



Eating well at work in Greenwich

A Guide for Employers

Why promote eating well at work, and what are the benefits?

Eating well is part of promoting a healthy workplace

What we eat and drink has an impact on our body and physical health, as well as our mental health, in relation to concentration, mental alertness and ability to cope with everyday stresses. A healthy, balanced diet supports good health and helps people to recover more quickly from illness. Employees who are in good health are less likely to need time off work and are likely to be more productive.

Many of the leading causes of disease and disability in our society – such as obesity, coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, certain types of cancer, mental ill health and osteoporosis – are associated with diets low in fruits and vegetables, and high in fat, sugar and salt. The costs of an unhealthy workforce to the UK taxpayer has been estimated at over £60 billion per year. Employers have a legal duty to provide safe workplaces that do not damage employees' health, but many of the places where we work actually encourage us to make less healthy choices.



The estimated costs of an unhealthy workforce to the UK taxpayer per year...

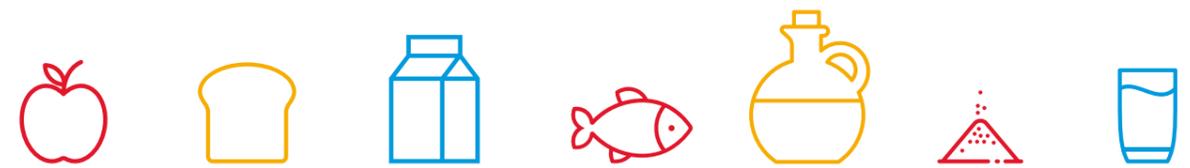
£60,000,000,000

How to eat well...

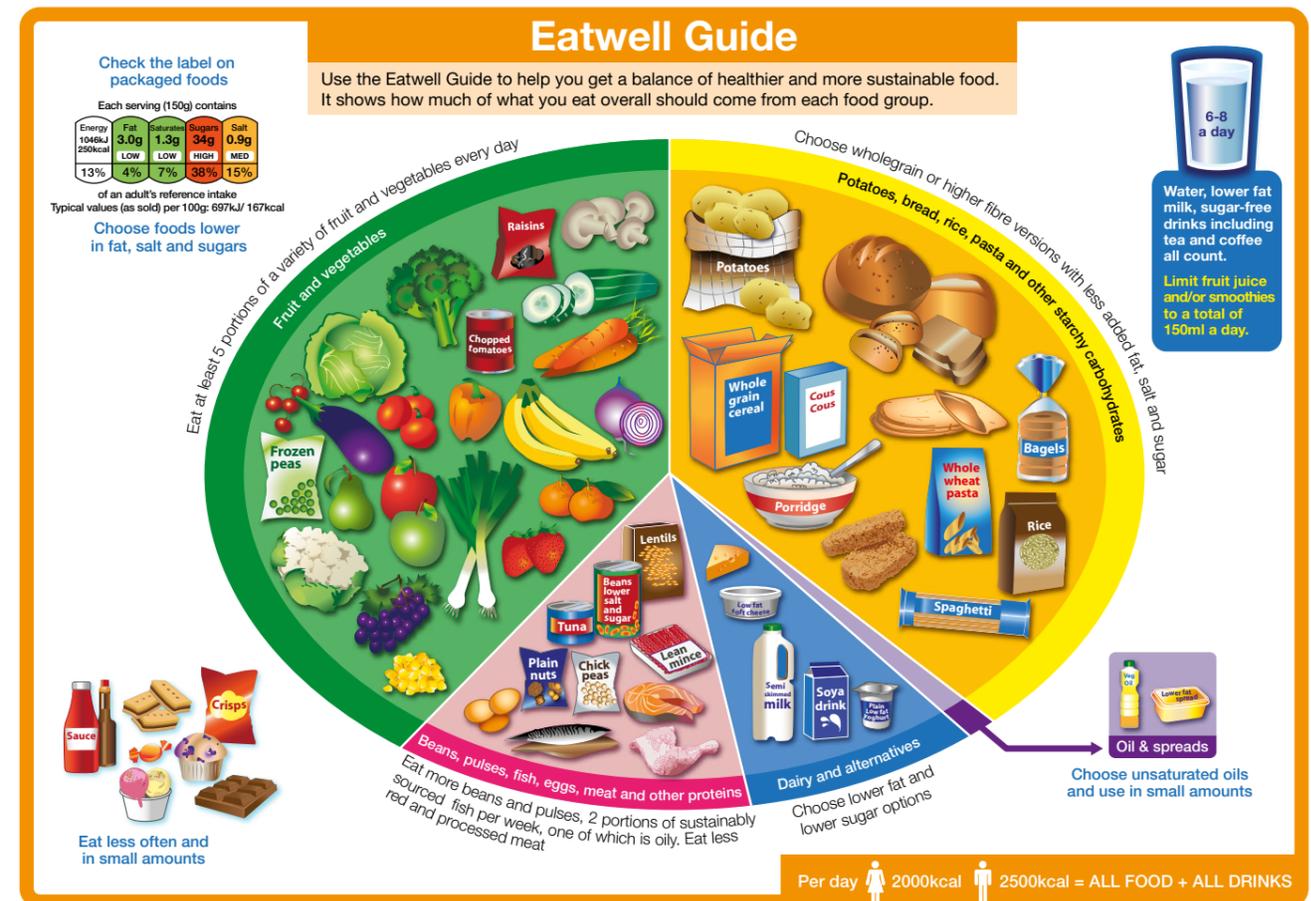
Eating well is about eating a balanced diet

Most people in the UK eat and drink too many calories, too much saturated fat, sugar and salt, and not enough fruit, vegetables, oily fish or fibre. Eating well is about eating a balanced diet. This means eating a wide variety of food and drink to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight.

The Eatwell Guide is the approach we use to promote healthy eating in the UK. For a healthy, balanced diet people should try to:



- Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day**
- Base meals on higher fibre starchy foods** like potatoes with the skins on and wholegrain bread, rice or pasta
- Have some low fat/low sugar dairy** or dairy alternatives (such as soya milk)
- Eat some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other protein**
- Choose unsaturated oils and spreads, and eat them in small amounts**
- Eat foods high in fat, salt and sugar less often** and in small amounts
- Drink plenty of fluids** (at least 6 to 8 glasses a day)



As an employer, how can I promote eating well?

Typically, employees spend on average one-third of their waking hours at work. The workplace is the ideal environment in which to raise awareness and support a culture of eating well! Any organisation, large or small, can take simple action to promote eating well, and it doesn't have to be expensive or time consuming. It is not necessary for all staff to engage or take part in any initiative or project. Even small changes can support an important culture change within your business.

When thinking about promoting eating well, it's a good idea to involve everybody in your workplace, to find out what they want. Consider suggestion boxes, meetings or informal discussions to allow employees to share their views. The 'Good Food in Greenwich Business Charter' outlines a range of actions you can take to support your staff to eat well.

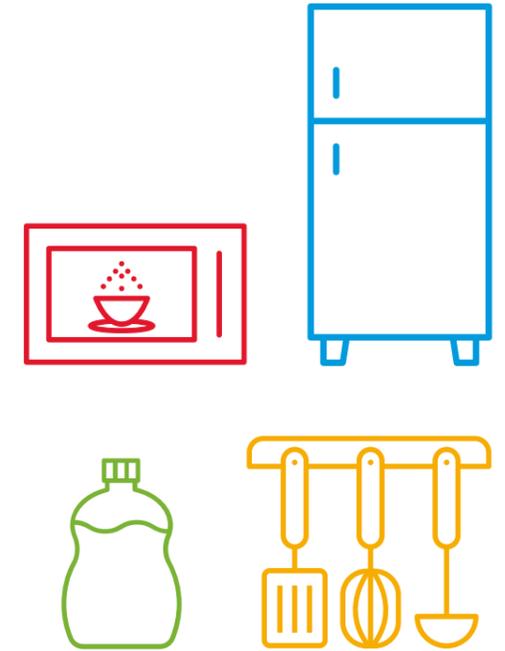
Ideas for you to try...



For more information about these ideas, please visit: goodfoodingreenwich.org and livewellgreenwich.org.uk

As an employer, you should work to provide facilities that support healthy eating.

- Ensure any kitchen facilities or break areas are in **good condition, hygienic and separate from work areas**
- **Encourage the use of the facilities** for lunch time and breaks
- Ensure there is access to **fresh drinking water**
- Provide a **fridge** and **microwave** to encourage staff to bring their own food from home, avoiding pre-packed convenience foods
- Provide **soap** and **hand towels** for hand washing, and **washing up liquid** and **cloths** for washing cups and utensils



Support you can try...

Live Well Greenwich
livewellgreenwich.org.uk

Good Food in Greenwich
goodfoodingreenwich.org

Sugar Smart Greenwich
goodfoodingreenwich.org/sugar-smart

London Healthy Workplace Award
www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/health/london-healthy-workplace-award

Public Health England Campaign Resource Centre
campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources

Change for life
www.nhs.uk/change4life

NHS Live Well Eat Well
www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well

British Dietitians Association
www.bda.uk.com

For more information visit on food safety and hygiene visit www.food.gov.uk



If you have a canteen, café or use outside caterers, offer healthier options to help employees make healthier choices

- ✓ Include plenty of **vegetables** and/or **salad**
- ✓ Offer **wholegrain choices** e.g. wholemeal bread or pasta
- ✓ Provide a **fish option** where possible (not fried or in a rich sauce)
- ✓ Provide **vegetarian** and **vegan** options
- ✓ Provide a selection of **fresh fruit**
- ✓ Provide **fresh tap water**
- ✓ Ensure **healthy foods are prominent** in the serving area
- ✓ Ensure healthier options are **not more expensive**
- ✓ If biscuits or cakes are requested to accompany coffee/tea for meetings, always offer a **healthy alternative such as fruit**

- ✗ Cut down the use of **fat** when preparing and cooking food, e.g. cooking oil, spread and mayonnaise in sandwiches
- ✗ Avoid **deep fried foods** such as samosas and spring rolls
- ✗ Limit the amount of **salt** added to food
- ✗ Limit the amount of **sugar** and fat used e.g. low fat and low sugar dairy products

The Healthier Catering Commitment Scheme

If you would like to work towards the Healthier Catering Commitment (a local accreditation scheme that recognises healthier catering offers) you can access support from the Good Food in Greenwich website or the RBG Environmental Health department

If you use vending machines, ensure healthier food options are available

- ✓ bottled water
- ✓ low sugar drinks
- ✓ packs of fresh or processed fruit in juice
- ✓ plain nuts or rice cakes
- ✓ wholemeal sandwiches and a limited selection of mayonnaise-type fillings

For more information on healthy catering, please visit: goodfoodingreenwich.org and search 'catering'



Support employees by joining a local scheme



Breastfeeding Friendly Greenwich

How can you help breastfeeding mothers?

Employers can have a policy to support breastfeeding. This includes:

- A break allowance for mothers to express milk
- A provision of a clean, warm, private room (not the toilet) for expressing
- A secure, clean fridge to store expressed milk
- Flexible working hours for breastfeeding mothers Let your employees know about your policy before they start their maternity leave.

Further information on what the law says about supporting breastfeeding mothers at work can be found here: breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/more-information-for-employers

The Breastfeeding Friendly Greenwich Scheme is designed to make it easier for mothers to find places where they can breastfeed their baby when they are out and about in Greenwich.

If you would like to join the scheme we can support you to do so, provide you with a free sticker and promote you on the Live well Greenwich website.

Visit livewellgreenwich.org.uk/feedingbaby for more information.

Employers have certain legal obligations to breastfeeding mothers. Supporting breastfeeding has business benefits too, including:

- Reduced absence due to child sickness
- Increased staff morale and loyalty, and a subsequently higher rate of return to work
- Lower recruitment and training costs
- An extra incentive to offer potential employees

Become a Sugar Smart business

Sugar Smart is a simple, effective pledge scheme to encourage organisations to raise awareness of the effects of sugar and unhealthy eating, and help people reduce the amount of sugar they consume – in both drinks and food.

During the working day it can be difficult to eat as well as we intend to. Treat foods – like cakes, biscuits, sweets and crisps – are a big feature of any office environment. They're easy to share, tasty and perk us up during a busy or stressful day. Sadly these foods are also fuelling our obesity crisis as we are eating them more and more frequently. Too many high fat and high sugar foods are leading to weight gain, tooth decay and lasting damage to our physical and mental health.

Research tells us that people would like the option of healthier foods and drinks while at work, and that many people will eat cakes, biscuits, sweets and crisps simply 'if they are there'. In fact, a survey of 1000 office workers found that 95% of them said they'd only like to eat treat foods at work once a week or less.

Simple pledges like reducing the frequency of cakes, biscuits, sweets or crisps, or making lower sugar and fat foods more available in the office are key actions that can support those who would like to eat less treat foods while at work.



Feel like becoming Sugar Smart?

Join the campaign and make pledges here: goodfoodingreenwich.org/sugar-smart

Businesses who join the campaign will receive:

- A listing on the Good Food in Greenwich website, certificate and window sticker for display
- Registration to the national Sugar Smart campaign from Sustain
- Access to free resources to help you become a Sugar Smart business



Contact Us

Live Well Greenwich
livewellgreenwich.org.uk

Good Food in Greenwich
goodfoodingreenwich.org

