



Batch-Cook Impact Report

January 2021



Introduction

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Feeding Derbyshire as part of Rural Action Derbyshire, a regional partner of Feeding Britain, investigated options to provide food support for older people and vulnerable individuals and families located in rural, isolated areas. Feedback from Age UK and the local resilience teams had suggested that whilst the contents of food parcels were adequate for emergency situations, they were not particularly suitable for the provision of nutritionally balanced meals in the long term. Furthermore, parcels often included items that were unsuitable or difficult to cook for those who are frail, older, or temporarily housed. As a result of the lockdown, and given their isolated status and lack of transport, access to fresh foods was significantly impacted, creating a risk of food insecurity and nutrition deprivation for many local residents.

Batch-Cook overview

With the generous support of the National Lottery & HM Government Coronavirus Community Support Fund, Feeding Derbyshire launched the Batch-Cook project on 1st July 2020. The project aimed to connect recipients with community food projects unable to operate during the lockdown. Each food project would produce large quantities of freshly prepared, ready-to-eat, nutritious meals to be distributed for free or at low cost directly to the recipients, supplementing ambient food parcels on a weekly basis. Alongside supporting shielding, self-isolating and other vulnerable groups with freshly prepared options, the project supported existing community food projects to maintain a service to their clients and contribute to the sustainability of the project throughout the pandemic and beyond.

The idea for the scheme arose directly from feedback from the existing community projects, with organisers highlighting the issues affecting the vulnerable people they support alongside the emerging needs and increased demand as a result of Covid-19. The projects had gathered feedback from their users to assess needs and demands and ensure that Batch-Cook was tailored accordingly. From this, Feeding Derbyshire worked to oversee and co-ordinate the distribution network, sourcing equipment, packaging and food supplies and supporting the community projects. The funding enabled the project to commence through the purchase of equipment, including portable chiller boxes, PPE and recycled/environmentally friendly packaging for the meals. Furthermore, the costs of increased FareShare subscriptions and food supplies alongside the associated transport costs of delivering the meals directly to the clients were supported.



Impact data

- The Batch-Cook project engaged with 11 local community food projects, which in total, prepared and distributed 85,472 meals.
- Collectively, the projects received approximately 13,891 kg of food and achieved an average total cost per meal of £1.26 (including PPE, packaging, food supplies and wages).
- The scheme has supported almost 7,500 individuals across Derbyshire during 2020.
- The project has engaged with approximately 170 volunteers in total.

Feedback & testimonials – meal recipients

‘Before this, I haven’t eaten in 3 days’

‘This is only time in the week I eat a hot meal’

‘The hot meal delivery has been thoroughly enjoyed by the children who look forward to the delivery all day. They want everyone to know how much they appreciate it.’

‘I enjoyed Monday’s lunch. Most meals last me 2 days which is great. I am looking forward to the next menu. The meals are lovely and much appreciated.’



Feedback & testimonials – community food projects

‘Feeding Derbyshire’s support has been a key to the kind of support we could offer to community members. It supported us with the food ingredients, non-food items needed for the community meals service. Requesting food ingredients via the Batch Cook Scheme made our operation of community meals service much easier. We could offer more free meals to the individuals who could not afford to pay for their meals and who were more vulnerable due to the pandemic.’

‘Without the financial support, our older residents would go without outside contact. Providing the hot meal is an opportunity for people to make contact with us without feeling that they are ‘being a nuisance’. They ask our delivery people for extra help and support. Without the support, we would have to reduce this service to a very small amount of recipients.’

