



The 2026 City St George's Food Policy Symposium

Centre for Food Policy

Policy and practice to redesign food systems

Healthy, sustainable and profitable retailing – identifying the food policy and market opportunities for the convenience store sector

11th June 2026

Contributors

John Bennett

Master Cook, The Worshipful Company of Cooks of London

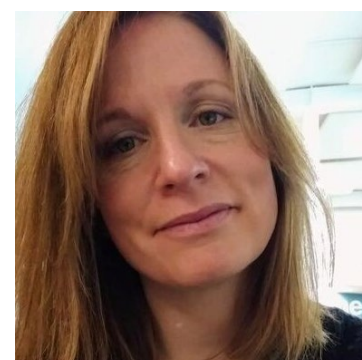
John became a Freeman of the City of London in July 2001 and was admitted to the Livery of the Worshipful Company of Cooks of London in November 2008. He was elected to the Court of Assistants in July 2017. He sits on The Master's committee and was crowned as Second Master in November 2024. John has a Master's degree in Business Administration from Westminster University and started working in the Hospitality Industry in 1977. John has worked in several sectors including hospitals and schools but mainly focusing on the Business and Industry sector. John has worked for Sutcliffe Catering, Granada Food Service, Compass catering and finally became CEO of Baxterstorey in 2012. He stepped down in 2021 and is now a Non-Executive Director.



Gillian Boundy

Senior Public Health Programme Manager, Southwark Council

Gillian Boundy works to help make sure families and communities have the support they need to live healthy lives. She leads programmes that improve resident access to affordable and healthy food, including work on school meal provision and holiday clubs. Before joining Southwark Council, Gillian held senior roles in finance and programme management, including positions in the private sector and civil service. This experience has given her a strong understanding of strategic planning, budgeting and delivering services that make a real difference to communities. She holds Master's degrees in Human Nutrition (Public Health) and Chemistry and is a qualified chartered accountant and Registered Associate Nutritionist.



Dr Olivia Brown

City St George's, University of London

Olivia is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Food Policy, working on the ENTHUSE Project. She is an epidemiologist specialising in obesity prevention and the commercial determinants of health. Her research examines the design and impact of obesity prevention policies. Olivia holds a PhD in Epidemiology and Public Health from the University of Nottingham, and MSc in Global Health and Development from University College London. She is interested in how commercial practices shape health and inequality, and her work seeks to inform policy that challenges these influences.

**Dan Clarke**

Healthy and Sustainable Diets Manager, IGD

Dan is an AfN Registered Nutritionist working as part of the IGD Social Impact team to support transitioning the UK population to healthier, more sustainable diets. IGD a strategic food and grocery insight, foresight, and learning organisation. Here to unite the industry and benefit society. We invest all our profits into social impact.

**Finlay Craig**

City St George's, University of London

Finlay is a PhD student at the Centre for Food Policy via the UK Food System Centre for Doctoral Training. His research is focusing on the potential for local authorities to use business rates relief incentives to promote healthy and sustainable food system transformation. He studied MSc Sustainable Development at University of Sussex and has worked in food since then, spending two years working for the Soil Association certification team and a further two years at an urban hydroponics company.

**Ayesha Chowdhury**

Young Researcher, University of Southampton

Ayesha is a young person who, as part of her NxtGen researcher role, worked on the YCON research project with Dr Sarah Muir to collect research data about young people's experiences of using convenience stores. Ayesha has also played an integral part in the YCON dissemination plans, working with the team to develop an infographic detailing young person's recommendations to support healthier eating in convenience stores.



Kath Dalmeny***Chief Executive, Sustain***

Kath Dalmeny is Chief Executive of Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming, and a member of the London Food Board. She helped establish the Sustainable Food Cities Network and led initiatives such as Sustainable Fish Cities and the Right to Food campaign to tackle food poverty. She advocates for high standards in food, environment, and animal welfare, and for fairer trading and stronger government support for producers and workers. Kath also supports the Campaign for Better Hospital Food, sits on Defra's food procurement taskforce, and serves voluntarily on the board of Growing Communities, a sustainable food enterprise in Hackney.

**Dr Preeti Dhuria*****University of Southampton***

Preeti is a Senior Research Fellow and registered public health nutritionist whose work focuses on improving access to, availability of, and visibility of healthier food options across a range of retail environments to support healthier food choices. Using systems approaches and qualitative methods, she generates evidence from diverse stakeholders to inform policy and strengthen retail food systems across the UK. Her research places particular emphasis on incorporating the lived experiences of underrepresented groups, including citizens and small business owners, into policy development and debate.

**Catherine Garner*****City St George's, University of London***

Catherine is the Coordinator at the Centre for Food Policy, City St George's University of London. Her role involves supporting the Centre in delivering its vision and impact through developing external communications, event logistics, research project administration, and internal office coordination, as well as supporting the drafting of reports and consultation submissions. She also works alongside Christina Vogel to coordinate the Professional Cookery for Food Systems Transformation Community of Practice. She holds a Sustainable Futures MRes from the University of Bristol, where her dissertation research explored perspectives of changing agri-environmental and land-use policies within farming communities on Dartmoor.

**Claire Hislop*****Organisational Lead – Food & Physical Activity, Public Health Scotland***

Claire is a registered public health nutritionist who has worked in the public health field in Scotland for over twenty-five years. In her current role she manages a team which has responsibilities for supporting policies and interventions which aim to improve the Scottish diet and increase physical activity. Claire has a BSc (Hons) Applied Human Nutrition and an MSc in Health Promotion from Queen Margaret University.



Rachel Jones***Local Food Coordinator, Sustain***

Rachel leads Sustain's work on Local Food, working alongside Alliance members to implement the Local Food Plan. She previously spent 10 years at Sustainable Development Agency, Futerra, as a Strategy Director and is also a trained horticultural grower, having previously run Sitopia Farm in Greenwich. Rachel is passionate about mainstreaming local, sustainable food and unlocking the huge benefits it can bring to as many people as possible.

**Julia Kirby-Smith*****Executive Director, Better Food Traders***

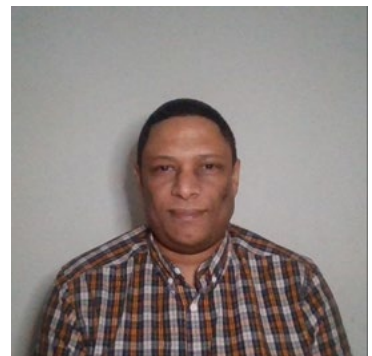
Julia leads Better Food Traders, a UK-wide enterprise network and non-profit that empowers and equips traders, farmers, communities and local authorities to rebuild an independent, sustainable food sector. She has a strong understanding of both independent food retail (having founded an ethical grocery business in North London) and the broader issues faced by our food system.

**Dr Sarah Muir*****Lifecourse Epidemiology Centre, University of Southampton***

Sarah is a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Southampton. She is co-investigator on the ECON research study and a psychologist by background. She leads ECON's large-scale case study project which take a deep-dive exploration into the convenience sector in six local regions in England. Through this project she will work closely with local players (retailers, customers, suppliers, and local councils) to co-create workable solutions to boost access and availability to healthy food products in the sector.

**John Norton*****Public Contributor and Co-investigator***

John is an experienced public contributor and a co-investigator for the ECON study, working across all the study packages. John is a regular user of convenience stores and brings expertise in community empowerment and public contribution to projects assessing ethnic and health inequalities.



Kay Patel***Global Food and Wine - Best One***

Kay Patel is an award-winning East London convenience store owner, operating three stores and continuing a proud family tradition in local retail. He has served the community for 25 years, following on from his parents' 20 years in the business — giving them over 45 years of service to East London.

**Stephanie Rice*****Founder and CEO, Rice Marketing and Good Food Retail Network***

Stephanie is a leading expert in the UK convenience retail sector, with over 35 years' experience in marketing, brand strategy, and senior leadership across symbol groups, wholesale, and independent retail. A former Marketing Director at Budgens and Musgrave Budgens Londis, she founded Rice Marketing in 2007. Her work focuses on helping retailers and wholesalers show that healthier food can drive both profit and community impact, delivering major initiatives such as Change4Life and Well London. She has worked with government, local authorities, and charities to shape impactful good food strategies, championing more accessible and healthier food provision. This led to the nationwide launch of the Good Food Retail network in 2025. She is a Non-Executive Director at Newtrade Media, Food Industry Advisor at Nesta, and a regular speaker and awards judge.

**Rosie Saxton*****City St George's, University of London***

Rosie is a Research Assistant at the Centre for Food Policy, working on the ENTHUSE project. She is currently evaluating the implementation of the Food (Promotion and Placement) Regulations. She holds a BA in Geography from Lancaster University and an MSc in Food Policy from City, St George's, University of London, where her dissertation focused on County Food Partnerships. Her research interests span the commercial determinants of health, local policy engagement, and rural-urban interconnections as opportunities to transform regional food systems.

**Antony So*****Food Policy Analyst, freelance***

Antony So is a political scientist specialising in food policy and the political economy of food. He recently worked with the Centre for Food Policy helping to map the supply chains of the UK's convenience store sector. He has previously worked with Professor Tim Lang analysing the UK's food security for the National Preparedness Commission, the Food Research Collaboration, the Food Foundation, and the University of Nottingham's Food Systems Institute. Prior to working on food policy, Antony worked in Paris and in Brussels at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Microsoft Europe, and the British-EU Chamber of Commerce.



Raj Sukhdev*RJS convenience*

Raj has been a Convenience store owner on a high street for 5 years and has a background in non-food retail. He is married with 3 children and has lived in Hampshire all his life. He has interests in politics, is a keen DIY person, enjoys playing pool and describes himself as a bit of a petrol head. He has also been a director of Eastleigh BID.

**Prisha Syal***City St George's, University of London*

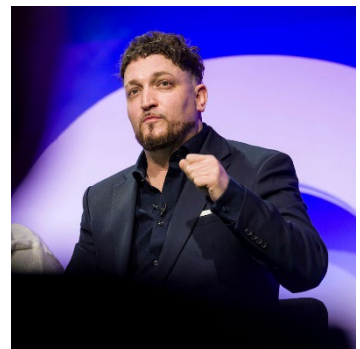
Prisha Syal is a Research Assistant at the Centre for Food Policy, working on the ECON project. She is conducting in-store ethnography to understand how best to support retailers and policymakers in increasing the sales of healthier products in convenience stores across England. She holds a BA in Social Sciences from King's College London and a MSc in Comparative Social Policy from the University of Oxford. Her MSc thesis examines how variations in London Boroughs' food policies contribute to differences in retail practices and food security outcomes.

**Professor Christina Vogel***City St George's, University of London*

Christina is Director of the Centre for Food Policy and a registered nutritionist with over 20 years' experience across Australia and Europe. Her research focuses on implementing and evaluating food policies and interventions, with a strong emphasis on community participation to promote healthier, fairer, and more sustainable food systems. She leads and contributes to NIHR and UKRI-funded projects, including evaluations of the UK's Food (Promotions and Placement) legislation and Healthy Start, as well as systems studies on convenience retail, the chicken supply chain, and nature-based agricultural solutions. She also advises governments and contributes to international expert groups, including ATNi and UN/WHO initiatives.

**Dominic Watters***Founder, Food is Care CIC*

Dominic Watters is a PhD Researcher in Geography at the University of Southampton. His work challenges established thinking on poverty and food insecurity by questioning whose knowledge is heard when defining daily realities. After many media requests about his lived experience, Dominic instead began to discuss his "living experience" (2022) as a way to better frame the unresolved nature of inequality. Drawing from his own council estate, he is developing the Four Visual Pillars, a framework that redefines food insecurity from within communities rather than through external institutional measures. Grounded in this perspective, his work seeks to create new ways for marginalised communities to define, discuss and dismantle the inequalities faced in neighbourhoods like his.



Dr Rebecca Wells

City St George's, University of London

Rebecca is a Senior Lecturer in Food Policy at the Centre for Food Policy, City St George's, University London. A former BBC radio producer and food journalist, Rebecca's research focuses on the interaction between food policy and the media. Her research interests include food policy, food in the media, food systems, food systems teaching and learning, food poverty, food banks, food security, and science communication.

**Dr Megan Winkler**

Assistant Professor, Department of Behavioural, Social and Health Education Sciences at Emory University Rollins School of Public Health

Dr. Winkler is a population health scientist and former clinician. Her work on retail food environments aims to uncover the social, political, and commercial determinants to the ubiquitously unhealthy food environment in the US. The goal is to identify actionable solutions that can transform it for health. She currently serves as the Co-Lead of the Policy Pillar within the Emory University Woodruff Health Sciences Food, Nutrition, and Health Initiative, as well as an Advisor to the Healthy Eating Research Program's Strategic Research Collaborative.

**Ed Woodall**

Chief Executive, Association of Convenience Stores

Edward Woodall became Chief Executive of the Association of Convenience Stores on 1 March 2026. Ed previously led ACS' government relations and public affairs strategy, representing the UK's 50,000 convenience stores across Westminster, Whitehall and the devolved nations. Over more than a decade, he has shaped the sector's engagement on complex and high-profile issues including regulation, retail crime, business costs, and responsible retailing - giving evidence to parliamentary committees and leading national campaigns on behalf of members.



This event is generously supported by

