



Southwark Food Action Alliance

Terms of Reference

1st October 2021

The Southwark Food Action Alliance (SFAA) is an independent collective of local food providers and distributors, charities and community partners, residents, businesses, and public sector representatives, coming together to deliver a joined up holistic food systems approach in Southwark that increases food security and food equality, delivered in an environmentally sustainable manner.

The alliance was formed as a direct response to an increase in demand for services tackling food insecurity, a need for a strategic approach and oversight, and an understanding that improved food security is linked to building more resilient communities with improved health outcomes.

SFAA and Southwark Council co-authored Southwark's first Food Security Action Plan which focuses on the root causes of food poverty in the borough and sets out sustainable solutions for organisations and the general public to implement over a 2-year timeframe. This was created in reference to the findings in Southwark's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) on Household Food Insecurity.

SFAA's Food Vision for Southwark

Fairer Food: Remaining committed to our strong work to improve food security, as set out in the Fairer Food Southwark Food Security Action Plan, with particular emphasis on improving access to affordable and healthy food. This includes reducing unhealthy takeaways in the borough.

(Food Governance and Strategy/ Healthy Food for All)

Keeping It Local: helping the local economy and environment through championing local providers, independent food businesses and locally sourced food. Create local food jobs and training.

(Sustainable Food Economy/ Procurement)

Soul Food: using food to create new friendships, stronger communities and better mental health through cooking, growing and eating together.

(Healthy Food for All/ Good Food Movement)

Food literacy: teaching cooking, growing and nutrition skills across our communities, particularly to those in schools, and raising awareness of sustainability issues and food.

(Good Food Movement)

Planet friendly: Promoting responsible food practices to reduce food waste and encourage more planet-healthy diets. Helping to create Southwark's first Sustainable Food Strategy.

(Food for the Planet/ Food Governance and Strategy)

The **SFAA Terms of Reference** (TOR) provide guiding principles and a high-level framework for the network to function within.

SFAA's Purpose and Role

1. To promote collaborative working to create effective food security partnerships that connect local food grower, procurement, preparation and distribution members.
2. To offer members opportunities to develop, enhance and assess their services through knowledge exchange and mutual assistance.
3. To support early engagement between member providers of services and public sector commissioners in order to:
 - Assess local service providers' key strengths and opportunities for enhancement, including when demographic changes occur
 - Assess gaps in provision
 - Involve relevant service providers in co-design, delivery and evaluation of projects
 - Keep providers up to date with national and local commissioning strategies, policies and opportunities.

Membership

Membership comprises local goods and service providers from both the voluntary and private sectors, together with public sector representatives, that together contribute to supporting food security to Southwark's residents. [Please see Appendix for current membership composition.]

Responsibilities

SFAA members are encouraged to:

1. Be solution focused, leveraging latest guidelines and best practice to develop appropriate food systems for Southwark residents.
2. Facilitate discussion and consultation on issues based on the needs of Southwark's diverse communities and neighbourhoods.
3. Develop and maintain collaborative partnership working, including between providers and commissioners.
4. Engage in positive and supportive communication between providers and their stakeholders, particularly when raising awareness of issues and resolving them effectively.
5. Promote the development of quality and equality standards in delivery, including adhering to dignity principles in food provision.
6. Participate in 'task and finish' working groups to deal with specific issues, as they arise.

Expectations of Members

All SFAA members are expected to demonstrate the following:

- Being respectful to each other and of each other's views
- Being inclusive and championing equality and diversity
- Acting in good faith and in the best interests of SFAA and its members
- Participating actively in SFAA meetings and projects, as appropriate
- Promoting SFAA and its causes and achievements.
- Informing the SFAA Co-ordinator of any conflicts of interest that exist or may arise during their membership tenure.

Governance

The **SFAA Steering Committee** comprises members representing the different aspects of food provision in Southwark. It provides oversight and expert guidance to the network, including in proposing and agreeing priority focus areas. Steering Committee members also represent and promote the SFAA collective at external meetings and events.

SFAA is currently facilitated through the **SFAA Co-ordinator**, a Community Southwark officer commissioned by Southwark Council to run the network.

Bi-monthly **SFAA Network meetings** are convened by the SFAA Co-ordinator, during which an agenda that includes latest regulatory and industry developments, together with project and activity-based items is delivered. Members are invited to participate actively at these meetings, including to present updates, highlight opportunities and raise issues for discussion and resolution or off-line follow-up.

The SFAA Co-ordinator minutes SFAA Network meetings, circulates draft minutes, presentations and related documents to members, and follows up on any actions arising from meeting discussions held.

The SFAA Co-ordinator also facilitates subgroup meetings, including monthly Food Distribution and fortnightly Food Hub meetings. Other sub-groups of interest meeting may be convened according to need (e.g., growers).

Term

These TOR are effective from 1st October 2021. This is a living document and will be reviewed and updated by the SFAA Steering Committee from time to time as SFAA develops, in consultation with members.

APPENDIX

Current Membership Composition by Category

31 food providers*
7 food distributors
9 food growers
4 food educators
8 family support providers
14 TRAs & community centres
15 advice / signposting providers
6 researchers
3 dieticians
1 nutritionist
2 cooking practitioners
1 grant funder
9 residents / volunteers
17 statutory services (including council & NHS)
127

*As part of our membership development plan, we will be reaching out to more food start-ups and businesses.
