



# PLATE UP FOR GLASGOW

**Make a difference one dish at a time.**

12 October - 12 November 2021

Hospitality Food  
Waste Campaign

## Evaluation Report

By

Fiona Inglis, Partnership Manager and Content Lead  
and

Rebecca Ricketts, Campaign Lead

Pitch Perfect Consulting Ltd  
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In partnership with:



## Executive Summary

Plate up for Glasgow was Scotland's first hospitality-led food waste campaign, designed to highlight the global issue of food waste and encourage hospitality businesses in Glasgow to act on reducing Scotland's environmental impact. Generating over 55.5 million opportunities to see, the campaign ran between October 12 – November 12, 2021, coinciding with the build up to, and duration of, the UN's COP26 climate conference, that was held in the city.

Collaborating with some of Glasgow's most loved venues, the campaign challenged businesses to offer at least one low-waste dining or drink menu option. Each Plate up for Glasgow dish or drink was created specifically to send as little food waste to landfill as possible, whilst also encouraging innovation and provoking long term sustainable changes to business practices.

A total of 41 venues took part in Plate up for Glasgow with a broad range of business types represented, including cafes, restaurants, and bars. Over the five-week period, data returned by 19 of the 41 venues found that 4,192 low-waste 'Food Hero' dishes and drinks had been ordered by guests. While this level of impact is significant in itself, it is important to note that it remains a stark under-representation of the actual number of dishes sold. Furthermore, with 88% of venues committed to keeping their campaign dish on the menu in the future, it is clear that Plate up for Glasgow had a positive short-term and long-term impact in reducing Glasgow hospitality's food waste output.

Clearly, Plate up for Glasgow proved that there is a real appetite within the hospitality sector for sustainable change. Interviews with venues found that participation in the campaign benefited businesses in a range of ways. To highlight, as well as reducing their environmental impact and making financial savings by reducing the amount of food being sent to landfill, many businesses saw higher levels of engagement both between staff and customers, and between in-house teams. Plate up for Glasgow also provided training and educational opportunities and inspired venues to look

at other areas of their menu, and wider business operations where sustainability can be improved.

As a pilot campaign, and operating within a limited budget, there were a number of areas where Plate up for Glasgow could have been strengthened. Data capture and collection from businesses relating to food waste and financial savings was particularly challenging. As a result, the true scale of the business profit gained by rerouting food from the bin, and the volume of food that was rerouted, remains based on best estimates and anecdotal evidence.

The challenges faced by Plate up for Glasgow when engaging with businesses, including accessing consistent data, did however provide insight into a number of wider barriers faced by the hospitality sector, when looking to enhance their sustainability. Key areas where the industry would benefit from greater support include: a dedicated online sustainability resource where businesses have access to information about funding opportunities and grants; sustainability consultancy and on-the-ground industry tailored advice; external investment and promotion of a recruitment drive to compensate for labour shortages; and financial incentive schemes for businesses, encouraging and supporting businesses willing to invest in sustainable practices.

# 1. Introduction

This chapter sets the scene on the global issue of food waste, the scale of food waste within the hospitality sector, and the financial and environmental benefits of reducing waste. The chapter moves on to discuss why a hospitality-led food waste campaign is necessary, and the overall aims of Plate up for Glasgow.

## 1.1 What is Plate up for Glasgow?

Piloted by Glasgow Chamber of Commerce through its Circular Glasgow initiative, funded by Experience Glasgow Food and Drink Regional Group and supported by Zero Waste Scotland, Plate up for Glasgow is Scotland's first hospitality-led food waste campaign. Plate up for Glasgow was designed to highlight the global issue of food waste and encourage hospitality businesses to act on reducing Scotland's impact.

We collaborated with some of Glasgow's most loved venues and challenged them to offer at least one low-waste menu option during the month-long campaign period. Each Plate up for Glasgow dish or drink, known as a "Food Hero" dish or drink, was created specifically to send as little food waste to landfill as possible (see section 2.2), whilst also encouraging innovation and provoking long term sustainable changes to business practices.



## 1.2 What is food waste?

Despite being a globally recognised problem, “food waste” does not have a single universally accepted definition. This has led to varying boundaries of what might be considered food waste. Clearly, this has implications for research and policy makers, as inconsistencies during data collection, reporting, and forecasting the volume and cost of the waste are common.

In saying that, the most commonly accepted definition of food waste comes from the EU’s FUSIONS project. That is,

***“Food waste is any food, and inedible parts of food, removed from the food supply chain to be recovered or disposed (including composted, crops ploughed in/not harvested, anaerobic digestion, bio-energy production, co-generation, incineration, disposal to sewer, landfill or discarded to sea).”***

(FUSIONS, 2016).

This definition is a significant one as it considers food waste to be not only the edible parts of food, but also inedible by-products of food such as animal bones and skin. With this in mind, Plate up for Glasgow sought to actively target hospitality food waste that was edible, as well as furthering the life of “inedible parts of food” (such as used coffee grounds and fruit peels). Doing so ensured businesses rerouted safe to consume produce from landfill, or where inedible, maximised the full potential of the item before finally being discarded.

## 1.3 How big a problem is food waste?

Food waste is a critical global issue, owing to its impact on social, environmental, and economic concerns. And, as has been demonstrated with the recent COP26 climate conference that took place in Glasgow (1 – 12 November 2021), it has become an increasingly emotionally charged one.

Approximately one-third of all food produced is wasted (FAO, 2015 and Munesue et al., 2015), which equates to roughly 1.3 billion tonnes of food waste worldwide (Gustavsson et al., 2011). At the same time, 10% of the world's population goes hungry.

Even as a relatively small country, Scotland still generates a substantial volume of food waste. Based on the latest data, **current annual waste estimates for Scotland comes to 1.35 million tonnes – costing Scottish councils £85 million, and Scottish households an average of £470.**

As well as the social problems presented by food waste, there are significant environmental ones, as it contributes to land degradation, land exploitation, and, crucially, has a substantial impact on climate change.

Putting food waste's environmental impact into context, based on 2011 data, the FAO (2015) reported that **if “food waste” was a country, it would be the third highest greenhouse gas (GHG) emitter in the world**, following China and the USA. Decomposing food releases a number of GHGs into the atmosphere, including methane, which is responsible for trapping approximately 80% more heat than CO<sub>2</sub>, making it a real driver of global warming – and a bigger driver of global warming than plastics.

## 1.4 How big an issue is food waste for the hospitality sector?

According to data published by the UK Government, the overwhelming majority of food that is wasted comes from our homes (House of Lords Library, 2021). At 70%, it is clear that more must be done to reduce domestic food waste and encourage households to be more mindful of the food they are throwing out.

However, research shows that **the hospitality sector is fast becoming a key area of concern**, as its contribution to total global food waste has been increasing in the recent past, reaching almost 12% (Dhir et al., 2020). To highlight, WRAP has reported that across the UK “around 1.1 million tonnes of food waste arises in the



hospitality and food service sector each year” (WRAP, 2020, p.11). Putting this into context, this equates to almost **one-fifth of all food bought in by hospitality businesses being wasted.**

**In Scotland,** Zero Waste Scotland (ZWS) calculated that **the equivalent of one in every six meals that are served are being wasted** (ZWS, 2019). Furthermore, with the trend in dining-out on the up, as a result of rising disposable incomes and more accessible hospitality options (Wang et al., 2017), hospitality food waste is becoming a growing problem for developing countries as well as industrialised nations (Dhir et al., 2020).

## 1.5 Food waste in light of Brexit and Covid-19

Both Brexit and Covid-19 have highlighted the fragility of our food systems and food supply chains, all of which have a knock-on effect on food waste. As the UK left the EU, and complications with border-checks on imports led to lengthy backlogs, it was estimated that almost 30 lorryloads of food could have been wasted every day (Holmes, 2021). With lorries carrying approximately 30 tonnes worth of food each, this not only results in an enormous amount of good food going straight to landfill, but huge financial implications and millions of pounds worth of lost resources. Meanwhile, copious amounts of crops have been left to rot in fields as farmers struggle with labour shortages, traditionally filled by seasonal workers coming to the UK from Europe.

Multiple Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns led to significant food waste and lost resources for the hospitality sector, as businesses were forced to close overnight. Today, similar labour shortage problems, compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic, have impacted food supply chains with many retailers and hospitality businesses struggling to fill shelves and secure menu order requirements.

## 1.6 Why Plate up for Glasgow?

Plate up for Glasgow was designed to have a positive impact on a number of national and international food waste ambitions. In 2019 **the Scottish Government set** out its Food Waste Reduction Action Plan, with **the target of reducing the country's food waste output by 33% by 2025**. By working hand in hand with Glasgow's hospitality sector, Plate up for Glasgow sought to directly impact the volume of food wasted in the sector by raising awareness of the issue and changing practices. Furthermore, in order to meet the 2025 Courtauld Agreement – a voluntary food and water waste agreement of which the Scottish Government is a signatory – it is reported that savings of 115k tonnes of food waste would be required by the UK's hospitality and food service sector alone (WRAP, 2020).

As well as the Scottish Government's targets, the United Nation's (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have also highlighted the need to reduce food waste. Promoted as a "call for action" by global actors (UN, 2021a), the SDGs consist of a number of goals and targets for nations to work towards, with the objective of creating more sustainable and fairer living standards for all. SDG 12 emphasises "sustainable consumption and production patterns" (UN, 2021b), with Target 12.3 aiming to "halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains" (UN, 2021b). More responsible food use and waste management will also positively contribute to SDG 2 by enhancing food security and promoting sustainable agriculture (UN, 2021c).

Plate up for Glasgow also identified the need to help rebuild the hospitality sector through green recovery. **Food waste costs the Scottish hospitality sector approximately £212 million each year, equating an average of £10,000 per business**. Clearly, it doesn't make business sense to pay for ingredients just to then throw them away. So why does it happen? Plate up for Glasgow sought to engage with hospitality businesses to find out the main reasons for food waste and how they can best be tackled.

## 1.7 What are Plate up for Glasgow's key aims?

Upon launching Plate up for Glasgow, the campaign strived to achieve a number of key aims. These were:

- Reduce food waste in hospitality businesses.
- Raise business awareness to the financial benefits of working more sustainably and adopting more circular practices.
- Highlight business benefits of working with local producers and suppliers, for a more resilient food supply chain and prosperous local economy.
- Raise public awareness of food waste and help reduce food waste in the home.
- Inspire long term change in hospitality practices and consumer behaviour.

## 1.8 Supporting City and local stakeholders

In addition to supporting both global and The Scottish Government's ambitions in addressing food waste, Plate up for Glasgow also played a key role in supporting and delivering on the objectives of several City and local stakeholders, including:



### Experience Glasgow Food & Drink

The newly formed regional food group Experience Glasgow Food & Drink has secured funding from Scotland Food and Drink to champion local produce. Experience Glasgow Food and Drink is an extension of Experience Glasgow, the umbrella organisation for the hospitality and tourism sector in the city and aims to grow its thriving food and drink network. The group aims to support food and drink businesses in the local area, delivering on strategic projects and supporting innovative engagement campaigns, such as Plate up for Glasgow, to raise the profile of the sector and work towards a recovery from Covid-19.

*"In the year when our food safety nets were taken from us, there has never been a greater urgency for food recovery. As a small business, working to recover from the pandemic, it's an opportunity to reimagine our urban food landscape."*

**Giovanna Eusebi, Owner,  
Eusebi Restaurant and Deli**



### Glasgow City Council Circular Route Map for Glasgow 2020 – 2030 and Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, Circular Glasgow

Working in partnership with Glasgow Chamber of Commerce's Circular Glasgow initiative and Zero Waste Scotland, this route map aims to address the complex issues entrenched into the mind-set of a throwaway society.

The circular economy is a direct challenge to the 'take-make-waste' mentality of the linear economy. In a circular economy waste is minimised and resources maximised through long-lasting design, maintenance, repair, reuse, re-manufacturing, recycling and up-cycling. A circular food economy changes the current food system by increasing access to nutritious food and finding ways of repurposing food that is usually thrown out.

With circular economy forefront of mind, Plate up for Glasgow worked alongside businesses to quantify waste, raising awareness, and identifying tangible circular opportunities such as rethinking existing ingredients, extending the shelf life of products, and utilising surplus food otherwise destined for landfill.

*“We are encouraging businesses and consumers alike to get involved with the Plate up for Glasgow project as our city continues to deliver innovative circular business solutions – with its great chefs, cooks and restaurants in the build-up to COP26. If we all adopted just one small change, we’d dramatically reduce the amount of food waste ending up in landfill, making a significant difference with minimum effort.”*



**Alison McRae, Senior Director,  
Glasgow Chamber of Commerce.**



### Glasgow Food Policy Partnership

This partnership brings many diverse partners together, including Glasgow City Council, Zero Waste Scotland, and Glasgow Chamber of Commerce to positively affect the quality of people’s lives through the urban food systems in the city. The progressive charter from this group resonates firmly with the Glasgow’s sustainable message about food and its production being good for the planet, good for workers, and good for local businesses, all core to Plate up for Glasgow’s ambitions.



### VisitScotland, Glasgow

Plate up for Glasgow was selected by VisitScotland to showcase how regional tourism and the hospitality sector can be a “Force for Good.” The campaign reminded everyone how important tourism is to the local economy, to the wellbeing of Scotland as a whole and the development of a sustainable future.

## 2. Plate up for Glasgow: overview of the campaign in practice

As outlined in Section 1.7, Plate up for Glasgow was launched with the ambition of fulfilling a number of overarching aims. As a result, the campaign adopted a multi-pronged approach for best tackling these key focus areas. This Section provides a comprehensive overview of Plate up for Glasgow, including when and where the campaign took place, what hospitality venues had to do to take part, and public and industry stakeholder focussed content.

### 2.1 Where and when did Plate up for Glasgow take place?

Piloted as the first hospitality-led food waste campaign in Scotland, Plate up for Glasgow worked exclusively with hospitality venues within the city of Glasgow. Glasgow was chosen as the pilot area. Being our home city and having strong connections to a diverse and innovative range of hospitality venues and stakeholders, whilst being the host city of COP26, made it the natural choice.

Whilst working hand in hand with hospitality businesses in Glasgow, other aspects of the campaign were open to those irrespective of geographical location. For example, our 'Become a Food Hero at Home' content, including tips for reducing food waste in the home, were encouraged for households everywhere.

The campaign ran between 12 October – 12 November 2021, totalling a period of five weeks. These dates were chosen to coincide with the run up to, and the duration of COP26, the United Nations Climate Change Conference, which took place in Glasgow between 31 October and 12 November 2021.

## 2.2 What was required of the venues to take part?

We challenged restaurants, bars, and cafes to come up with at least one “low waste” dish or drink – designed to send as little food to landfill as possible.

To ensure consistency throughout the campaign, all venues were asked to come up with a dish or drink based on at least one of the following four parameters:

### 1. Rethinking existing menu items

(E.g. using the parts of ingredients that would not always make it to the plate, such as vegetable stalks leaves and meat offcuts).

### 2. Showcasing food preservation techniques

(E.g. drying, pickling, smoking, fermenting, to save produce that may be nearing end of life and prematurely wasted).

### 3. Using unfashionable cuts of meat

(E.g. the nose-to-tail approach to butchery).

### 4. Creating a dish from surplus or donated food

(E.g. creating dishes from ‘surprise’ ingredients that have been donated by suppliers who simply have too much stock that won’t be distributed in time).

To mitigate greenwashing, all venues taking part in the campaign had to submit their proposed low waste dish through an application process. All applications were reviewed by our team, including an external chef, to ensure their offerings were strong enough to meet our entry criteria and showcase some of the best innovative techniques. Throughout the campaign period each of our participating venues were visited regularly by our Partnership Manager and Campaign Lead to ensure that they were keeping up with the campaign’s messaging and standards.

## 2.3 Who participated?

41 hospitality venues across the city took part in Plate up for Glasgow. A full list of venues is provided at the end of the report.

These venues comprised a broad range of business types, including cafes, bars, pubs, restaurants, takeaways, a brewery, and global retailer IKEA. Many cuisines were represented, from high end fine dining and cocktail bars to lunchtime salad bars and plant based only menus. An exciting range of international cuisines were also on offer, including Italian, South-East Asian, Thai, European, and, of course, Scottish.

Venues were located throughout Glasgow, including the city centre, West End, East End and South Side, and covered a variety of price points. Securing participating venues from a broad range of business types, cuisine types, geographical spread and price points was fundamental for maximising the potential reach of those looking to take part in the campaign, both hospitality venues and customers.

## 2.4 The Hospitality Toolkit

With the core aim of supporting the hospitality campaign during its post-pandemic recovery, Plate up for Glasgow was conscious of working collaboratively with businesses. With this in mind, the Plate up for Glasgow team met with several industry leaders and stakeholders to gather insight into the biggest challenges for reducing food waste. Working together an effective strategy for reducing food waste was explored and developed.

From this research process, the Plate up for Glasgow team created a [Hospitality Toolkit](#), which outlined the key aims of the campaign, the business and environmental benefits of reducing food waste, and the parameters of what the campaign would look like in practice. The Toolkit also provided tips, example recipes, and practical resources for hospitality businesses who were looking for additional support in participating in the campaign and was designed to make it as straight forward as possible for venues to take part.

To highlight how sustainable practices can be implemented, and the positive impact that reducing food waste can have on businesses, a number of [case studies](#) were put forward. These included bars and restaurants from around the world that have made sustainable and circular practice their business, providing tangible examples of those leading the way in the hospitality sector. The Toolkit was made accessible to businesses through the Plate up for Glasgow website after registering their interest in taking part. (On launching the campaign, the Hospitality Toolkit became an open resource for all, i.e. no registration was required).

## 2.5 Ultimate Guide to Reducing Food Waste at Home

As touched on in Section 1.7, Plate up for Glasgow sought to reduce food waste not just in the hospitality sector, but within homes as well. As a result, the campaign featured an [Ultimate Guide](#) to reducing food waste in the home, similar to the principles found in the Hospitality Toolkit. This guide was designed to be informative and inspiring and was full of easy tips and tricks to reduce food waste for all the family, including how-to videos. Engaging the wider public was an important part of Plate up for Glasgow, as the majority of food waste in Scotland is generated within the home. It was also important in educating and sparking behavioural change as consumers, when dining out.

## 2.6 Superstar Suppliers and the Drinks Cabinet

One of the key challenges faced by the hospitality sector since reopening following the Covid-19 national lockdowns has been the unpredictability of the food supply chain. All of the hospitality businesses we engaged with throughout the campaign highlighted the struggles they continue to face when placing orders to fulfil their existing menus. With the lack of product availability, impacted by the coronavirus and compounded by challenges around Brexit, Plate up for Glasgow looked at the increasingly important role

that local suppliers have in enhancing sustainability, reducing food waste and strengthening food business resilience. With this in mind, the campaign sought to showcase a number of prominent local [food producers](#) and [drinks brands](#) which have sustainable and environmentally sensitive practices at the heart of what they do. Not only did this highlight some the exceptional food being produced in Scotland but helped to draw business' attention to the many benefits that can be found by supporting a more localised food supply chain.

## 2.7 Food for Thought

As a hospitality-led campaign, looking at the issue of food waste very much from a business lens as well as an environmental one, Plate up for Glasgow was keen to provide a platform, [Food for Thought](#), for wider industry discussion around the issue of sustainability in hospitality. To promote debate, gain insight and share ideas, the campaign ran a series of thought pieces by influential industry stakeholders, including The Ellen MacArthur Foundation, Zero Waste Scotland, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, Experience Glasgow Food and Drink, and chefs and business owners in the city.

As well as discussing some of the key challenges and highlighting business opportunities for those working in the field, these thought pieces were also designed to help raise public awareness and contribute to the wider discussions in line with the COP26 climate agenda.



### 3. Plate up for Glasgow's communications and digital marketing strategy

As a hospitality-led campaign, Plate up for Glasgow, was a designed with engagement and communication at the heart of its strategy. To reflect its importance, a separate Communications and Marketing report has been compiled and **can be found on page 48**.

### 4. Methodology

To assess whether Plate up for Glasgow was successful in achieving its aims, both qualitative and quantitative data was collected across various aspects of the campaign activity. This chapter highlights which data was captured, the data collection method, and discusses the strengths and limitations of the data put forward in the report.

#### 4.1 How data was collected: participating hospitality venue stakeholder meetings

Collecting qualitative and quantitative data directly from the hospitality venues was an integral part of the campaign measurement process. As such, it was important for the Project Lead and Partnership Manager to establish good channels of communication with key figures in each venue, including business owners, general managers, and head chefs, to extract valuable insights. This was done through a series of preliminary phone calls and emails, before setting up face-to-face meetings with relevant contacts within the business.

Maintaining regular in-person visits and email correspondence with businesses was crucial in keeping the campaign forefront of mind within the venue, as well as building a strong working relationship with each hospitality stakeholder.

## 4.2 Hospitality venues: quantitative data

Prior to the launch of Plate up for Glasgow, each venue was requested to provide us with a number of quantitative data points by the end of the campaign period. These were designed to best quantify the public's immediate engagement with the campaign, and included:

- Number of Plate up for Glasgow Food Hero dishes or drinks sold over the campaign period.
- Number of covers (guests) over the campaign period.
- Indication of public engagement with Plate up for Glasgow related social media posts.

Assessing the number of Food Hero dishes sold was necessary to measure both the volume of potential food waste diverted from going to landfill, as well as an estimate of how much money each venue saved as a result of the campaign. Establishing the number of covers each venue had during the campaign period was also important in gauging whether Plate up for Glasgow had a notable impact in driving customer footfall into businesses. Similarly, assessing social media engagement, and the nature of this engagement, was also key to analysing public perception and participation with the campaign.

## 4.3 Hospitality venues: qualitative data

Following the campaign, one-to-one meetings with each of the 41 participating venues were requested to discuss their experiences in taking part in Plate up for Glasgow. Meetings were scheduled during the two-week period directly after the campaign period only. Doing so allowed the Campaign Lead and Partnership Manager to capture insights when they were most relevant and fresh in the mind of the businesses. It was important to set a deadline on data collection, especially in light of Christmas, festive bookings and the inevitable refocus of venues. Of the 41 businesses contacted, a total of 25 agreed to meet, in person, and share insights with the Campaign Lead and Partnership Manager. During these meetings, valuable qualitative data was also recorded, including:

- Whether the venue continues to offer their Food Hero dish after the campaign's official end date?
- Whether the business experienced any unexpected benefits from taking part in Plate up for Glasgow, and if so, what?
- Whether there was anything that prevented the business taking part in the campaign as fully as they'd have liked to, and if so, what?

To ensure consistency of the data collected, each participating business was asked the same 12 questions about both Plate up for Glasgow and more general questions about sustainability within the workplace, including future aims and key barriers. Due to the nature of the line of questioning, data was comprised of primary first-hand evidence, anecdotal feedback from staff, and future business projections.

#### 4.4 How data was collected: site visits to participating venues

As well as communicating with key representatives from each business, members of the Plate up for Glasgow team carried out numerous unannounced venue site visits. This research method allowed the campaign team to collect observational data, designed to corroborate anecdotal and verbal feedback presented by the venues during the campaign period.

Visits were carried out on an ad hoc basis and were designed to replicate the Plate up for Glasgow experience that the public or a prospective diner would have when visiting the venue. Doing so allowed the team to see whether venues made use of the promotional printed collateral that had been requested and provided, whether venues had created and displayed any independent in-house promotional materials, and if so, what these looked like. Spontaneous site visits also allowed the Campaign Lead and Partnership Manager to make enquiries with front of house staff, to establish how informed they were about Plate up for Glasgow, in the same way a diner might ask about the campaign.



## 4.5 Strengths and limitations of the data collected

An area of the data collection that was particularly effective was that both the Protect Lead and the Partnership Manager forged strong working relationships with key figures in Glasgow's hospitality industry. This enabled Plate up for Glasgow to gain extensive qualitative insight into the challenges faced by the hospitality sector, including: re-opening post Covid-19 lockdowns, adapting to changes as a result of Brexit and delivery of hospitality during COP26 itself. As a result, the team were able to specifically tailor aspects of the campaign to make it as simple as possible for venues to participate, therefore broaden the reach of the campaign, promoting sustainable practices as widely as possible while maintaining set guidelines to ensure quality and consistency.

However, the data collected was not without its limitations. There were several major challenges when gathering data from hospitality businesses, particularly on the topic of food waste. These challenges included:

- Stakeholders not having access to relevant information, despite information being requested before and during the campaign period.
- Venue workforce being too stretched to effectively measure and monitor waste on a regular basis.
- Lack of communication between team members resulted in inconsistent data.
- Lack of staff knowledge and understanding on how to interpret and download data from existing systems.
- Lack of data returned from all venues, despite several requests.
- Confident that post campaign interviews could have been carried out with more than 25 venues had time and resourcing constraints not been an issue.
- Number of external variables which significantly impacted hospitality trade during the campaign period, including COP26, road closures and temporary venue closures.

Clearly, these factors made it difficult to achieve a consistent and complete representation of all businesses who took part in the campaign. However, it should be noted that these challenges are consistent with other studies involving the hospitality sector, and therefore not unique to Plate up for Glasgow (Inglis, 2021). Saying that, the data gathered from the 61% of venues who did return feedback served to highlight a number of consistent trends, including key examples of where Plate up for Glasgow had a positive impact across venues, as well as key issues that should be reviewed in the future.

## 5. Presentation and discussion of the results

This Chapter gives an overview of the data collected during the Plate up for Glasgow campaign along with a discussion of the key observations emerging from the research.

### 5.1 Number of Plate up for Glasgow dishes sold

Of the 25 venues interviewed, 19 venues returned data on the number of Plate up for Glasgow Food Hero dishes or drinks sold. From these 19 venues, a total of **4,192** campaign offerings were sold over the five-week period. Despite being a significant sum of dishes, it is important to bear in mind that with just under half of all venues who took part in the campaign returning their results, this figure is clearly a notable under representation of the number of low-waste offerings ordered by diners.

### 5.2 Amount of money saved by businesses as a result of Plate up for Glasgow

There were several facts that made it challenging to capture the data on how much money each venue saved from taking part in Plate up for Glasgow. These factors included, but are not limited to:

- Many venues offered more than one Food Hero dish or drink.
- Many venues regularly changed their Food Hero offering daily or weekly, depending on what food was available.
- Many Food Hero dishes or drinks were comprised of small amounts of varied produce, making it hard to accurately calculate.

Although it proved difficult to put an exact value of the amount of money saved by each participating venue, anecdotally, Plate up for Glasgow saw a wide range of ways the initiative successfully supported businesses in making savings, sharing ideas and generating sales.

**Savings:**

*"Through the campaign we've seen staff behavioural change and an increased understanding of the how surplus stock can have a detrimental impact to the business and climate. As a result, orders are now down by 30% and innovative new drink specials have been created to sell underperforming spirit sales."*

**Graeme Moffat,  
General Manager, Nonna Said**



*"Off the back of Plate up for Glasgow, the new drinks menu has been created using only edible or reusable garnishes, saving money and reducing our waste."*

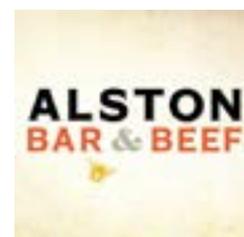
**Andy Gemmel, Manager,  
The Gate**



**Increased sales:**

*"With increased engagement and awareness around the agenda of food waste, staff felt more knowledgeable, and sales are reflective of that."*

**Euan Robb, Group Sales  
Manager, Alston Bar and Beef**



*“Plate up for Glasgow gave the trainee front of house students the opportunity to explain to customers the concept behind the campaign and discovered that ‘story telling’ significantly helped to sell their dishes!”*

**Carol Sailsbury, Chef Lecturer,  
City of Glasgow College**



*“Next time, we’d look to add more dishes to the campaign menu. With so many plates relevant to sustainable low waste messaging, it would be easy to adapt to a wider range of dishes. It might also be a good way to profile and drive sales towards our lower selling dining options.”*

**Noel O’Donnell, Manager, Mono**



**New revenue streams:**

Following the campaign, more venues are considering how bar waste can be incorporated into food dishes and vice versa, food waste into drinks.

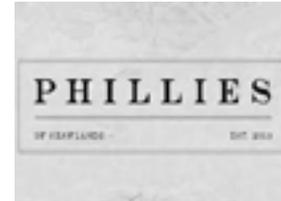
For example:

**The Duke’s Umbrella** uses the left over from berries and citrus from the kitchen to creating their “chopping board cordials.”

**Sprigg** created a new dish, redirecting broccoli stems from the bin to Szechuan pickled broccoli stalks deli pots.

**Driving business ideas through collaboration:**

*“We were able to draw inspiration from what the other venues were doing. We loved the idea The Gate had with using flat prosecco. It’s something we struggle with a lot here, if someone has opened a new bottle for one prosecco by the glass and then the whole bottle gets wasted. Now we know that we can do something with it, which is great.”*



**Gordon Erskine, General Manager, Phillies of Shawlands**

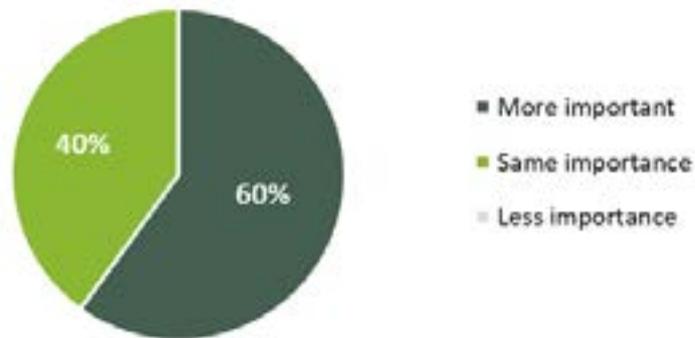
## 5.3 Changing the opinion on food waste within the hospitality sector

As outlined in Section 1.7, two of the key aims of Plate up for Glasgow were to:

- Reduce food waste in the hospitality sector
- Inspire long-term change in hospitality practices and consumer behaviour.

With this in mind, it was important to establish how successful Plate up for Glasgow had been in raising the issue of food waste within the sector and encouraging businesses to adopt some of the parameters of the campaign going forward.

How important is food waste to your business since taking part in Plate up for Glasgow?



Based on a total of 25 responses

Figure 1: How important businesses viewed the issue of food waste since taking part in Plate up for Glasgow.

During post-campaign interviews with venues, it was found that **60% of businesses now consider the need to reduce food waste as more important** than they did prior to taking part in Plate up for Glasgow (see Figure 1).

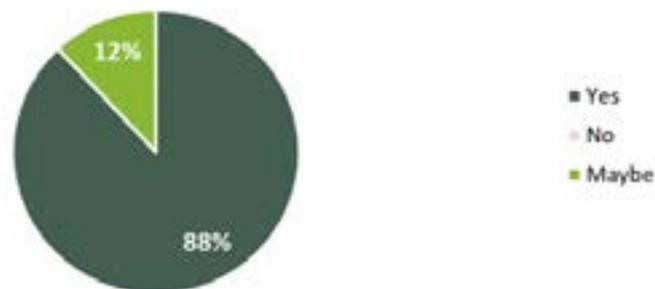
*“The campaign has created even more of a focus on addressing food waste. Thanks to Plate up for Glasgow, we no longer feel like a lone soldier. We now have a community of likeminded businesses all looking to share ideas and solutions.”*

**Giovanna Eusebi, Owner and Founder, Eusebi Restaurant and Deli**



Of the 40% of businesses who considered the need to reduce food waste to be of the same level of importance, it should be noted that many of these venues were already taking proactive steps to ensure kitchen practices are as sustainable as possible, including in-house butchery, menu specials, cross menu ingredients and food preservation techniques.

Will you continue to offer your Plate up for Glasgow dish/drink on the menu once the campaign has ended?



Based on a total of 25 responses

Figure 2: Proportion of venues who have committed to retaining their Plate up for Glasgow dish on the menu or creating a new dish in line with the campaign parameters.

While assessing the importance businesses placed on reducing food waste since participating in the campaign is insightful, and the results highly encouraging, it was important to assess whether this newfound engagement with food waste would translate into ongoing future action. As a result, businesses were asked whether they would keep their Plate up for Glasgow Food Hero dish or drink on their menu once the campaign had come to an end. As shown in Figure 2, data found that 88% of venues would either continue to offer their Plate up for Glasgow dishes or drink or introduce a new dish to the menu based on the four campaign parameters.

*"We'd certainly look to introduce a daily sustainable dish on the Scholars menu post the campaign. It's a fantastic way to educate diners, staff and students."*

**Carol Sailsbury, Chef Lecturer,  
City of Glasgow College**



*“Following the campaign, we are now looking at these principles across the whole menu. I think for us, it’s less about the way we use food waste and turning it into a whole dish, but more about how we use all of these off cuts for other purposes. Reworking things across the board.”*

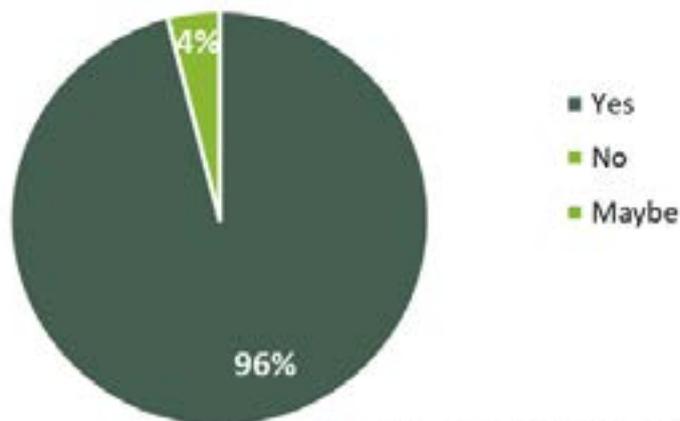


**Ronan Shaftoe, Head Chef,  
Bar Brett**

This shows, therefore, that Plate up for Glasgow has had a major impact in generating long-lasting change in hospitality businesses. Additionally, this highlights the visible immediate and far-reaching impact that a food sustainability campaign can have in inspiring change both in the short and long-term.

Having achieved such a high impact over a relatively short campaign period, it was considered important to assess whether participating business would be likely to take part in a similar campaign in the future.

**Would your business participate in a similar campaign to Plate up for Glasgow in the future?**



Based on a total of 25 responses

Figure 3: Proportion of businesses who would participate in a similar food waste campaign in the future.

Looking at Figure 3, data from the post-campaign interviews found that 96% of businesses would be happy to participate in a similar sustainability focused campaign led by the Plate up for Glasgow team in the future. This finding is highly significant as it highlights a number of important considerations for future practices. Firstly, it demonstrates that there is a real willingness from the hospitality sector to engage with the topic of sustainability. Secondly, it shows that, with committed external support, businesses have the capacity to adapt and implement work practices that reduce food waste within a short space of time, if provided with the necessary information. Thirdly, it highlights that by establishing strong relationships with businesses, and tailoring our approach in engagement and communication to a way that suits businesses in the industry, it is possible to mobilise and unify a sector that can traditionally be fragmented and hard to engage with (Inglis, 2021).

*“This was a well organised campaign that provided businesses with great support. There was a great camaraderie between all the venues taking part and we loved being a part of Plate up for Glasgow. We look forward to seeing what comes next!”*

**Giovanna Eusebi, Eusebi Restaurant and Deli**



## 5.4 Unexpected business benefits in taking part in Plate up for Glasgow

With an overwhelmingly positive reception from participating businesses of Plate up for Glasgow, it was important to assess what organisations felt the key benefits of taking part had been. Feedback pertaining to the *unexpected* benefits of taking part in the campaign (that is, aside from financial and environmental benefit of reducing food waste) is presented below. It should also be noted

that the responses given were not prompted or selected from a multiple-choice list but came directly from the representative during discussion.

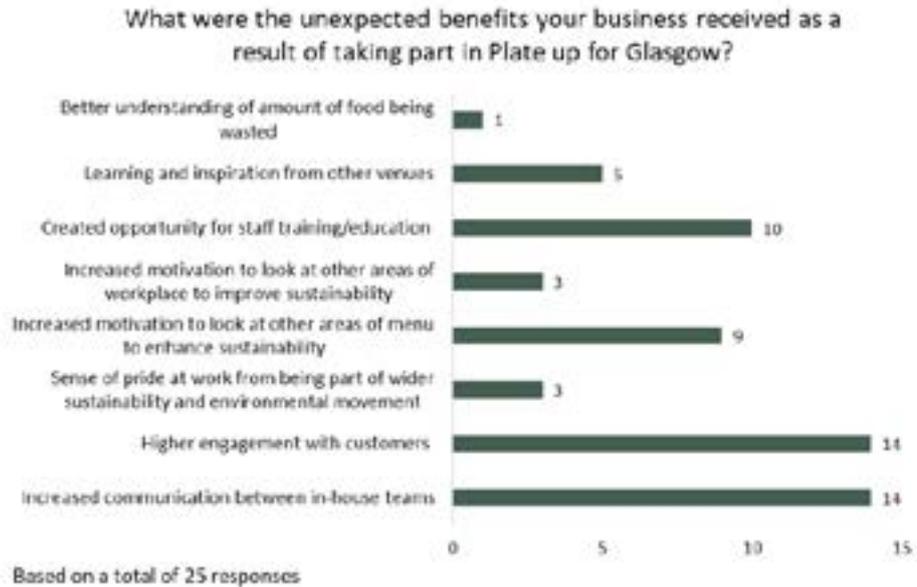


Figure 4: The range of unexpected benefits participating venues found by participating in Plate up for Glasgow.

From Figure 4, it is clear that over half of businesses (56%) found that Plate up for Glasgow gave them the opportunity for better engagement with their customers. Doing so reportedly added value to the business as it enabled them to develop a stronger relationship with guests. This was especially true when highlighting the work they are doing in sustainability – something of increasing importance to diners, particularly during the period of the COP26 climate conference, where the message of sustainability was heavily promoted across the media.

As well as enhanced communication with guests, another unexpected benefit that businesses experienced from Plate up for Glasgow was that it increased communication between different work teams within the venue. Respondents reported that the campaign opened up discussion between, for example, front-of-house and kitchen teams. This was a positive change for businesses, as it helped all staff to develop their understanding of kitchen and food preparation practices. As a result, teams improved their knowledge behind decision making, felt empowered to ask questions about food dishes, and became more engaged in the discussion about food waste.



*“Plate up for Glasgow gave our more junior members of the teams in kitchen a more in depth understanding of decision making behind reducing food waste. The campaign meant that they were seeing directly the choices that are made by the head chef in terms of what they were ordering and why.”*

**KA PAO**

**Rowan King, Operations Manager, Ka Pao**

Increased communication within in-house teams in hospitality venues is a particularly important outcome of Plate up for Glasgow, as recent research found that lack of internal communication was a key factor of avoidable food waste in Glasgow’s hospitality businesses (Inglis, 2021).

Similar to improved communication, interviews also highlighted that taking part in the campaign led to more team education and training. 40% of venues reported that introducing Plate up for Glasgow created opportunities for businesses to introduce sustainability and food waste training – something which was on their agenda but often as a lower priority, particularly with venues being so stretched and short staffed. However, it is clear that furthering the discussion about the need to reduce food waste, and the methods for doing so, had a further knock-on effect beyond educating staff members, as over a third of venues (36%) stated that Plate up for Glasgow has led them to looking at other areas of the menu where they can work to reduce food waste.

## 5.5 Factors that prevented venues from taking part as fully as they'd have liked

Working with fully operational but often very different businesses, the Plate up for Glasgow team were cognisant of the fact that venues may partake in the campaign with varying degrees of commitment. With this in mind, post-campaign discussions sought to assess what, if anything, prevented businesses from participating as fully as they'd have liked to. This was considered extremely important, both to gain deeper insight into some of the key challenges preventing businesses from working to reduce food waste more generally, as well as understanding where improvements could be made to the planning and running of a campaign in a similar vein, in the future.

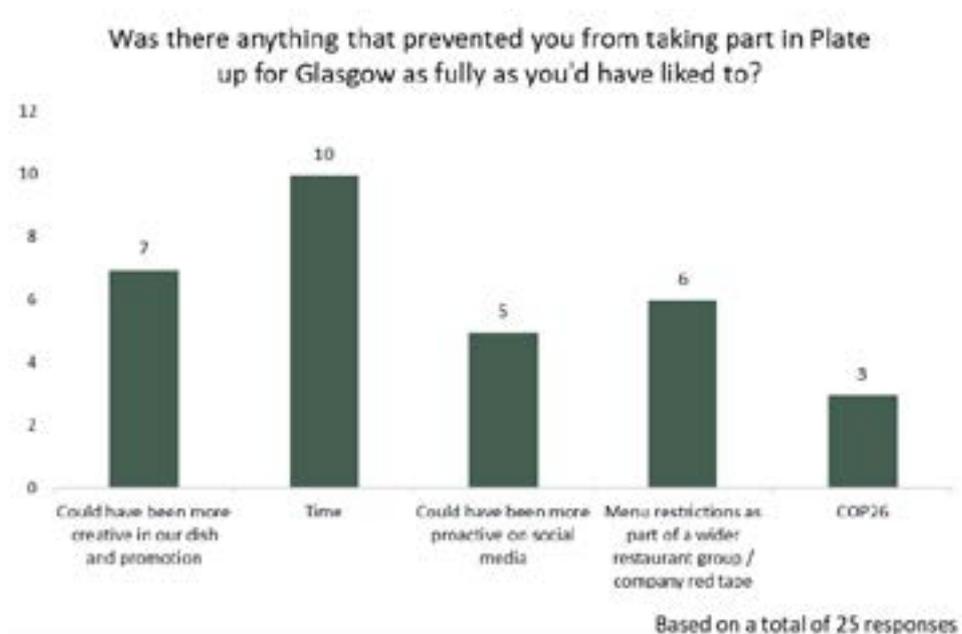


Figure 5: Factors which prevented businesses from taking part in Plate up for Glasgow as fully as they'd have liked to.

Looking at Figure 5, it is clear that having a lack of additional time to devote to Plate up for Glasgow was a key factor in some businesses not being as proactive as they'd anticipated when initially signing up to take part. With 40% of businesses citing "time" as a barrier, this is consistent with feedback relating to industry labour shortages and staffing challenges, resulting in stretched front of house and kitchen teams. In some cases, lack of time was also a result of external factors

such as new management adjusting to the role (The Hug and Pint), the opening of a new restaurant site (Ka Pao, Sprigg, Five March), supply issues and or unforeseen circumstances where venues had to close for periods of time, eg flooding caused by storm damage (Bowl) or Covid related issues.

One area which was frequently mentioned by venues as a limiting factor was not having enough resource or time to support the campaign via an “in-house” social media (20%) and physical promotion (28%). For example, some venues had dedicated marketing and social media teams, which allowed them to utilise dedicated resources to the promotional side of the campaign (The Finnieston, Porter and Rye, Chaophraya, Ox and Finch, Ka Pao, Nonna Said, Glaschu), and didn't impact the immediate operations of the running of service. However, for most venues, being small, independent businesses, social media tended to be handled by general managers (Hug and Pint, Mono, Bar Vini) or other senior members of staff, such as the business owner (The Gannet, Sprigg, The Battlefield Rest, The Prancing Stag). As a result, promotional support from individual venues tended to be limited due to time and competing operational commitments.

As well as social media, venues also felt there was probably more they could have done to promote the campaign in-house through the use of specials boards, sandwich boards, Plate up for Glasgow menu inserts and restroom posters. This finding was of particular interest to the Plate up for Glasgow team, as in-house promotion was a topic specifically discussed with each venue at pre-campaign recruitment meetings. Furthermore, with all venue visits taking place in person, the Plate up for Glasgow team was able to talk about the physical space with each business representative, all of whom were asked which type of promotional collateral would best suit their business. On the whole, these promotional materials were delivered, as requested. With this in mind, it seems clear that lack of time continued to have a knock-on effect with businesses' ability to consistently promote the campaign.

Despite the recognition of restricted budget, several venues also felt they could have benefited from a professional photographer to

better showcase their featured dish or drink, while also generating additional content for in-house social media support.

Another interesting insight was that businesses expressed the regret that they had not been as creative in their choice of Food Hero dish or drink as they could have. While venues had a clear understanding of what was required of them, with parameters and examples provided in the Hospitality Toolkit, what they appeared to miss, possibly due to the campaign being the first of its kind in Scotland, were tangible local examples in practice. With venues touching on enhanced creativity, this was particularly interesting as it suggests a real appetite to engage with the topic on a deeper level in the future – something which signals an increased motivation to reduce food waste. Furthermore, it chimes in with the findings in Figure 4, which highlighted that 20% of venues cited learning and taking inspiration from what other venues taking part in the campaign were doing as a real unexpected benefit.

It should also be noted that the more creative the Food Hero dishes and drink, the greater the level of interest and resultant venue coverage from the press and media. For example, The Duke's Umbrella's Pig Head Croquettes and Drygate's Spare Parts beer, brewed from surplus bread and fruits from a local supermarket were showcased through the press release and regularly featured.

## 5.6 Key challenges to reducing food waste and increasing overall sustainability in hospitality businesses

While the main focus of our post-campaign discussions with venues was their involvement in Plate up for Glasgow, it was also important to gain a deeper insight into the wider challenges in improving sustainability faced by hospitality businesses. With this in mind, businesses were asked what they considered the key barriers specific to their business operations to making sustainable changes.

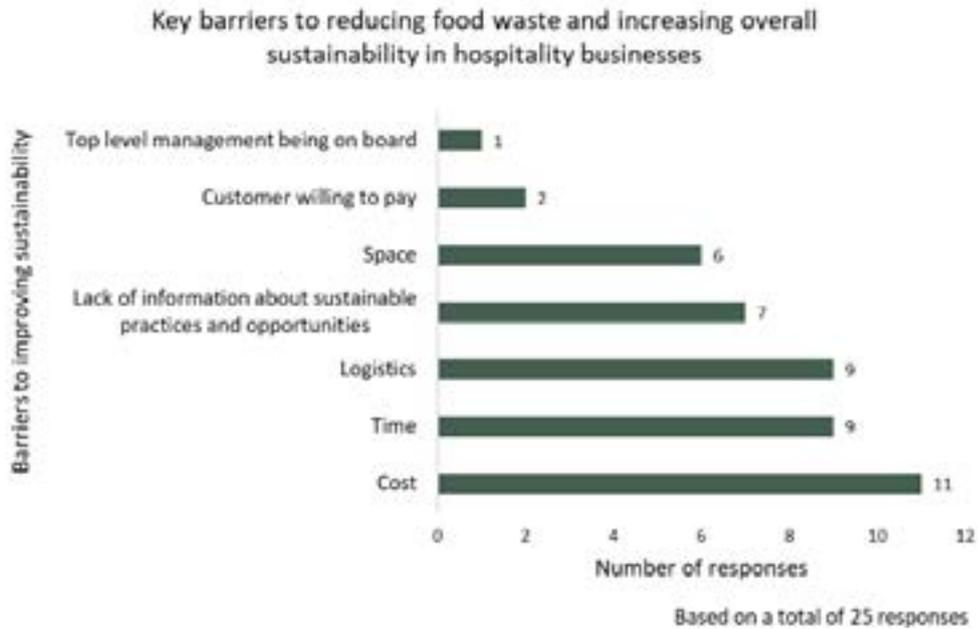


Figure 6: Key barriers to reducing food waste and improving sustainability in the workplace.

Looking at the data in Figure 6, it is evident that for almost half of venues interviewed, the additional cost to business was the biggest challenge preventing businesses from making changes to business practices to become more sustainable. Indeed, many venues cited the two financial benefits of Plate up for Glasgow as a key motivating factor in participating in the campaign – namely, that it was free to take part, and that it resulted in financial profit by extending the margin on menu items otherwise being wasted.

*“I thought the campaign and the idea was brilliant! I love that there was funding and support for this type of initiative and more of it can only be a good thing for the city. Keep it going! Thanks again and please involve us in future campaigns!”*

sprigg

**Tom McDermott,  
Business Owner, Sprigg**

As well as cost, time and logistical issues also present major challenges to businesses. As previously identified during discussion about participation with Plate up for Glasgow, businesses lack the time necessary to improve sustainability. This includes the time it takes to measure and monitor where change would be best placed, researching relevant sustainability solutions, training staff on new practices, and ultimately implementing operational change. Similarly, logistical issues pose a challenge to venues implementing changes to work towards food waste and improve sustainability. This was particularly apparent with businesses who highlighted the desire to participate in food redistribution schemes where they had surplus stock at the end of the day, or those who would be keen to make use of surplus donated foods going to waste by wholesalers, markets, and supermarkets.

Finally, it should be noted that a significant proportion of venues consulted cited a dearth of information about sustainability within the hospitality sector to be a main barrier. This includes lack of information about access to funding, financing, and grants for adopting sustainable practices, as well as information about recognised sustainable alternatives to practices, equipment, or suppliers and producers.

Overall, it was highly encouraging that the overwhelming majority of businesses expressed a real desire to improve sustainability within their business. With only one venue highlighting a lack of support from top level management as a barrier, it is clear that with adequate infrastructure and support in place, Glasgow's hospitality sector could take great steps to reducing their environmental impact.

*“On reflection, Plate up for Glasgow has me realising that it’s pretty incredible how much produce and valuable stock could be created from so little. If this approach was the basis of an entire menu, someone could be making some outstanding profits, not to mention salvage of waste!”*

**Chris Dougan, General Manager,  
Bar Vini**

The logo for Bar Vini, featuring the word "VINI" in a bold, red, sans-serif font.

## 6. Summary of key findings

Having reviewed all the data, a number of key findings emerged. These findings are summarised below, including key areas of success of Plate up for Glasgow and the main challenges faced by businesses when looking to reduce their food waste.

### 6.1 Plate up for Glasgow increased importance of reducing food waste in hospitality businesses

It is highly encouraging to see that for those venues who participated in Plate up for Glasgow, the campaign served to increase the level of importance they place on reducing food waste in their business. Raising awareness of the environmental and business impact of food waste was a key aim of the campaign, and suggests that the team were effective in crafting, delivering, and promoting the message. It is also rewarding to see that all but one venue would take part in a similar campaign in the future, highlighting the appetite for action from Glasgow's hospitality businesses. It should also be noted that the venue who opted not take part in a future campaign cited a lack of time and limited opening hours (three days a week), making them unable to fully commit in the same way other venues would.

### 6.2 Plate up for Glasgow has real environmental impact and inspired long-term change

It was incredibly rewarding to see that Plate up for Glasgow resulted in real environmental impact by reducing the amount of food that ended up in landfill. By encouraging 41 venues to offer at least one dish or drink that championed low waste techniques, Plate up for Glasgow made a real mark in creating and facilitating a low-waste movement by some of the city's best and most loved venues. Furthermore, of the 4,192 dishes recorded from the 19 venues who were able to provide sales data, it is clear that this is a significant under representation of the full extent of the impact the campaign had. Still, perhaps more significantly, Plate up for Glasgow achieved another fundamental aim of inspiring long-term change in

reducing food waste. To highlight, 88% of the 25 venues interviewed were committed to keeping their Plate up for Glasgow dish, or a dish inspired by the campaign, on their menu once the campaign officially came to an end. As a result, it is without doubt that Plate up for Glasgow had an important positive short-term and long-term impact on Glasgow's hospitality sector, by boosting profit, reducing environmental impact, and furthering sustainable work practices.

### 6.3 Plate up for Glasgow strengthened communication between multiple stakeholder groups

Another key success to come from business participation in Plate up for Glasgow was that it played a fundamental role in strengthening communication between a number of industry stakeholder groups. Perhaps this was most apparent within the venues themselves, with in-house teams engaging with each other in a way that they wouldn't have previously. Doing so served to further knowledge, enhance team cohesion, and sparked inspiration from team members who felt empowered to contribute new ideas. Additionally, Plate up for Glasgow was pivotal in increasing communication between hospitality staff and their guests. For the businesses who already operated with sustainability at the heart of their business model, discussing their involvement in the campaign allowed them to really promote to guests the extensive work they already do. This reportedly served as a powerful tool in promoting and marketing themselves as a business taking environmental action seriously, particularly during the global discussion surrounding COP26.

Finally, Plate up for Glasgow served to strengthen communication between hospitality businesses themselves. Through events such as the campaign press launch, which saw nine venues come together under one roof to showcase their Food Hero offerings, business stakeholders were able to connect with and support each other.

*"I must say it's the first time I've witnessed such a collaborative, unified and visible stand against climate change from the city's hospitality industry."*

**Cate Devine, Award-winning food writer and seasoned journalist.**

This is something which was picked up on during post-campaign interviews, with a number of venues saying that participating in Plate up for Glasgow made them feel part of a wider community – something, which has otherwise been lacking.

*"Culturally, it's important for everyone to change. Plate up for Glasgow helped to raise this level of awareness."*



**Seumas McInnes, Owner,  
Café Gandolfi**

## 6.4 Identification of key barriers to moving the industry towards a more sustainable future

A number of factors were identified as being key barriers for businesses looking to make sustainable operational changes to business practices. These included:

- Cost
- Time
- Logistics
- Lack of information

While these may not be surprising in themselves, it is clear that many of these barriers have a real knock-on effect to other areas, making it particularly difficult to act. As a result, they present a complex challenge for external stakeholders looking to target future policy in this arena.

## 7. Recommendations for future practice

Upon reflection of the data and invaluable discussions with industry stakeholders, a number of recommendations have been put forward, both for the future practice of a similar campaign, as well as key target areas for where future intervention would be best placed in making effective change.

### 7.1 Future recommendations for a similar food waste campaign

Having reviewed the planning, execution, and consolidation of the Plate up for Glasgow campaign, a number of recommendations have been put forward that would serve to further strengthen a similar project if undertaken in the future, chiefly:

- More uniform and rigorous data collection.
- More tightened focus on fewer venues.
- Dedicated campaign communication and marketing resource.

Despite best efforts being made by the Campaign Lead and Partnership Manager through extensive communication with each venue across the following stages of the campaign

- at the point of recruitment
- during the campaign activity period
- the weeks after the campaign concluded

collecting data from businesses was a real challenge, or, in many cases, simply not returned. This was disappointing as each venue was asked to provide the same data at the point of committing to taking part (see Section 4), and it was politely requested on a number of occasions. With this in mind, those seeking to run a hospitality campaign in the future may consider making return-of-data a mandatory requirement of guaranteed participation for the full duration of the campaign period.

Doing so may present several additional challenges, such as having to remove venues from formally taking part, which would see a reduced overall environmental impact. However, it would serve to maintain consistency and accountability for those who were fully committed to taking part.

Similarly, it is recommended that if running a similar campaign over the same timeframe, and with the same level of funding and resourcing, there should be a more streamlined number of businesses participating. To highlight, Plate up for Glasgow had been launched with the initial intention of having 26 venues signed up to take part, however, with the overwhelming amount of positive press coverage, and strong interest from hospitality venues themselves, the Plate up for Glasgow team was keen to open up campaign participation to as many venues who successfully fulfilled the application criteria as possible.

Clearly, this had a somewhat positive impact as it resulted in greater accessibility, wider coverage throughout the city, and more venues delivering low waste dishes, thereby sending even less food to landfill. However, in doing so, the Plate up for Glasgow team was stretched to a point where some venues may have had less support, engagement, and promotional assistance than they would have benefited from. Furthermore, there was insufficient financial resources available to fully recompensate team members, who invested a significant amount of time in kind, for the substantial contributions made to compiling the research, content, delivery, and support, as the campaign continued to gain traction.

## 7.2 Accessible leverage points

It is clear that building on the sustainability message and momentum gained by the businesses who took part in the campaign will be crucial if more is to be done to improve the environmental performance of Glasgow's hospitality sector.

Profiting from the strong working relationship with hospitality stakeholders fostered by the Plate up for Glasgow team will be key when engaging with the sector for future projects. This was evidenced by the fact that the majority of businesses posed the question:

“What's next?”

The relationship between food and the environment is a powerful one, and there are many challenges to be tackled on a local, national, and international scale. We've been heartened by the enthusiastic level of interest in Plate up for Glasgow and are now in discussions as to explore how the campaign could evolve. If you have any ideas, or if there are any specific areas around the topic that you'd like to see tackled next, we'd love to hear from you. Drop us a line at [hello@plateupforglasgow.co.uk](mailto:hello@plateupforglasgow.co.uk).

### 7.3 Where support is needed most

Consultation with the hospitality sector shone a light on a number of areas where external support is most needed in order to improve performance in environmental sustainability. These areas include:

- Creation of an information hub/resource that hospitality businesses can find sustainability solutions, such as: information on available funding and financial subsidies for making sustainable changes, information on low waste hacks and tips and industry information exchange, information on available products, suppliers and technology that improves sustainability.
- Consultants and on-the-ground expertise. Many participating venues cited the value of working alongside the Plate up for Glasgow team who were not only knowledgeable on the agenda of sustainability but also across local hospitality businesses and well connected with owners, chefs, and relevant stakeholders. This proved to be invaluable in the creation of bespoke solutions, mobilising individual businesses while creating a movement everyone could buy into at city level. With a larger team, the campaign would have likely benefited from a full-time communication resource, supporting social and physical promotional collateral creation.

*"I'd like to express gratitude for what Plate up for Glasgow has done and are continuing to do. I have huge respect for what you've worked on the past few months, especially with such a small team and thank you for relighting the awareness towards sustainability within my own head. I'd be happy to be a guinea pig going forward with trying to spot where business can be more sustainable in ways that we may not have considered before."*



**Erfan Shojanoori,  
The Hug and Pint**

- Significant investment in young workforce and celebrating the hospitality sector as an exciting and rewarding industry to work in. Promoting the industry should include a recruitment drive to attract employees to the sector. Doing so is crucial for plugging the recruitment crisis driven by Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic, which has had an impact across several of the areas identified as key barriers to sustainability, including time and logistical challenges.
- Incentives for businesses seeking to make environmentally beneficial changes to their business. With most businesses citing cost as the single most important factor impeding change, it is clear that the sector requires financial support in order to make the sustainable changes they are already motivated to make. With the cost of investing in sustainability falling on small independent business, from technology and equipment, to deciding to work with more expensive yet local and sustainable food suppliers, it is the businesses who continue to bear the brunt of the costs when considering implementing sustainable solutions increasingly expected of them from both government and customers.

# Thank you

The Plate up for Glasgow team would like to extend a sincere thank you to our campaign funders and partners:



## Thanks also to:

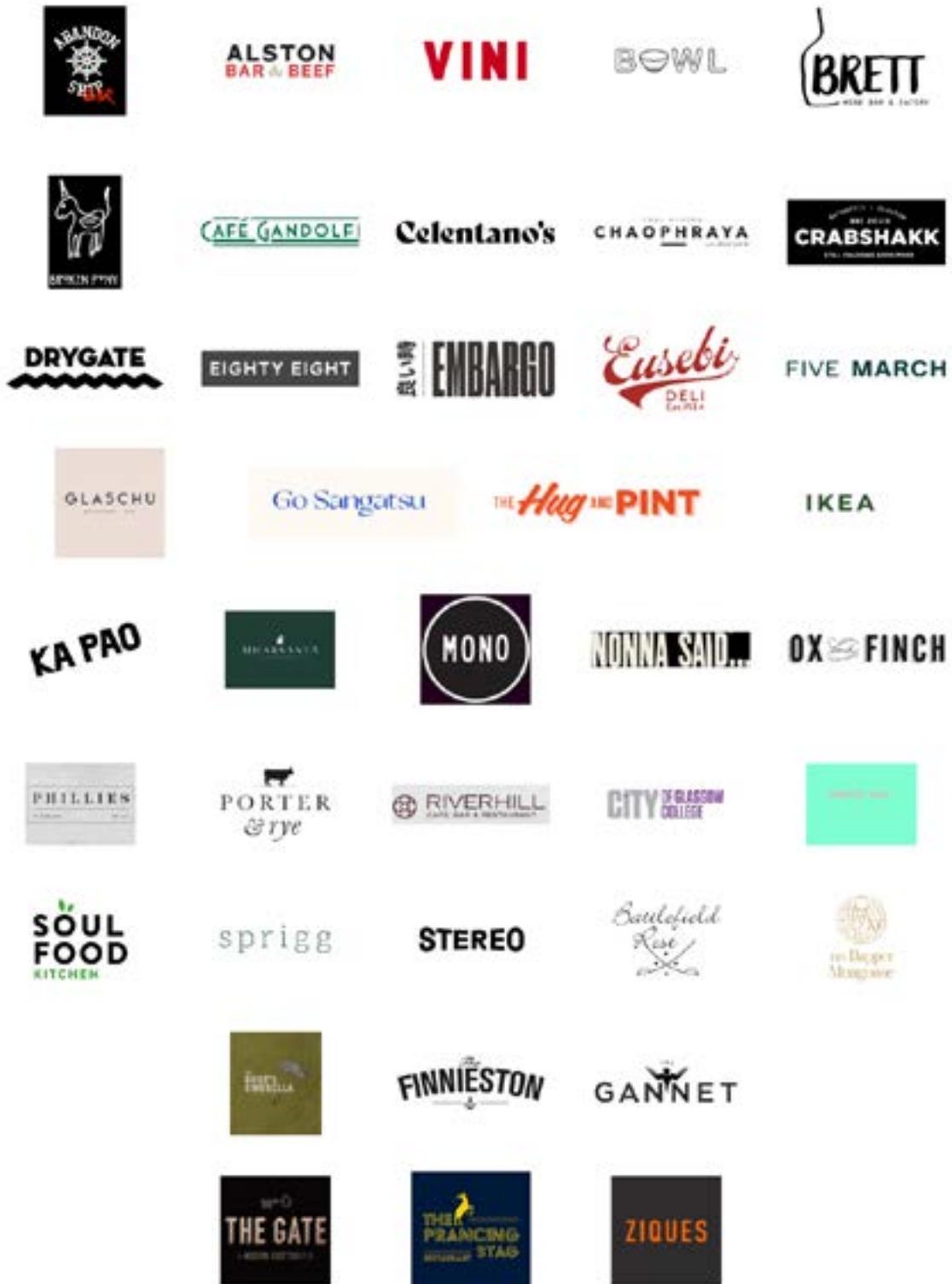
Lisa McConnell, Project and Communications Executive, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce for providing media and marketing support

Jennifer Hood, Managing Director of JH Digital Design for website design and development

And

Mhairi Duncan, Scott Ferguson, Julie Hall, Jess Haslam and Harriet Law for all their support during the planning and recruitment phases of the campaign.

Finally, we reserve our biggest thank you to the 41 venues who participated in Plate up for Glasgow. Their encouragement, dedication and innovative ideas were fundamental to making this such a unique, powerful and engaging campaign.



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Communications and  
digital marketing  
strategy

**Insights and  
evaluation report**

This report aims to provide further information on Plate up for Glasgow's communications strategy, with attention to the website, public relations and press, launch event and social media.

## **1. Aims of the communications and digital marketing strategy**

Plate up for Glasgow's communications strategy was crafted with the view to achieving a number of key objectives, in line with the campaign's overarching aims.

These objectives were:

- Increase business and consumer awareness of food waste in Scotland and encourage implementation of ways to reduce food waste.
- Increase brand awareness of Plate up for Glasgow.
- Drive traffic to the Plate up for Glasgow website, a hub designed to showcase and share tangible and simple ways for everyone to adopt food waste reduction strategies.
- Increase brand awareness and generate bookings for participating venues.

The target audiences during the campaign period were:

- Businesses (primary: hospitality led; secondary: public, private, social and third sector).
- Consumers looking to dine out or enjoy food on the go in Glasgow.
- Visitors to the city looking for sustainable dining options.
- Public with an interest in sustainability looking to reduce food waste at home.

## 2. Methodology: How these objectives were achieved

To achieve the points outlined in Section 1, Plate up for Glasgow established a multi-faceted approach to the communication and marketing strategy. This included:

- Plate up for Glasgow website
- Press releases and media engagement, including a press launch event
- Social media, including Plate up for Glasgow Instagram account
- Partnership and collaborative working with stakeholders

An outline of each phase is given below.

### 2.1 Plate up for Glasgow website

The creation of the Plate up for Glasgow website was the first communication channel to be established. This was fundamental, particularly in the initial stages of the campaign, including the venue recruitment phase and as a landing page for all enquiries and further interest, including from press. The website was also the lead communication portal where Plate up for Glasgow venues were officially launched, unveiling participating businesses with an interactive map and driving visitors directly to each venue's in-house reservation pages. To ensure the website was as engaging as possible, regular content was published throughout the five-week period, including thought pieces, blogs and videos from a range of thought leaders and experts in food waste reduction. A spotlight was also shone on local suppliers and sustainable brands.

### 2.2 Press releases and media engagement, including a press launch event.

Media engagement was crucial at all stages of the campaign. With the support from Big Partnership PR Agency, writing press releases and reaching out to Glasgow's top media outlets were particularly useful

in the early stages. This included recruitment and helping to promote the open call for applications, where all interested venues could apply to take part in the campaign. The inclusion of a number of well-known venues who had already confirmed participation also significantly helped the team gain real traction.

In the lead up to the launch of the campaign, an in-person press launch event was organised. The purpose of this fun and informal event was to allow press, influencers, and stakeholders (over 100 attendees in total) the opportunity to be the first to sample some of Scotland's most sustainable dishes and drinks at our Plate up for Glasgow showcase event. The aim of the event was to raise the profile of the campaign launch, October 12, and drive bookings to participating venues from Tuesday October 5.

Following the press launch, the campaign continued to gain coverage, with focus on reducing food waste relating to the wider press agenda of reducing climate change in light of COP26 taking place in Glasgow.

## 2.3 Social media strategy

The social media strategy was predominantly delivered through the Plate up for Glasgow Instagram account. This included owned original content, including:

- Highlights (images and videos) from venues
- Supplier spotlights
- Competitions in partnership with participating venues
- Reels and stories
- Tips to reduce food waste
- General information about the campaign e.g. how to book, FAQ.

As well as owned content, Plate up for Glasgow's social media output also included earned content from stakeholders, influencers, participating venues, and diners.

- Sharing content generated by influencers at the press event and visiting venues

- Sharing content generated by participating venues and diners
- Sharing press mentions, articles and film snippets

Additional social media coverage was secured through:

- Support offered from funding partner Experience Glasgow to create high quality image and video content to feed into the social media channel.
- Stakeholder and city partner support by promoting Plate up for Glasgow through their own channels. Stakeholders included lead partner Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, Circular Glasgow, VisitScotland, Scottish Tourism Alliance, Glasgow City Council COP26 Team, Zero Waste Scotland, Glasgow Food Policy Partnership, Downtown City Maps, Glasgow Convention Bureau and Scotland Food & Drink.

## 2.4 Partnership and collaborative working with stakeholders

As mentioned above, forging collaborative partnerships with external stakeholders and city partners was a crucial element of the communication strategy. Doing so enabled the campaign to extend its reach and opportunity to see far beyond that if working independently.

Collaborating with Big Partnership, through their link to Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, was instrumental in the success of the Plate up for Glasgow press launch. Similarly, collaborating with Atomic 10, through their link to lead partners Experience Glasgow Food and Drink, saw additional Plate up for Glasgow competition offerings and the delivery of a bespoke Plate up for Glasgow influencer event. This event included an exclusive lunch and cocktail experience hosted by Peter McKenna of participating campaign venue, The Gannet, at Native Hotel with a small number of invited influencer guests who were able to taste low waste dishes and learn about food waste tips and hacks.

### 3. Presentation of results

Following a review of the comms and digital strategy supporting Plate up for Glasgow, it was important to evaluate whether this approach was successful in achieving its aims. Data for each arm of engagement is presented below.

#### 3.1 Website

Data analytics have highlighted a number of interesting observations in relation to website performance, user demographic, user engagement and activity over the campaign phases (e.g. recruitment, venue teaser, launch). The results of which are detailed here.

Overview of total website traffic between the Plate up for Glasgow website launch and campaign end (10 August 2021 – 12 November 2021).



Figure 1: Overview of website users over the campaign period.

Looking at the data, it is clear that the majority of website users were gained during the period following 5 October 2021. We see two distinct peaks in the traffic:

- **Tuesday 5 October**, when participating venues were announced to the general public.
- **Tuesday 12 October**, when the full venue profiles were made available to the general public.

These results align themselves with the campaign aim coinciding with key 'public interest' announcements, such as announcing the line-up of venues taking part, and the unveiling of the dishes. Prior to this, the communication strategy had been specifically designed to drive and encourage audiences from the hospitality sector only, in alignment with the venue recruitment phase.

### **Most frequently visited areas of the website were:**

- Homepage
- Venue profiles
- Food for thought
- Meet the faces behind the campaign
- Ultimate Guide to reducing food waste at home

### **Homepage**

The homepage provided information about Plate up for Glasgow, including what the campaign was about, when it was taking place, and key messaging.

### **Venue profiles**

A total of 1,499 users accessed the Venue Profiles landing page throughout the campaign period. Venue profiles were able to view as an alphabetical list, and an interactive map. The map was designed to aid visitors who were new to the city as part of COP26 work out the geographical location of venues.

502 users (33%) chose to view the venues as a list, with 342 users (22%) opting to view the venue locations in a map format. The remaining number of users will have taken no action on this page or accessed a venue profile directly by clicking on their logo.

### **Food for thought**

The total number of users for this website page, during the campaign period was 347. With 11 blogs published, some pieces were markedly more viewed than others, reflecting the level of additional external promotional support by contributors themselves.

## Meet the faces behind the campaign

This area of the website featured several “behind the scenes” videos and interviews with chefs, bartenders and front of house staff from venues taking part in the campaign. These videos were designed to be informal, fun, and give the public a sneak peak of some of the dishes they could expect to see on the menu while bringing individuals behind our vibrant local hospitality sector into the limelight.

## Ultimate Guide to reducing food waste at home

The Ultimate Guide was an area of the website dedicated to the public, and was centred around providing handy tips, tricks and kitchen hacks for reducing food waste at home. The Guide featured recipes, how-to videos and resources for further food waste and sustainable food information.

## 3.2 Press engagement and launch event

Effective press engagement resulted in a high level of coverage across local, national, and international media outlets, through print, digital, television and radio channels. With support from Big Partnership (see Section 2.2), between August and November 2021 **Plate up for Glasgow achieved a total of 118 items of coverage, with a total of 55.5 million opportunities to see.**

Below provides a breakdown of some of the key data.

### Publications

(6 items in print, 15 items of digital coverage)



## 14 Radio and Television

interviews:



David Urban,  
video journalist, in  
partnership with  
UNESCO

## International coverage:

Spain – Agencia Efe  
(Spain’s international newswire)  
Germany – ZDF

## Breadth of coverage:

9% of coverage appeared in national titles  
18% of coverage appeared in regional titles  
73% appeared in trade publications

## 3.3 Social media and digital marketing

With social media playing an important role in terms of geographical and sociodemographic reach, it was considered a vital tool in promoting Plate up for Glasgow, strengthening the campaign’s brand, and connecting with participating venues. See below for an overview of Plate up for Glasgow’s Instagram and digital marketing activity.

### Plate up for Glasgow Instagram Overview

For the period 7 September (launch of account) - 16 November 2021

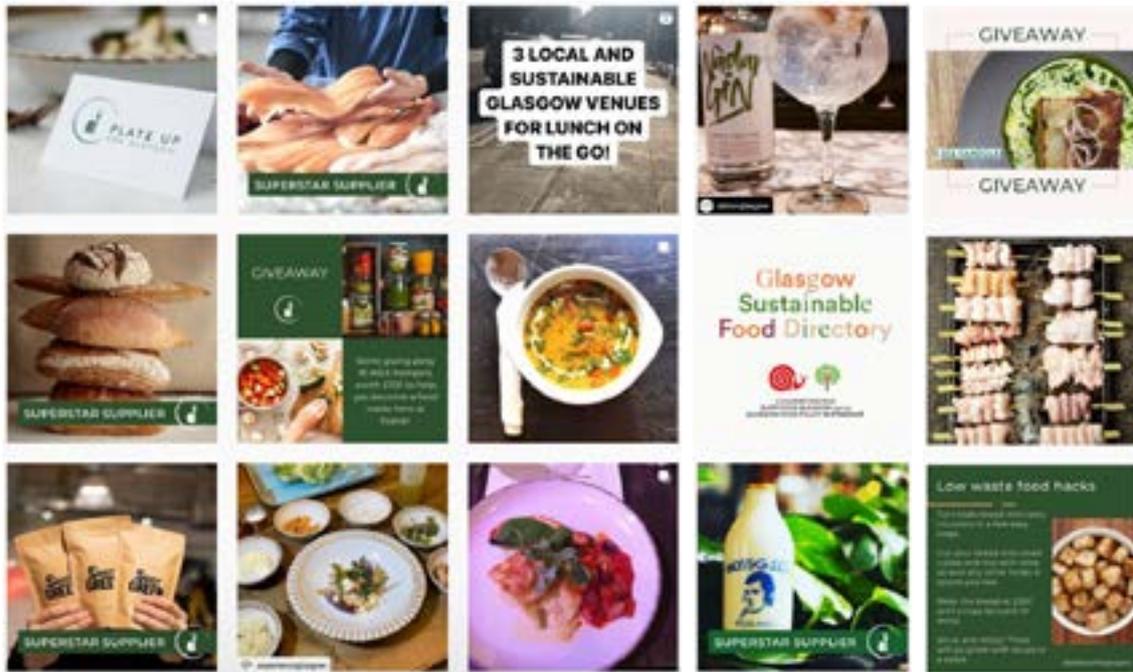
Followers gained:	over 1,700
Pieces of content shared:	104
Impressions:	over 86,000
Likes, comments, and shares:	over 5,500
Social media competitions created:	5

### Wider digital marketing overview

For the period 2 August – 16 November 2021



Estimated social media reach:	868,000
Interactions on social media:	13,500
Bespoke content generated by leading food and drink influencers	



### 3.4 Partnership and collaborative working with stakeholders

Clearly, working collaboratively with campaign partners and external stakeholders played a key role in achieving several aims set out in Section 1. Aside from working with Big Partnership to promote Plate up for Glasgow's digital and print press reach (see Section 3.2), perhaps one of the most significant partnerships was the collaboration with Atomic 10. Below is an outline of the audience reach they achieved as a result of the activity outlined.

#### PR Agency Atomic 10 audience reach

Social media impressions:	5,4205
Social engagements:	1,973
Link clicks for bookings:	115
Video views of Experience Glasgow Instagram reels:	11,357
Video views of Experience Glasgow TikToks:	3,792
Partnership video views:	6,7237
Experience Glasgow creative content video views:	15,149
<b>Total video views:</b>	<b>82,386</b>
<b>Total coverage opportunities to see:</b>	<b>1,369,938</b>

## 4. Positive outcomes and key learnings

Following a review of the communication and marketing strategy data, a number of positive outcomes, learnings and challenges were noted. The key points are presented below.

### 4.1 Aspects of the communications strategy and website content that worked well

Some of the most valuable insights that enhanced the reach and success of the campaign were found to be:

- Launching Plate up for Glasgow to coincide with COP26 was a real strength of the overall marketing strategy. The campaign's focus on reducing food waste tapped into the national media agenda and public awareness around sustainability and climate change. As a result, there was a natural synergy between promoting the campaign and engaging with the wider international conversation.
- Creating relationships with influencers and media at an early stage of the campaign. Inviting local well known and respected social media personalities, journalists and bloggers to the launch event was important for generating initial interest in Plate up for Glasgow. As a result, they continued to promote and support the campaign throughout the five-week running period with likes, comments and sharing content.
- Including competitions, particularly with higher profile venues such as Eusebi Deli and Restaurant and The Gannet helped to massively boost social media following.
- Engaging regularly with venues and encouraging them to support the campaign through their own inhouse social media. Those who were more active on social media saw higher engagement.
- Ensuring that the campaign focussed on reinforcing a positive message (innovative ways to reduce food waste and challenging restaurants to create something new) as opposed to a negative and pessimistic climate change messaging appeared to be a key factor in raising awareness and increasing engagement.

- Keeping the content fun, accessible, varied and shareable. The use of strong imagery and video content was particularly powerful in driving campaign content.

Some of the most valuable insights that enhanced the engagement and success of the campaign website were found to be:

- Venue profiles and the 'behind the scenes' 'Meet the faces behind the campaign' provided engaging, fun and informative content. This was designed to further the celebratory and positive tone of the campaign.
- It was really positive to see that there was a good spread of users opting for different ways of browsing the venues (list and map options), meaning that delivering both offerings was a positive thing to do.
- Some of the blog posts certainly performed much better than others. This was potentially due to the levels of accompanying social media promotion and the level of promotion by the blogger themselves.

## 4.2 Challenges and areas for improvement

Despite the Plate up for Glasgow team's best efforts, there were areas of the social media strategy and website content that could have been improved. These areas include:

- Initial posts about the campaign received less engagement due to the campaign being in the early stages. However, it was still valuable content to populate the channel and start building a following.
- The global social media (Instagram and Facebook) blackout on 4 October 2021, took place on the night of the press launch event. This was challenging as influencers and press could not post and share live content from the event, suggesting that the campaign could have had significantly more coverage had this not been the case. However, one unexpected benefited from the blackout was that media and influencers were less focused on posting, and

more present and engaged at the event, including chatting with chefs, venues, and the Plate up for Glasgow team. As a result of this we saw content being drip-fed several days after the event.

- Some supplier posts worked better than others. If the supplier was less well known or the supplier didn't engage with the content, the post received relatively low engagement.
- The overall numbers of users accessing each individual profile page was lower than expected and there are no strong correlations between venues most active on social media versus the number of users who accessed the venue's profile page.
- There could have been better diversity of those contributing blogs and thought pieces under the Food for Thought content. Future campaigns could look to include front of house staff, kitchen porters and those who hold positions more relatable to the general public.

## **5. Recommendations for future PR, Communications and Social Media strategy**

All things considered, Plate up for Glasgow was extremely successful in achieving a high level of media coverage, social media followers and social media engagement – particularly when considering that the campaign only ran for five weeks. As a result, the key learnings from both the successes and challenges have enabled the team to put forward a number of communication focused recommendations for any further activity going forward.

- There is a strong food community on Instagram that engage regularly with one another and support each other's accounts. Finding and engaging with these influencers would be strongly recommended if the campaign were to run again.
- The content that received the most engagement was strong, quality images and the reel content. If the campaign was to run again in future, it is recommended to focus on this type of content.

- Given the amount of content needed for a campaign like this, more resource would be needed if running again. This would have made it more feasible to explore the use of additional social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter.
- Having a dedicated Communications Lead would have been highly valuable for developing the same level of connection and promotional activity with venues as the Campaign Lead and Partnership Manager developed during the recruitment and activity phase.
- A dedicated Communication Lead would have enabled earlier dialogue and better planning for collaborating and creating content, as well as encouraging and supporting their diners to create content to boost user-generated content.
- In future, use of premium analytics tool like Hotjar or similar would allow for a more thorough analysis of how people interact with the site. It would also be helpful to speak with members of the target demographic of the campaign and conduct a wider feedback piece around how the site was received amongst the public and a consultation around how this would be improved in future.