

**Healthy  
Workplaces**

**North  
Somerset**

## **Food and Nutrition in the workplace**

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February 2025

# Agenda

What?	Details	Who
Healthy Workplaces Programme	Healthy Workplace Programme overview and update	Abi Thomas
Food and nutrition in the workplace	How to support good food and nutrition choices in the workplace, using the healthy workplaces awards programme framework	Naomi Greaves
Healthy workplaces events	Up and coming events	Naomi Greaves



Naomi Greaves  
Health Improvement  
Specialist: Food,  
Nutrition & Workplace  
Health



Liz Green  
Food, Nutrition &  
Workplace Health  
Manager



Abi Thomas  
Public Health  
Practitioner  
Apprentice

# The North Somerset Healthy Workplaces programme

- Public Health initiative
- Promote and maintain health & wellbeing of working age population
- Benefits to business and local economy
- A vehicle for greater reach of local health promotion activities
- Reduce health inequalities



# How do we support workplaces?

- Access to free awards programme
- Evidence-based framework & guidance
- Events and training
- Shared resources
- Bespoke online or on-site support e.g. action plan support, topic-based health talks/workshops
- Workplace health checks



# The Awards journey so far

- Started in 2021 with pilot
- Rolled out programme from 2023
- Now **30** workplaces members of the awards programme
- Total of **27,102 employees** in those organisations
- Sectors include local government, health, care, construction, education, leisure, more





### Buzzer Challenge

A practice to promote wellbeing in the workplace  
- A Healthy Workplaces intervention case study

Find out more



### Menopause Bootcamp

What is the name of your intervention?  
Menopause Bootcamp at North Somerset  
Council Health and wellbeing category Women's  
Health Why...

Find out more



### The Power of Exercise

Access Your Care What is the name of your  
intervention? The Power of Exercise Which  
Health and Wellbeing area did...

Find out more



### Gold Star Awards

Extend Learning Academies Network What is the  
name of your intervention? Gold Star Awards  
Health and wellbeing category All staff...

Find out more



### Celebrating Cultures – Inclusive Wellbeing Days

What is the name of your intervention?  
Celebrating Cultures – Inclusive Wellbeing Days  
Health and wellbeing category Mental Health,  
Inclusion...

Find out more



### Implementation of Wellbeing Champions

What is the name of your intervention?  
Implementation of Wellbeing Champions in key  
focus areas Corresponding health and wellbeing  
category...|

Find out more

## This session will cover;

1. Introduction to food and nutrition in the workplace – why does it matter?
2. Hydration
3. Safe Food Storage
4. Support for Staff
5. Healthy Workplaces Guidance
6. Vending Machines
7. Review of Food and Drink Environment
8. Other Considerations Around Food in the Workplace



## Food and nutrition in the workplace, why does it matter?

### Supports Employee Health & Wellbeing

- Reduces risk of chronic conditions such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and obesity.
- Supports immune function, energy levels, and overall physical health.

### Improves Mental Wellbeing

- Certain nutrients support brain health and emotional regulation.
- Eating well can help reduce stress, improve mood, and enhance resilience.

### Improves Concentration & Productivity

- Balanced meals help maintain steady blood sugar levels, improving focus, decision-making, memory, and mood.
- Reduces mid-afternoon slumps, fatigue, and irritability.

### Supports a Positive Workplace Culture

- Healthy food options show organisational commitment to employee wellbeing.
- Helps create a supportive, health-enhancing environment.

### Reduces Sickness Absence

- Good nutrition helps reduce illness-related absenteeism.
- A healthier workforce means fewer lost working days.

### Enhances Engagement & Retention

- Employees feel valued when their health is prioritised.
- A well-designed food environment can improve morale and job satisfaction.



The importance of hydration is promoted, and all staff can access basic needs such as water and safe food storage regardless of their role or workload.



## Why Water Matters

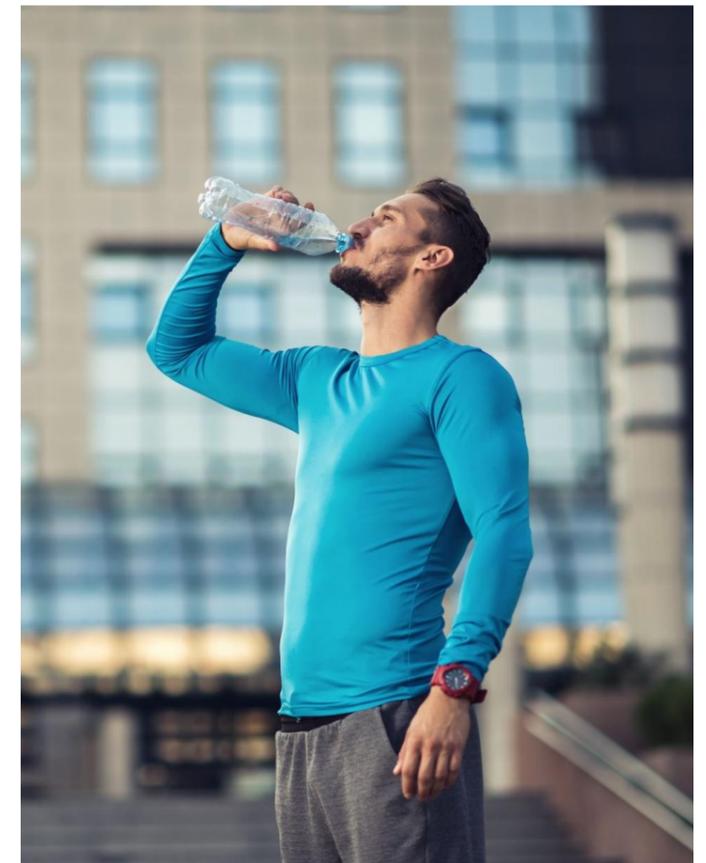
Staying hydrated helps your body regulate temperature, maintain energy levels, and keep your brain working at its best. Even mild dehydration can affect concentration, mood, and physical performance, making regular water intake essential during the working day.

### Thinking about your workplace

- Are there hydration stations available?
- For staff who are not office based, are there water bottles provided? Are staff aware of locations where they can top up their water?

### TIPS:

- Posters around the workplace can be a good reminder to people to drink more water.
- Keep water stations clean, appealing and well maintained.
- Offer fruit at water stations such as sliced lemon, cucumber, berries or mint – this can make it more appealing without adding sugar.
- Include simple hydration messages during wellbeing weeks, step challenges, or health newsletters.
- Suggest short water-filling breaks during long meetings, workshops, or training.
- Managers modelling good hydration helps normalise it.





The importance of hydration is promoted, and all staff can access basic needs such as water and safe food storage regardless of their role or workload.

## Why Safe Food Storage Matters in the Workplace

Safe food storage helps prevent the growth of harmful bacteria that can cause food poisoning. In a workplace, where many people share kitchens, fridges, and equipment, proper storage reduces the risk of cross-contamination and keeps everyone safe. Good storage habits also help maintain food quality, prevent waste, and support a healthy, hygienic working environment.

### Thinking about your workplace

- Are there fridges available for staff to store food? Are there microwaves available to heat food and a kettle to make hot water? Are there washing up facilities?
- For staff who are not office based, are insulated lunch bags or cool bags provided? Or are high quality flasks provided for hot foods or drinks?

### TIPS:

- Ensure all food spaces are clean, appealing and well maintained.
- Ensure suitable refrigeration space is available for staff and checked regularly to dispose of any out-of-date items.
- Encourage staff to plan meals with food safety in mind, especially on long days without fridge access. (mobile staff)
- Provide guidance on foods safer for unrefrigerated storage (e.g., whole fruit, nuts, sealed tins, oatcakes). (mobile staff)





Provision of active support for staff who wish to change their food choices and eating habits.

## Why a Provision of Active Support for Staff is Important

Offering active support helps staff make positive, sustained changes to their eating habits. When organisations provide practical tools, guidance, and signposting, it removes barriers and makes healthy eating more achievable.

### What Organisations Can Do to Provide Active Support

#### 1. Offer Direct Support Within the Workplace

- Run a healthy eating group or lunchtime club
- Establish a workplace healthy lifestyles group
- Provide events, workshops or campaigns focused on nutrition
- Use programmes like Workplace Health Work Ready (BDA) to support staff [Workplace health: Work Ready - BDA](#)

#### 2. Signpost to Local Support and Community Services

- Food and mood courses (free online options)
- Growing or community cooking projects [Food in the Community Map | Better Health North Somerset](#)
- Local food support services such as food banks and community kitchens [Food in the Community Map | Better Health North Somerset](#)
- Local registered nutritionist or dietitians
- Local behaviour change coaches such as the healthy lifestyles advisors [Here for your Health and Wellbeing | Better Health North Somerset](#)
- Link staff to reputable, evidence based-tools such as from the British Nutrition Foundation



## Implementation of guidance in North Somerset Healthy Workplaces Eating Well at Work for Employers



Many of us consume about one third of our daily calories at work. What we eat and drink affects our health as well as our performance. People who do not eat regularly, eat a balanced diet or drink enough water throughout the work day may experience headaches, feel sluggish or tired, or have difficulty concentrating.

The workplace can be a great place to support healthy eating by:

- providing time and space for employees to eat their meals
- offering healthy food and drinks in the cafeteria, during meetings and in any vending machines
- providing refrigerators and microwaves so that meals can be stored and prepared appropriately
- signposting to local healthy food initiatives
- ensuring there is easy access to water throughout the day

If you are considering improving your offer around food and nutrition in the workplace, these guidelines are a good place to start, many of you may be doing these things anyway which is great! [Employer Toolkit](#)



Any vending machines have healthy items and limit high fat, high salt and high sugar options

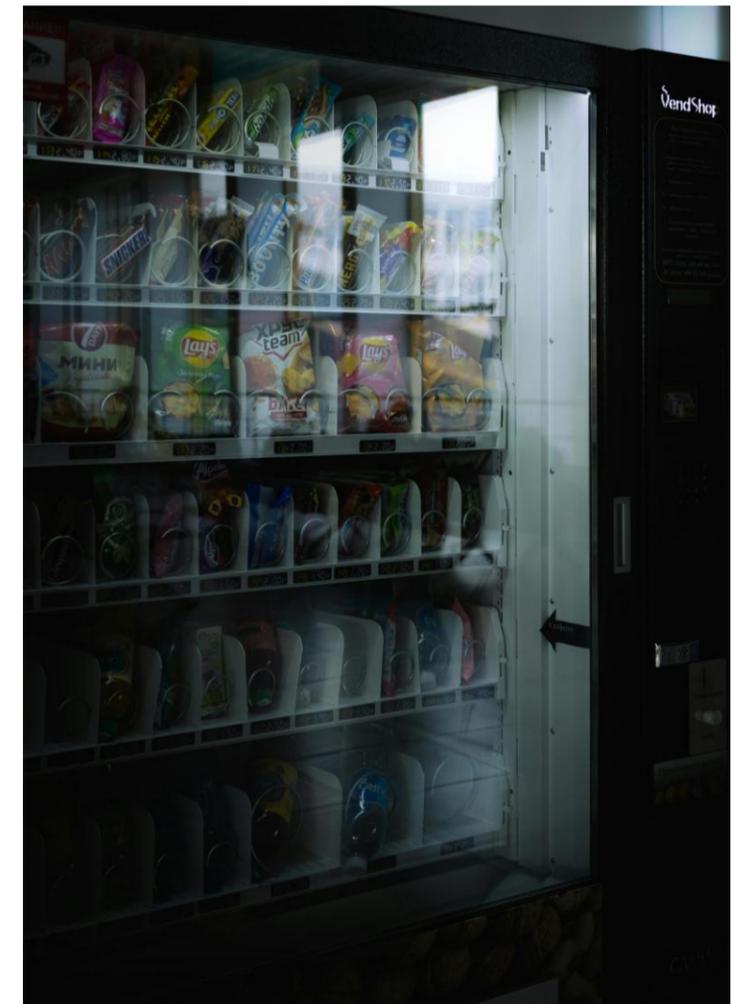


## Why Healthy Vending Options Matter at Work

Providing healthier choices in vending machines helps staff make nutritious decisions during busy workdays, supporting better energy levels, concentration, and overall wellbeing. It also creates a workplace environment that promotes health, reduces reliance on high-sugar snacks, and shows employees that their organisation cares about their long-term health.

### TIPS:

- Include snacks like unsalted nuts, seeds, wholegrain crisps/crackers, popcorn, oat bars, and low-sugar yoghurts.
- Offer bottled water and low- or no-sugar drinks as default options.
- People choose what they see first – so place healthier products where they are most visible and easiest to grab.
- Limit chocolate, sweets, and sugary drinks.
- Work with vending providers who can supply balanced, nutritious options.
- Use nutrient profiling model to assess products high in fat, salt or sugar if unsure which products meet the threshold.
- Promote any improvements as part of a wellbeing campaign to increase engagement.





Review ways to improve the food and drink environment within the workplace to ensure staff and visitors have access to affordable, nutritious and sustainable food and drinks.

## Why This Review is Important

Reviewing the food and drink environment helps to ensure that staff and visitors have access to affordable, nutritious and sustainable options. A supportive food environment encourages healthier choices, boosts wellbeing, and demonstrates a genuine commitment to staff health.

## What Should Workplaces Review?

### 1. Availability

- Are healthier food and drink options provided across the site?
- Do vending machines, cafes, and catering offer nutritious options?

### 2. Affordability

- Are healthier choices priced fairly compared to less healthy ones?
- Are there budget-friendly options for all staff?

### 3. Sustainability

- Are there plant-based options?
- Is food sources responsibly (e.g, seasonal produce, reduced packaging)?
- Are there actions to reduce food waste?





Review ways to improve the food and drink environment within the workplace to ensure staff and visitors have access to affordable, nutritious and sustainable food and drinks.

## Has an Assessment Been Carried Out?

Workplaces should ask themselves:

“Have we assessed our current food and drink environment to see if it supports affordable, nutritious, and sustainable choices?”



## Examples of what an assessment might include:

- A review of vending machine stock
- A scan of canteen or cafe menus
- Staff survey on food preferences or barriers
- Reviewing catering contracts or supplier offerings.

## If an assessment was completed – what was the outcome?

Reflect and record:

- Key findings
- Changes made or planned
- Impact of the changes



Review ways to improve the food and drink environment that the organisation has control or influence over to ensure access to affordable, nutritious and sustainable food and drinks, for example, event provision and advertising.

### Why This Review is Important

Improving the food and drink environment in areas the organisation can influence helps create a workplace that actively support healthy, sustainable choices. By shaping catering, events, vending, procurement and advertising, organisations can make nutritious options the easy, affordable default. This not only benefits staff wellbeing and energy levels but also demonstrates a strong commitment to health, sustainability and a positive workplace culture.

#### 1. Event & Meeting Provision

- Providing healthier refreshments at meetings
- Offering water as the default drink
- Including vegetarian/plant-based options as standard
- Avoiding over-reliance on pastries or high-sugar foods
- Ensuring portion sizes are appropriate

#### 2. Advertising

- Reviewing what is advertised on site (posters, digital screens, intranet)
- Avoiding promotion of unhealthy foods as the default
- Highlighting healthy choices, hydration, seasonal produce
- Avoiding sponsorship from unhealthy food/drink brands where possible

# Other Considerations Around Food in the Workplace

Supporting a healthier culture around shared food and celebrations

## Shared Snacks, Birthdays & Treats

Many workplaces have a tradition of bringing in biscuits, cakes, pastries, or sweets to share. While this is a lovely way to celebrate, these foods can become a regular part of the workday – which can make healthier eating harder.

## Healthier Alternatives for Shared Snacks

- Fruit platter or fruit kebabs
- Yoghurt pots with berries
- Homemade snacks with reduced sugar (flapjacks, muffins, fruit breads)
- Dried fruit and nut mixes
- Wholegrain crackers with cheese or dips
- Popcorn (lightly salted)
- Mini wholegrain sandwiches or wraps



## Celebration ideas that aren't food-based

- Birthday wall/board
- Team card
- Sharing a playlist or choosing the team's 'song of the day'
- A non-food wellbeing gesture (e.g, team walk, virtual celebration, coffee catch-up)

# Other Considerations Around Food in the Workplace

Supporting a healthier culture around shared food and celebrations

## Fundraising Events (Moving Beyond Bake Sales)

Traditional fundraising often centres around bakes and sweet treats. Over time this contributes to a workplace culture where unhealthy foods are the default.

### Healthier food-based Fundraising

- Fruit boxes for donation
- Homemade soup day
- Healthy snack stall
- Build-your-own yoghurt or salad pot (fundraiser priced)

### Non-food Fundraising activities

- Sponsored walk, step challenge or cycle to work week
- Raffle (donations from local businesses)
- Book swap or plant swap
- “Guess the baby photo” competition
- Office Olympics/wellbeing games
- Lunchtime yoga or wellbeing session (donate to enter)

## Why These Changes Matter

Making small shifts in shared snacks and fundraising helps to:

- Create a workplace culture that support healthier choices
- Reduce routine exposure to high-sugar, high-fat snacks
- Ensure celebrations include everyone, including those with allergies, intolerances, or health concerns
- Align fundraising with organisational wellbeing goals
- Encourage creativity and participation in healthier, more inclusive ways.



Any questions?

## PHIRST Evaluation Members Workshop

Online - Friday 27 February at 10am - 11am

## North Somerset Healthy Workplaces Network Meeting

Online - Thursday 23 April at 11am- 12.30pm

## Smoking Cessation Workshop

Online – Thursday 14 May 11am - 12pm

## Men's Health Webinar

Online – Thursday 18 June 2pm-3pm

## Healthy Workplaces Celebratory Event

In person – Tuesday 24 November 10am – 3.30pm



## Become a member

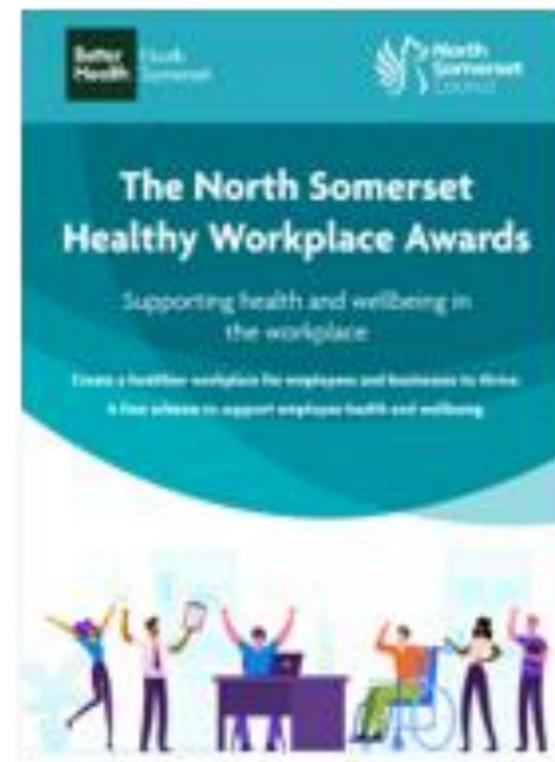
- Short registration form
- Healthy workplaces team will then contact you to introduce you to the programme

## Sign up to the newsletter

[North Somerset Council \(list-manage.com\)](http://list-manage.com)

## Contact the team

[healthyworkplaces@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:healthyworkplaces@n-somerset.gov.uk)



Thank you for attending our food and  
nutrition in the workplace training