



Covid-19 Emergency Food Programme Impact Report

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August 2020



On Wednesday 18th March, the UK Government announced that schools, colleges, and early years settings were to close their gates at the end of the school week as part of the country's ongoing response to Coronavirus. For many children, the closure of schools represented the loss of a hot, healthy midday meal, and in a number of cases, also a filling and nutritious breakfast.

Following Feeding Britain's request to the Prime Minister, the Department for Education announced a support package to include a centrally-funded national supermarket voucher for low-income families whose children were eligible for free school meals, with a system in place by the end of March.

Whilst Feeding Britain welcomed this announcement, it quickly became clear that a proportion of disadvantaged families would remain unable to secure the support they needed. In particular, approximately half of children living in poverty did not qualify for, or receive, vouchers. Among many of those who did, the purchase of food was made a challenge by difficulties in accessing online systems, problems with redeeming vouchers at the checkout, the need to shield or self-isolate, a lack of access to transport or a retailer that would accept vouchers, and in some cases the reality of empty shelving upon arrival to the supermarket. Additionally, the pandemic had generated a wave of 'newly vulnerable' families, including the self-employed, those experiencing wage cuts and others who had recently been made redundant.

Consequently, on Monday 23rd March, Feeding Britain launched an emergency food programme to protect children and their families' access to food. In every region of the Feeding Britain network, a programme appropriate to the area was rapidly developed, implemented, and scaled up to meet the level of need identified in the community. This was formed of a combination of food hampers, children's lunch packs and pre-prepared meals made available for families to collect or delivered directly to the homes of recipients. Existing links were strengthened, volunteers were mobilised, and new relationships were formed.

The scheme was not without its challenges and plans frequently needed to be adapted in line with new announcements and in response to the needs of the community. Social distancing measures, the loss of volunteers requiring shielding and scarcity of food supplies required both an agile plan and a responsive delivery team. Despite this, a total of approximately 1 million meals have been distributed to an estimated 46,700 families and households to date. In many cases, strength was derived from hybrid partnerships with local authorities, the resources and food sourced by Feeding Britain, and the new relationships that had been formed in March.

The following paper presents an overview of each of the regional programmes Feeding Britain was privileged to support, along with case studies, key strengths, challenges, lessons drawn from the scheme and how these may be applied to future programmes.

Feeding Barnsley/Good Food Barnsley

Good Food Barnsley, working in partnership with statutory and community partners, launched a programme on 26th March to support those at the greatest risk of food insecurity, delivering their first emergency food pack the very next day. The next month would see the delivery of food hampers containing the equivalent of over 50,000 meals.

Requests for food assistance via telephone or e-form were directed through a single contact centre managed by Barnsley Council. From this, requests were channelled to the most appropriate response partner according to the type of assistance required. Emergency food packs formed of ambient food staples were distributed from the central FareShare Yorkshire depot to a small number of strategic food hubs, before direct delivery to the medically vulnerable and those in self-isolation.

The teams moved to a revised operating model two weeks later, depicted in the diagram below. Requests from those experiencing financial hardship were directed to the Local Welfare Assistance Service, offering a support package of advice, assistance, and a referral route to the re-opened food bank or to join Company/Community shop. As a result, the emergency response scheme focussed solely on those in self-isolation displaying Covid-19 symptoms, those with medical needs and without the support of friends or relatives and shielded individuals with specific dietary requirements.

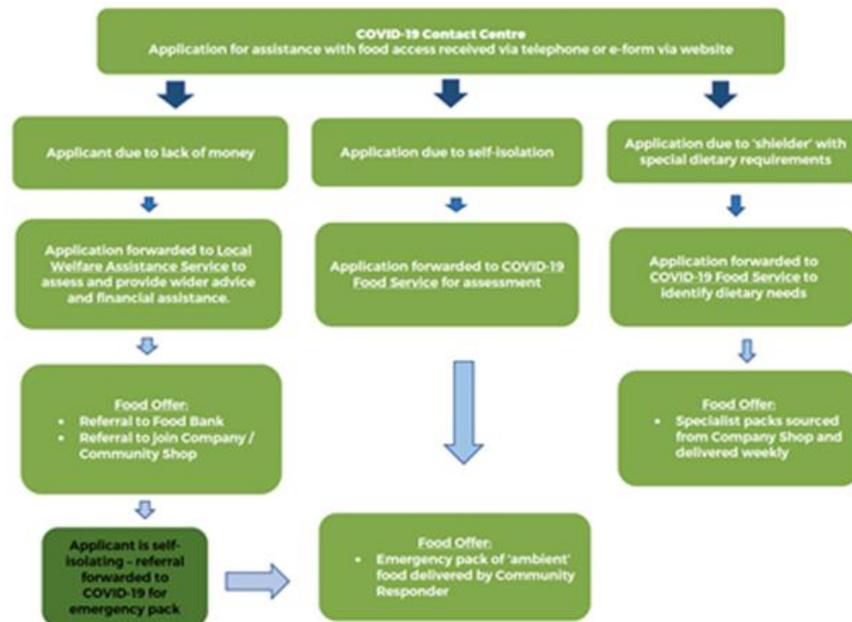


Figure 1: Good Food Barnsley revised operating model

The strong, trusting partnerships between FareShare Yorkshire, local food banks and Company/Community Shop, alongside the involvement of Barnsley Council, represents an example of good practice that allowed for a comprehensive and coherent emergency response. Following initial availability issues, food supplies were soon more than adequate, and Feeding Britain’s resources were prioritised for the upcoming Summer Healthy Holiday programme. Good Food Barnsley is now assessing with Feeding Britain how long-term support can be offered in a more sustainable way before people reach a crisis point or emergency.

Feeding Birkenhead Supporting Wirral

Feeding Birkenhead Supporting Wirral, Wirral foodbank, and Wirral Council established a central Emergency Food Hub for the bulk receipt, purchase, collection, and distribution of food supplies to vulnerable residents at risk of hunger. An online portal and central Wirral Coronavirus Helpline were established as a referral route for residents struggling to access food, details of which were shared widely to allow schools and other agencies to refer families in need of support.



Relationships were forged with local supermarkets and the community organisations made use of pooled FareShare allowances and orders from His Church to secure adequate supplies of food. Operating collaboratively from the Emergency Food Hub allowed the teams to produce up to 400 hampers each day, supporting 10,176 unique households with 18,121 hampers between April and July. The scale of the operation was supported by the size of the facility secured for the central hub, enabling volunteers to mobilise within social distancing guidelines. Wirral Council further facilitated this strong response through the redeployment of employees from closed public services and the police.

Feeding Britain's resources were used to support the operation, with a focus on providing meals for children who would ordinarily be in receipt of free school meals and those residing in low-income households, as well as to maintain a localised healthy offer in social supermarkets for 500 families each week. Several Feeding Birkenhead Supporting Wirral projects acted as collection points for families, with a home delivery service available for those isolating or unable to travel. Support was further offered in the form of a telephone chat service to alleviate social isolation, a hot meal service, and the offer of Emergency Memberships at the Birkenhead Number 7 Citizens' Supermarket for 200 families per week.

Feeding Birkenhead Supporting Wirral is now assessing with Feeding Britain how it can continue safeguarding families' wellbeing during school holidays in the 2020-21 academic year.

Bonny Downs Community Association, East Ham

The emergency food programme in East Ham was launched in partnership with the Bonny Downs Community Association (BDCA) and supported by L&Q. The aim of the project was to prevent and relieve hunger over a three month period amongst children and families on exceptionally low incomes and with limited, or non-existent, access to affordable and nutritious food. In particular, the proposal aimed to support children whose families were not being reached by existing government schemes and the project intended to provide both food and enriching activities.

As well-established pillars of the community, the Bonny Downs Baptist Church and its Community Centre have a detailed understanding of local families in need and the type of support they may require in order to meet those needs. Through direct home delivery of food supplies and children's craft and activity packs, it was expected that at least 70 children per week would be protected from the risk of hunger and a loss of access to educational and enriching activities.

“We had no idea at the start of March 2020 that our community centre services would be reshaped so dramatically, to become a huge relief effort, with warehousing and logistics. Our staff have responded with flexibility, compassion and creativity. We have become a community that fully supports it's community, and it has been heart-warming to be part of it.”

Bonny Downs Community Centre, July 2020

Working alongside FareShare and local corporations, parcels contained a variety of non-perishable food supplies alongside fresh vegetables, meat, drinks, and snacks. Additionally, the BDCA on-site café team prepared freshly cooked takeaway meals for inclusion in the delivered parcels, further enhancing the provision. As a result, 5,133 food hampers containing a total of 35,931 meals have been distributed to date, supporting 1,187 individual children and their families. A total of 210 craft packs were also delivered, although the team faced distribution challenges given the bulky nature of the packs. Volunteer drivers generously donated their time, undertaking multiple trips to ensure local children were provided with enriching activities during school closure.

Feeding Bradford & Keighley

The Feeding Bradford & Keighley network, in partnership with FareShare Yorkshire and Bradford District Council, launched a wide-scale emergency response to support families in need, individuals, older people and the newly housed with prepared meals and multiple day food parcels.

A strong food support system was already in place in the region, with Inn Church's 'The Storehouse' operating a central food distribution hub for organisations and community groups across the district. This operation was drastically scaled up in response to the pandemic, supporting various feeding projects and 18 out of 21 of the area's food banks to meet the extensive increase in need. New staff and volunteers also played a pivotal role in supporting the expanded service.

In May, the majority of recipients were transferred to a home delivery model to promote social distancing and reduce the risk of infection. However, some recipients were keen to continue to access services in person. This clearly demonstrated that social support, alongside food, is a key element in meeting the needs of local residents and will be a fundamental consideration in re-framing future services. Data collection throughout this process also represented a significant challenge, with difficulties accessing information and assessing need across multiple agencies.

As of July, and with support from Feeding Britain, the network had provided approximately 250,000 individual meals or ingredients to create parcels for food banks to distribute to those in need. Additionally, 225 child-friendly parcels containing project and activity bags and a total of one tonne of food were delivered to local families. In a period of ten weeks, the network distributed the same amount of food that would usually be processed in a year.

Bradford District Council has played a key role both financially and as a means of feeding back information and experiences 'on the ground'. Through this process, it was identified that a mapping exercise would be of use, allowing all formal and informal projects and offers of community support to be documented. This, to prevent duplication and allow collective working.

Feeding Bradford & Keighley is now assessing with Feeding Britain how long-term support can be offered in a more sustainable way, having recently opened a citizens' supermarket in the premises of the old Bradford Brewery. Further information on the project can be found [here](#).

Feeding Bristol

Feeding Bristol, in partnership with Bristol Council, FareShare South West, the city's Food Network and foodbanks as well as a range of community groups, led the development and implementation of a city-wide strategy to provide food to those in need. The model aimed to support economically vulnerable groups by providing healthy and nutritious food options and coordinating offers of support. The network was also tasked with considering the long-term implications of, and responses to, the pandemic.

Between mid-March and the end of May, the equivalent of 220,632 meals alongside 16,280 parcels were delivered by 26 participant organisations based in city wards characterised by high levels of deprivation. Food parcels were formed of a mixture of fresh and ambient products and pre-prepared, balanced meals were assembled by experienced chefs. At the peak of demand in mid-May, more than double the number of meals and almost triple the number of parcels were distributed in comparison to the period prior to lockdown.

The method of distribution of both meals and parcels varied between each organisation in relation to local need and capacity. Given social distancing requirements and the need to prevent queuing, over half of the food was delivered directly to the homes of recipients.

Some organisations offered a mixture of both collection and delivery operations to support those without a fixed address and offer access to key services.

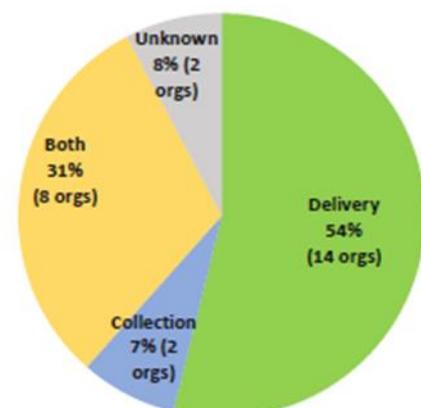


Figure 2: Percentage of organisations using different delivery methods

Alongside the provision of emergency support, infrastructure was developed to support those experiencing financial hardship in a longer-term, more sustainable way. Run by Family Action, and in collaboration with FareShare South West and Feeding Bristol, FOOD Clubs aim to serve the community through reliable food provision and mutual family support. Prior to the pandemic, a total of 5 FOOD clubs were operational in Bristol. As part of the emergency response, this has increased to 12 clubs with a further 3 planned for opening this year. Further information with regards to FOOD clubs can be found [here](#).

Throughout this process, a challenge that organisations faced was the limited ability to interact with recipients and assist with the use of ingredients and cooking of meals, a level of engagement that was common in the city prior to lockdown. In response to this, organisations are beginning to consider how cooking skills can be developed for vulnerable groups in a socially distanced manner. This forms a key component of Feeding Bristol's Healthy Summer Holidays programme, and will continue to be central to Feeding Bristol's vision of access to nutritious and affordable food and the skills to prepare meals for all, empowering residents to eat healthily.

An extensive report highlighting the community food response in Bristol can be accessed [here](#).

Feeding West Cheshire

Led by The Welcome Network, a collaboration between Cheshire West and Chester Council, Public Health and local community groups was launched to assess the current provision across the borough, identify any gaps, generate a plan of action and begin considering strategies to provide a consistent wider offering for families and children in the future.

The region already benefitted from strong, local referral pathways linking groups with community members and it was the aim of the task force to further extend these connections, enhance their provision and fill any identified gaps. Throughout the emergency programme, a number of community hubs have emerged which have built on existing partnerships and allowed the enhancement of the foodbank offer. These hubs have facilitated the sharing and storage of food which has been delivered through a newly established distribution system.

“People are feeling anxious, from a change in circumstances to not being able to visit shops they might normally visit. We are seeing a real need for the trusted community groups and organisations to be supporting local people.”

Stephanie Ellis, The Welcome Network

Resources from Feeding Britain were utilised to supplement the provision across the region, through the sourcing of food staples, additional fruit and vegetables, nappies, and essential toiletries. Items have been sourced locally where possible and distributed through the network to generate food parcels for families and members of the community in need. To date, over 11,000 meals have been provided, printed recipe cards have been produced, and capital items including fridges and freezers have been sourced to increase the capacity to store more food items.

Throughout this time, a central food hub has also been established, distributing FareShare food across Cheshire West and Cheshire East. The warehouse has been pivotal in the safe storage and packing of food and the team have commenced the distribution of weekly holiday cooking boxes for community groups unable to meet and eat together. The response to the pandemic has also prompted the development of a 'Feeding West Cheshire' strategy, through which local organisations can align, collaborate, and work together both now and in the future.

Feeding Cornwall

In response to the pandemic, Transformation CPR quickly expanded their operations to support the most vulnerable members of the community, including families and children eligible for free school meals. Food parcels containing a wide range of ambient food supplies alongside children's lunch and activity packs were distributed through a newly developed e-voucher system, designed to support referral agents and school staff working from home.

At the beginning of the emergency programme, obtaining food in sufficient quantities was a significant challenge, both as a result of a fall in donations and restrictions placed on purchasing. The team tackled this issue by obtaining, with support from Feeding Britain, catering sized supplies to be decanted into smaller sealed units and forming relationships with local farmers, hotels, pubs, wholesalers, and schools. The utilisation of Feeding Britain's resources to secure additional shelving and commercial refrigeration units also helped, allowing greater quantities of fresh food and family-friendly pre-prepared meals to be stored.



A model of home deliveries was quickly adopted to support social distancing and reach those in isolation, particularly in the more remote areas. This too presented a challenge given the rural nature of the county and the cost of logistics, with an additional 500 miles covered in one week alone. Access to information represented a further barrier with GDPR and data sharing concerns restricting the ability of the team to identify those in need of delivered aid. Despite this, a total of 16 drivers and 3 vans operated to meet the 110% increase in demand for home deliveries, providing an estimated 40,000 meals to 1,500 households between April and July.

To further support operations both now and in the future, Transformation CPR have introduced a new, computerised stock control system. This, to offer more effective warehouse management and manage the supply to other facilities across Cornwall. Enhanced procedures will also allow the warehouse to receive greater levels of chilled and frozen food donations from large retailers.

Feeding Coventry

The city of Coventry launched an Emergency Food Framework designed to co-ordinate the community response to the pandemic, enhancing the work of existing organisations and utilising the food networks already established in the area. With central support from the Council, the response aimed to provide food and essential services to those accessing foodbanks, families eligible for free school meals and other vulnerable members of the community.

This was delivered through a 'hub and spoke' model, formed of a central coordination hub and 10 satellite city-wide Emergency Food Hubs situated in community locations. The central hub offered a single point of referral for those requiring assistance before being triaged by the team and directed to their nearest local

hub. From here, residents were able to receive the most appropriate offer of support, including a foodbank voucher, a free school meal parcel or a neighbourhood service.

What can an Emergency Food Hub offer?

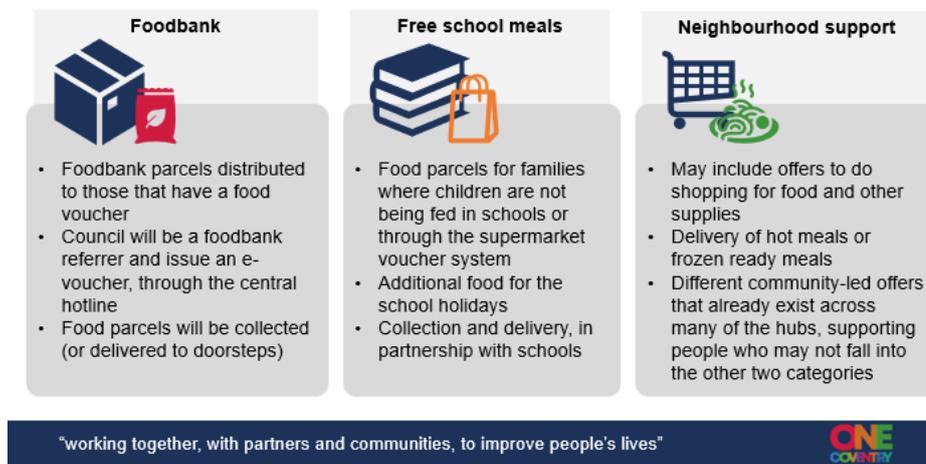


Figure 3: Coventry Emergency Food Framework

Free school meal parcels were made available to families unable to make use of the Government voucher scheme due to the need to self-isolate or lack of family and friend support networks. This, to offer alternative arrangements for the more than 10,000 children usually in receipt of at least one free school meal, with some ordinarily also receiving breakfast. As a result, resources from Feeding Britain were directed to support the packing and distribution of 1,543 family food parcels through the Emergency Food Hubs and local primary schools. A further 338 parcels were distributed to stranded University students, funded by Coventry University.

Resources from Feeding Britain were focused on securing food supplies and the Coventry team formed new relationships both nationally and locally, including the bespoke manufacture of 140,000 Coventry Foodbank and Coventry Citizens' Supermarket teabags. Alongside the provision of food, the emergency response also highlighted the difficulty families on low incomes faced in sourcing household and personal hygiene products. Consequently, Feeding Coventry's 'Bare Necessities' project was launched, sourcing and supplying sanitary, baby, hygiene and cleaning products for distribution alongside food parcels. The project will potentially continue to run beyond the Covid-19 emergency response.

Feeding Derbyshire

Led by Rural Action Derbyshire, the Feeding Derbyshire network launched an emergency response to protect children eligible for free school meals, children from low-income households and other vulnerable groups. The programme aimed to utilise existing networks and partnerships across the county, including community food projects, foodbanks, school catering service providers and the local authorities across the region's two-tier local government system.

The network conducted a mapping exercise to identify gaps in provision and introduced a referral system to allow schools and other agencies to signpost families in need of support. From this, community collection and distribution points were established alongside a home delivery scheme for food and meal packages. The rapid recruitment of volunteers and centrally prepared operational guidelines assisted with the scaling up of Derbyshire's food support system.

Resources from Feeding Britain were used to secure adequate supplies to produce the meals and food parcels, making use of both national and local providers. Food parcels were formed of predominantly ambient food products, with the addition of fresh fruit and vegetables and hygiene and sanitary products. Hot meals were batch cooked by community cafés and distributed for re-heating, with menus including roast dinners, stews, pasta dishes and meals for those with specific dietary requirements. Between April

and June, it is estimated that the equivalent of more than 70,000 meals were distributed to Derbyshire residents in need.

“Now more than ever there is a need for targeted work and intervention, using local intelligence to tailor the development of our work to address food poverty and the causal factors of income and employment.”

Mandy Chambers, Feeding Derbyshire, May 2020

The batch-cook model was identified as a particularly strong response in meeting the food needs of vulnerable individuals and families with reduced access to fresh and prepared food options as a result of the pandemic. Consequently, funding from the National Lottery Community Fund was secured to scale up the programme and distribute batches of nutritionally balanced meals to supplement ambient parcels on a weekly basis. The batch cooking process will be carried out by community food projects, making use of surplus food where possible, and allowing existing projects to maintain a service to their client-base. Feeding Derbyshire will oversee and co-ordinate the distribution network, source equipment, packaging and food supplies and support the community projects.

Glasgow

Feeding Britain supported the Govan Youth Information Project with funding for a food programme supporting families in Govan and Ibrox throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Funds were used to provide 3,000 packed lunches alongside art and craft packs. Additional support for the 14 week programme was also received from Glasgow City Council, Foundation Scotland, the Martin Lewis Fund and the Rangers Charity Foundation.



Additionally, Feeding Britain supported similar operations with Govan HELP and a packed lunch scheme administered by the Ridgeway Dairy, an initiative backed by Drumoyne Community Council. The Dairy began preparing lunches when lockdown restrictions were imposed, with packs including a fresh sandwich, fruit, yoghurt and snacks. Distribution of the lunches increased from just under 300 units in April to over 1,500 in June. An additional Feeding Britain contribution was made to extend the service until the reopening of schools, providing a further 570 lunch packs.

Feeding Britain has since begun working with organisations in Glasgow South West to pilot longer-term support in a sustainable way.

Greenwich and Woolwich

Home-Start Greenwich has been working in partnership with organisations including Feeding Britain and FareShare to run an emergency food programme, aimed at reaching vulnerable children and families throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

Through a partnership with local caterer First Choice Caribbean Hut Lunches, Home-Start Greenwich were able to distribute a varied range of nutritionally balanced cooked meals to vulnerable families. Menus included chilli con carne, pasta bakes, jerk chicken and vegetarian curries. Feeding Britain's support has enabled a reach of 240 children per week, with food distributed from the Brookhill Children's Centre and delivered directly to families by bus through support from RBG/GS Plus Ltd. This, to ensure the safety of families that would usually need to make use of public transport to collect the meals.



The Home-Start Greenwich team have been working with Feeding Britain to develop a post Covid-19 recovery plan to implement projects aimed at assisting families to become less dependent on an emergency food provision. The programme will focus on the development of skills to prepare healthy meals using affordable, easily accessible ingredients, combat social isolation through a series of events and re-open the Community Kitchen as a cooking and training club.

Feeding Leicester

Feeding Leicester, led by the Public Health team of Leicester City Council, launched a programme to reach children eligible for free school meals and other vulnerable children including those in the care system, but not in education. Feeding Britain was able to contribute to the development of 5-day food parcels made available for collection from local primary schools, reaching 800 children per month.



Food parcels contained ingredients for lunch and dinner, including pasta, bread, eggs, milk, fish, fruit, and vegetables. Schools that were enrolled in the Magic Breakfast programme also received breakfast items including bagels, cereal, and beans. Parcels were substantial enough to support parents to access food without having to leave the house daily and the scheme was run in parallel to a hot food provision for vulnerable individuals and families. Resources from Feeding Britain were also prioritised for the upcoming Summer Holiday programme of meals and activities.

Feeding Liverpool

In response to the pandemic, Feeding Liverpool quickly moved from a support-based role to one of helping to deliver front line services, playing a pivotal role in the bulk sourcing and distribution of food supplies. Resources from Feeding Britain were used to meet the cost of fresh and ambient food items, as well as logistics and warehousing, in order to enable the provision of food parcels to vulnerable families eligible for free school meals, delivered through a network of existing organisations.

The local steering group determined that Feeding Liverpool's support would be best utilised across two main tiers – supporting both emergency food aid providers experiencing increased demand or disrupted food supply chains and community groups coordinating longer-term initiatives, such as food pantries. Initially, three community organisations received support, increasing to six organisational groups throughout the pandemic.

“The food supplied by Feeding Liverpool has helped us to be able to offer support to more members of our communities. Without the donations we would not of been able to feed as many households across Norris Green and Croxteth as we have. The food was used alongside our own stock to make up food parcels, which provided a good healthy well balanced and essential package to some of our most vulnerable residents.”

L11 Food Hub, April 2020

Food supplies, obtained through relationships with both national and local retailers, impacted the combined food stocks for each of the organisations, ranging from approximately 5% to 40%. Collectively, the organisations distributed a total of over 14,000 food parcels and 2,637 cooked meals to approximately 6,000 households between April and July.

In addition to the sourcing of food supplies, Feeding Liverpool conducted research analysis and worked to connect like-minded organisations through the development of interactive resources ([link](#)). Furthermore, Feeding Liverpool continued to advocate an increased understanding and awareness of food policy and insecurity through social media, briefing notes and blogs ([link](#)).

Feeding South Shields

Feeding South Shields, in collaboration with lead delivery partner Key Project, launched an emergency support package initially centred around the provision of packed lunches for children eligible for free school meals and aimed to support foodbanks experiencing significantly increased levels of demand. Following a decision from South Tyneside Council to fund and administer the distribution of lunches to children ordinarily in receipt of a free school meal, the team shifted their focus to 'newly vulnerable' families experiencing hardship as a result of job losses and social isolation.

“A lot of those seeking support are new to the benefits system as we have seen a sudden increase in unemployment locally whereby staff have been laid off rather than furloughed.”

Jo Benham-Brown, Key Project

Feeding Britain helped to resource the preparation of 'Family Feeding Packs', consisting of ingredients to provide breakfast and evening meals for a period of seven days. Parcels consisted of milk, cereals, sauces, tinned meat, fresh bread, and other ambient supplies, sourced from Brakes, Morrisons, wholesalers and

through support from FareShare. The packs were further enhanced with fresh fruit and vegetables alongside eggs from a local farm. The packs were made available to families in need and those at risk of 'falling through the gaps' due to the impact of Covid-19, through a combination of collections and home deliveries.

Key Project and Key 2 Life Foodbank were well placed to manage the logistics, finance and governance of the programme as well as providing coverage across the whole of South Shields. The scheme further benefitted from the assistance of volunteers, South Shields Football Club and the Member of Parliament Emma Lewell-Buck involved in the collection, packing and distribution process. As a result, it is estimated that almost 70,000 meals were distributed between April and June.

West Yorkshire Food Poverty Network

The West Yorkshire Food Poverty Network is formed of organisations based in Leeds, Wakefield, Calderdale, Kirklees and Bradford, with the collective aim of tackling food poverty across the region. An Emergency Food Response was launched to protect the most vulnerable members of the community, with a centralised food hub facility operated jointly by the Council, FareShare and Rethink Food. This, to allow bulk food supplies to be received, sorted, and distributed by the Leeds Rhinos Foundation to foodbanks experiencing significantly increased levels of demand across West Yorkshire.



The response across West Yorkshire faced initial challenges with accessing food supplies in sufficient quantities, the loss of volunteers due to the requirement to shield and reaching individuals with multiple, complex needs. These early hurdles were overcome through working in partnership and strong local authority support, with a number of Council vehicles and staff redeployed to assist with the operation. Feeding Britain was able to help by sourcing food supplies from Morrisons, Brakes and His Church to be shared across the network and the region received Defra funding for Leeds and Bradford.

In Leeds, a centralised phonenumber and referral system was established alongside a RAG rating system. Those in need of urgent support were categorised as 'Red', with details shared with the warehouse for direct delivery. Referrals with a less immediate need were categorised as 'Amber' or 'Green' and were directed to one of the 33 local volunteer hubs for the delivery of a food parcel, collection of a prescription or access to a shopping service.

Throughout the pandemic, the members of the West Yorkshire Food Poverty Network have continued to contribute recommendations and evidence to ongoing policy discussions, particularly with regards to Universal Credit and Healthy Start vouchers. A study led by Leeds University is currently underway to

assess the impact of Covid-19 specifically on recipients of Universal Credit with the aim of utilising findings to inform future plans.

Next Steps

As many of the Emergency Response Programmes begin to be scaled back, an extensive Summer Holiday offering has commenced across the Feeding Britain network, continuing to protect and enhance the wellbeing of our most vulnerable children who are at risk of hunger and isolation. Despite this, there are tough times ahead. Businesses are expected to close, unemployment is expected to rise and the already stretched budgets of many families are likely to be placed under even more severe pressure. Feeding Britain will continue to work alongside partners to deliver a network-wide programme of projects and promote a policy agenda aimed at supporting the most vulnerable in our society.

While Emergency Response Programmes will remain on standby to respond to acute need, the next leg of Feeding Britain's strategy for addressing the social and economic consequences of COVID-19 is to accelerate the development of affordable food provision, and wraparound support, at the heart of each community. This has been proven to build resilience and prevent hunger, by offering both nutritious food and holistic support in a dignified environment to households who are struggling but have not yet reached a crisis point.

Our involvement on this front is twofold: building, opening, and running new citizens' supermarkets (larger facilities, with higher set up costs) from scratch with our regional partners; and helping existing community centres, children's centres, food banks, and other emergency food outlets evolve into more sustainable food providers. Under this second strand of work, community food provision takes the form of social supermarkets (smaller facilities with pay-per-item), pantries (smaller facilities with pay-per-week), and FOOD Clubs (pantries operating in children's centres), all of which are welcoming and stigma-free.

The model to which our regional partners aspire is to complement a centrally located citizens' supermarket with social supermarkets, pantries, and FOOD Clubs in satellite locations. Our aim is to ease at least some of the pressure on households who are struggling to pay the bills and put food on the table, before the need for food banks or food parcels arises, by massively improving their access to affordable, nutritious food as well as the support that can address their underlying risk of hunger.

“We must stand together, work together and not give in.”

Don Gardner, Feeding Cornwall

Acknowledgements

Although the pandemic has highlighted the prevalence of inequalities, it also highlighted the incredible community spirit of organisations, individuals, and corporations alike. The emergency programmes outlined in this report were made possible by the generous donations received by Feeding Britain, as well as the ingenuity of our regional partners and the thousands upon thousands of hours of voluntary effort that were contributed by people across the communities we serve.