

Southend on Sea Borough Council
Department of Enterprise, Tourism and the Environment
Regulatory Services

Official Feed Food Controls Service Plan 2012/13

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Team Leader – Regulatory Services

October 2012

Introduction

The Service Plan was compiled by the Management Team within the Regulatory Services Group of Southend on Sea Borough Council.

The Service Plan is structured in accordance with the service planning guidance contained in the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement. Powers to enable the Agency to monitor the audit local authorities are contained in the Food Standards Act 1999. In accordance with this guidance the plan is submitted to the relevant member or senior officer forum for approval to ensure local transparency and accountability.

The purpose of the Service Plan is to ensure that national priorities and standards are addressed and delivered locally in accordance with the relevant codes of practice and guidance. It is intended to ensure transparency and accountability and detail the contribution that the Group makes to the Corporate Strategy for Southend on Sea Borough Council.

1. Service Aims and Objectives

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The delivery of the plan aims to:

- Ensure that the highest achievable levels of food control (food safety, standards and feeding stuffs) are maintained throughout the Borough.

The objectives are to:

- Ensure hygienic conditions in the sale, preparation, manufacture and storage of foodstuffs and feeding stuffs.
- Ensure the wholesomeness and appropriate labelling / composition of foodstuffs and feeding stuffs within the Borough
- Focus on a risk-based approach to inspections and enforcement activity in accordance with the Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy
- Administer the legislation in compliance with the approved codes of practice and related official guidance.
- Promote a greater knowledge and understanding of food safety and nutrition within the Borough

1.2 The vision of Southend on Sea Borough Council is to:

- Provide a safer town where people feel secure and confident
- Reduce inequalities in health and wellbeing
- Build strong, confident and proud communities
- Support a thriving and sustainable local economy

Our aims of producing a clean, safe, healthy, prosperous and excellent authority are reflected through each level of service planning from the Corporate Plan, the Public Protection Plan and our activities are linked to each of the aims.

2. Background

2.1 *Profile of Southend on Sea Borough Council*

This unitary authority is a seaside town which is a tourist destination with local shopping areas and a thriving town centre and covers an areas of 6,785 hectares. It is the closest seaside resort to London and is located within the Thames Gateway region and has around 6 million visitors each year. There are seasonal businesses within the town and the Enterprise and Tourism Group actively promotes events in the Borough to support the prosperity of the businesses.

The population in 2011 was 173,600 which is a population increase of 8.3% on the previous census. In 2010 the Business Survey identified that the main businesses within the town were 31% property / business and 23% wholesale and retail with 88% of businesses employing between 1 and 10 people.

2.2 *Organisational Structure*

(Appendix 1) Contains details of Council structure and responsibilities relating to food.

Southend on Sea Borough Council sends food for microbiological examination to the FWE Laboratory at Colindale via a collection service.

Food & Water Samples HPA FWE Colindale NW9 5EQ 0208 327 6548 /6550	Infection Control HPA (Essex) Infection Control Team Witham 0845 155 0069	Stool Samples Southend Hospital Micro Lab Consultant Microbiologist 01702 435555
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The nominated Public Analysts for food and feedingstuffs are located at:

Food and Feedingstuffs Public Analyst Scientific Services Ltd 28 – 32 Brunel Road Westway Estate Acton London W3 7XR Tel: 020 8222 6070	Food Kent Scientific Services 8 Abbey Wood Road Kings Hill West Malling Kent ME19 4YT Tel: 01732 220001
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2.3 Scope of the Regulatory Services Group

The Regulatory Services Group is part of Public Protection which is within the Directorate of Enterprise, Tourism and the Environment. With respect to food and feed the responsibilities of the Group are to:

- Undertake proactive food safety and standards inspections.
- Undertake proactive feed inspections
- Proactive and Reactive health and safety Interventions in food premises
- Deal with imported food matters
- Investigate complaints about food and feed.
- Investigate complaints about food and feed premises
- Investigate food poisoning and infectious disease referrals / complaints
- Deal with public health matters at food premises related to drainage, industrial noise and rubbish
- Provide consultation recommendations on planning, licensing and event applications

2.4 Demands on the Regulatory Services Group

The service implemented a new database at the beginning of the financial year as part of the 'New Ways of Working' initiative to rationalise computer systems. Ongoing IT support was not possible for the old system APP / Flare. This time was chosen so that all returns could be provided on the previous years activity and inspections due the following year could be extracted. The service is now using Uniform which is fully supported and also has Planning and Building Control as users. This system, unlike APP, is linked to the property gazetteer.

The migration of data from APP to Uniform was not completely successful. Contingency plans are in place to continue to licence APP to view so that historical records can be viewed. Commercial Premises are being inputted manually, prioritised by those where activity has been undertaken (inspections / licensing / service requests) and food businesses. Additional resource has been identified to facilitate this and is in place until the end of the financial year.

The service is moving towards a paperless office, implementation of EDRMS will be completed this year which will enable attachment of inspection reports and letters to be fully referenced and accessible. Existing paper records will be retained.

Food Premises profile

Manufacturers / producers	18
Distributors	9
Retailers	417
Restaurants / other caterers	1263
Importers	5
Total	1712

Food Hygiene Inspections:

FSA Category	No. of Premises	Frequency Required	Due 2012-13
A	6	Every 6 months	12
B	156	Every 12 months	156
C	753	Every 18 months	603
D	199	Every 24 months	179
E	371	Every 36 months	298
Awaiting Inspection	200	Within 1 month	200
Totals	1685		1448
Not in programme*	27		

Category A and B food hygiene, Category A food standards, and non-compliant C premises should be subject to an inspection, partial inspection or audit at the required interval. Broadly compliant C risk food hygiene premises and broadly compliant B risk food standards can alternate between inspection, partial inspection audit and other Official controls as defined in the Food Law Code of Practice.

Category D risk premises can alternate between an intervention which is an Official Control and an intervention that is not an Official Control. Premises rated E for food hygiene and C for food standards can be subject to an alternative enforcement strategy.

Approved Premises:

Types	No. of each Type
Cockle Processing	5
Cold Stores	2
Fishery Products	1
Meat Products	1

Food Standards Inspections:

FSA Category	No. of Premises	Frequency Required	Due 2012-13
A	1	Every 12 months	1
B	227	Every 24 months	164
C	1157	Every 60 months	422
Awaiting Inspection	300	Within 1 month	300
Totals	1685		889
Not in programme	27		

Feedingstuff Establishments:

In the last year a number of businesses have registered as animal feeding stuffs establishments.

Category	No. In category
R7	13
Exempt	2
R1, R3 & R 7	1

There is one Enhanced Remote Transit Shed which does not currently handle imported foods.

Concerns have been raised regarding the harvesting of oysters from the foreshore and allegations that these oysters which are being taken from B and C classification beds are entering the food chain. Investigations have not established a link and a joint application for funding is being prepared.

Regulatory Services have responded to incidents of food fraud with respect to counterfeit wines and alcohol.

The Group will undertake sampling around the Olympic location Hadleigh and prioritise inspections due in the Leigh area. Resources will be targeted in line with the national priority for the Olympics. Southend is not a host Borough but the main transport hub for the Hadleigh Farm event. It is anticipated that visitors may choose to stay in the area either before or after the event.

All businesses which are due for inspection are to be contacted and advice given and prioritised for inspection where due. Funding to be applied for via the EETSA food group and individually via the Food Standards Agency for targeted sampling. On the day of the events Officers will undertake visits to the foreshore area to ensure compliance with food hygiene requirements.

Service Requests:

Including:

Requests / Complaints	2011-12
Food Safety and Standards	403
Infectious Disease	260
Nuisance / Noise	76

Officers are located in the main Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue. The service responds to inspections outside of normal hours. There is a contact centre which is staffed 24 hours.

Southend on Sea Borough Council is a seasonal location with impacts on the transient nature of the businesses in the borough.

2.5 Regulation Policy

There is a Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy which was approved by Cabinet in 2011. This policy was developed and consulted upon meeting the requirements of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 and the Regulator's Compliance Code.

3. Service Delivery

3.1 Interventions by Regulatory Services Officers for Food and Feeding stuffs

Details of inspections due in each category are listed in 2.4. Regulatory Services Officers will inspect:

A and B rated food safety inspections

A rated food standards inspections

Approved premises: the cockle sheds will be inspected at the start of the season and other approved premises where due

Other premises with highest risk (for example non-compliant Category C) and those which are the most overdue.

Revisits where notices served or significant statutory failure.

Regulatory Services Officers will co-ordinate inspections, complaints, licensing, planning and event applications in their areas.

Officers have access to expertise and peer support through attending local liaison group meetings, detailed in section 3.8.

Suitably qualified and competent Enforcement Officers will concentrate on medium risk food safety inspections, inspecting those of highest risk and those

premises which have not had an inspection. 268 C risk hygiene inspections are planned to be completed and new premises inspections where required.

Food standards will be undertaken at the same time as the food safety inspection where it is due, overdue or likely to be due before the next food safety inspection.

All new premises will be evaluated as to the risk they represent. New premises will be inspected based on risk and where they are undertaking catering activities. Home caterers and Childminders will be evaluated separately to determine whether an inspection is required.

Evaluate alternative methods of intervention to ensure that changes to those previously rated as low risk are assessed for change and compliance.

All Enforcement Officers will assist in alternative interventions for other premises and sampling.

Health and safety inspections will be undertaken at new premises. They will also be undertaken at the same time as the food safety inspection where health and safety priorities are identified or where hazards are noted during the inspection.

There is a register of animal feed establishments and an evaluation of inspections required for feeding-stuffs will be undertaken. All inspections required will be completed by Officers meeting the competency requirements for feeding-stuffs.

A consultation process for events will be implemented for those operating on Council land to ensure that those supplying food at events are pre-vetted. This process will only allow businesses who can demonstrate that they can adequately control the risks associated with their businesses to trade.

Where inspections of events are undertaken the inspection outcome will be reported to the registered local authority of any mobile traders.

Where Southend on Sea Borough Council is not the event organiser the specialist Regulatory Services Officers for food safety, standards and health and safety, will determine whether pro-active inspections are required within their inspection areas.

Southend benefitted from funding from the FSA last year to adopt the NHRS and because the data requirements of the scheme only enable full database uploads, we will be unable to upload until all commercial premises have been input or the FSA are able to facilitate an IT solution. The FSA have been notified of this, the Group will continue to issue certificates and administer the review process.

A review of other official controls will be completed once all commercial premises have been input.

3.2 Regulatory Services Group Food and Feed Complaints

The demand on the service for 2011-12 is detailed above in 2.4.

All complaints will be allocated on an area basis. The RSO will use their knowledge and judgement to determine whether any action required.

Investigations of service requests / complaints to be based on intelligence and to be proportionate.

It is anticipated that demand will be similar to that of previous years.

3.3 Home Authority / Lead Authority and Primary Authority Scheme

Southend on Sea Borough Council does not have any formal schemes in place. The Enforcement Policy requires all Officers to give consideration to any schemes and formal intervention strategies prior to taking enforcement action. As part of an informal Home Authority arrangement this authority will continue to undertake sampling for examination of the cockle processing establishments in liaison with the Corporation of London Port Health Authority.

All premises on Uniform will indicate whether there is an arrangement in place, once all Commercial Premises have been inputted.

3.4 Advice to Business

The level of demand from businesses is included in section 2.4 but does not take account of advice given during inspection. Advice to businesses will continue to be given particularly in respect to our obligations under the National Rating Scheme to provide advice to assist businesses to improve to a higher rating.

Ad-hoc advice will be given on request and where necessary businesses will be advised of specialist support that they can obtain for themselves. Southend on Sea will further develop web pages to provide advice to businesses and links to other providers of businesses. The Authority will continue to contribute to ERWIN.

3.5 Feed and Food Sampling

The food sampling policy is set out in the Food Team Manual. The Regulatory Services Group will continue to participate fully in the Essex Food Group programme as well as take samples to support local work. It is planned that sampling will be undertaken in accordance with the sampling plan (appendix 2). Training has been completed to enable Enforcement Officers to support this work.

The Group, where resources allow, will participate in the East of England Trading Standards Association (EETSA) food sampling and standards programme as well

as take samples in support of local work. EETSA has successfully bid for funding for sampling from the FSA. It is anticipated that 20 samples will be taken and sent for analysis as directed by the specialist Regulatory Services Officer.

Where funding is available applications will be made to the FSA directly. A bid has been accepted by the FSA and it is anticipated that 46 samples will be taken and sent for analysis and examination as directed by the specialist Regulatory Services Officer.

An application will be made to the FSA for funding for the UKFSS reporting system for food sampling. This will enable information sharing and co-ordination. It will also improve the reporting of samples taken for the LAEMS return.

Samples for examination will be submitted to the FWE Laboratory at Colindale. Samples for analysis will be sent to the Public Analyst Scientific Services Ltd.

3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

Investigations will be undertaken of outbreaks; other incidents of suspected food poisoning will be monitored and responded if necessary. The demand for last year is detailed in 2.4 and it is expected to be similar for this year. There are working instructions that detail the responses to be made. Work is currently underway to improve the process and reduce the demand on time. Southend Borough Council has signed up to the Memorandum of Understanding Outbreak Control Plan.

Pandemic flu or similar will increase the demand on time and will result in a reduction in the pro-active programme.

3.7 Incidents

There are working instructions for incidents in the Food Team Manual. Where required by the Agency or DEFRA resources will be provided which will result in a reduction in the pro-active programme. Resource will also be provided to respond to flexi warranting arrangements proposed to deal with illegal shellfish activity. Resource may also be required to support Southend Borough Council's emergency control plan.

3.8 Liaison with Other Organisations

Southend Borough Council will continue to participate locally in liaison arrangements with:

- the Essex Food Liaison Group (including sampling)
- EETSA
- Essex Occupational Health and Safety Group
- Thames Liaison Group for Shellfish

- Food Hygiene Focus Group
- Health Inequalities Board and Public Health England
- Events Team
- Planning Major Projects Board
- SMAART Team

An average of 70 days is spent on the above.

With national bodies as appropriate, FSA, BIS, LGA

3.9 Promotional Work and other non-official controls interventions for food and feed

Participation will be as part of a larger exercise organised nationally or through the County, these will be evaluated in line with corporate initiatives.

Support of initiatives identified through the public health agenda including those identified in action plans for Health and Wellbeing.

Promotion of Healthy Eating Awards within Southend.

Any promotional work undertaken will be evaluated to measure its effectiveness

4. Resources

4.1 Financial Allocation

	<i>£ Budget 2012-13</i>
<i>Travel and Subsistence</i>	<i>5,350</i>
<i>Equipment</i>	<i>1,100</i>
<i>IT</i>	<i>1,800</i>
<i>¹Sampling Budget</i>	<i>²18,250</i>
<i>Staffing Costs</i>	<i>232,016</i>
<i>Legal</i>	<i>8,365</i>

¹*Microbiological samples are taken as part of our free allocation with the FWE.*

²*Includes grants from the Food Standard Agency (£9,250) for priority sampling.*

4.2 Staffing Allocation

Staff Food	No.
Professional	4.4
Administration	0.8

4.3 Staff Development Plan

Training will be identified as part of the appraisal system to meet the needs of the service to be delivered. Officers are responsible for managing their own CPD training which will mostly provided externally and funded by the Council.

Enforcement Officers are to be trained to support areas of food, feed, infectious disease and legal processes. This will be provided internally in the main.

Two Enforcement Officers completed the Higher Certificate this year. There is also one Regulatory Services Officer who has completing the learning element of the Environmental Health degree. They will be supported to complete log books, learning portfolio and professional interviews. Support will be given to trainees to help them to achieve their registration with an expectation this is undertaken within a reasonable period.

5. Quality Assessment

5.1 Quality Assessment and Internal Monitoring

All procedures will be reviewed this year and internal monitoring will be adhered to including periodic review of inspections, service requests, legal proceedings and letters, and where appropriate special monitoring will be undertaken.

The Regulatory Services Group continues to support the concepts of Peer Review and Inter-Authority Auditing. A Regulatory Services Self-Assessment and Peer Challenge took place in 2009.

Consistency training was undertaken prior to the adoption of the NFHRS which was cascaded to those officers undertaking food inspections.. The department participated in the Essex consistency exercise.

A Data Protection Audit is scheduled to take place in November 2012.

There is an internal monitoring team within the Council who select areas for review on an annual basis. There is also Member scrutiny through the scrutiny process as appropriate.

6. Review

6.1 Review against the Service Plan

Review against the service is undertaken internally within the department.

Food Safety:

FSA Category	Numbers Due 2011-12	Numbers Inspected	% Achieved
A	21	21	100
B	209	209	100
C	638	294	46
D	166	23	14
E	332	32	10
Unrated	219	5	2

Food Standards:

FSA Category	Numbers Due 2011-12	Numbers Inspected	% Achieved
High	1	0	0
Medium	161	74	46
Low	371	102	22

Food standards were not separately targeted.

Enforcement in Premises:

	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10
<i>Prosecutions</i>	4	0	5
<i>Simple Cautions</i>	0	3	1
<i>Improvement Notices</i>	33	57	55
<i>Prohibitions</i>	0	4	3
<i>Seizure</i>	1	0	0

Requests

	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10
<i>Food Safety and Standards</i>	403	365	485
<i>Infectious Disease</i>	260	259	250
<i>Nuisance / Noise</i>	76	55	28

Sampling

	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10
<i>Microbiological Samples Taken</i>	222	273	387
<i>Analytical Samples Taken</i>	0	32	44

6.2 *Identification of any Variation from the Service Plan 2011-12*

The number of high risk inspections completed was less than planned. This has been due to a number of issues, including enforcement activity resulting in dedicated officer time throughout the investigation process; long term sickness absence; maternity leave and significantly the impact of the restructure of the Regulatory Service during 2011 including service reprioritisation and a review of resources.

However, throughout this period interventions have been directed to the highest risk activities as required by the relevant guidance and codes of practice. The one high risk food standards inspection was not completed in 2011/12 and has already been inspected early in 2012/13.

There has been a reduction in the number of notices served over the last 3 years. This may be because there has been an overall reduction in the number of premises rated A and B for food hygiene over the last 3 years indicating an improvement in compliance.

The Authority did not make a bid for imported sampling last year. Microbiological sampling continued to be undertaken in line with the priorities, supporting the areas high risk activities, ice cream and cockles and participation in Essex and National priorities.

6.3 *Areas for Improvement*

- Completion of hand-over from administration review that has recently been completed.
- Differentiate between compliant and non-compliant C risk premises to target for inspection.
- Inspections due reports to include details of where food standards are also due to highlight required inspections
- High risk food standards inspections to be completed
- Vetting and prioritisation of new premises
- Standardising work where possible and process improvements
- Training of Officers to support work areas
- Implementation of new IT system which will enable reports to be run, interface with front-office system (LAGAN), EDRMS (document imaging system) and GIS mapping
- Completion of bid for UKFSS funding
- Review of alternative methods of delivery.

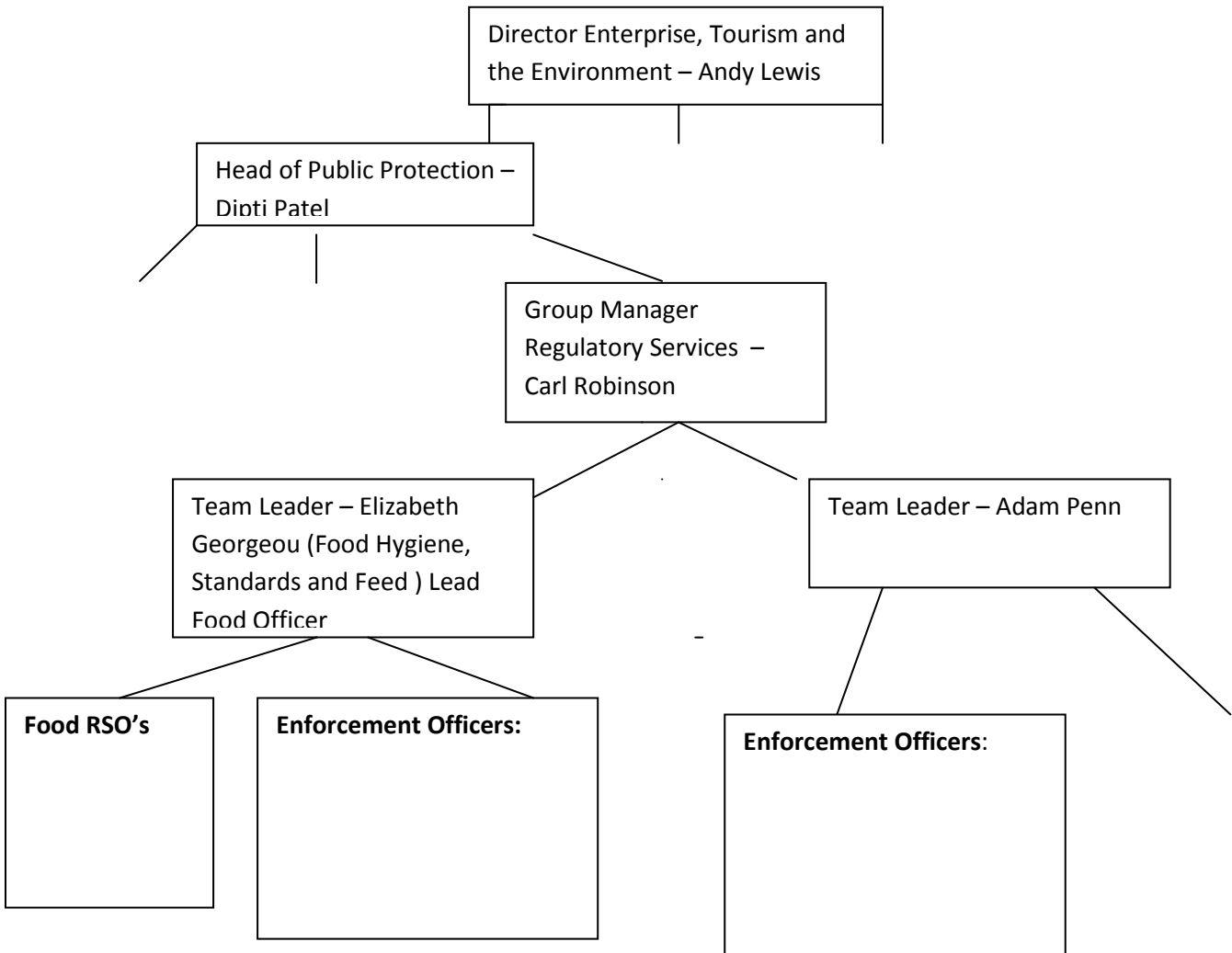
Appendix 1

Leader and Cabinet Portfolio for Public Protection:

Leader Nigel Holdcroft

Public Protection Tony Cox

Food Service – Officers undertaking food work only:



SOUTHEND ON SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL
MICROBIOLOGICAL AND ANALYTICAL SAMPLING PROGRAMME; 18th April 2012 – 20th
March 2013

Microbiological samples will be collected from the post room before 3pm.

Sampling will take place fortnightly, unless otherwise agreed with lab.

Food Std Sampling Dates	Micro. Sampling Dates	PROGRAMME 2012 - 2013				
		Samples to be with the Food Team, at Civic Centre by 14:00 ready for collection				
	WEDS	Sampling Projects In-house, LGA/HPA, FSA funded, Eastern Region	Rossi Pool Water	Fuud	Cockles (June-Oct)	Other Users i.e. Tracy Pitkins, John Lothian
	18 April 12	In-house scooped and machine ice cream	YES			TBC
FSA Funded Food Allergens in Takeaway Foods (May-July)	2 May 12	In-house scooped and machine ice cream In-house rte seafoods	YES			TBC
	16 May 12	In-house butcher shop survey				TBC
	30 May 12	In-house butcher shop survey				TBC
	13 June 12	FSA funded strawberries (x5)	YES	YES		TBC
	27 June 12	FSA funded strawberries (x5) HPA Study 47 Olympic preparation & response sampling TBC				TBC
	11 July 12	HPA Study 47 Olympic preparation & response sampling TBC	YES			TBC
	25 July 12	In-house made to order sandwiches				TBC
FSA Funded 'Free From' Claims	8 Aug 12	In-house made to order sandwiches FSA funded whole/pre-sliced melon (x5)	YES			TBC

Aug-Oct	22 Aug 12	FSA funded whole/pre-sliced melon (x5)				TBC
	5 Sept 12	FSA funded sous vide cooking (2 premises) *RESAMPLES*	YES			TBC
	19 Sept 12	In-house environmental swabs and cleaning cloths				TBC
	3 Oct 12	In-house environmental swabs and cleaning cloths	YES	YES		TBC
	17 Oct 12	FSA funded whole/ pre-sliced melon (x5)				TBC
	31 Oct 12	HPA Study 48 Pate study				TBC
	14 Nov 12	HPA Study 48 Pate study	YES			TBC
	28 Nov 12	FSA funded berries (max 6)				TBC
	12 Dec 12	*RESAMPLES*	YES			TBC
	26 Dec 12	NO SAMPLING				TBC
	9 Jan 13	In-house Listeria shopping basket	YES			TBC
	23 Jan 13	In-house Listeria shopping basket				TBC
	6 Feb 13	In-house fresh/synthetic cream cakes	YES	YES		TBC
	20 Feb 13	HPA Study 49 Reactive response study TBC				TBC
	6 March 13	In-house fresh/synthetic cream cakes	YES			TBC
	20 Mar 13	*RESAMPLES*				TBC