



# Grow Better Together:

Our strategy to 2030



We are the charity that joins forces with nature for a better future: A world with good health, in balance with nature, and a safe climate.

Working with everyone to transform the way we eat, farm and care for our natural world, we build real solutions from the ground up.

## Glossary

### Agroecology

Nature-friendly farming and food systems that support a fair, sustainable society.

### Organic

A certified example of an agroecological system. Governed by legal standards, and regularly and independently inspected, organic systems deliver produce in ways that benefit people, animals, wildlife, society and the natural world.

### Agroforestry

Integrating trees onto farmland, creating healthier soils and increasing crop yields whilst also creating vital homes for wildlife.

### Regenerative forestry

Forests managed in ways that support our climate, nature and people.

### Healthy & sustainable food

Food that's good for people's nutrition, that's grown and distributed in a way that's good for the environment, and supports communities.

### Field labs

On-farm trials led by groups of farmers and growers who want to test and adapt their farming methods in real time with support from researchers.

# Together, we are a force for nature.

Together, we have:

- **Supported 12,000 farmers** to connect with researchers through Innovative Farmers field labs and lead the way on agricultural research in the last decade. Working together, they trial new methods to support a sustainable farming future.
- Certified over **26 million hectares of sustainably managed forest** in over 36 countries. Through recognising businesses working sustainably, we help to conserve land and wildlife, mitigate climate change and support local communities.
- **Brought even more people into the movement.** Over 1 million new people visit our website a year, interested to learn more and join our call for a nature-friendly future.
- Promoted the role of soil in a nature-friendly future. Through continued campaigning and influencing, we helped to secure a commitment to a **Soil Health Action Plan for England**, setting out how improving soil health can support productivity, wildlife and climate.
- Worked with caterers across the UK to serve over **2.6 billion meals to Food for Life standards** on animal welfare, sourcing and traceability since 2009 - helping to create a food system that supports both nature and our health.



Our new strategy builds on the positive progress from the last 75 years and will lift our ambitions even further as we respond to the urgent and inter-linked climate, nature and health crises.



# A word from Helen

“  
The health of soil, plants, animals  
and humanity is one and indivisible”

**Lady Eve Balfour, Founder, Soil Association**

We all live in a fine balance with nature, and when we tip the scales, our wildlife, our climate, and our health suffer. But by working with nature instead of against it, we can restore our future – and food, farming and forestry will help get us there.

For over 75 years, the Soil Association has worked on many fronts to help everyone farm sustainably and eat well. To feel connection to nature and live in a way that helps people and planet to thrive.

We see the benefits of nature-friendly farming and forestry, with good lives for farm animals, thriving biodiversity and sustainable business models. And we want good food to be accessible to everyone; with nutritious and ethically produced food helping us all to eat and live well. It is all linked – and it's by making connections that we will make it happen.

Great progress has been made, but there is much still to do.

Now is our time for positive renewal and the wind is with us now. Many farmers and land managers are up for change; policy makers are looking for 'nature-based solutions'; and the cost-of-living crisis has thrown food inequalities into the spotlight, with a recognition that things must change to support those who need it most.

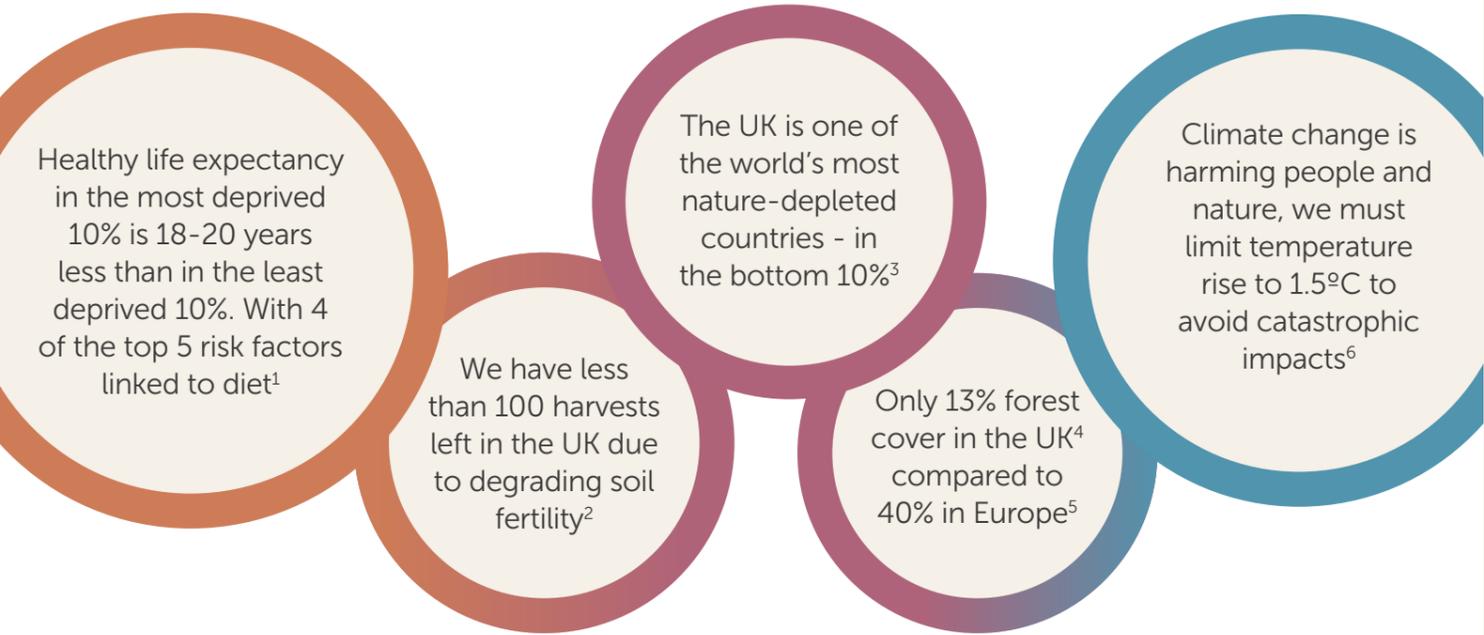
We help everyone – individuals, groups, and regulators – to take the steps that are right for them. We run major successful programmes, like Food for Life and Innovative Farmers, to create networks for farmers and caterers to learn and enable change in schools, eateries and on farms. Using knowledge from the practitioners we work with, we define what a better world could look like, creating standards for food, farming and forestry. And, together with our supporters, we advocate for nature-friendly policies from governments and businesses, that will secure our future, with everyone supporting regeneration.

The only reason we can only do any of this is because of the commitment from our members and supporters, trusts and foundations, corporate partners and our clients – who all passionately believe in our vision of regeneration. You are all part of a vital collective who are relentlessly driving to ensure that we can achieve the three transitions that we must deliver this decade: to agroecological farming and regenerative forestry, to healthy and sustainable diets, and to unite for positive change, in a spirit of practical optimism and lively energy - to secure the future which our children and grandchildren deserve.

**Helen Browning OBE**  
Group Chief Executive, Soil Association

# Earth needs us to change

Every day we hear about new issues, piling on top of old ones.



The world is not responding fast enough to regenerate itself. Change must happen faster.

But just as the issues we're facing are all connected, so are the solutions. That is where the Soil Association will focus.

## Planting hope

The health of our soil and the food we eat is interlinked. The way we work the land, and ultimately the food we all eat, has a huge impact on our health, our climate, and our wildlife, as well as crops and farm animals.

It's up to all of us whether that impact is good or bad. We must create a future where healthy and sustainable food, farming, and forestry is available for all.

Because the future doesn't have to be daunting. The more people are connected to the natural world, the more we can look after it, and in turn, each other. Working together, we can turn the tide in the next ten years – and restore our world, from the ground up.

Sources: 1 Health state life expectancies by national deprivation deciles, England - Office for National Statistics, 2 Soil lifespans and how they can be extended by land use and management change - IOPscience, 3 Biodiversity Intactness Index – The National History Museum, 4 Microsoft Word - Ch1\_Woodland\_FS2021 - Forest Research, 5 Biodiversity: Three billion additional trees by 2030 – launch of MapMyTree tool – European Environment Agency (europa.eu), 6 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2019 Report

# Our Vision

We see a future of regeneration.

With healthy soils, thriving wildlife, good lives for farm animals, nutritious food, and a hopeful future.

Joining together, we can make it happen.



# Our strategy

The Soil Association will influence large-scale system change by helping everyone build natural solutions together.

We do this to protect our earth, our wildlife, and all the people whose mental and physical wellbeing is threatened by a food system disconnected from nature - all relying on food, farming and forestry practices that are not fit for our future.

The system we seek to change is vast and complex. But using our generations of experience in pioneering solutions, we will work across the whole spectrum of food, farming and forestry to drive action.

Our analysis identified targeted goals achievable through **two key levers** that will transform how we eat, farm and care for the natural world:

## Farming & land use

**Healthy soils:** Soil carbon loss is reversed and increases by 0.4% per year, and all soils are sustainably managed.

**Biodiversity:** Declines in abundance and diversity of pollinator, butterfly and bird species are reversed.

**Restored climate, clean air and water:** Environmental pollution from farms is reduced by 90% and rivers are restored to high ecological standards of water quality.

**Good lives for farm animals:** Reducing antibiotic use in UK livestock farming and aquaculture by 90%.

## Diets & living

**Fair food economies:** A healthy, ethical and sustainable diet is affordable, accessible and the norm for all.

**Healthy, nutritious diets:** Childhood obesity (and inequalities) is halved, and all children eat at least 5-a-day fruit and veg.

**Responsible trade:** No net environmental harm is associated with the UK's food, farming and forestry consumption footprint.

## Joining forces for positive change

**Diversity of people:** We all understand the value of diversity in what we grow, eat and consume, and of different perspectives on food, farming and land use.

**Organic principles:** We all live value-based lives promoting fairness, care, health and ecology.

**Connecting with people and nature:** We all experience meaningful connections with each other and with nature through food.

Because the Soil Association operates at the intersections of farming and the environment; of animal welfare and people's wellbeing; of forestry and ecosystems; of public policy and business practice, a **third key lever** we must support is making connections: helping everyone contribute to the progress we need...

To achieve regeneration, we've built the three key levers into three transition plans to deliver by 2030:



## Farming & land use

In fields & forests, we must support:

- Agroecology
- Regenerative forestry



## Joining forces for positive change

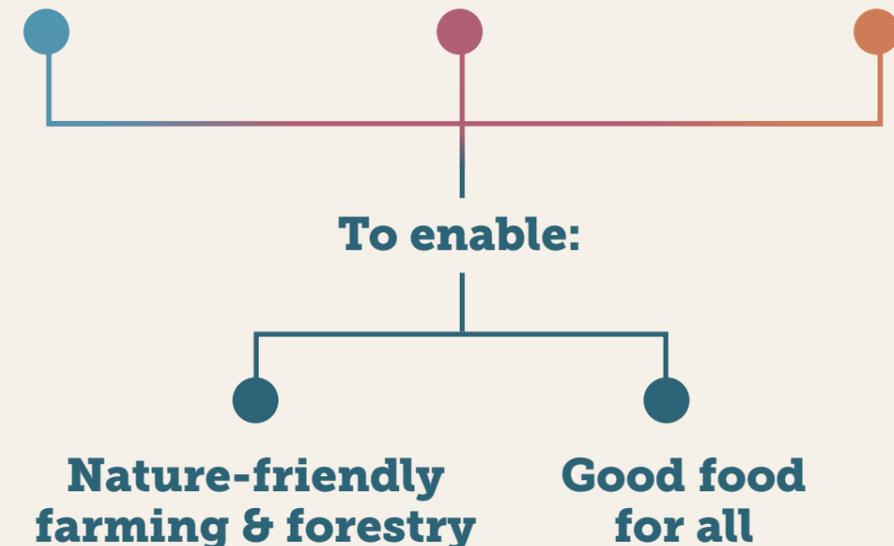
We must work together everywhere to change how we eat, farm & care for our natural world.



## Diets & living

In kitchens & communities, we must support:

- Healthy & sustainable food
- Conscious living



**A better future for climate, nature and people.**

# Farming & land use

We are championing an agricultural transition and helping to make nature-friendly land use practice the norm.

We work with farmers, growers, foresters and all businesses, helping them to thrive while stewarding the land in nature-friendly ways.

## To go further, we will:



**Transforming farming and land use policy**  
Bringing field-based evidence to government to better enable regenerative practices through supportive policies.

**Celebrate farming and forestry**  
Boosting awareness of nature-friendly land practices as a solution to planetary crises.



**Make public goods pay**  
Connecting farmers and land managers to incentives, resources and on-the-ground advice.

**Help farmers measure their impacts**  
Soil Association Exchange will be an action research hub to support and reward nature-friendly farming.

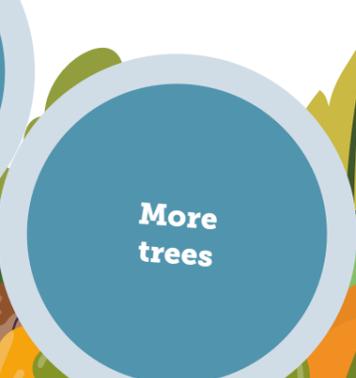
**Support farmer-led research**  
Helping farmers lead agricultural innovation through Innovative Farmers trials.



**Boost assurance in nature-friendly products**  
Continuing to set standards for best practice and influencing supply to get more sustainably produced food within reach of all.

**Bring more foresters into the movement**  
Engaging more land managers, increasing audits and sharing our knowledge to boost uptake of nature-friendly practices on a global scale.

## So we can enjoy:



# Diets & living

We are creating a national good food movement and boosting the availability of healthy, sustainable, and affordable food for all.

We work with caterers and businesses, guiding them to source from sustainable producers and help put nutritious food on menus everywhere.

## To go further, we will:



**Transforming food and trade policy**  
Bringing government and supply chain actors together to make healthy and sustainable food an easy option for everyone.

**Celebrate food**  
Boosting awareness of healthy and sustainable diets as a solution to planetary crises.



**Support good food markets**  
Helping more communities to make good food the norm in their area through the Soil Association-led Sustainable Food Places.

**Enable community change**  
Scaling up support for individuals through My Food Community, helping them lead a food transformation.



**Bring more schools into the movement**  
Helping every child have a healthy relationship with food through our award-winning Food for Life programme.

**Support climate-friendly menus**  
Building recognition of Food for Life Served here as a symbol for sustainable food outside the home.

**Increase trust in good food**  
Continuing to set standards and accrediting even more organic food through Soil Association Certification.

## So we can enjoy:

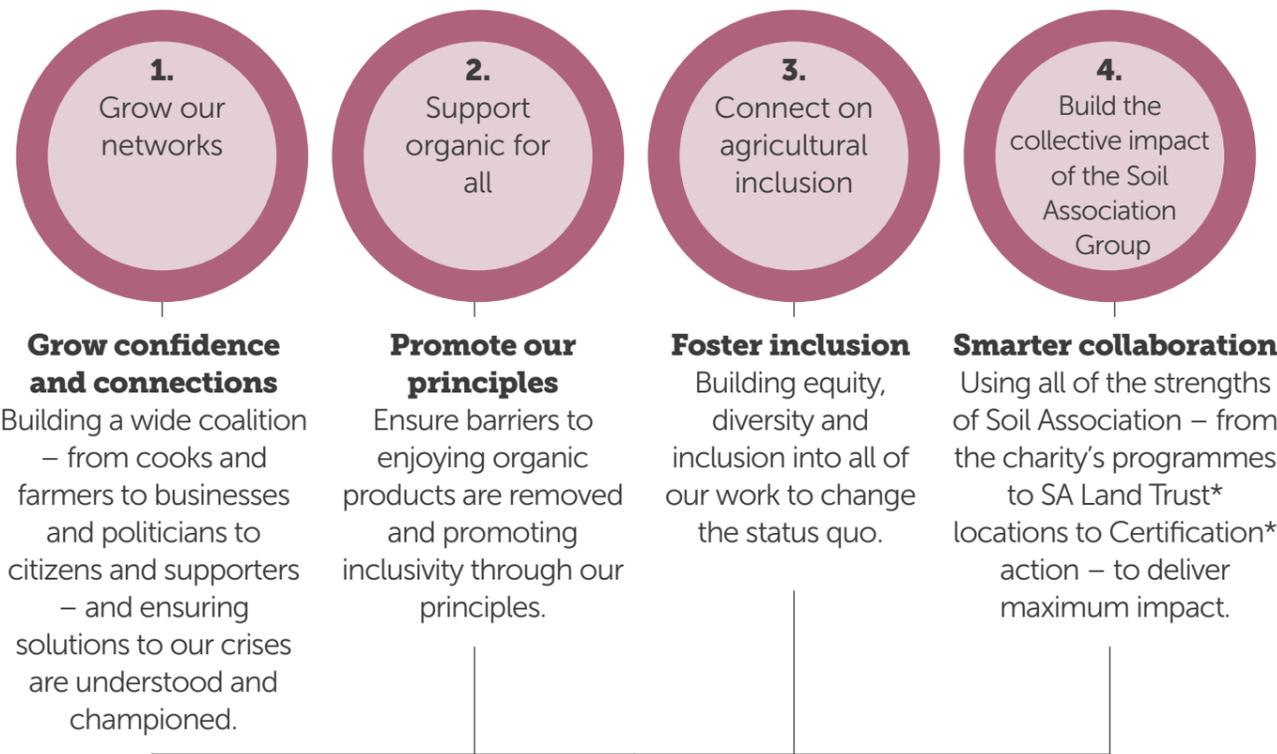
# Joining forces for positive change

The Soil Association cannot enable this change alone.

The good we do is only made possible by joining forces with community leaders, businesses, farmers, policy makers, and a wide breadth of diverse communities to release the regenerative power of the natural world and restore our health, our wildlife and our climate.

Working together we grow our understanding of what a 'better future' looks like, share our experiences, and discover new ways things can be done. Combining our ideas and our efforts, we help to shape a system that works for everyone and restores climate, nature and health.

## To go further, we will:



## So we can enjoy:



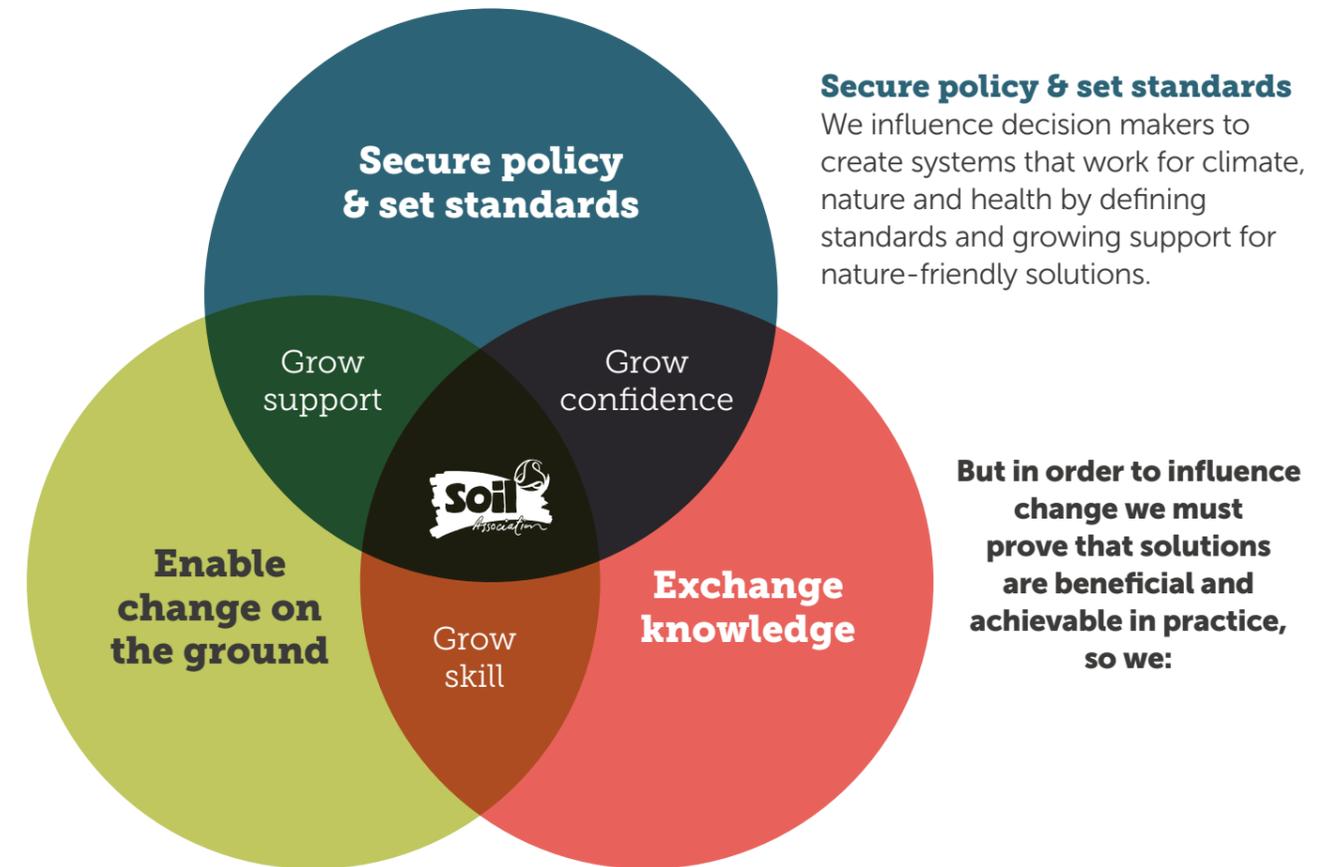
\*Learn more about the Soil Association Group on p16-17

# The role of the Soil Association

The Soil Association has over 75 years of experience in pioneering nature-based solutions, working across the whole system to drive action.

There are global emergencies in climate, nature and health – but we know food, farming and forestry hold the key to solving them.

We work with everyone to transform the way we eat, farm and care for our natural world:



Our work:

# Secure standards and policy

**The Soil Association** – Our charity helps people join forces with nature to create a better future for all. We build communities who connect with each other and drive system change through cohesive action.



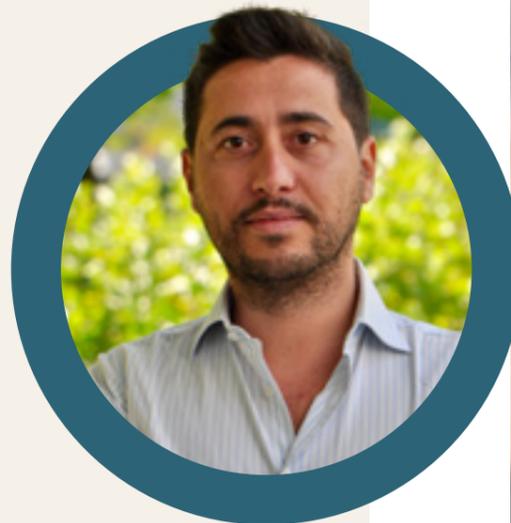
The Soil Association developed the world's first organic standards in the 1960s, and ever since we've been setting the bar for high standards in food, farming, and beyond! These standards set the parameters for what nature-friendly systems should look like, and recognise and reward businesses demonstrating best practice.

Our brilliant supporters join in with our campaigns, and our policy team take learnings from industry experts to policy makers, encouraging the development of pragmatic policies, that deliver for climate nature and people.

In 2022, 30,298 supporters signed our 'Stop Poison Poultry' petition, 1,816 supporters went on to write to CEOs of the top 10 supermarkets demanding the removal of pesticides from soya supply chains of poultry.

“As one of the global organic movement's founders, the Soil Association demonstrates that they look across borders to join forces. I am particularly thankful for their expertise in helping develop the first and the new EU Organic Regulation. I appreciate the role they play, as the UK's largest organic certification body, as international standards setters, and through their expertise on market development through inspirational and replicable actions like Organic September. Together, we are making Europe more organic!”

**Eduardo Cuoco, Director of IFOAM Organics Europe**



“The Soil Association remains a well-respected voice within food and farming policy, advocating for solutions that benefit nature, people and the climate, with impacts way beyond the farm gate.”

**Jenny Hawley, Policy Manager, PlantLife**



Our work:

# Enable change on the ground



**Food for Life** – our programme striving to make good food the easy choice for everyone - helping eateries source nutritious and sustainable food and provide food education. We work with caterers everywhere, including in over 50% of primary schools in England and Scotland, supporting them to put healthy, sustainably produced food on the menu.

“The meals look so appealing and colourful and children are becoming much more adventurous in their food choices. The joint workshop for parents have been great and it is wonderful to see the knowledge learned filtering through into meals being prepared at home.”

**Juli Copley, Head Teacher, Radleys Primary School, describing the impact of the Food for Life programme**



**Soil Association Exchange** - a new on-farm and online service aims to become the industry standard for measuring, improving and rewarding the ecological performance of all UK farming and forestry – in the same way as the Soil Association helped to set standards for organic 50 years ago. We will support farmers to make changes on their farms and explore and reap the rewards of farming more regeneratively.

“Having worked in the food and agriculture sector for 30 years, I know that SA Exchange is precisely what we need if we are to meet the climate, nature and health challenges of today.”

**Judith Batchelar OBE, Deputy Chair, The Environment Agency & former Director of Brand, CSR and Sustainability, Sainsburys**



**Soil Association Certification** – With over 50 years' experience, our certification business works across the supply chain, offering practical knowledge and expertise to support thousands of business clients to bolster animal welfare, our health, and the environment through their practices. Accreditation gives recognition to those leading the way to a regenerated future.

“It's really important to us and our customers that our product comes with the very best organic credentials. Our Soil Association stamp is a guarantee that everything we do is to the highest standards of animal welfare and sustainability.”

**Anna Elliot, Eversfield Organic**



[www.soilassociation.org](http://www.soilassociation.org)



Our work:

# Exchange knowledge

**Innovative Farmers** - Many of the best ideas in farming come from farmers. This network makes it possible for farmers to collaborate, alongside researchers, to test practical solutions to the issues that matter most to them. Since 2012, it has launched over 120 field labs, giving farmers the confidence to make a positive change.

“The great thing about field labs is that they help farmers to find solutions.”

Innovative Farmers has given farmers the confidence to go out there and try things for themselves and empowered them to work with researchers as co-creators.”

**John Pawsey, Farmer, Shimpling Park Farm**



**Sustainable Food Places** – Our partnership network of over 68 places brings local authorities, businesses and organisations together to find solutions to meet their area's specific needs. Joining forces, they use food as a tool to drive meaningful change in their communities – from addressing diet-related ill health and food poverty, to mitigating climate change and supporting biodiversity.

“Sustainable Food Places has provided vital support... specialist knowledge... and recognition and celebration to Sheffield's longstanding 'good food movement.’”

**Gareth Roberts, Coordinator, Sheffield Food Partnership**



**Soil Association Land Trust** – Land is a finite and precious resource – but every year acres of fertile soil are lost to development and the intensification of agriculture. Since 2007, the SA Land Trust has been safeguarding land it's been gifted for agroecological farming and growing. It uses community engagement and tenancing opportunities to share generational knowledge and support thriving careers in sustainable farming. Woodoaks Farm in Hertfordshire was donated in 2020 to ensure it will be farmed sustainably into the future.

“Through collaboration and community exchange, we can create a future that benefits the environment, biodiversity and the health and wellbeing of local people.”

**Rose Lewis, Woodoaks Programme Manager, Soil Association**



# Join forces with us

Our goals to 2030 are bold and this reflects the scale of what needs to be achieved.

“

We must deliver transformation in food, farming and forestry, all of which are powerful forces for change. By unlocking their potential for regeneration, we can restore a world with good health, thriving nature, and a safe climate.

The Soil Association has deep-rooted expertise, and a powerful and coherent vision – this is a strong combination. In many respects, and over 75 years since our founding, ‘our time’ has now really arrived. Our insight and services are more in demand than ever.

But we cannot do this alone.

As a charity we rely on the generous support of people like you. Our work is funded by a mixture of people, companies and trusts who share our vision. And right now, we need your support more than ever before. We must work together with confidence to restore climate, nature and our health. ”

Thank you.



**James Cashmore**  
Charity Managing Director, Soil Association

If you would like to know more about supporting us, please email [philanthropy@soilassociation.org](mailto:philanthropy@soilassociation.org) or call **0117 314 5042**.



“

Soil Association Membership gives me a deeper connection to the work of the Soil Association and I have gained a real insight into how my support is making a difference. It feels so good to be a part of a group of people who, despite different backgrounds, have a common concern for the health of the planet and motivation to do something about it. ”

**Alex Finch, Soil Circle Member**

“

This partnership allows us to shine a spotlight on the exemplary charitable work of the Soil Association whilst helping gardeners on a path to 100% nature friendly gardening. ”

**Alan Roper, CEO, Blue Diamond**



## Royal Patron

HRH The Prince of Wales

## Board of Trustees

Martin Nye

Thomas Bourne

Andrew Burgess

Sepi Golzari-Munro

Isabel Oliver

Rosemary Radcliffe

Jonathan Spencer

Phil Fearnley

Steven Lizars

Caroline Missen

To find out more visit:

**[www.soilassociation.org](http://www.soilassociation.org)**



Soil Association, Spear House, 51 Victoria Street, Bristol BS1 6AD

T **0300 330 0100**

F **0117 314 5001**

Registered charity no. 206862

Soil Association Scotland, 20 Potterrow, Edinburgh EH8 9BL

T **0131 370 8150**

Registered charity no. SC039168

---

## Do you need this in an alternative format?

If you require this document in an alternative format, please email **[digitalteam@soilassociation.org](mailto:digitalteam@soilassociation.org)** to request a copy.

