.3 Procurement

Catering procurement is managed by NWSSP Procurement Services. The service aligns its sustainability objectives with NHS Wales and the Health Board as they focus on achieving sustainability targets, encouraging suppliers to adopt sustainability standards and enforcing the NWSSP Sustainability Code of Practice.

3.4 Waste Management

¹ WHO (2021) Plant-based diets and their impact on health, sustainability and the environment.

3.5 Communication and Engagement

Food waste

Currently, food waste from commercial areas is not measured, however patient food waste is tracked based on unserved meals. A review of this showed, in 2023-24 Morriston Hospital recorded the highest patient food waste at 9%, compared to 6% at NPTH and Singleton. Improvements to reduce this waste, through menu improvements, waste management and food reduction initiatives need to be explored.

Non-food waste

Within our catering services, non-food waste has been reduced in commercial areas following the Welsh Government single-use plastic ban. The catering department continue to trial different methods to reduce non-food waste in catering areas ensuring they benefit the Health Board and meet sustainability objectives.

An online intranet page dedicated to healthy and sustainable food offers information on food production, waste reduction, and healthy food options. The catering department also participates in campaigns such as Recycle Week and Healthy Eating Week, providing promotions, discounts and useful information.

The Health Board collaborates with Cae Felin Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) near Morriston Hospital, providing access to nature and opportunities to grow fruit and vegetables. This partnership emphasises the importance of collaboration and communication among local organisations and stakeholders to educate staff, patients, and the broader community on the benefits and opportunities of sustainable development

4 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Previous reports have indicated a reduction in revenue when offering healthier food and drink options in commercial areas. A cost-benefit analysis will be conducted when implementing the strategy's actions to determine feasibility. The Health Board will focus on cost-saving measures that can be reinvested in valuable projects and will continue to pursue funding opportunities to implement the strategy effectively.

A summary table (Table 1) shows the combined recycling and general waste data for the Health Board in 2023-24. To understand the effect of waste reduction, a projected 5% reduction in waste has been calculated. A 5% reduction in recycling waste could save **£4327.06** in recycling costs and reduce CO₂e by **510.68kg**, and a 5% reduction in general waste could save **£14,374.91** and reduce CO₂e by **1007.60kg**.

Waste Type	Year	Total Waste (tons)	Cost per Ton (£/ton)	CO2e per Ton (kg CO2e/ton)	Cost per kg CO2e (£/kg CO2e)	Total Cost (£)
Recycling	2023-24	479	£180.85	21.27	£8.50	£86,541.15
	2024-25 (Projected)	455.05 (5% reduction)	£180.85 (Assumed same rate)	21.27 (Assumed same rate)	£8.50 (Assumed same rate)	<u>£82,214.09 (Projected)</u>
General	2023-24	947	£303.61	21.28	£14.27	£287,498.15
	2024-25 (Projected)	899.65 (5% reduction)	£303.61 (Assumed same rate)	21.28 (Assumed same rate)	£14.27 (Assumed same rate)	<u>£273,123.24 (Projected)</u>

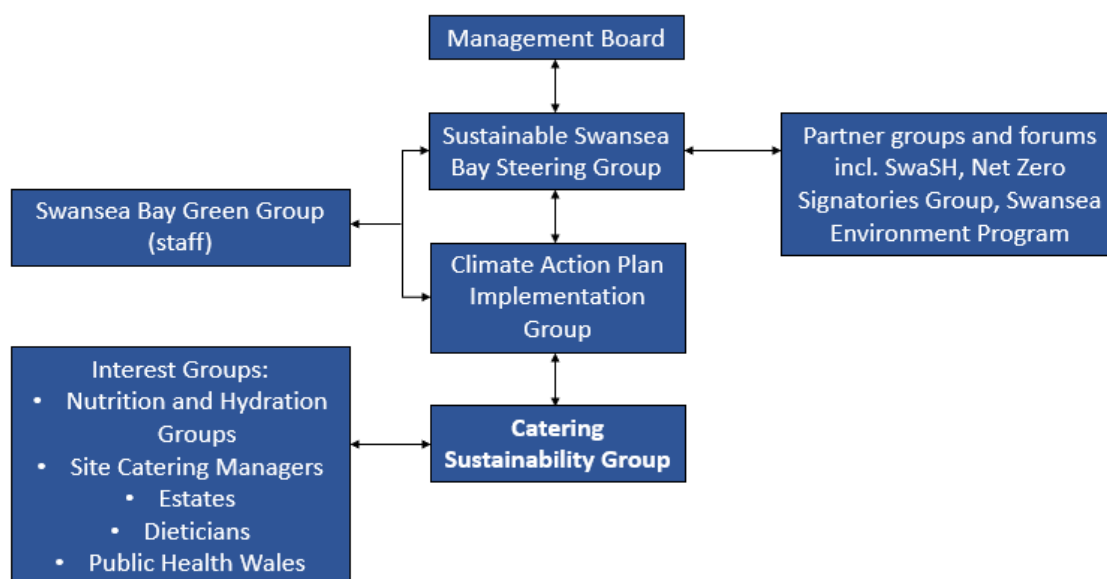
Table 1. Health Board-wide waste reduction impact

These figures are Health Board-wide and do not represent the catering department specifically. However, through future waste reduction initiatives, the catering department can contribute to broader Health Board waste reduction efforts, resulting in possible cost-savings and reduced carbon emissions.

5 GOVERNANCE AND EVALUATION

The Catering Sustainability Group will oversee this strategy and ensure ongoing improvement by periodically reviewing targets, measuring performance, and providing accountability through the action plan (see Appendix 4). Major project decisions will be reported to the Sustainable Swansea Bay Steering Group (SBSSG) to ensure alignment with broader sustainability goals. Interest group discussions will be conducted when relevant.

Performance will be tracked against strategic objectives with regular progress updates. The strategy will be reviewed bi-annually, with targets adjusted as needed.



6 REFERENCED DOCUMENTS

- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2016
- SBUHB Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2022-2024
- Welsh Government Eat Well Plate Guide
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- Healthy Weight Strategy 2019 (Healthy Weight Healthy Wales)
- Global Centre for Healthy Food Environments Report (Sprink)
- NWSSP Procurement Services Sustainable Procurement Code of Practice
- The Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Wales) 2023
- The Waste Workplace Recycling (Wales) Regulations 2023
- All Wales Nutrition and Catering Standards for Food and Fluid Provisions for Hospital Patients
- SBUHB Population Health Strategy 2023
- Health Promoting Hospital Vending Guidance

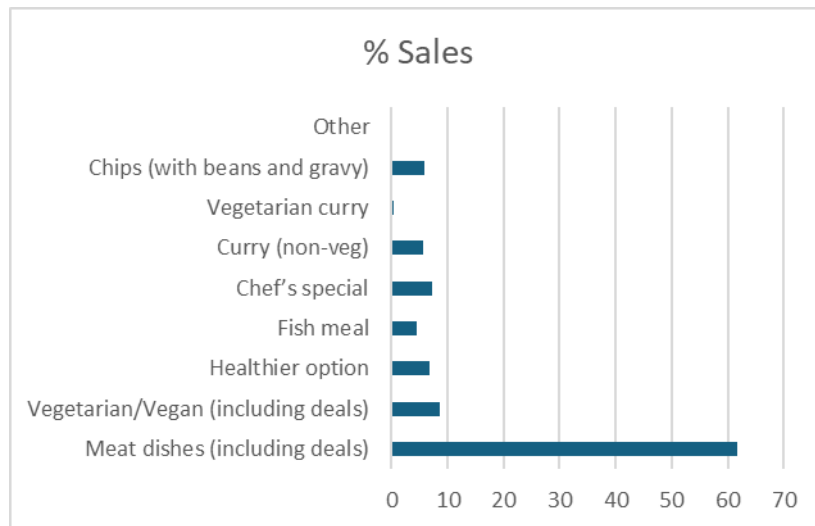
7 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - *Review of our current challenges and opportunities*

Our Challenges	Our Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient requirements: Balancing health and sustainability goals with diverse patient nutritional requirements. • Behaviour Change: Encouraging patients, staff, and visitors to choose 'healthier' and more sustainable options. • Availability of Healthier and Sustainable Options: Making healthier and sustainable options more accessible. Currently there is a lack of options in some commercial areas e.g. vending machines, and on some health board sites e.g. sites without cafes. • Supply Chain Complexity: Adhere to All-Wales contracts. • Profit: Balancing selling healthier and sustainable options with the requirements for catering services to make a profit. • External Contract: Long-term contracts with external providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMIS: Recent introduction of the menu-pick module of CMIS at two major sites, enabling bedside meal ordering that has resulted in improved streamlining of meal preparation, stock planning, and increased variety in patient options. Potential to expand across all sites. • Healthy and Sustainable Food Environment: Opportunity to make the Health Board sites a healthier and sustainable food environment for staff, patients, and visitors. • Health Promotion: Better engagement with staff, patients, and visitors to promote healthier and sustainable habits. • Collaboration: Collaborating with external partners e.g. local farmers, other Health Boards, to exchange knowledge and ideas. • Cost-savings: Potential for long-term cost savings by implementing some sustainable practices. • Strategy: Development of a healthy and sustainable food strategy to work towards healthy and sustainable food environment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third-Party Provider: Greater opportunity to influence a healthy and sustainable environment at larger scale. • Health Board Brand: Improve the brand of the Health Board and its reputation. • Waste Reduction: Implementing waste reduction initiatives can lower waste disposal costs – opportunity for long-term savings.
--	--

Appendix 2 –



Graph 1. % sales of meal options across 3- months (Sept, Oct, Nov 2023) at Singleton, Morriston, and NPTH restaurants/cafes.

Appendix 3 – Action Plan

****The Health Board Sustainability Steering Group, Public Health Wales and the Swansea Bay UHB Green Group will be a part of all ongoing discussions, but have no responsibilities to deliver the action plan****

Year 1: Sept 24-25 Year 2: Sept 25-26 Year 3: Sept 26-27

Commit.	Action	Timeframe	Responsibilities	Considerations
1. Health and Nutrition				
1.1 Restaurants/ Cafes	<p>Review menu plans to incorporate healthier and more sustainable options e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make room for more plants - Reduce the amount of meat available • Meals with reduced saturated fat/overall calorie content • Include more dietary/cultural requirements • Fresh seasonal fruit readily available • Incorporate more locally sourced/organic food • Include more dairy-free options <p>Review portion sizes</p> <p>Improve accessibility to free water</p> <p>Keep up to date with changing national guidance and regulations (Healthy Weight Healthy Wales)</p>	Year 1	CSG Site Catering Managers	<p>Installation of water fountains will require guidance from HB water quality committee</p> <p>Cost of implementing this action have yet to be determined – a cost benefit analysis will be undertaken to determine if the action can be taken forward</p>
1.2 In-patient Areas	<p>Continue to align with All-Wales Patient Menu Explore opportunity to incorporate e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make room for more plants - Reduce the amount of meat available • Review and include more dairy-free options • Meals with reduced saturated/overall calorie content • Include more dietary/cultural requirement options • Fresh seasonal fruit • Review the distribution of salt on wards – minimise provisions where possible <p>Keep up to date with changing national guidance and regulations (All-Wales Patient Menu Framework)</p>	Year 3	CSG Site Catering Managers	<p>Cost of implementing this action have yet to be determined – a cost benefit analysis will be undertaken to determine if the action can be taken forward</p>

<p>1.3</p> <p>Vending machines</p>	<p>Include nutritious snack, meal, and drink options in self-fill vending machines e.g. nuts, sandwiches, water – ‘getting the balance right’</p>	<p>Year 1</p>	<p>CSG</p> <p>Site Catering Managers</p>	<p>Cost of implementing this action have yet to be determined – a cost benefit analysis will be undertaken to determine if the action can be taken forward</p>
<p>2. Sustainable Procurement and Consumption</p>				
<p>2.1</p> <p>Carbon emission reduction</p>	<p>Ensure All Wales National contracts are adhered to - influence wider sustainable procurement through the product specification, qualification criteria, and evaluation methodology.</p> <p>Ensure sustainable practices are being maintained by suppliers e.g. reducing food miles, reducing packaging</p>	<p>Year 3 (following contract lengths)</p>	<p>NWSSP Procurement Services</p>	<p>Currently depends on vendors reporting their own sustainability practices</p>
<p>2.2</p> <p>Social value + local economy</p>	<p>Improving social value e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procuring Fairtrade-certified products where possible (e.g. tea, coffee, bananas) • Social Responsibility standards are met by vendors <p>Improving local economy e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore local sourcing options – procuring ‘Welsh’ produce where possible, and ‘British’ if Welsh is not possible <p>Improving pricing e.g.</p>	<p>Year 1 (ongoing)</p>	<p>NWSSP</p> <p>CSG</p>	<p>Local sourcing – food must align with relevant regulations</p> <p>Cost of implementing this action have yet to be determined – a cost benefit analysis will be undertaken to determine if the action can be taken forward</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review our pricing of healthy and sustainable food and drink - Consider price comparison with unhealthy options Prices are the same across the entire Health Board 			
<p>2.3</p> <p>Food waste commercial areas</p>	<p>Review food waste stream options including collection of waste in line with changing regulation by 2026</p> <p>Implement food reduction initiatives e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring purchasing and consumption patterns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibility of reducing over-purchasing/unnecessary purchasing of items Review portion sizes Explore alternatives for redistribution of surplus food 	Year 2	<p>Environmental Management Team</p> <p>CSG</p>	<p>Adequate training for changes in waste disposal methods</p> <p>Cost of implementing this action have yet to be determined – a cost benefit analysis will be undertaken to determine if the action can be taken forward</p>
<p>2.4</p> <p>Food waste in-patient areas</p>	<p>Review food waste stream options including collection of waste in line with changing regulation by 2026</p> <p>Install CMIS across other hospital sites and expand its features</p> <p>Implement food reduction initiatives e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review patient mealtime serving processes and address areas for improvement e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Juice provided from a jug instead of individual juice cartons Protected mealtimes to allow patients to take their time to eat without interruption 	Year 2	<p>Environmental Management Team</p> <p>CSG</p> <p>Site Catering Managers</p>	<p>Challenge implementing CMIS due to lack of staff to operate</p> <p>Cost of implementing this action have yet to be determined – a cost benefit analysis will be undertaken to determine if the action can be taken forward</p>

2.5 Energy efficiency	<p>Explore energy-efficient solutions within our current kitchens and catering areas (e.g. industrial air fryer)</p> <p>Introduce energy efficient catering technologies in any new builds</p>	Year 3	<p>CSG</p> <p>Site Catering Managers</p> <p>Environmental Management Team</p>	<p>Cost of implementing this action have yet to be determined – a cost benefit analysis will be undertaken to determine if the action can be taken forward</p>
2.6 Non-food waste reduction	<p>Stage II – regarding packaging, to be delivered by April 2026.</p> <p>Reducing unnecessary waste across services e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore reusable food container options for in-patient meals • Multiportion containers for milk and juice at commercial areas and in-patient areas • Move to water jugs on wards where infection control is at lower risk • Encourage the use of reusable water bottles/food containers e.g. discount at commercial areas, better access to free water 	Year 2	<p>CSG</p> <p>Environmental Management Team</p> <p>Site Catering Managers</p>	<p>Reusable food containers for in-patient meals would require a thorough cleaning process after use</p> <p>Cost of implementing this action have yet to be determined – a cost benefit analysis will be undertaken to determine if the action can be taken forward</p>
2.7 Retail Units	<p>Review long term contracts (15 years) with approximately 5 years left</p> <p>Consider this from an All-Wales level, where potentially there is a greater influence</p>	Year 3	<p>CSG</p> <p>Site Catering Managers</p>	<p>Consider from an All-Wales level, where potentially there is a greater influence</p>

	Work with retail units to achieve sustainability goals			
3. Communication and Engagement				
3.1 Marketing	<p>Improve marketing of healthy and sustainable food options at commercial and inpatient areas</p> <p>Communicate meal plan and nutritional information to in-patients</p>	Year 1 – Review within 12 months	CSG Site Catering Managers	
3.2 Campaigns and events	<p>Align campaigns and events with the Health Boards Sustainability Communication Plan;</p> <p>Develop communications (e.g. bulletin) regularly to promote Health and Sustainability + regularly update intranet site information</p> <p>Collaborate with local organisations</p>	Year 1 – review within 12 months	CSG Site Catering Managers Communications team	
4. Reporting and Monitoring				
Contracts	<p>Organise working group to discuss upcoming commercial contracts – plan for future changes</p> <p>Retail units - Long term contracts (15 years) with approximately 5 years left</p>	When applicable	CSG Site Catering Managers NWSSP Procurement Services Finance	
Surveys	Staff and visitor surveys to be undertaken annually	Every 12 months	CSG	Getting individuals to complete the survey

			Catering Quality Service	
Reports	Develop and circulate the results of the surveys	Every 12 months	CSG Catering quality service	Capacity to complete analysis and share results