



# FOOD CITIES 2022

## PROFILE BIRMINGHAM



**BIRMINGHAM POPULATION  
1.2 MILLION**



Birmingham is England's second city, located in the West Midlands and with a population of 1.2 million. Previously known as the "city of a thousand trades" due to its industrial heritage, Birmingham is a diverse, creative and bold city – it is the largest centre in Great Britain for employment in public administration, education, and health, and is also an important business, financial and higher education centre. Birmingham also boasts a fantastic food scene with a diverse food offer and also a high number of Michelin starred restaurants. Famous food products including Cadbury's chocolate and "Balti" curries also originated in Birmingham! In 2022, the Commonwealth Games will be held in Birmingham, solidifying Birmingham's position as a vibrant and global city.

### Food System Challenges

There are a number of key food system challenges. Birmingham has high numbers of takeaways and convenience stores, especially in deprived areas, and 40% of Birmingham citizens consume a takeaway once a month. There are also parts of Birmingham with low supermarket

access which leads to reduced access to affordable healthy food. Only half of Birmingham citizens eat five portions of fruit and vegetables per day, and fruit and vegetables make up only 11% of expenditure, whilst 34% of money is spent on foods high in fat, salt, and sugar and takeaways. Additionally, food insecurity is a key challenge - 7% of Birmingham citizens reported using food banks during lockdown in the Birmingham Food Survey. There are also high levels of obesity – more than a third of 10-11 year olds and two thirds of adults are overweight or obese in Birmingham.

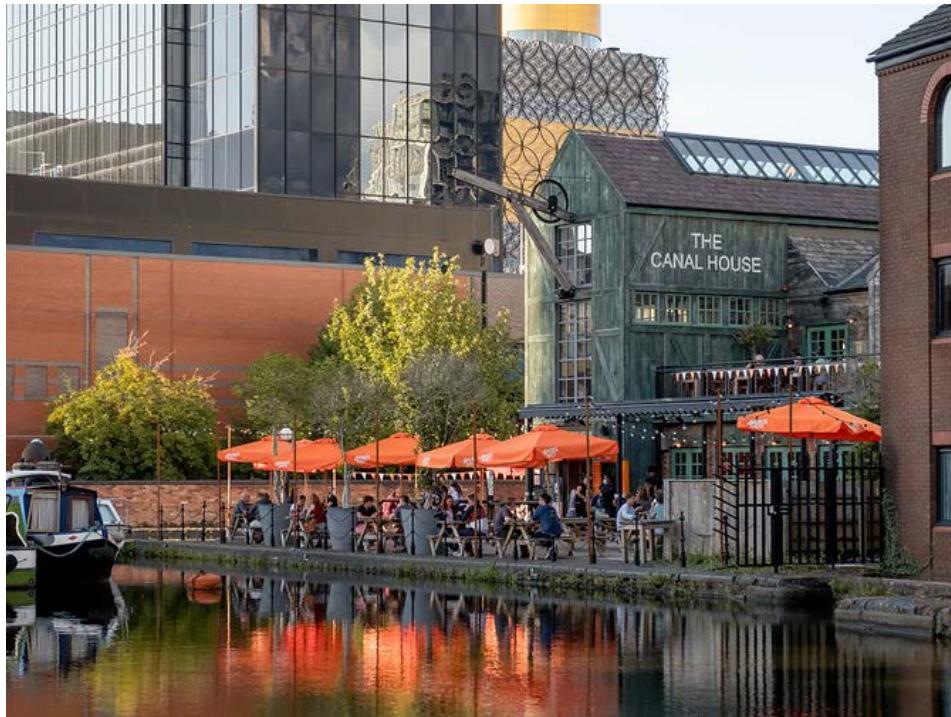
### City Food Vision

Our vision is to create a bold, fair, sustainable and prosperous food system and economy, where food choices are nutritious, affordable and desirable so all citizens can achieve their potential for a happy, healthy life.

WITH THANKS TO



**The Food Foundation**



## Food Strategy

Our eight-year food strategy (2022-2030) aims to:

- Grow the Birmingham food movement
- Build a sustainable, ethical and nutritious food system and a thriving local economy
- Build stronger resilient communities that support those who most need it and mitigate food insecurity
- Empower citizens to consume a sustainable, ethical, healthy and nutritious diet

We will achieve these aims by delivering nine workstreams:

1. Food production – Empower citizens and local producers to grow and preserve food and connect to the city's food system.
2. Food sourcing – Increase sourcing of local, environmentally sustainable, ethical and nutritious foods across the food system.
3. Food transformation – Transform diets to contain more diverse and nutritious ingredients and less fat, salt and sugar.
4. Food waste and recycling – Maximise the repurposing and distribution of surplus food and minimise waste and unsustainable packaging.
5. Food economy and employment – Create a thriving local food economy for all and maximise training and employment opportunities.
6. Food skills and knowledge – Empower citizens with knowledge and skills in relation to the food system from farm to fork.
7. Food behaviour change – Ensure the capability, opportunity and motivation for key behaviours that will enable long term change.
8. Food security and resilience – Ensure citizens in every community, at every age, have access to sufficient affordable, nutritious and safe food.
9. Food innovation, partnerships and research – Gather insights and facilitate innovation, collaboration, learning and research across the food system.

## Resources

- ↳ [Birmingham Situational Analysis](#)
- ↳ [Global Cities Pledge on Food Justice](#)
- ↳ [Seldom Heard Voices - Food Conversations](#)
- ↳ [COVID-19 Emergency Food Response](#)

## Expertise

We have a multi-disciplinary food team with expertise in public health, behaviour change, food systems research and public health nutrition. We are committed to cross-matrix working and working with partners across the city and beyond to ensure evidence-based, effective actions to improve Birmingham's food system. We also have a diverse city and so have expertise in terms of cultural diets and celebrating diversity.

## Learning Needs

We are keen to share best practice and learn from other cities, especially in the areas of facilitating public/local food procurement, facilitating urban food production, mitigating food insecurity, changing behaviours around food and creating a thriving food economy. We are also interested in learning more about food partnerships and movements.



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