



**Good vegan food  
on every public sector menu**

# **Challenge your Council**

## **Catering for Everyone**



## Background

We're campaigning for more and better vegan options in our public services.

Vegans reliant on others to cook for them whilst at school, in hospital, or in any of our other public services, should be served tasty and nutritious vegan food. But more than that, we want to see good vegan options for everyone, every day, across the public sector.

Councils wield huge influence in the provision of public sector catering. Not only can they lead by example and improve the vegan provision in their own offices, but they can influence procurement across the public sector. Find out who your local Councillor is and write, write, write!

## Action

Your Councillors have been elected to represent the needs of their community, and that includes you!

You can help the campaign by challenging your local authority. Use our template letter at the end of this document and get in touch with your Councillor. You might want to highlight great local vegan options, or even invite them round for a vegan lunch to discuss the issues.

If you have local elections this May then this is a perfect opportunity to ask your local candidates whether they'll support this campaign as well.

We're asking Councillors to support our campaign in the following ways: -

- ▶ Leading by example and offering a vegan meal in their Council canteen every day. As a starting point they might want to try The Vegan Society's Plate Up for the Planet seven day challenge.
- ▶ Use their influence on public sector institutions in their local authority to encourage better vegan provision. This might be through the public procurement process in local schools, or collaborating with the health board.
- ▶ Consider bringing a motion to make their Council a supporter of vegan food across our public services.

You can find your Councillor by entering your postcode at the [www.writetothem.com](http://www.writetothem.com) website.

Meeting with your Councillor face-to-face is the best way to increase your chances of getting a positive response from them. If you're able to meet with your Councillor our campaigns team can offer some support and advice in advance of the meeting, and we'd also like to hear any successes or challenges you experience. Contact us at [campaigns@vegansociety.com](mailto:campaigns@vegansociety.com).

Don't forget to keep us updated on your progress. The Vegan Society are here to help you every step of the way, so do keep us up-to-date on any developments, and we can always advise you on the next steps to take.

Simply email the team to arrange a call or Skype meeting and we will guide you through the process and answer any questions you might have.

## Representing The Vegan Society

As a Campaigner Network member we trust you to do what you can to uphold The Vegan Society's reputation and not take it for granted. In particular, we'd like you to:

- ▶ Be open and honest about your relationship with The Vegan Society and whether you are communicating your own views or The Vegan Society's.
- ▶ Respect any requests to keep sensitive information to yourself.
- ▶ Act and communicate in a way that best represents The Vegan Society, especially at events and meetings or in communication with third parties. Never do anything that could bring the name of The Vegan Society into disrepute.
- ▶ Try to reflect The Vegan Society's values in the way you represent us. Show consideration and respect for other people and their points of view, both within and outside the organisation.

## Key messages for Catering for Everyone

When talking to your Councillor, here are some points you should look to include:

- ◀ Veganism has been found to come within the scope of international human rights provisions and vegans in the UK are protected under human rights and equality law
- ◀ Vegan food can be enjoyed by vegans and non-vegans alike
- ◀ Increasing vegan food provision will also support environmental initiatives. A vegan diet can reduce personal food related carbon emissions by 50%
- ◀ Both the British Dietetic Association and the American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recognise that totally plant-based diets are suitable for every age and life stage
- ◀ Some research has linked vegan diets with lower blood pressure and cholesterol, as well as lower rates of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some types of cancer
- ◀ The Vegan Society can help local catering teams to build vegan meal plans. The Vegan Society's in-house dietitian can help with balanced meals and answer any questions that catering providers may have.

## Social Media

Below are some pre-written Tweets that you can post to social media. Don't forget to tag your Councillor if you know their handle, and use the hashtag #CateringforEveryone to shout about any campaign successes.

- ◀ I'm supporting @TheVeganSociety's #CateringforEveryone campaign. Let's get more and better vegan food on public sector menus. Read more: [www.vegansociety.com/cateringforeveryone](http://www.vegansociety.com/cateringforeveryone)
- ◀ Vegan food is the most inclusive option, and is great for people, planet and animals. @TheVeganSociety's new #CateringforEveryone campaign encourages more vegan options across the public sector. [www.vegansociety.com/cateringforeveryone](http://www.vegansociety.com/cateringforeveryone)
- ◀ Great vegan food can promote inclusivity, sustainability and good nutrition. Let's get more of it on public sector menus @TheVeganSociety #CateringforEveryone [www.vegansociety.com/cateringforeveryone](http://www.vegansociety.com/cateringforeveryone)

## Template Email/Letter

Dear Councillor [Councillor name]

I am writing regarding to ask [Council name] to support the Vegan Society's Catering for Everyone campaign. Vegan food has benefits that can be enjoyed by everyone and I would like to see good vegan food offered across the public sector in [Council name].

Veganism is a way of living which seeks to exclude, as far as is possible and practicable, all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose.

### **Inclusive**

Veganism has been found to come within the scope of international human rights provisions and vegans in the UK are protected under human rights and equality law. This means that service providers have an obligation to ensure that they do not interfere with a vegan's right to freedom of conscience, and a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to avoid any discrimination on the grounds of veganism.

This equality extends to the provision of suitable food, and I would like to see tasty, nutritious, appropriate vegan meals on daily menus in all our public sector institutions – starting with hospitals and schools. I realise that menu changes may seem challenging or expensive at first, but there is plenty of support available via The Vegan Society.

### **Sustainable**

Providing vegan options does not just protect the rights of vegans. Vegan food can be enjoyed by vegans and non-vegans alike. Increasing your vegan food provision will support environmental initiatives. A vegan diet can reduce your food related carbon emissions by 50%. If you're interested in the environmental benefits of veganism you (or [Council] Council) might want to try The Vegan Society's 'Plate Up for the Planet' seven day challenge.

### **Healthy**

Both the British Dietetic Association and the American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recognise that totally plant-based diets are suitable for every age and life stage.

It's easy to produce tasty options that are rich in fibre and low in saturated fat, provide multiple servings of fruit and vegetables, and exclude processed meat, which the World Health Organisation has classified as a cause of cancer. In addition, some research has linked vegan diets with lower blood pressure and cholesterol, as well as lower rates of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some types of cancer.

The Vegan Society can help local catering teams to build vegan meal plans. They have an in-house dietitian who can help with balanced meals and answer any questions that catering providers may have. They also have resources for services users and providers across the public sector, which can be found on their website [www.vegansociety.com/cateringforeveryone](http://www.vegansociety.com/cateringforeveryone).

***I am writing to ask you to support the Catering for Everyone campaign by doing the following: -***

- Leading by example and offering a vegan meal in your own canteen every day. As a starting point you might want to try The Vegan Society's Plate Up for the Planet seven day challenge.
- Using your influence on public sector institutions in [Council] to encourage better vegan provision. This might be through the public procurement process in local schools, or collaborating with the health board.
- Consider bringing a motion to make [Council name] a supporter of vegan food across our public services.

I hope you will consider supporting this campaign, for the good of the planet, our public health, and for animals. I look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Please let me know when would be best to come and discuss this important issue with you in person.

Yours sincerely

[Sender name]