

[News story: Cutting food waste: game-changing fund opens](#)

The Government will today invite food redistribution organisations to [apply for the first £5 million round of funding](#) under a multi-million pound pilot scheme to reduce food waste.

From today, redistribution organisations in England will be able to bid into a £5 million pot to help them overcome the financial barrier to redistributing surplus food which is currently going to waste but which could be redistributed.

It's the first part of a [£15 million scheme](#) announced last year by the Environment Secretary to specifically address surplus food from retail and manufacturing.

Further opportunities are being developed and will open later this year.

Currently around 43,000 tonnes of surplus food is redistributed from retailers and food manufacturers every year. It is estimated a further 100,000 tonnes of food – equating to 250 million meals a year – is edible and readily available but goes uneaten. Instead, this food is currently sent away for generating energy from waste, anaerobic digestion, or animal feed.

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

It is absolutely right that we end the scandal of food waste and this substantial funding will help that happen.

We want to build on the great work already being done by businesses, charities and volunteers. Perfectly good food should be on people's plates and not unnecessarily discarded.

The fund is open to organisations that receive surplus food to distribute to those who have a need in England. Applicants will need to show how they will help food businesses reduce their surplus in the long term.

The new scheme follows government's [£500,000 Food Waste Reduction Fund](#) to support the substantial reduction of food waste throughout England.

The Government has also recently [appointed philanthropist Ben Elliot as Food Surplus and Waste Champion](#) to help promote awareness of the issue and help drive down food waste from all sources. The appointment is key commitment in the government's recently-published Resources and Waste Strategy.

Food Surplus and Waste Champion Ben Elliot said:

Today's announcement is an exciting step which will turbocharge efforts to reduce the frankly unforgivable amount of food which goes to waste.

My role is all about championing this crucial issue and I'm convinced the significant amount of money the Government has made available will really help to amplify the good work which food redistribution companies do in this country.

Marcus Gover, Chief Executive of WRAP, said:

We welcome the setting up of this fund, which will help to accelerate the redistribution of surplus food from retailers and food manufacturers to people who can benefit from it. It builds on the great work in this area in recent years which has seen millions of meals' worth of food saved from waste, and which has benefited both society and the environment. It also supports the ambitions of Courtauld 2025 and the Food Waste Reduction Roadmap launched last year.

Redistribution is an important part of the comprehensive package of measures announced in the Resources and Waste Strategy which aims to tackle food waste holistically at all parts of the supply chain and in the home.

Today's announcement builds on government's [Resources and Waste Strategy](#) launched last month which sets out how government will introduce annual reporting of food surplus and waste by food businesses. Should progress be insufficient, we will consult on seeking legal powers to introduce mandatory targets for food waste prevention.

The Resources and Waste Strategy also sets out how government will ensure weekly collections of food waste, which is often smelly and unpleasant, for every household – restoring weekly collections in some local authorities, subject to consultation.

Food businesses interested in redistributing surplus food can contact their local redistribution organisation to see how they can help.

The grant closes on the 20 February.

Further information

- In 2017, [205,000 tonnes of surplus food in the retail and food manufacturing sectors was wasted](#). Some of the surplus is difficult to minimise, costly in that it would need to be reworked or repackaged, and some surplus would not be edible. It is estimated by WRAP that 100,000 tonnes of this is both accessible and edible with the remaining being more difficult to redistribute.

- The pilot will run in 2019/20, drawing on £15 million additional funding the Treasury have allocated to Defra to tackle food waste. Any future funding would be subject to the Spending Review.
- A food redistribution organisation is one that collects surplus food from food businesses and delivers it to those who have a need.
- Food waste in the UK totals 10.2 million tonnes per year, of which 1.8 million tonnes comes from food manufacture, 1 million from the hospitality sector, and 260,000 from retail, with the remainder from households.

Information to applicants

- The grant will be advertised via the [Bravo portal](#) and will be live from the 11 January 2019.
- Potential applicants should have a historical record with a minimum of 2 years' service of distributing surplus food in order that the Authority can satisfy itself that the necessary personnel, contacts and infrastructure is in place to collect and distribute within the timeframe FY 2019/2020.
- Successful applicants can cover their distribution and administration costs, which will include an auditing requirement to ensure value for money.

[Press release: Unqualified Immigration Adviser Receives Suspended Sentence](#)

On Wednesday 12 December 2018 at Westminster Magistrates Court, Ms Namrata THAKKAR aged 37 years of Priory Gardens, London, Acton, pleaded guilty to two counts of providing unregulated immigration advice and services between 1 January 2016 and 18 March 2017.

Namrata Thakkar was employed as a recruitment consultant/immigration adviser between May 2012 and January 2017. As part of her employment she was required to be regulated by the OISC to provide immigration advice and assistance to persons recruited from all over the world to work in the UK. When her employment was terminated she continued to provide immigration advice, which she was no longer qualified to provide.

She was sentenced to 12 weeks' imprisonment, suspended for one year. She was also ordered to pay prosecution costs of £1500 and a victim surcharge of £115.

On sentencing District Judge Blake, said,

"I see these as very serious offences where the starting point for sentence is one of custody....I give you credit for the guilty pleas, the considerable

mitigation that you have repaid the fees charged, and your deteriorating health issues”

Speaking about the decision, Deputy Immigration Services Commissioner Dr Ian Leigh said,

“These are serious offences that are aggravated by incompetent service ... and I am pleased with the outcome in this case.”

Notes to the Editor

1. The OISC is an independent public body, established under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, to regulate the provision of immigration advice and services in the UK.
2. For further information contact Victoria Bovill-Lamb, Manager Investigations and Intelligence Team at the OISC on 0207 211 1591.

Press release: Unqualified Immigration Adviser Receives Suspended Sentence

Former adviser convicted

News story: Fatal accident, Twerton

At around 22:04 hrs on 1 December 2018, a passenger travelling on a train from Bath to Bristol struck her head on a tree branch near to Twerton, about 1.5 miles (2.4 km) west of Bath Spa station. The train was travelling at about 85 mph (137 km/h) and the passenger sustained fatal injuries.

The train was the 20:30 Paddington to Exeter service formed of a GWR High Speed Train (HST). Witness evidence indicates that the passenger was standing at a door on the side facing away from the other track. The door was fitted with an opening droplight window, which is used to access the door handle fitted to the outside of the door. A yellow ‘Caution’ label above the door states ‘Do not lean out of window when train is moving’. The window was reported to have been opened and the passenger had her head out of the window.

Our investigation will encompass examination of the measures in place to control the risks from persons leaning out of train windows, including the threat from vegetation.

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry, the British Transport Police or by the industry's regulator, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

We will publish our findings, including any recommendations to improve safety, at the conclusion of our investigation. This report will be available on our website.

You can [subscribe](#) to automated emails notifying you when we publish our reports.

[News story: UK business on the menu: The South East set for a record year, says Liz Truss](#)

- Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Liz Truss, visits wine and cheesemakers in the South East to highlight the success of home-grown produce and their economic potential
- Minister champions local businesses in the South East and urge them to take advantage of global exporting opportunities

Today (11 January 2019), visiting Winterdale Cheesemakers who are whetting local appetites with its award-winning Kentish cheese, and Hush Heath Wine Estate who specialise in sparkling rosé, Liz Truss will champion the success of the UK food and drink industries.

The UK cheese sector is going from strength to strength in terms of export demand, highlighting the economic opportunities available to businesses large and small from new markets.

Latest figures show that cheese exports alone were worth over £600 million to the UK economy, rising by nearly a quarter in 2017 driven by increased demand from Asian markets.

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Liz Truss said:

The South East is leading the way as one of the UK's strongest

exporting regions, offering impressive local-grown produce.

People around the world enjoy the best of British cheese and wine and we want this success to continue, ensuring UK businesses have every opportunity to increase their trade which will lead to more jobs and higher wages.

The South East is the UK's strongest region for exports, exporting the highest value of goods in of any UK region. Since 2010 employment is higher and unemployment has also fallen faster in the South East than in London, with over 360,000 more people in employment and 140,000 more businesses.