

Introduction

Wild Shropshire Restaurant is dedicated to fostering strong connections with our local community in Whitchurch and the broader Shropshire area. Our commitment to sustainability extends beyond environmental practices to include civic engagement and meaningful community support. This strategy outlines the actions Wild Shropshire Restaurant will take to build stronger local relationships, promote civic responsibility, and give back to the community.

1. Supporting Local Producers and Businesses

Objective:

Promote and support local suppliers, artisans, and businesses by building a community-focussed supply chain.

Action Plan:

- **Local Sourcing:**
Continue prioritising local farmers, butchers, dairy producers, and artisans for the restaurant's ingredients. Strive to source 90% of our produce from within a 50-mile radius by the end of 2026, supporting small, family-owned farms and businesses in Shropshire.
- **Partnerships with Local Artisans:**
Collaborate with local craftsmen and artists by showcasing their work in the restaurant, whether through serving ware, décor, or event collaborations. For example, we will feature handmade pottery or locally crafted furniture to enhance the guest experience and highlight local talent.
- **Market Participation:**
Actively participate in **local farmers' markets**, food fairs, and community events to promote our sustainable dining ethos, connect with residents, and foster relationships with other businesses.

Monitoring & Evaluation:

- Biannual reviews of suppliers to ensure continued local partnerships.
 - Track the percentage of local products sourced and aim for incremental increases year over year.
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2. Community Engagement & Education

Objective:

Educate and engage the local community in sustainable food practices and environmental responsibility.

Action Plan:

- **Workshops & Farm Tours:**
Host workshops on sustainable farming, fermentation techniques, and zero-waste cooking. These workshops will be open to the public, helping individuals and families learn how to reduce food waste, grow their own produce, and adopt sustainable cooking practices.
- **Farm-to-Table Events:**
Organise **farm-to-table dinners** that highlight local produce and give guests insight into the journey from farm to plate. These events will also serve as fundraisers, with proceeds going toward local environmental and community initiatives.
- **School Partnerships:**
Partner with local schools to provide educational opportunities for students. Initiatives could include school visits to the Wild Shropshire farm, offering students the chance to learn about organic farming, composting, and sustainability practices.

Monitoring & Evaluation:

- Feedback surveys from workshop participants to gauge the community's interest and impact.
 - Annual reports detailing the number of community events and attendees, with goals to increase participation each year.
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3. Employment and Apprenticeships for Local Residents

Objective:

Offer job opportunities and vocational training to support local employment and skill development.

Action Plan:

- **Local Hiring:**
Maintain a preference for hiring local residents for both restaurant and farm positions. This will not only reduce commuting emissions but also support the local economy and provide stable jobs within the community.
- **Apprenticeship Program:**
Develop an apprenticeship program focused on sustainable agriculture and culinary arts. Partner with local colleges or vocational schools to offer hands-on experience in organic

farming, kitchen operations, and restaurant management, with an emphasis on sustainability.

- **Internships for Aspiring Chefs:**

Provide internships for aspiring chefs to gain experience in sustainable, farm-to-table dining. Interns will have the opportunity to work both in the kitchen, the lab and on the farm, learning how to incorporate local, seasonal produce into their culinary creations.

Monitoring & Evaluation:

- Track the percentage of employees and apprentices from the local area, aiming for continuous improvement.
 - Measure the success of the apprenticeship program by tracking participant retention and career progression.
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4. Charitable Initiatives and Volunteering

Objective:

Support local charities and encourage volunteerism within the Wild Shropshire team to benefit the community.

Action Plan:

- **Food Donation Program:**
Partner with local food banks and shelters to donate surplus food, reducing food waste while supporting those in need. Implement a structured process to ensure that any surplus produce from the restaurant goes to local charities.
- **Charity Events:**
Plan and host charity dinners or auctions, with proceeds going to local organisations that focus on food security, environmental conservation, or other community needs. Collaborate with local non-profits to ensure funds are directed where they are most needed.
- **Employee Volunteering Days:**
Implement an employee volunteering program that offers paid days off for staff to volunteer at local charities, schools, or environmental organisations. Encourage participation in community clean-up events, food drives, and educational outreach.
- **Holiday Meals for Vulnerable Groups:**
During holiday seasons, organise special meals for vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, homeless, or those in shelters, with the restaurant donating food and services.

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Monitoring & Evaluation:

- Regularly assess the impact of food donations and volunteer hours, with an annual report on charitable activities.
 - Track the number of charity events hosted and donations made, setting targets for year-over-year increases.
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5. Environmental Stewardship in the Community

Objective:

Incorporate environmental stewardship into community engagement efforts, promoting sustainability both in and outside of the restaurant.

Action Plan:

- **Community Gardening Projects:**
Support local community gardens by providing resources, expertise, and volunteers. Help residents establish their own gardens by offering guidance on organic farming and sustainable growing practices.
- **Biodiversity Conservation Initiatives:**
Collaborate with local environmental organisations to promote biodiversity in the area. This could include tree planting initiatives, wetland restoration projects, or public awareness campaigns on protecting local wildlife.
- **Recycling Programs:**
Partner with local councils to promote community recycling programs. Offer workshops or incentives for local residents to improve recycling practices and reduce waste.

Monitoring & Evaluation:

- Annual evaluation of community garden initiatives, tracking the number of participants and the amount of produce grown.
 - Progress reports on environmental projects and biodiversity conservation efforts within the local area.
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Conclusion

Wild Shropshire Restaurant is committed to actively engaging with and supporting the local community. Through promoting local business partnerships, offering education and employment opportunities, and driving charitable and environmental initiatives, we aim to foster civic engagement and make a lasting positive impact in Whitchurch and Shropshire. We will continually monitor and evaluate our efforts to ensure they are meaningful and responsive to the needs of our community.