



Dear Businesses,

Healthier Catering Commitment for London

Brent Council has recently undertaken a needs assessment to identify the health of residents, and identify areas for improvement. The findings of the assessment showed high health deprivation in the area, which included high rates of obesity and type II diabetes among residents. As a result of this Brent Council is working towards ways in which we can encourage the community to be healthier, and will improve the general health and wellbeing of the community.

The Healthier Catering Commitment (HCC) for London is a scheme run by some London Boroughs, with the support from the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Mayor of London. The Healthy Catering Commitment is a voluntary scheme based on the principle that small changes can make a big difference. It recognises those businesses in London that demonstrate a commitment to reducing the level of saturated fat and salt content in their foods, offering some healthy options (for example, lower sugar drinks and snacks) and making smaller portions available on request.

The healthy lifestyles team, along with the consumer and business protection (food safety team) is committed to work with businesses in Brent to promote the Healthier Catering Commitment for London. In 2014 nine businesses achieved the award as part of a pilot programme. Due to the success of the pilot programme, the Healthier Catering Commitment for London is now being launched throughout the borough and we would like to invite your business to work towards achieving the award.

This document contains the terms and conditions for the scheme.

1. Introduction

Consumers now view eating out not just as an occasional treat, but as a part of everyday life. Food consumed outside of the home tends to be higher in saturated fats and salt than food eaten at home. A diet high in saturated fats and salt is linked to cardiovascular disease, which is the UK's biggest killer.

As a caterer, you could make a significant contribution to improving your customers' diet and health by making a few simple changes in how you prepare and cook your food. Consumers are becoming more aware of healthy eating, and by signing up to the Healthier Catering Commitment you could increase both your customer satisfaction and your sales, and also save money by using less oil and salt!

Small changes can make a big difference!

There are certain requirements and conditions that have to be met for a business to take part in the scheme.

2. Application and assessment

Most catering businesses (with the exception of schools, nurseries, care homes and hospitals that have specific nutritional guidelines) are eligible to take part in the scheme provided that:

- The business is broadly compliant for food hygiene (for example, good hygiene standards at the premises) and
- There is no statutory nuisance arising from the business (for example, from noise, odour or drainage)

You will need to meet a minimum of eight criteria, from a list of 22 that include conditions in relation to the use of fats, oils and salt and the availability of lower sugar drinks and snacks, and fruit and vegetables. There are four compulsory criteria, and for businesses which fry food, a further three. You are obviously encouraged to consider signing up to more than eight criteria and they are wide ranging and varied so you will find something that applies to you!

The assessor may ask for evidence to support particular requirements, this may involve inspecting the kitchen to see the food on offer, the way it is prepared or seeing a copy of the menu. If there are some criteria that have not been met, you will be given feedback with details of areas to improve on and a further visit may be conducted to ensure that these have been dealt with.

As a successful business, you will receive a 'Healthier Catering Commitment' door sticker which you may display and your premises may be shown as meeting the standard on websites such as www.scoresonthedoors.org. In addition, your businesses will be promoted in Brent publications such as our website, the Brent Magazine.

3. Conditions and renewal

Should standards slip in your business (either on the food hygiene to a level below broadly compliant, or in maintaining the healthier catering commitment), then the healthier catering commitment will be withdrawn. Any materials which use the logo including the sticker will be removed from the premises.

You will be reassessed for the Healthier Catering Commitment each time the routine food hygiene inspection is carried out (it is valid for a maximum of two years), although officers may check to ensure it is being maintained at other times when your business is visited.

If there are any major changes to your menu or cooking methods, you will need to let the Council know as they may wish to discuss this with you. If there is a new owner of the business, they will need to re-apply for the healthier catering commitment as it will no longer be valid.

4. The future

It is very much hoped that you will want to build on your success if you have achieved the necessary standard and look to incorporate some of the other commitments in your business. If you need extra support or advice in doing so, please do not hesitate to contact Lauren, who may be able to direct you to a borough nutritionist or dietician who can help with this.

The scheme may, from time to time, add, delete or amend criteria to take account of changing nutritional advice in these areas, and the commitments are intended to develop over time.

If you are interested in taking part in the scheme, please complete the application and assessment criteria form and return to the address below, or if you have any further questions then do not hesitate to contact Lauren Ensor (Healthy Catering Officer) on 020 8937 6259, or healthyliving@brent.gov.uk.

I look forward to meeting you soon.

Yours sincerely

Lauren Ensor

Attention of: Healthy lifestyle team,
Lauren Ensor
Brent Civic Centre
Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way,
Wembley,
HA9 0FJ