





# Who we are

The Food Ethics Council is a charity that provides independent advice on the ethics of food and farming. Our dedicated staff and Council members work together for a food system that is fair, sustainable, humane and healthy for people, animals and the environment. Our work is not for profit and we are not affiliated to any political party or religious organisation.

## Our staff

**Dan Crossley** is executive director and leads the team. He has worked on food sustainability issues for over a decade, previously leading Forum for the Future's work on sustainable food and working for a food manufacturing company.

**Liz Barling** is head of communications. Liz's responsibilities include managing internal and external communications, media relations and marketing and brand management.

**Anna Cura** is programme co-ordinator. Anna manages and co-ordinates our key project work, as well as leading the day-to-day running of the office.

## Our Council

Our Council is made up of (currently) 16 members (listed below) who are all leaders in their fields, and appointed as individuals. They bring a broad range of expertise to our work, from academic research through to practical knowledge of farming, business and policy.

Council members actively participate in our work and give us access to wide networks across food and farming.

Our Board members, elected from the wider Council, oversee the running of the organisation. Board and Council members are not paid for their time.

COUNCIL MEMBERS	
<b>Emeritus Professor David Pink</b> (trustee) Harper Adams University	<b>Julian Baggini</b> The Philosopher's Magazine
<b>Jon Alexander</b> (trustee) New Citizenship Project	<b>Helen Browning OBE</b> Soil Association; organic Ffarmer
<b>David Croft</b> (trustee) Diageo	<b>Dr Nigel Dower</b> Aberdeen University
<b>Ruth Layton</b> (trustee) Food Animal Initiative; Benchmark Holdings Plc	<b>Emeritus Professor Elizabeth Dowler</b> University of Warwick
<b>Joanna Lewis</b> (trustee) Soil Association Food for Life	<b>Professor Ralph Early</b> Harper Adams University
<b>Pete Ritchie</b> (trustee) Nourish Scotland; organic farmer	<b>Cathryn Higgs</b> Co-Operative Food
<b>Patti Hicks Whaley</b> (treasurer) ActionAid UK	<b>Patrick Mulvany</b> Agriculturalist
	<b>Dr Kate Rawles</b> Outdoor philosopher, author and activist
	<b>Geoff Tansey</b> Writer and consultant

Our vision is of a world  
where everyone eats healthily  
and sustainably, enjoying food  
that is produced and traded  
fairly and humanely.

### Our mission

The Food Ethics Council's mission is to build fair and resilient food systems that respect people, animals and the planet.

Our unique contribution is to promote ethical considerations in relation to decisions about food and farming and to facilitate deliberative thinking and bold action for a fair food system. Ethics refers to the values, principles and codes by which people live. Acting ethically means taking values seriously and asking 'what should I do, all things considered?'

We know that we can't achieve our vision on our own, which is why we work with like-minded civil society organisations, governments and progressive businesses to address ethical concerns at the heart of decision-making about food and farming – at home and around the world.

### Our diagnosis

The current reality is far from ideal. Food systems are failing to feed most people in ways that are healthy, sustainable, fair and humane.

Many decisions made by political and business leaders in the UK are short-term, short-sighted and short on values. There has been a real lack of political will nationally to bring about a fairer food system, and global governance merely serves to perpetuate current vested interests.

With the exception of a few pioneering organisations, the pace of change towards a coherent, sustainable food sector is frustratingly slow. In short, the food system is dysfunctional and unsustainable, and urgent change is needed to shift from narrow 'business as usual' thinking to coherent, integrated, holistic, long-term policies.

No one organisation can fix these problems on its own. But by working together, we can. As the UK government negotiates the country's exit from the European Union, it is even more pressing that it is held to account for its decisions about how we produce, trade and consume our food.

If we come together, contributing research, advocacy and campaigning expertise, the Food Ethics Council believes we can make a real shift towards government policymaking and business planning that support fair, sustainable food systems.

## Why our food systems are failing

The huge inequalities that exist in access to healthy diets and land

Our inability to live within the means of the planet, including grasping the urgency of addressing climate change

The concentration of power that rests in the hands of a few organisations

The global economic model that requires infinite growth on a finite planet, which can only be achieved through unsustainable practices

People's increasing disconnection with where our food comes from



# Selected highlights of the year

## January

Held a Business Forum on *'Fat at five: the new norm? How can business help reduce childhood obesity?'*

## February

Executive director Dan Crossley gave a presentation to Defra civil servants on food ethics and how it is relevant to their work.

## March

Co-organised an event in Westminster as part of the Square Meal group on how a sustainable food system could help tackle climate change, chaired by Professor Tim Benton.

## April

Two events on the EU referendum, food and farming: one in Manchester organised jointly with the Kindling Trust (19 April), and one in Westminster organised jointly with the Food Foundation and Food Research Collaboration with a panel of MPs and MEPs questioning three expert speakers (25 April).

## May

Published *'Catering for Sustainability: Making the case for sustainable diets in foodservice,'* commissioned by WWF-UK and Sodexo UK & Ireland, and held a high level roundtable on findings.

## June

Put on a *Food Talks* event in central London for the general public called 'Fishy Business' in collaboration with Impact Hub Kings Cross, Think.Eat.Drink and Organico.

## July

Responded to the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) consultation on food and soft drink advertising to children.

## August

Dan Crossley was a keynote speaker at a sustainable food conference at Imperial College London on 3rd August 2016, where he spoke to the 150-strong audience on *Food: beyond feeding the world.*

## September

Held first Business Forum on the possible impacts of Brexit, discussing how businesses can navigate ethical issues in relation to the food and farming workforce post-Brexit.

## October

Held *Food Talks* event in collaboration with Impact Hub Kings Cross, Think.Eat.Drink and Organico on 'Food fights and food rights.'

## November

Dan Crossley spoke at the annual Food Matters Live event on 24th November 2016, where he highlighted the big ethical questions around sustainable protein.

## December

Held a workshop with the New Citizenship Project on the 'future of food' with progressive food businesses, exploring how organisations can create more value in the food system by moving from a consumer to a citizen mindset.


# Our work in 2016

## Advocacy and communications

2016 saw the final year of a four-year programme funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation to support our core advocacy and communications work that underpins our mission to build a fair food system.

The Food Ethics Council focused much of our political and stakeholder advocacy on the EU referendum and its aftermath. Before the vote in June, the Food Ethics Council organised and attended a number of events in Manchester and London, and spoke to Parliamentarians about the issue. As part of the Square Meal group [<http://foodresearch.org.uk/square-meal>], we co-organised and participated in a very well-attended event in Westminster on 1st March to discuss how a more sustainable food system could help tackle climate change.

After the referendum, we continued to work with civil society groups to ensure that fair, sustainable food and farming was (and is) front and centre in the minds of the UK Government as it negotiates our exit from the European Union. Our aim is to encourage the sector to work together to deliver a powerful collective response to the issue.



“[You have] given me a broader context in considering our approach to issues.”

**Food business**

Stakeholder survey 2015

We organised three Business Forums around issues relating to Brexit. Before the referendum, we discussed The EU referendum: should we stay or should we go? Afterwards, we asked how businesses can tackle ethical issues relating to the food and farming workforce post-Brexit, and how we can ensure terms of trade in food and agricultural products are fair for all concerned.

Keynote speakers included **Martin Nesbit** (Senior Fellow and Head of Environment and Climate Governance Programme at IEEP – and former Director at Defra, with responsibility for negotiations on the CAP); **Margaret Beels**, Chair of the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (formerly GLA); and **Tim Lang**, Professor of Food Policy, City University London. Reports of these Business Forums, containing expert opinion and valuable insights were distributed to our business and CSO networks, and are available for free on our website: [www.foodethicscouncil.org](http://www.foodethicscouncil.org).

## Research and expert advice

The Food Ethics Council works with civil society, progressive businesses and governments to provide research and expert advice on complex or contentious issues that relate to food and farming.

### Catering for sustainability: Making the case for sustainable diets in foodservice

WWF-UK and Sodexo UK & Ireland commissioned the Food Ethics Council to help them understand and promote the case for sustainable diets in the foodservice sector. After undertaking extensive desk research and a series of interviews with 13 senior managers across the foodservice sector, we published a report on our findings and recommendations in May 2016.

The report assessed the current state of the industry, trends in sustainable diets, what the business cases might look like, the barriers to the business case, and what government and industry can do to support the development of sustainable diets across foodservice. We focused on contract catering and the food to go sector, and public and private sector operators.

A high-level workshop with senior management representatives of foodservice companies was held on the same day, to discuss the findings and start to map out a way to deliver sustainable menus in foodservice.

### New Citizenship Project: The Future of Food

The New Citizenship Project (NCP) launched a collaborative innovation project on the future of food, with the core question being ‘how can challenging the consumer status quo create more value in our food system?’

The Food Ethics Council was commissioned by NCP to bring our food expertise to the project, which is working with six organisations of different shapes and sizes who are interested in reimagining the way they interact with citizens to open up bigger questions about the food system, over the course of three workshops.

### Turkish food ethics

The Food Ethics Council was an associate to an EU-funded project led by the Turkish Bioethics Association in 2016, called ‘Promoting Agricultural and Food Ethics in Turkey and Improving the Ethical Decision-making Capacity of the Stakeholders in Agriculture (or ‘TARGET’).’

Food Ethics Council member Geoff Tansey travelled to Turkey where he met with local and international associates and took part in a TV programme on food ethics. A key output has been the launch of the first Turkish NGO on agricultural and food ethics. More information about TARGET can be found at [www.target-prj.org](http://www.target-prj.org).

## 11 PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

**We collaborated with eleven different alliances and individual organisations**

- Square Meal group
- UK Food Poverty alliance
- Eating Better alliance
- Groceries Code Action Network
- New Citizenship Project
- WWF-UK & Sodexo UK & Ireland
- TARGET
- Kindling Trust
- Food Research Collaboration
- Food Foundation
- Impact Hub Kings Cross/Think.Eat.Drink/Organico



## 7 REPORTS

**We produced seven reports on topics from childhood obesity and sustainable menus in foodservice to trade and labour post-Brexit**



## 16 EVENTS

**We organised sixteen events with parliamentarians, civil society organisations, business leaders and the general public**



**150,000**

visitors to our website

**2,400**

subscribers to our monthly newsletter

**22**

blogs by council members, staff and other experts

## COMMUNICATIONS

**6,400**

Twitter followers including high profile journalists, MPs and senior food business executives



**@foodethicsnews**

**39**

media hits on national platforms including the Guardian, Farmers Weekly and Sustainable Brands

# Our programme 2016 - 2019

## New work programme

The Food Ethics Council was awarded a three-year grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation in autumn 2016 to deliver a new programme of work.

Our ambition is for the **UK Government and Devolved Administrations to attach high priority to ethical concerns in food and farming**, with policies contributing to fair, sustainable, humane and healthy food and farming systems. Our work will also ensure greater civil society focus and more coordinated effort on issues of ethical concern in food and farming.

Our key programmes will support policy decisions that enhance the fairness and sustainability of the UK food system – now, during the Brexit negotiations and associated redrawing of national policies, and in the run up to the next General Election (currently due in 2020).

## Unleashing the power of indexes

In our **Unleashing the power of indexes** work, we will influence major food indexes to drive a ‘race to the top’ on food sustainability. We will work with key food indexes (including the Food Sustainability Index) to strengthen metrics and approaches used and to ensure they have an appropriate set of measures across environment, social, health and animal welfare.

We will then work with civil society organisations (CSOs) to act on these major indexes, leveraging media interest and prompting political interest, culminating in tangible improvements to the UK’s food system. We will also build a detailed commentary and ethical analysis to accompany future versions of the Food Sustainability Index.

This work will help the UK score higher in major global food indexes, and make sure those indexes are more robust measures of countries’ performance on food impacts.

## Food policy barometer

The Food Ethics Council will develop a **food policy barometer**, a tool to show how policies contribute to or hinder progress towards healthy, fair, sustainable, humane food and farming. As organisations struggle to make their voices heard in the run up to Brexit, the barometer will encourage them to take a step back and see whether national policy proposals are likely to deliver positive long-term change (‘all things considered’).


We’ll present the barometer online in a simple, compelling visual way, providing an easily accessible judgement of key government policies and, where appropriate, selected collective food industry commitments (e.g. Courtauld 2025).

## Convening and advocacy

For selected key policies or proposed legislation that score badly on the Barometer (i.e. are not in our view contributing towards fair and sustainable food and farming), we’ll convene key players from the food system and policy experts in a series of **policy solution roundtables** to develop alternative policy proposals.

Advocacy will focus on using tools we have worked with and created ourselves to drive change. These will build an evidence base for CSOs and progressive businesses, and will feed into our own direct advocacy, as well as being convening and mobilising tools for ‘influencers’.

Using the evidence and policy solution options identified, we will conduct **joint advocacy** to promote fair policy solutions in the run up to the 2020 General Election.



“Food Ethics Council research outputs and tools and guidance aimed at businesses form a crucial counterweight to industry-driven commercially motivated knowhow.”

**Senior Lecturer**

Middlesex University, stakeholder survey 2015

## Ethical tools

We are developing tools for key food system influencers (e.g. CSOs and progressive businesses) such as our emerging **Ethical Framework**. There is a huge appetite for information on food ethics, as we can see by the fact that the most popular page on our website is ‘what is food ethics?’

We will continue to seek grant funding for our crucial work on providing research, advice and tools on ethical issues relating to food and farming, to diversify our funding and to grow the organisation.

## Business Forum

Our Business Forum seminars have provided senior executives with expert insights to help improve their performance in addressing the big issues of the day. The seminars are a great opportunity to discuss hot topics and share knowledge with likeminded individuals. Find out more at [www.foodethicscouncil.org/getinvolved](http://www.foodethicscouncil.org/getinvolved).

We are very grateful for the support of all those who funded our work this year, without whom none of this would be possible. These include:

**Esmée Fairbairn Foundation**  
**Big Lottery Fund**  
**JMG Foundation**  
**The A Team Foundation**

and a number of individual donors.



**JMG**  
**Foundation**



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[@FoodEthicsNews](https://twitter.com/FoodEthicsNews)

Front cover image: Geraint Rowland

“The Food Ethics Council provides a valuable and constructive voice for greater equality – between the poor and rich, between current and future generations – in the food system reminding all of us who work on food of the needs of everyone, now and in the future.”

**Professor Tim Benton**

University of Leeds and former  
UK Champion for Global Food Security