



Broxtowe  
Borough  
COUNCIL

# Food Service Plan 2024/25

## **1.0 Introduction**

Broxtowe Borough Council (the Council) is committed to ensuring that food produced, sold or consumed in the district is safe to eat and does not pose a risk to public health.

This Food Service Plan sets out how the Council will deliver the elements of food safety and hygiene for which the Council has enforcement responsibility.

The requirement to have a Food Service Plan is laid down by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in its Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement. The FSA was established in April 2000 as an independent monitoring and advisory body and is the central competent authority responsible for food safety in the UK.

The FSA's Recovery Plan introduced between August 2021 and the end of March 2023 to ensure Local Authorities caught up with food inspections following COVID-19 was fully implemented by the Council. A normal food premises inspection programme was adopted by the Council for 2023/24. This resulted in 100% of programmed inspections being completed.

The COVID-19 Recovery Plan resulted in the bunching of inspections due to their rapid completion of visits by Officers and Consultants during the recovery period. This was seen in the first quarter of 2024 when a disproportionate number of D-rated premises became due for inspection. This trend will continue for a number of years until the natural turnover of businesses, changes in risk ratings following inspection and work by the Food Safety Service moving inspections forward results in a more even spread across a 12-month period.

The previous 12 months has also seen a high number of new food premises registrations. These included a large proportion of home based activities such as cake bakers and a high turnover of some of the takeaway type premises. This continues to pose a challenge to identify, assess likely risk and inspect in a timely manner.

## **2.0 Food Safety Service Aims and Objectives**

### **2.1 Aim**

To maintain, and where possible improve, the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors to the Borough of Broxtowe and the success of local food businesses by ensuring the safe production, processing, handling, storage, distribution and sale of food in the district.

### **2.2 Objectives**

- To ensure that at all levels of the food chain, all food prepared, sold or offered for sale is wholesome and fit for human consumption.
- To operate the service in accordance with the relevant Code of Practice, practice guidance and the requirements of the Food Standards Agency.

- To keep accurate records of all food enforcement activities and maintain an accurate register of food businesses in the district.
- To carry out food hygiene interventions in accordance with the minimum inspection frequencies and to standards determined by the Food Standards Agency.
- To participate in the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme providing information about businesses to facilitate customer choice.
- To encourage standards of hygiene higher than the minimum acceptable in law.
- Working towards increasing overall food hygiene ratings for food businesses, thereby protecting food consumers within the Borough
- To aid local businesses export food and drink to the EU and worldwide by providing export health certificates.
- To deal with food alerts in accordance with Food Standards Agency guidance.
- To investigate complaints relating to food premises or food sold in the Borough of Broxtowe.
- To investigate notified cases of food and water borne illness and take effective action to control the spread of infection.
- To sample and risk-assess private water supplies.
- To effectively and efficiently meet the needs of the public and businesses using our service and to respond positively to challenges.
- To respond to planning and licensing consultations as a statutory consultee.
- To participate in Safety Advisory Groups (SAG's) to provide early advice on food safety matters at larger events.
- To increase the knowledge of food handlers and the general public about the principles and practice of food hygiene.
- To support and promote schemes and initiatives which improve the health of customers of food businesses (e.g. Healthy Options Takeaway (HOT)).
- To undertake surveillance, inspection and sampling of foods and food contact materials including imported food in accordance with national food sampling surveys taking action to remove unsafe food from sale.
- To provide appropriate responses to public health emergencies.
- To work with partners to maintain a safe community.

### **3.0 Links to Broxtowe's Corporate Plan**

The Council's priorities are detailed in the Corporate Plan 2020/24

The Food Service Plan accords with the Council's Vision which is: *"A greener, safer healthier Broxtowe where everyone prospers"*

The Food Service Plan contributes directly to the Business Growth and Health priorities in the Corporate Plan which are:

*"Invest in our towns and our people" and "Support people to live well"*

#### **4.0 Organisation structure and staffing**

The food safety service is within the Environmental Health Team. Since June 2021, the Chief Environmental Health Officer reports directly to the Chief Executive. A permanent Senior Environmental Health Officer was recruited last year and started work on 1 May 2023 managing the food safety service. This has helped to reduce the number of direct reports to the Chief EHO. The Environmental Health remit also includes occupational health and safety, environmental protection, private sector housing, dealing with public health emergencies, animal, skin piercing and scrap metal licensing and registrations, private water supplies and camping and caravan sites. The wider Licensing function (taxis, liquor, street collections, massage and special treatments, sexual entertainment venues and gambling etc.) has also been under the Chief Environmental Health Officer's management since 1 July 2021.

The establishment provides for eight suitably qualified Officers who are able to undertake food safety, occupational health and safety, licensing, registrations, private water supply and infectious disease investigation duties. This comprises of the Head of Environmental Health, Licensing and Private Sector Housing, six Environmental Health Officers (Senior EHO, 2 full-time EHO's, 3 part-time EHO's) and one part-time Environmental Health Technical Officer (who is qualified to the Higher Certificate in Food and Food Premises Inspection standard).

The food safety service has been fully staffed since early July 2023. There are also other vacancies (including in the pollution team within environmental health and private sector housing team) and further recruitment is ongoing.

Administration support is provided by another department which also supports other teams. As of July 2023, the staffing allocation equates to 3.25 Full Time Equivalent Officers (FTE) for food safety duties.

#### **5.0 Staff Development and Competency**

All Officers are subject to regular appraisal and participation in competency assessments and authorisation frameworks for the relevant service areas. Specific Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements as required by the Food Law Code of Practice, membership of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health or equivalent professional bodies are also adhered to. It is essential that Officers are up to date with legislation and enforcement issues and the service utilises free and low cost training courses available in addition to completing specific job training as required and utilising tools such as the FSA's Competency Framework for food Officers and cascade training through the team as appropriate.

The Environmental Health section is responsible for all aspects of food hygiene and safety, private water supplies and infectious disease control, as well as a wide range of other duties including wider public health duties, occupational health and safety, animal activity licensing, the registration of skin piercing activities, consultations for planning, licensing applications and temporary event notices.

All Officers within Environmental Health work generically, providing a full range of services within the field. All Officers are expected to prioritise a workload that

includes a range of cases both of a proactive and reactive nature and a risk profile suitable for their role.

In terms of food safety services, responsibilities include:

- Inspection of food premises in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice.
- Registration of food businesses.
- Approval and inspection of businesses producing foods of animal origin.
- Investigation of complaints about food and hygiene at food premises.
- Promotion of documented food safety systems.
- Participation in, and promotion of, the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, including requests for re-ratings.
- Sampling of food for microbiological examination.
- Investigation of food borne and water borne infection.
- Investigation of food poisoning outbreaks.
- Imported food control.
- Sampling.
- Food alerts (food hazard warnings).
- Provision of advice and guidance including participation in events that promote food safety and supporting new and proposed food businesses.
- Food hygiene training courses.
- Provision of Health Certificates as requested.

Whilst undertaking food safety interventions, Officers also carry out the following additional functions:

- Hazard spotting in relation to health & safety issues.
- Priority based health and safety inspections (2024/25 these will be gas safety in catering premises and cellar safety in pubs).
- Duty of care waste checks.

As part of the provision of a complete service, the section works in conjunction with the following partner organisations:

- The Food Standards Agency.
- Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).
- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- The UK Health and Security Agency (UKHSA).
- Other local authorities including Public Health, Trading Standards etc. as appropriate.
- Public Analyst.

The Council is also represented on the following working groups:

- Nottinghamshire Food Liaison Group
- Nottinghamshire Food Sampling group
- Nottinghamshire Licensing and Registration Sub Group
- Nottinghamshire Health and Safety Group

- Infection Liaison Committee
- Nottinghamshire Regulatory Managers Group
- Health Protection Strategy Group
- Local Health Resilience Forum
- Midland Health and Safety Group
- East Midlands Work Related Deaths Forum

These groups also contribute to wider regional and national working groups.

## 5.1 Quality Assurance

The following monitoring arrangements are in place:

- Paper/computer based checks in respect of food hygiene inspections.
- Shadow inspections for new staff, existing staff, contractors and those returning to food work.
- Regular 1:2:1's with all team members
- Peer review/audit of enforcement action in respect of food safety work.

## 6.0 Enforcement Protocol

The enforcement protocol has been approved by the Council and reflects the intention of the service to meet the requirements of criminal investigation laws and the Regulators Compliance Code.

## 7.0 Demands on the Food Service

The following paragraphs outline the various demands on the service and the profile of the premises within the Borough.

### 7.1 Number of Premises

As at 31 March 2024, there were 857 food premises on the Broxtowe food database. The table below shows the number of each type of food business in each category.

Premises category	Total number of premises in category
<b>Manufacturers/Packers</b>	19
<b>Importers</b>	2
<b>Distributors</b>	4
<b>Retailers</b>	198
<b>Restaurants and Caterers</b>	634
<b>Total Number of Premises</b>	<b>857</b>

## 7.2 Interventions at Food Establishments

The Council uses the Food Hygiene Intervention Rating Scheme as detailed in the Brand Standard for the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme and the Food Law Code of Practice to determine the frequency that food premises should be inspected. This ensures that all premises are inspected at an appropriate minimum interval determined by their individual risk rating. The risk rating is based on the nature of food handling undertaken, the level of compliance with legal requirements and confidence in food safety management systems. The minimum frequency varies from six monthly to three years depending on the assessed risk category.

Additional interventions and officer time are directed at those businesses which fail to meet basic compliance with food safety. Ratings of businesses meeting the criteria contained in the Brand Standard are published on the Food Standards Agency website as part of the National Food Hygiene Rating scheme.

Since 1 April 2023 interventions have reverted back to the Food Law Code of Practice following approximately 20 months of following the Food Safety Recovery Plan initiated by the FSA following COVID-19.

As at 31 March 2024, the breakdown of food businesses by category in the district was as follows:

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Premises category</b>	<b>Premises Score</b>	<b>Frequency of Inspection</b>	<b>Total number of Premises in Category</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>High</b>	92 or higher	6 months	6
<b>B</b>	<b>High</b>	72 to 91	12 months	52
<b>C</b>	<b>High</b>	52 to 71	18 months	133
<b>D</b>	<b>Low</b>	31 to 51	24 months	284
<b>E</b>	<b>Low</b>	0 to 30	Alternative Interventions (36 months)	321
<b>Unrated</b>	<b>Other</b>		New premises within 28 days of registration	25
<b>Unrated</b>	<b>Other</b>		New premises outside 28 days of registration	33
<b>Outside Programme</b>	<b>Other</b>			3
<b>Total</b>				857

A specific database is used to generate and record interventions. This database is also used to extract data to upload to the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme website, the Food Hygiene Local Authority Return to the FSA (completed twice a year end of September and end of March), the Health and Safety Executive/Local

Authority Enforcement Liaison Committee (HELA) return to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and other statutory returns (e.g. Drinking Water and Animal activities licensing returns to DEFRA, Noise return to the CIEH).

The premises score includes weightings for complex processes, type of food handled, number of consumers, vulnerable groups, condition of the structure of the premises and confidence in management etc. Category A premises are usually manufacturers or premises with a poor compliance history. Category E premises are usually retailers of packaged ambient food or wet sales pubs etc.

Inspections with a Hygiene Rating of 0, 1 and 2 (on a scale of 0 - Requires Urgent Improvement to 2 – Improvement Necessary) and businesses in categories A and B usually generate a revisit. Additional revisits are generated at the request of the food business operator to review their food hygiene rating, where there are customer complaints, for new business start-ups and where major alterations or refurbishments are planned. Following the Food Standards Agency's guidance for the delivery of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, the Council adopted a cost recovery charge in August 2023 for those businesses who request a revisit to re-rate their Food Hygiene rating following receipt of a Rating of less than 5 at a routine inspection.

In 2023/24 the Council continued to see a high number of new food premises registrations. These included a large proportion of home based activities such as cake bakers and a high turnover of some of the takeaway type premises. This continues to pose a challenge to identify, assess likely risk and inspect in a timely manner.

Additional complications with many of these new registrations include:

- Food Business Operators (FBO) with limited food safety knowledge and experience.
- Businesses that register and are not ready to trade for months.
- FBO's wishing to produce and sell more unusual foods such as fermented, pickled, dried and smoked products of animal and non-animal origin.

All these complications add to the Officer time required providing advice and guidance before businesses can be inspected and awarded a Food Hygiene Rating. It is predicted that the trend in both the high number of new food premises and their complexity will continue into the current year due to cost of living pressures and competition in the food sector.

### **7.3 Food and Water Sampling**

Sampling of food, including imported food, water, and materials in contact with food is carried out as part of a county, regional and national sampling programme. Sampling will also be undertaken, where appropriate, in relation to food poisoning outbreaks and food complaints, where formal action is being considered. Food samples for microbiological examination are sent to the Public Health Laboratory at York. Other food samples and private water supplies are sent to the Public Analyst.



#### **7.4 Control and investigation of outbreaks and infectious diseases related to food, water, travel or recreational activities.**

The service has a policy to investigate any suspected cases of infectious disease to minimise spread of infection. A matrix exists regarding the cases to be investigated and liaison takes place with The UK Health and Security Agency (UKHSA). Samples are currently sent to the laboratory at Birmingham for analysis.

#### **7.5 Food Safety Alerts, Product Recall Information and Allergy Alerts.**

The policy of this service is to respond appropriately to food alerts and intelligence, to investigate food safety incidents and generate food alerts as necessary in accordance with the requirements of the Food Safety Code of Practice and associated Practice Guidance.

#### **7.6 Health and Food Safety Education and Promotion**

The service participates, where resources permit, in targeted local and national activities and interventions.

### **8.0 Service Data for 2023/24**

#### **8.1 Food Hygiene Interventions in 2023/24**

Interventions undertaken (by category of premises). Please note these relate to proactive inspections. Other interventions to food businesses were also undertaken. Work to identify risk and prioritise newly registered food businesses will continue to be undertaken in 2024-2025 to ensure new higher risk businesses are inspected earlier.

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>Unrated</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>442</b>

As of 31 March 2024 there were 0 overdue programmed inspections for Cat A-E food premises and 58 new businesses that were yet to be inspected and risk rated, 33 of which were over 28 days – further details of these can be found in sections below.

The Food Service received a total of 124 new food business registrations during 2023/24.

## 8.2 Number of revisits in 2023/24

There were 41 revisits undertaken, of which 7 of these were paid for re-rating revisits. Additional revisits were also undertaken to monitor particular issues identified during interventions.

## 8.3 Requests for Service 2023/24

Requests for service include concerns regarding the condition of the premises, or food with microbiological or physical contamination. There has been a collapse in the request for food export certificates from a local business who previously exported food products worldwide.

Hygiene of Premises	Food Complaints	Food Safety Advice	Export Certificates
60	31	55	0

## 8.4 Enforcement Action (Premises) 2023/24

Informal Warnings (including emails and letters)	Over 350
Improvement Notices	0
Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notices	0
Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Orders	0
Voluntary Closure	0
Seizure, Detention, Voluntary surrender of food	1
Simple Cautions	0
Prosecutions	0

Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notices are served where an imminent risk of injury to health has been identified and action is required to stop a food business or process from operating. Any notices served must be followed by an application to the Magistrates' Court within three working days for an Order confirming such action.

## 8.5 Food and Water Sampling

A total of 47 food and environmental samples were taken in 2023/24. In addition, 6 water samples were taken from spa pools following a case of legionella in the Borough.

The sampling programme included products identified through national and regional studies. Adverse sample results were identified and followed up with revisits and re-sampling as appropriate.

## 8.6 Control and Investigation of outbreaks and infectious diseases related to food, water, travel or recreational activities in 2023/24

43 reports of suspected or confirmed cases of infectious disease were notified to the service in 2023/24 which required investigation. This is a 33% increase compared to 2022/23 (32 reports).

Cases investigated comprised of salmonella, cryptosporidium, e. coli, giardia, hepatitis, shigella and suspected illness following consumption of food and water.

### **8.7 Food Safety Education and Promotion in 2023/24**

The Council participated in proactive and targeted promotion of good hygiene practice and particular initiatives. We continued to provide advice to new businesses.

### **9.0 Performance Monitoring**

The Food Service aspect of Environmental Health has a number of performance indicators which are monitored as part of the Community Safety Business Plan.

These are:

- Food Inspections – High Risk - Inspect all businesses due for inspection in accordance with a pre-planned programme based on risk. Target 100%.
- Food Inspections – Low Risk - Inspect all businesses due for inspection in accordance with a pre-planned programme based on risk. Target 100%.
- Food - Respond to specific complaints about practices procedures and conditions which may prejudice health in the short term within one working day of receipt, and non-urgent complaints / general requests for advice within five working days of receipt. Target 100%.
- Infectious Disease - Respond to notifications within one working day and requests for advice and information as soon as practicable within five working days of receipt. Target 100%.

Performance information in respect of these indicators for the last three years is also given below.

### **9.1 Performance Trends**

**2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Percentage of High Risk Inspections Completed</b>	<b>Percentage of Low Risk Inspections Completed</b>
2019/20	98%	96%
2020/21	5%	0.5%
2021/22	95%	84.5%
2022/23	100%	100%
2023/24	100%	100%

## 9.2 Response to Service Requests within Target Times

Service Type	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Food Safety	97%	97%	97%	93%	97%	99%
Infectious Disease Notifications	91%	100%	100%	100%	100%	93%
Consultations	95%	94%	93%	96%	98%	97%

A continued increase in consultations were received as business activities varied and diversified. An increase in planning consultations with complex activities and responses was also noted. All service requests were assessed and prioritised to ensure urgent enquiries were dealt with more quickly.

## 9.3 Broadly Compliant Premises

89% of premises were at least broadly compliant with a food hygiene rating of 3 – Generally Satisfactory or higher. The figure is down on 2022/23 (94%) due to lower Food Hygiene Ratings at a number of premises following inspection in 2023/24 and an increase in unrated businesses (new business registrations that haven't yet received a full food hygiene inspection).

## 9.4 Proposed Inspection Programme 2024/25

Priority	Premises category	Total number of Premises in Category	Inspections due 2024/25	Overdue Inspections Carried forward
<b>A</b>	High	6	12	0
<b>B</b>	High	52	52	0
<b>C</b>	High	133	64	<b>0</b>
<b>D</b>	Low	284	96	<b>0</b>
<b>E</b>	Low	321	176	<b>0</b>
<b>Unrated</b>	Other	58	At least 120	58
<b>Total</b>		854	<b>520</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Outside Programme</b>	Other	3		
<b>Total including Outside Programme and Carried Forward</b>		857	<b>578</b>	

There continues to be a significant number of new business premises registrations being submitted to the Council. All new businesses registering get signposted to

advice to help them commence trading safely. New food registrations are triaged to prioritise visits to higher risk operations. The large number of new registrations, along with other factors (see 7.2) means that, whilst there is an intervention within 28 days of registration, a large proportion cannot be inspected within this time frame. Some registrations are received many months before a business starts operating and therefore cannot be inspected within 28 days of registering.

## **10.0 Issues for 2024/25**

- To continue with the timely intervention of food safety interventions.
- As a result of the number of interventions carried out during the Food Safety Recovery Plan in 2021/22, there will continue to be a large number of inspections due in certain months in 2024/25. The Food Service will manage this and look to move some inspections forward during the year to start to spread inspections out more evenly in years to come. This will be aided over time by the natural turnover of businesses and changes in risk ratings following inspection.
- To ensure active participation in the FSA's ongoing proposed new delivery models, to modernise food safety enforcement and ensure it is sustainable for the future. There are no dates published for when these changes are likely to be implemented.
- Participation in the FSA's other proposed changes to food safety delivery – streamlined professional competency framework and recruitment and retention of qualified food safety Officers.
- To continue to participate in national consistency exercises relating to the work of the team.
- To continue to monitor the resource provided to food safety enforcement to ensure it is adequate to meet the demands of the service, including new food business interventions in a timely manner.
- To continue to provide effective food and registration interventions prioritising high-risk and non-compliant premises.
- To continue to carry out follow up interventions to 0,1 and 2 rated premises to secure improvements.
- To continue to provide a competent team to deal with these areas of service delivery.
- To improve team resilience by training up one of the Environmental Protection EHO's to be competent to inspect the full range of food premises and to contribute to the training and support of an EHO apprentice in the wider team.
- To continue to use the full range of enforcement tools available to protect the safety, health and welfare of visitors, residents and workers within the Borough including targeted health and safety interventions.
- To return to promoting the HOT (Healthy Options Takeaway) Award and other Health Promotion initiatives as and when they are identified.
- To continue to participate in the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.
- To continue to implement changes to animal licensing activities and ensure that staff meet the qualification requirements to inspect these activities.

- To continue to participate in the development of new enforcement requirements for cosmetic treatments and additional animal activities licensing (e.g. primates).
- To continue to support businesses importing and exporting food products.
- To continue to work with partner agencies to share intelligence, have a consistent approach to enforcement and identify joint training and working opportunities.
- To continue to participate in Safety Advisory Groups.
- To continue with the implementation of mobile working devices and mobile inspection apps to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the intervention programme.

### **11.0 Identification of variation from the Service Plan**

There are a number of newly registered premises that have not received an inspection within 28 days of registering as detailed in sections 7.2 and 9.4. All of these businesses are triaged and receive relevant information to assist in their start up.

Resource must continue to be allocated to monitoring premises with a Food Hygiene Rating of 0, 1 or 2 to ensure improvements in standards is achieved.

Resource must continue to be allocated to dealing with outbreaks of food and water borne illness.

New legislative requirements for the regulation of beauty treatments, licensing of primates (and possible changes to the zoo licensing requirements) will require training and assessing these premises will be resource intensive.

Continued priority of reactive work including notifiable accident, workplace ill health and occupational safety interventions is also necessary.

### **12. Further Information**

Local Authority food enforcement statistics are published at

<https://data.food.gov.uk/catalog/datasets/069c7353-4fdd-4b4f-9c13-ec525753fb2c>