



Nottingham Trent University Sustainability Champion Ivan Hopkins- Executive Chef



NOTTINGHAM
TRENT UNIVERSITY

Profile

- HEI
- 28,000 students (includes full and part time students)
- 3000 staff
- Urban and Rural campuses

Category supported by



Summary

Ivan Hopkins; Executive Chef for Nottingham Trent University has revolutionised the catering menus based around sustainability, gaining the prestigious Silver Food for Life accreditation. Ivan has brought sustainable food to a huge customer base at affordable prices.

Project partners

In order for Ivan to achieve the changes in the catering department he worked with a number of suppliers, ranging from the suppliers of eggs, to pork and right through to the suppliers of the sandwiches that are purchased for sale on the campuses. Ivan also worked closely with the NTU catering staff, involving them in training in order to ensure that staff could communicate the menu improvements to customers.

The problem

The university is the workplace for over 3000 staff and the main place of study for, in excess of, 28,000 students. The task of catering for this number of people with a range of cultures and backgrounds in addition to the current economic constraint is large enough, however Ivan's passion and commitment to the work he carries out meant that he strived to provide a sustainable and tasty menu too.

The approach

In order to achieve the sustainable approach Ivan worked towards and achieved the Food for Life Silver standard for all university canteens. It was the steps taken to achieve this accreditation that led to Ivan being nominated as a Sustainability Champion; as a result of his commitment to achieve it, Ivan visited suppliers, requested and introduced bespoke services and built professional and positive relationships. Ivan continues to recognise the importance of sharing his knowledge and has been keen to communicate his experience with other institutions.

Our goals

The way in which Catering has been developed within NTU strongly illustrates many of the institute's goals. Adaptations to locally and seasonally sourced produce encompass the essence of NTU's Procurement Policy, Purchasing Policy and Sustainable Food Policy. The Sustainable Food Policy sets the expected NTU standard of what we buy, what we produce and how we produce it, Ivan's efforts within the department has ensured that the policy is being fulfilled and ever improving on a day to day basis. NTU have been able to answer students' request for a wide variety of foods and an increased number of healthy options, in doing this the catering team, led by Ivan, have been able to absorb any additional costs ensuring that the student experience is one of superior quality.

Obstacles and solutions

Unsustainable or ethical suppliers	During tenders, on a number of occasions, Ivan has visited livestock farms to ensure Animal Welfare is of the highest standard. With sustainability high on the NTU catering agenda, a number of changes with suppliers have taken place; Sandwiches which previously have been supplied from a Company in Devon (estm. 240 miles from Nottingham) are now locally sourced from the Nottingham area. In addition to the miles that the suppliers travel to the university, the number of deliveries has also been reviewed to ensure that there are minimal journeys made by the supplier; this illustrates Ivan's efforts to not only address Scope 1 and 2 emissions but also Scope 3.
Student buy in	<p>Ivan worked closely with student accommodation to provide 1000 Welcome Packs to first year students. Providing the ingredients for a cost effective meal not only acted as an incentive to adopt and recognise the ability to cook with local produce but also, as one student feedback was 'very welcoming' at a time where some students were away from home for the first time.</p> <p>We estimate that the transformation of the menus has only cost approximately an extra 25p per meal. Ivan has personally invested immeasurable hours to deliver the change. The results have been impressive and through improved marketing of our new sustainable offer, sales have actually increased by approximately 15% despite the modest price rises.</p>

Performance and results

All of Ivan's work has meant that the NTU catering outlets are now Food for Life Silver accredited. In recognition for his work Ivan was also shortlisted within the Cost Sector Chef Award category at the Craft Guild of Chefs Award, known as the Worshipful Company of Chefs. Ivan has hosted EAUC webinars to share his experiences with other institutions.

Lessons learned

Ivan has fed back a number of lessons:

- Research fully all of the criteria and get a firm understanding of the project, otherwise misunderstanding certain aspects may create unnecessary work.
- Get to know your suppliers –it helps massively in the success of the scheme, previously we had minimal contact and knowledge of our providers.
- Include the catering team from the outset and give them a clear understanding of the process, its aims and benefits to all parties from supplier to consumer. We realised from an early stage that staff 'buy-in' was crucial.
- We also learnt that to gain interest from the consumer communication was vital, we found that by getting the catering staff to open dialogue with our customers created more interest and questions about where their food comes from and what's in it. Don't assume that consumers aren't interested they are

Sharing your project

Ivan can be seen as representative for Higher Education as a result of the efforts and achievements that he has made. Visits to other institutions such as York and Glasgow are examples of how Ivan shares his experiences for the benefit of others.

What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

To be a finalist has meant that the passion and drive from Ivan as an individual has been strongly appreciated and highlight that his achievements are the goals of others within the sector.

Further information

www.ntu.ac.uk/catering