



Healthy Holidays – Summer 2020

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This year's Summer Holiday programme of nutritious food, delivered alongside fun and enriching activities, has been unlike any other. Social distancing restrictions, local lockdowns, and the uncertainty surrounding the continuation of the Government's Free School Meal vouchers presented challenges that, to some, may have appeared insurmountable. Yet 2020 was also, for so many families, the year in which this programme was needed the most. Months of prolonged lockdown, isolation, and school closures – often combined with a reduction in household income – had created an acute need among families for six weeks of food, fun, and support.

In response to this need, and despite the challenging circumstances, this report highlights the incredible Healthy Holiday programmes that were delivered across the Feeding Britain network. These engaging and innovative schemes were made possible by the generous donations received by Feeding Britain, strong partnerships with local authorities and other institutions, support from the Department for Education's Holiday Activities and Food Programme, and the dedication and resilience of each of our regional partners who were determined to deliver an inclusive programme for children otherwise facing a bleak Summer. As a result, more than one million meals were delivered to over 40,600 children and families across the Feeding Britain network.

In keeping with Feeding Britain's unique combination of action, research, and policy change, the report also highlights key findings from research undertaken by our trustee Professor Greta Defeyter of the Northumbria University Healthy Living Lab, followed by suggestions and recommendations for future holiday provision presented by our regional partners – chief among them being the national rollout of the Department for Education's Holiday Activities and Food programme across the whole calendar year. Further reports and resources can also be found on our [website](#). A summary of our regional partners' Healthy Holidays programmes is given below.

Good Food Barnsley – Feeding Barnsley

Good Food Barnsley has brought together partners across the borough to develop an annual holiday programme of food and fun. Formalised as a CIC in Summer, Good Food Barnsley aimed to build upon this previous work and deliver a programme with a firm focus on food provision and activities without stigma. Despite the challenging circumstances and a short timeframe, Good Food Barnsley harnessed support from Feeding Britain, Brakes Meals & More and the local authority to deliver 30,307 meals and 1,978 activity packs to 2,857 individual children.



In collaboration with 11 delivery partners and local supporters including Fareshare Yorkshire, Community Shop, FullCrumb Kitchen, Tesco and Streetgames, food and activity packs were provided for direct delivery or collection by families. Food hampers and recipe boxes were collated using stock purchased by Defra funding and used by delivery partners to both cook meals and create parcels. The FullCrumb Kitchen also provided between 100 and 300 sandwich bags on a daily basis, containing the freshly made sandwich, fruit, healthy snack, and a drink for distribution to local families.

Alongside food, each child received a Streetgames duffle bag, filled with outdoor games and equipment to allow activities to be delivered remotely. Public Health also distributed 'Summer physical challenge' leaflets to encourage exercise, and the local authority streamed online cooking classes related to the food boxes and recipe cards distributed by the team. Cooking at home was further supported with direct fruit and

vegetable deliveries to the homes of participating families, access to Community Shop with the opportunity to double the value of the Government Free School Meal vouchers, and supermarket gift cards where volunteer capacity was limited.

Despite being delivered remotely, partners remained in regular contact with families to offer opportunities to socialise. Feedback received highlighted the positive impact of the scheme, with families relieved of some pressure in a time of great uncertainty and children experiencing variety across the six weeks alongside the opportunity to try something new and continue eating healthily.

Bath & North East Somerset Food Poverty Steering Group

The Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) Holiday Food Grants Programme welcomed applications from local groups and organisations to deliver a programme of nutritious food, engaging activities, and wrap-around support for families with children under the age of 18. The Programme was developed with funding from St John's Foundation and Feeding Britain, and coordinated by B&NES Council.

Funding was awarded to 12 organisations delivering a wide variety of innovative Summer provision. This included Summer camps, cooking education, the establishment of food clubs and pantries, cooked meals, and food box provision. Wherever possible, each group aimed to promote physical activity and combine well-being support with expert advice services to offer a holistic Summer scheme. In a number of cases, the funding was utilised to both deliver the immediate programme and invest in equipment to support a longer-term service. As a result, 7,434 meals were provided to 1,137 children and their families.

Each delivery partner aimed to reach families impacted by the Covid-19 lockdown, particularly children eligible for free school meals or facing financial hardship as a result of the pandemic. Feedback from families was overwhelmingly positive, with the opportunity to access nutritious meals and allocate the household budget to other essential outgoings welcomed by families. Volunteers involved with the schemes also reported improvements to mental health and wellbeing as a result of their participation, and delivery partners welcomed the opportunity to connect with local families and build trusting relationships.

“Sharing food is a wonderful way to build bridges and gain trust. This project allowed us to give to vulnerable families locally and build strong links. Our members really enjoyed contributing in this way.”

SWALLOW, October 2020

Further details relating to the B&NES programme can be accessed [here](#).

Feeding Halton, Feeding Birkenhead Supporting Wirral & Feeding Cheshire West and Chester – Edsential programme



Feeding Halton, Feeding Birkenhead Supporting Wirral, and Feeding Cheshire West and Chester joined forces with Edsential to gain financial support from the Holiday Activities and Food Programme.

The Programme across all three boroughs focussed on the provision of healthy meals and snacks, family cooking, nutritional education and physical and enriching activities including dance, gardening, and arts and crafts. Despite concerns that circumstances surrounding the pandemic would prevent direct delivery of the holiday clubs, and potentially create issues of digital exclusion should online provision be necessary, 76% of clubs delivered activities face to face and a further 22% interacted with families through the delivery of food and activity hampers. As a result, 146,000 meals were distributed alongside activities to 12,000 children.

The programme was delivered as a result of strong local collaboration and partnership working, allowing resources to be maximised and a significantly higher number of families to be reached. This also created a support network for delivery partners to share knowledge and good practice, and develop a structure to keep children engaged whilst adhering to social distancing guidelines. For those families unable or uncomfortable with attending face to face sessions, doorstep deliveries and online resources provided opportunities to participate at home and enjoy cooking together as a family.



Feeding Bristol

Working in collaboration with FareShare South West, Bristol City Council, The Children's Kitchen and organisations across the city, Feeding Bristol coordinated a Healthy Holidays programme to alleviate the financial pressures experienced by children and families in greatest need. Social distancing and Covid-19 restrictions had greatly impacted the positive engagement and social cohesion that food brings, and the holiday programme aimed to focus on the wellbeing of children to complement the substantial and generous supply of food provided by FareShare South West, totalling approximately 205,813 meals to all food projects across Bristol.

Community partners created safe meeting spaces and distributed a wide range of resources and activities based upon six core initiatives to support more than 2,000 children. With support from Feeding Bristol, The Children's Kitchen created ten diverse recipes and accompanying cooking demonstration videos to encourage children and their families to prepare affordable meals together. The popular resources were translated into 16 languages and enjoyed by families across the city. Recipes can be accessed [here](#). In collaboration with 91Ways and Square Food Foundation, family cooking and food education was also supported. More than 40 community food sessions were held, providing a safe space for family members to cook together, try a new recipe, and take home ingredients to continue the activity at home.



“I’m going to make this at home but put some more random stuff in – it’s like an experiment, when you do it, it tastes really nice.”

Jacob, aged 7, August 2020

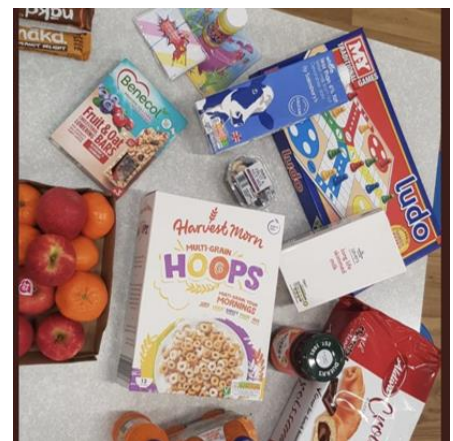
Partnerships with Playful Bristol and the Bristol Youth and Community Action resulted in the delivery of 526 activity sessions including crafts, cooking, gardening, and physical activities. Each session was accompanied by food provision in the form of parcels to take home or meals delivered on site. The holistic holiday programme was further complemented by the development of an information leaflet containing suggestions of how to achieve maximum value for money from the Government Free School Meal vouchers, the distribution of 3,750 activity packs and a young carers emergency fund to reach Bristol's 200 young carers.

Feeding Coventry

The Coventry Food Network, in collaboration with partners across the city, launched the Summer Holiday Breakfast Club to provide breakfast packs and fun activities to families struggling with the effects of the prolonged closure of schools. Each dietician-approved pack contained 5 days' worth of nutritious breakfast supplies and 5 exciting activities to promote creativity and encourage children to be active outside. Groundwork West Midlands also provided easy to follow recipe cards to support families to try new recipes and develop kitchen-based skills.

The project was made possible by the collaboration between organisations, including the redeployment of City County staff and warehouse space provided by the Coventry Food Bank, and the generosity of volunteer pickers, packers and delivery drivers working to ensure enough packs were available on a weekly basis.

The Breakfast Club was not means tested and remained open to all, ensuring a lack of stigma and providing access to healthy food for every family. Children eligible for free school meals and vulnerable families were made aware of the programme and invited to sign up and the programme was further advertised through social media, school newsletters, community hubs and word of mouth. As a result, a total of 2,075 individual children received 6,500 breakfast packs distributed from 17 hubs.



“These boxes gave me peace of mind that we would always have breakfast that was healthy, sadly the cheap alternative is junk food if you're limited for cash sometimes you have to do what you can to make ends meet.”

Parent feedback, September 2020

The full Feeding Coventry report can be found [here](#).

Feeding Derbyshire

Feeding Derbyshire worked with a total of 18 independent Healthy Holidays clubs across all districts of the county, enabling each group to receive a FareShare subscription consisting of four days' supply of food for each week that a child attended the holiday club. Each food bag contained breakfast, lunch, and hot meal ingredients alongside 2 pieces of fresh fruit per day for each child. Feeding Derbyshire complemented this offer with freshly prepared, nutritious ready meals through the established Batch-Cook scheme and funding to support the provision of activities, the purchase of additional items including hygiene products and provision for under 5s.

Alongside the distribution of food bags, each project provided fun and engaging activities for children attending the sessions. For those with access to nearby outdoor space or large sports halls, socially distanced activities including cake decorating and pizza making were hosted. Other groups, with the support of Derbyshire County Council, created activity packs and resources to be enjoyed at home, preventing the need to restrict numbers, and allowing more families to participate.



As a result of this scheme, 6,014 children and families received approximately 75.5 tonnes of food, including over 100,000 pieces of fresh fruit. Without this provision, club organisers estimated that between 30% and 100% of children accessing the scheme would have gone without food. This was supported with feedback from families impacted by the pandemic, with the emotional strain and impact of trying to source affordable food becoming abundantly clear.

“One six year old told me his tummy didn’t rumble at all this holiday”

High Peak project delivery partner, September 2020

A full report from Feeding Derbyshire, including highlights, challenges and priorities for the future can be accessed [here](#).

Feeding Gainsborough

Feeding Gainsborough, a coalition of Eudaimonia, Disability Network West Lindsey, Affordable Foods and Bread and Roses, built upon the success of the Covid-19 emergency food response to support children of all ages and their families throughout the Summer period.



The programme consisted of the delivery of food parcels, children’s activity packs and colouring books, and freshly prepared chilled and frozen meals including pasta bakes, curries, roast dinners, and desserts. Children also received pre-prepared ‘cooking packs’ containing recipes and ingredients to cook family dishes at home.

To complement this provision, ‘Grab & Go’ packs containing sandwiches, fruit, snacks, and drinks, designed specifically for teenagers were made available from three locations across the town. Freshly prepared hot meals were also offered free of charge for families from the food truck within the newly created STANS Pocket Park.

As a result of the programme, 13,608 meals were distributed to 108 individual children and their families.

Glasgow

Feeding Britain continued to support a packed lunch scheme administered by the Ridgeway Dairy, an initiative backed by Drumoyne Community Council. Ridgeway launched a free of charge lunch scheme 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 throughout the Summer holidays, providing a further 570 lunch packs for local children.

Feeding Leicester

A Feeding Leicester partnership between Feeding Britain, FareShare Midlands, Leicester City Council, Central England Co-operative, The National Lottery Community Fund and Reaching People, Leicestershire and Rutland Sport, and De Montfort University co-ordinated the distribution of over 293,000 meals to almost 2,000 children in Leicester.

“...I do not know how some of our families would have survived without this service”

Bethan, Braunstone Adventure Playground, September 2020

14 FareShare Community Food Members evenly distributed across the city received food parcels containing ambient staples and over 192,800 individual pieces of fresh fruit. Fruit and snacks were distributed to children in reusable bags to reduce the need for plastic and encourage children to recycle. In addition, activity and reading packs were delivered alongside the food parcels to keep children entertained at home. Leicester City Council also delivered virtual, doorstep and outside children's services and distributed meals, formula milk and nappies to 568 children between April and August.



Feeding Britain's resources were used to acquire fruit, snacks, bags, activity packs, and equipment including hand washing stations and PPE to enable a Covid-safe operation.

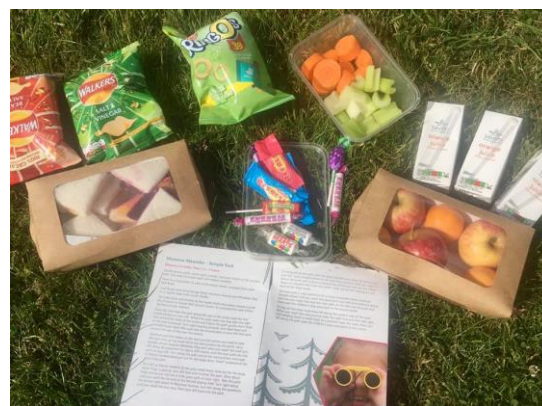
Feeding South Shields

Feeding South Shields, in collaboration with lead delivery partner Key Project, launched an emergency support package of family feeding hampers throughout the pandemic, meeting the needs of families at risk of 'falling through the gaps' as a result of Covid-19. At the beginning of Summer, with volunteers shielding, church halls closed and the potential of reinstated restrictions, the team aimed to build upon the effectiveness of the emergency scheme.



The Summer programme was developed with the aim of providing opportunities for outdoor family interaction, reducing the risk of virus transmission, and promoting exercise for children after a prolonged period of school closure. Working in partnership with the local authority, the team developed a network of walking trails across the borough, capturing elements of industrial heritage, history, local sculptures, and opportunities to learn about the natural environment. 7 routes were rapidly devised, ranging from 0.5 miles to 3 miles, accessible by foot or public transport and all but one buggy and wheelchair friendly.

This enriching activity was paired with the provision of family picnic hampers made available to all families wishing to participate. The picnics removed the financial barriers usually associated with a family day out and were offered universally to prevent stigma. The scheme was promoted as an outdoor activity with food as an additional offering, alongside a photograph competition, to encourage widespread engagement and provide an opportunity for all ages to participate. As a result, 1,100 picnic hampers were distributed totalling 4,800 meals.



The success of the scheme means it is likely to be run again in future years alongside any return to 'regular' Healthy Holiday programmes.

West Yorkshire Food Poverty Network – Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Kirklees and Calderdale

A collaboration between Leeds Community Foundation and Transforming Lives for Good resulted in a successful application to the Holiday Activities and Food Programme. A largescale programme was developed with support from Leeds City Council, Bradford District Council, community organisations and local food networks.

The Leeds Healthy Holidays programme consisted of a combination of outdoor, online and doorstep activity provision combined with access to nutritious meals and fresh fruit and vegetables. Almost 5,000 individual children have been supported with 45,870 portions of food and 7,091 activity packs. 60% of this

provision was delivered in-person through 8,689 on-site attendances. Leeds City Council further utilised the sessions to share information relating to available financial support and the local school uniform scheme.

The Bradford Healthy Holidays programme, administered by Give Bradford and supported by Bradford City Council, funded 88 projects reaching 6,326 children and providing an average of 15.8 portions of food to each individual taking part. This was complemented by a programme of activities including online cooking demonstrations, Zoom competitions and 'home Olympics'. Socially distanced face to face cooking sessions were also held in the outside space at the old Bradford Brewery. With conversion works underway to transform the brewery into an affordable supermarket, the cooking sessions were held outdoors under gazebos kindly loaned by Bradford market. The sessions allowed families to cook together at separate, designated workstations and taught valuable skills including food safety and nutrition. The scheme also provided an opportunity for young people to volunteer and assist with setting up and clearing away the equipment. Between July and September, 35 classes were held, with 88 attendees cooking 312 meals.



“A newfound skill and passion for cooking has been developed in an eight year old who has never used a knife in the kitchen nor been near the cooker.”

Parent feedback, September 2020

In Wakefield, Healthy Holidays provision took the form of a delivered meal service through a mixture of food hampers, ready meals, and hot food. This was supported by a local industrial catering company supplying meals to programme providers free of charge. The team in Calderdale also launched a food parcel provision, serving 2,580 beneficiaries with food, baby essentials and toys. Co-ordinated by the Council, Kirklees delivered 580 'cooking together' packs containing ingredients and recipes to feed a family of four.

A full report covering the West Yorkshire programme can be accessed [here](#) and further information can be found on the [Inn Churches](#), [Wellsprings Together](#), [GiveBradford](#) and [TLG](#) websites.

Research findings presented by Professor Greta Defeyter of Northumbria University Healthy Living Lab

The Healthy Living Lab team developed an in-depth parental and child wellbeing survey which was hosted online between 24th August and 9th September and distributed to parents with children attending Department for Education Holiday Activities and Food funded programmes. The research was conducted in partnership with Streetgames, Feeding Britain, Mayor's Fund for London Kitchen Social Programme, and Gateshead Council, with 232 fully completed responses received.

Findings revealed a vast array of innovative and creative delivery models in the light of Covid-19 restrictions, with numerous combinations of face to face, distanced and online activities. Provision remained grass-roots in nature, with community organisations the most common delivery partner as a result of the established relationships and trust built between families and such groups. Other holiday club venues included parks, schools, libraries, leisure centres and youth clubs. It is recommended that in order to promote the sustainability and ensure maximum impact of the schemes, a choice of provision is given to families in order to suit their individual needs.

The theme of childcare within holiday club settings was also explored. 80% of respondents agreed that holiday clubs should provide a safe space for children to interact with others for 6-7 hours per day, with the vast majority stating they would send their child to such provision every day should it be available. Preliminary results from additional research conducted by the university suggest that the offering of childcare helps parents maintain paid work across the Summer holiday period.

Parents further reported the positive impact of holiday club attendance on their children, with over 70% agreeing that the programme provided a greater number of activities for children than previously during the pandemic, and 40% believing that the activities had contributed to their child's educational learning, despite limited face to face contact. The programmes also presented the benefit of preparation for a return to school, with 46% believing it provided essential structure, 40% agreeing the clubs motivated the children to return to school and 37% stating that it helped their child feel less anxious about returning to the classroom.

Recommendations

As the Healthy Holidays programme has drawn to a close, and feedback has been sought from regional partners, common successes, challenges, and recommendations for the structure of future provision have emerged.

For many groups, demand for services increased week on week. Responding to this need required coordination and collaboration between all parties involved, and sufficient funding to support the costs associated with delivering a widescale Summer programme. Several partners raised the issue of the 'postcode lottery' of Government support, and the positive impact that the expansion of consistent Government funding to all local authorities could bring. In addition, many groups emphasised the need for year round provision, as it is clear that the issues facing families do not disappear as the Summer period ends.

Our central recommendation is for the immediate expansion of the Government's Holiday Activities and Food Programme, within a longer-term policy framework and accompanying resources to deliver high-quality Healthy Holidays provision.

All of our regional partners highlighted the challenges that planning and coordinating a programme within very limited timescales presented, and that forward planning and early allocation of funding must be supported in future years. Partners were also supportive of administering holiday clubs on a universal basis, ensuring inclusivity, access to healthy and nutritious food for all and a lack of stigma in programme participation.

Despite the difficulties Covid-19 presented, many groups were able to work flexibly, reach a greater number of families through a hybrid model of face to face and online provision, and involve the community as a whole. Projects reported the positive outcomes from the requirement to plan and deliver in creative ways, and found they were often able to connect with families who would otherwise struggle to access support. It is clear that the positive impact of this year's Healthy Holidays programme will persist beyond the end of Summer and will in future offer additional opportunities to complement holiday clubs as we know them.

**“It's nice to be part of this community, as
togetherness at this time is key.”**

Parent feedback