

An Introduction to The Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act, 1st National Good Food Nation Plan and the new Scottish Food Commission

Professor Mary Brennan

Chair of Food Marketing and Society and Director of the Wellcome funded Living Good Food Nation Lab, University of Edinburgh Business School and Member of the Scottish Food Commission

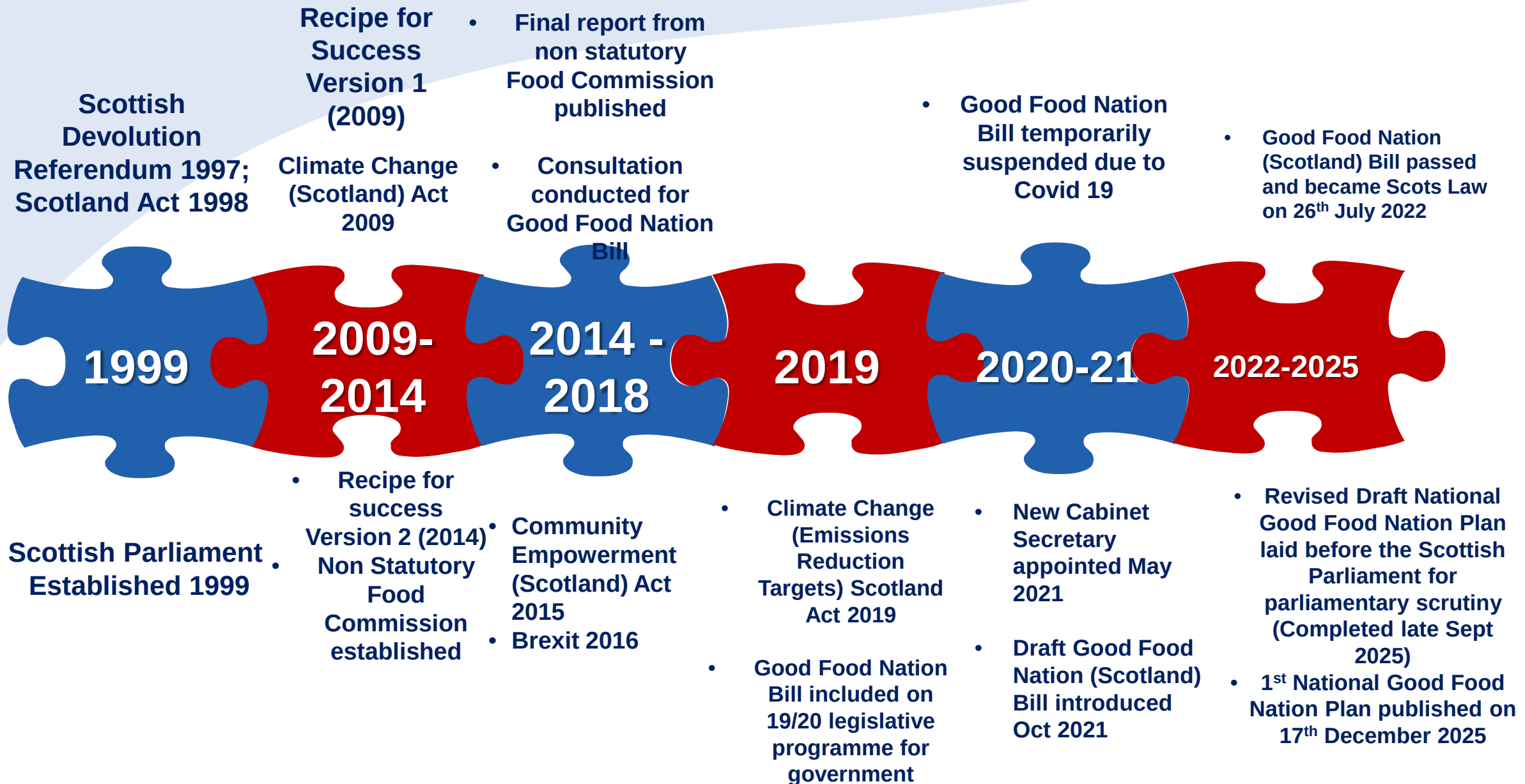
British Dietetics Association, Public Health Specialist Group & West Scotland Branch -
Dietitians do prevention - public health dietetics in action

4th October 2026



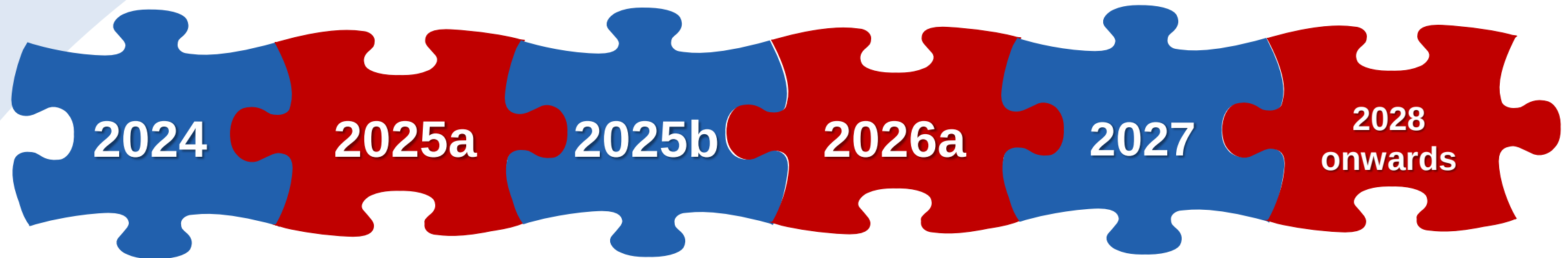
A long and winding political and policy road

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A long and winding political and policy road

- Public Consultation of 1st Draft National GFN Plan 2024
- Revised Draft National Good Food Nation Plan laid before the Scottish Parliament for parliamentary scrutiny (Completed late Sept 2025)
- Draft Secondary Legislation – Specified Functions and Descriptions laid before Scottish Parliament in Oct 2025, Withdrawn for revision Dec 2025
- Appointment of the 1st Chief Executive of Scottish Food Commission (Jayne Jones)
- Official launch of the Scottish Food Commission March 2026
- 1st set of Local Good Food Nation Plans published April 2028



- Appointment of 1st Chair of new Scottish Food Commission
- Appointment in June 2025 of 3 members of the Scottish Food Commission
- 1st National Good Food Nation Plan published on 17th December 2025
- Announced that Section 10 will commence on 1st April 2027 (relevant authorities)
- Development of, and consultation on, 1st Scottish Food Commission Corporate Strategy
- Publish 1st Scottish Food Commission Corporate Plan



The Act

Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022

VISION

To enable Scotland to be



a Good Food Nation, where people from every walk of life take pride and pleasure in, and benefit from, the food they produce, buy, cook, serve, and eat each day. ʘʘ



The Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act

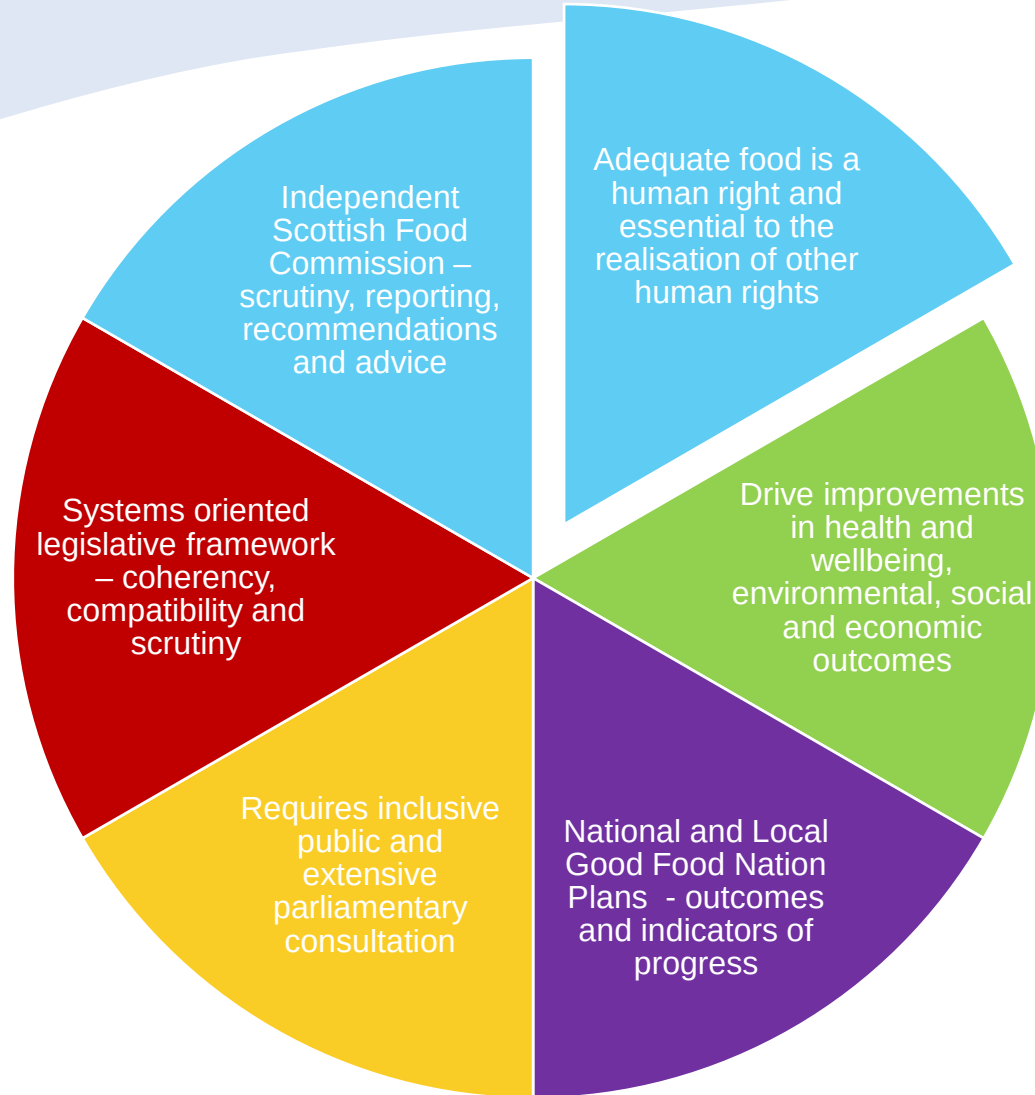
Core Principles

In preparing National and Local Food Plans, Scottish Ministers and Relevant Authorities must have regard for:

1. how each part of the food system and supply chain plays an important role in the provision of food
2. how a sustainable food system and supply chain contributes to mitigating climate change, halting and reversing the loss of biodiversity and improvement in animal welfare
3. the ability of high quality, nutritious and culturally appropriate food to improve the health and physical and mental wellbeing of people
4. how adequate food is a human right and essential to the realisation of other human rights
5. the importance of food business sector (defined as persons carrying out businesses involving any stage of the production, processing of food, and/or preparation/service of food to consumers
6. a thriving Scottish economy, with resilient supply chains, fair work standards contributes to resilient local economies across Scotland.

In a Snapshot...

The Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act



A Good Food Nation Blueprint

- What a Good Food Nation will look like?
- What we need to do to get there?
- Where, and with whom, responsibilities, and levers of change, lie?
- With whom, and how, we need to work to deliver?
- How we will measure, and respond to, progress along the way?
- How we can achieve greater coherency and consistency

Origins of the Scottish Food Commission



Non-statutory Food Commission established in 2014 to develop national indicators



Report published in 2018 recommended the Good Food Nation Bill



Statutory role provided for (stage 3 amendment), and formalised in, the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022



Public Appointment Process for Chair (Aug '24) and 3 Members of the Scottish Food Commission (June '25); 1st Chief Executive took up post in January 2026.



Reflects lessons from the GFN Journey, multiple public consultations and parliamentary scrutiny and the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on food systems

Scottish Food Commission



**Dennis
Overton OBE**
Chair



**Mary
Brennan**
Member of the
Commission



**Emilie
Combet**
Member of the
Commission

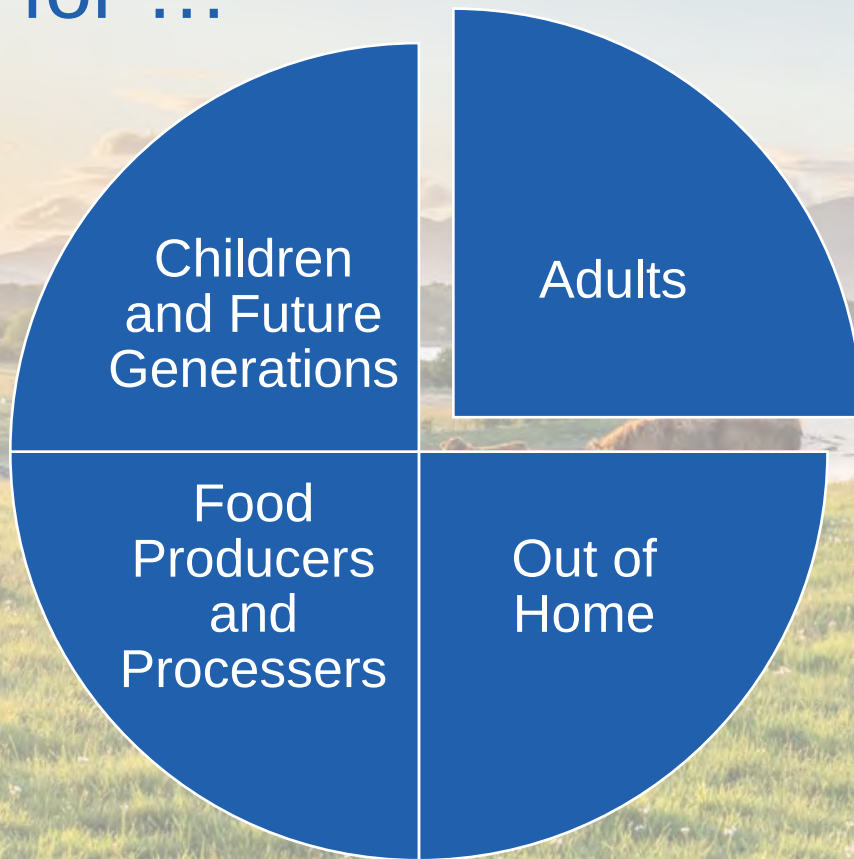


**Graeme
Jack**
Member of the
Commission



The First National Good Food Nation Plan

A Vision for ...



Six primary outcomes in the 1st National Good Food Nation Plan

1

The food environment in Scotland enables people to eat well. Everyone benefits from reliable and dignified access to safe, nutritious, affordable, enjoyable, sustainable and age-appropriate food

2

Scotland's food system is sustainable and contributes to a flourishing natural environment on our land and in our waters. It supports our net zero and climate adaptation ambitions and plays an important role in protecting and improving animal health and welfare and in restoring and regenerating biodiversity.

3

Scotland's food environment and wider food system enables and promotes a physically and mentally healthy population. This leads to the prevention of, and a reduction in, diet-related conditions.

4

Our food and drink sector is prosperous, diverse, innovative, and vital to national and local economic and social wellbeing. It is key to making Scotland food secure and food resilient, and creates and sustains jobs and businesses underpinned by fair work standards throughout food supply chains.

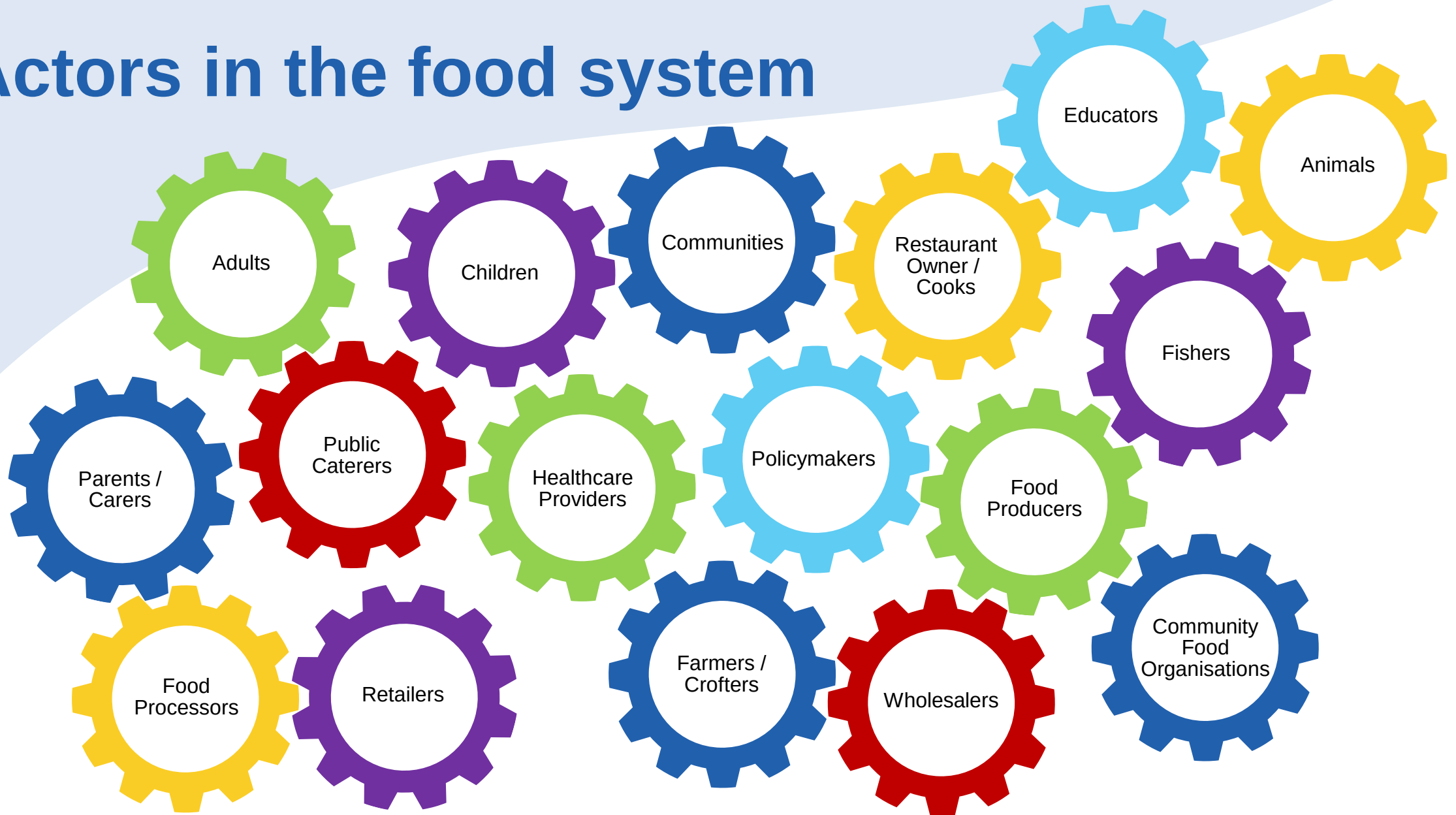
5

People and communities are empowered to participate in, and shape, their food system. Scotland has a thriving food culture with a population who are educated about good and sustainable food.

6

Decisions we make in Scotland contribute positively to local and global food systems transformation. Scotland actively engages in learning and exchanging knowledge and best practice internationally.

Actors in the food system



Scottish Food Commission

An independent statutory oversight body

OUR VISION



*Making
food work
for all. ʘʘ*

OUR PURPOSE



We lead stewardship and oversight of the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act by engaging diverse perspectives, scrutinising and applying constructive challenge, building mutual understanding and common ground, learning from best practice at home and abroad, to drive transformational change of Scotland's food system into a fairer, healthier and more sustainable ʘʘ

The Scottish Food Commission



INDEPENDENT, STATUTORY BODY WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE STEWARDSHIP AND OVERSIGHT OF THE GOOD FOOD NATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2022 .



SCRUTINISE, ADVISE, AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO SCOTTISH MINSTERS AND RELEVANT AUTHORITIES ON NATIONAL AND LOCAL GOOD FOOD NATION PLANS AND OTHER ALLIED POLICY AND/OR LEGISLATION.



CONDUCT RESEARCH, MONITORS PROGRESS, SHOWCASE GOOD PRACTICE AND PROVIDES EXPERT ADVICE AND GUIDANCE ON FOOD SYSTEMS THINKING, LEADERSHIP AND TRANSFORMATION

Conductors of Food Systems Transformation

Our role is to act in, and across, the interests of all of the actors in the food system recognising where there are areas of commonality, tension and differences – Making food work for all

We'll highlight good work and shine a light on less than ideal or unacceptable practice

We're evidence based, the importance of data and insight cannot be understated

Keen to complement, and work in, collaboration to accelerate progress

Opportunities will come from building deep understanding of the depth and breadth of actors (expected and unexpected) in the Scottish Food System...

...and creating mutually beneficial solutions



The Commission's Role in Supporting/Challenging Relevant Authorities:



Provides guidance and advice during plan development and implementation



Monitors and reviews effectiveness of local plans



Shares best practice and research



Makes formal recommendations for improvement



Supports meaningful, achievable, and locally relevant plans



Holds local authorities to account for statutory duties, including key principles

Corporate Strategy – Upcoming Consultation – Winter 2026

01

What would you like to, and/or expect to, see from the Scottish Food Commission?

02

Reflections on our Draft Corporate Strategy

03

Questions for, and feedback to, the Scottish Food Commission as it builds the organisation

The work to date

Organisational Design, Set up and planned Staff Recruitment

Advice, Consultation responses, Scrutiny and Parliamentary Evidence

Mission, Purpose and 1st Corporate Strategy

Meeting, and engaging with, Food System Actors across Scotland

Working closely with Wellcome funded Living Good Food Nation Lab – data dashboard, planning toolkit and intensive support for relevant authorities

Showcasing Scotland's Food Systems Transformation journey domestically, across the UK and internationally

Insights from the Local Good Food Nation planning front line

Financial Resource
Vacuum and
uncertainty for RA's

Volume of work, and
managing this
especially in small
RA's with Business
as Usual

Shifting and
uncertain Timelines

Ways of working and
mechanisms for
cross departmental
and organisaitonal
working

Differing appetites
for the visionary
work ...

Tensions with other
plans (and activities)
and associated
timelines

Convening GFN
groups and
assigning
coordination
responsibility

National vs Local
Outcomes (and
targets and
indicators)

Forthcoming local
elections within the
planning period

Individual vs Joint
Plans

Public Consultation

Data – type, level,
analysis,
consolidation, user
interface

What role the
Scottish Food
Commission will play
....

Supporting
guidance, resources,
templates

Targeted, facilitated
support



Get in touch:

jayne.jones@foodcommission.gov.scot





Living Good Food Nation Lab

If you have would like support from our Living



Good Food Nation lab

please contact us at:

Livinggoodfoodnationlab@ed.ac.uk

<https://goodfoodnation-toolkit.scot/>

<https://lgfn-lab.business-school.ed.ac.uk/>