St John's College: Food Waste Policy

Our Food Waste

St John's College was founded in 1511. Today we cater for one thousand students, Fellows and staff, as well as visitors attending lunches, dinners, conferences, meetings and other events, serving 490,000 meals each year.

Sustainability is fundamental to our work and we hold a Gold Award from Cambridge Sustainable Food in recognition of our approach. High quality vegetarian options are a feature of every menu, with choices changed weekly to reflect seasonality. We serve sustainably sourced fish, RSPCA-assured meat, locally sourced vegetables and eggs and dairy are predominantly organic or free-range. The use of plastics is avoided through the use of plant-based disposable cutlery, the removal of plastic straws and the introduction of Keep Cups. Our cleaning products are made from plants A lot of our wine that is served, is sustainably made, or organic.

Our commitment to sustainability extends to how we manage our food waste, which can arise from the following sources:

- Spoilage: food that is damaged or out of date
- Preparation: food which is discarded during preparation or food which is prepared but not served
- Serving: Numbers at the event changing

We are following WRAP’s food and drink waste hierarchy (shown below), through prioritising food waste prevention, redistribution and recycling over disposal.

Food and drink material hierarchy

We are already measuring our food waste through the use of ‘Chef’s Eye’, which is helping to identify which menus result in higher levels of waste. This, together with more batch cooking, has enabled us to reduce food waste from kitchen preparation to less than 5%. We are continuing to
monitor our food waste and reduce it further where we can. Food waste that cannot be avoided is composted via the City Council.

Our Targets

St John’s College is committed to the following targets:

- Measure food waste from spoilage, preparation and serving every day
- Continue to minimise food waste as much as possible, including plate waste
- Continue to send unavoidable food waste for composting via the City Council
- Ongoing compliance with relevant waste legislation.

Our Actions

In pursuit of our targets we will:

- Elect a Food Waste Champion
- Develop and implement a food waste reduction action plan
- Communicate our policy, targets and actions to our staff and students
- Provide food waste reduction and recycling training for our staff
- Review and report our progress to senior management every term.

Communication and Review

This policy is communicated to all fellows, staff and students and is available on the College website. We will promote our successes to our fellows, staff and students and report our progress to Cambridge Sustainable Food.

We will review and update this policy and associated targets annually.

Signed: 

Name: 

Position: Catering and conference Manager

Date: 24 April 2019.