

# A recipe for success:

## How do children and young people want to access food in their communities?

September 2024



Working in partnership





Young person at Barnardo's & Co-op service in Brent

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## Executive Summary

**In May 2023, Barnardo's and Co-op launched an ambitious partnership to bring local communities together to support the positive futures of 750,000 10–25-year-olds across the UK. This follows research that found a third of young people do not feel positive about their future.<sup>1</sup>**

Through 20 local services and online support via social channels that young people go to for information and advice we are supporting positive futures for children and young people through supporting things like access to food, improving mental wellbeing, and helping to enable opportunities for the future.<sup>2</sup> More information on our partnership is set out on page 28.

This is the first report from our partnership aimed at decision makers and focusses on one of the key foundations young people need to thrive: **access to food**. Young people growing up in poverty face a wide range of barriers and this is just one part of the picture. Yet accessing food is an important starting point; young people tell us that getting good, nutritious food, in the places and spaces that work for them is key to them getting on in life, not only helping them grow and develop but also connecting them with other young people.

In this report we have focused on solutions that exist across community spaces – the physical spaces where young people might interact for an economic or social purpose. This is a context where young people's voices are less understood.

While a lot is known about young people's views on access to food at home and at school it is less clear what needs to be done across spaces such as local shops, youth hubs or local food networks.

Our report builds on insight from our services in communities across the UK, reflecting the views and experiences of young people aged 10 to 25 – including members of the partnership's Youth Advisory Group.<sup>3</sup> Listening to young people's voices is more important now than ever before. Local community spaces are under pressure: rising costs have changed the face of many town centres and funding for local services has tightened. This means fewer resources are available at the same time as high levels of poverty and destitution mean that more young people are going without the essentials they need to thrive.<sup>4</sup>

**The result is that too many young people are not getting the food they need, when they need it.**

Ensuring all young people have access to nutritious food in their communities should be an important focus for the new Government. To achieve this, politicians and policy makers need to understand what young people want and expect from those delivering services in communities, particularly when it comes to accessing food.



**Who we spoke to for this report**

Who we spoke to	What they told us
<p>31 young people in six focus groups across the UK in June 2024. Five of these sessions took place in areas where Co-op and Barnardo's are delivering services as part of the partnership. One session happened online with Co-op's Young Members' Group. The Co-op Young Members' Group is made up of six young people with different skills and knowledge, from a range of backgrounds and experiences, who work with the Co-op on projects and activities.</p>	<p>The focus groups revealed a number of barriers young people experience when accessing food in their communities, such as cost and accessibility.</p> <p>It also highlighted young people's interest in getting involved in their local food networks and learning new cooking skills.</p>
<p>60,536 children and young people with VotesforSchools - an organisation that works with schools and colleges across the UK to support discussions on topical issues and collect young people's views.<sup>5</sup> 45,384 voted on and discussed issues associated with accessing healthy food between Monday 9th and Friday 13th September 2024.</p>	<p>We found that amongst 42,616 secondary school voters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 23% cannot access healthy food choices in their community</li> </ul>
<p>10,028 Co-op members shared their views in an online poll in July and August 2024. This included 601 (6%) aged 16-25.</p>	<p>Many supported our calls for change. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 97% of respondents aged 16-25 agreed that retailers should look at ways of increasing access to affordable food for young people</li> <li>• 92% wanted to see a holiday food programme accessible for all young people where they live.</li> </ul>

**Recommendations**

Change is needed to improve young people's access to food in their communities.

Full recommendations for action are set out on pages 20 - 28.

**So many young people I know just don't know how to cook, let alone make anything at home.**

Nicole - young person from Hurlford



Barnardo's and Co-op's Youth Advisory Group

**What local authorities and Government can do:**

1. Local authorities should establish a local food partnership in every area, directly involving young people from the outset. The Government should review how it could support this, learning from funding and legislative initiatives in Scotland and Wales.

**What retailers can do:**

2. Consider ways that 16 and 17 year-olds can access discounted food by amending the terms of their retail discount schemes or considering the introduction of other discounts.

**What the Westminster Government can do:**

3. Set out plans to address holiday hunger after the Holiday Activities and Food Programme ends in March 2025, including efforts to increase uptake and extend eligibility.
4. Make food available to young people in existing afterschool clubs and youth services, including in Family Hubs and the proposed Young Futures Hubs. Consult young people on food provision and on opportunities to develop cooking skills in these services.
5. Remove the reduced rate for under 25s in Universal Credit to ensure young people can afford essentials.
6. Review the Healthy Start scheme to ensure its value is adequate and uptake improves.



Young person at Barnardo's & Co-op service in Cardiff

# What we know about young people and access to food

Many young people struggle to access enough nutritious food.<sup>6</sup> While there is extensive research on young people's access to food at home and at school, young people's views on access to food in their local community are less well understood.<sup>7</sup> In this section we summarise some of the key evidence available.

## Food cost and insecurity

- In 2023 Barnardo's and Co-op surveyed a representative sample of 2,000 young people aged 10-25 across the UK. The study found that over one in three (35%) are in a family that has either currently or previously had issues paying for or accessing food.<sup>8</sup> One in three (35%) also said their family had used food support in the last six months.
- ONS data published in 2024 shows that younger households – where the head of the household is aged 16 to 24 - are the most likely to be food insecure.<sup>9</sup> A household is food insecure when members of the household reduce the quality, variety or desirability of their diets or where they disrupt their eating patterns to reduce their food intake due to lack of money.<sup>10</sup>
- 21% of younger households are food insecure compared with 10% of households for all age groups combined.<sup>11</sup> The same study found that young households are more than twice as likely to

have used a foodbank in the 30 days preceding the survey compared with all other age groups.<sup>12</sup>

## Young people and their community

- Research by the National Lottery Community Fund found 18 to 24 year olds were the age group most likely to feel part of their local community (78%), most likely to see this as important (73%), and were most likely to volunteer (71%).<sup>13</sup>
- Against this positive backdrop, young people are concerned about violence in their communities and report feeling unsafe in some public spaces.<sup>14</sup> The Youth Endowment Fund found that 95% of young people felt safe at home and 83% at school compared to only 45% out in the street and 43% in public parks.<sup>15</sup>
- According to the National Youth Agency, the youth services workforce has lost around 4,500 frontline practitioners over the last 12 years alongside a £1bn real terms reduction (73% drop) in local authority funding for provision over the same time period.<sup>16</sup>

## Holiday hunger

- Feeding Britain is a UK charity that works to eliminate hunger and food poverty by providing meals and coordinating support services.<sup>17</sup> They estimate that during the school holidays 3 million children under 18 are at risk of hunger.<sup>18</sup>
- Holiday hunger is reflected in food banks, community fridges and pantries across the country with networks typically reporting an increase in demand for emergency food over the holiday periods.<sup>19</sup>
- In 2020 researchers at the University of Northumbria found that increases in holiday hunger are associated with increases in all types of parental stress.<sup>20</sup>

## Cooking

- Young people are interested in learning to cook. Research by polling group Mintel found that 60% of 16 - 34 year olds enjoy experimenting with new cooking trends and ingredients, compared to 51% of UK consumers overall.<sup>21</sup>
- Despite their enthusiasm to learn, young people lack confidence. YouGov polling in 2022 found that nearly one in five young people aged 18 – 24 said they were bad at cooking (19%).<sup>22</sup>
- In a survey of 209 young people supported by homelessness organisation Centrepoint in 2022, almost 1 in 4 (24%) reported not having access to decent kitchen facilities to prepare meals.<sup>23</sup> Just over 1 in 4 (28%) said that they cannot afford the energy costs to cook.

## Underserved groups and access to food

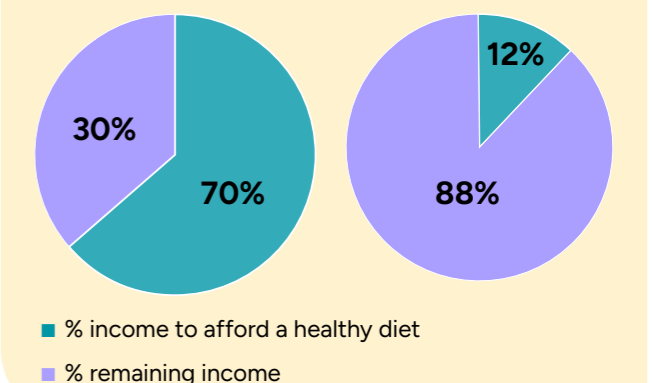
- People in a household from a Black/African/Caribbean/Black British ethnic group are the most likely to experience food insecurity.<sup>24</sup> The Barnardo's initiative SEEN works to improve outcomes for young people of African, Asian and Caribbean heritage and recently delivered a project to equip more young people and families with skills on preparing healthy food on a budget.<sup>25</sup> Analysis of 4 roundtable discussions, 150 feedback forms and 54 video interviews for the project identified the cost of buying ingredients (72%), the time it takes to cook (37%) and knowing what food is healthy (34%) as key concerns amongst participants.<sup>26</sup>
- 18% of disabled people lived in a food insecure household compared with 9% of people who were not disabled.<sup>27</sup> ONS data shows that around half

of younger households – where the head of the household is aged 16 to 24 – that are experiencing food insecurity are households where one or more person has a disability.<sup>28</sup>

- Many young parents can struggle to access food. Around 4 in 10 young parents under 25 report they are struggling to get by financially.<sup>29</sup> Food insecurity in pregnant mothers is associated with increased risk of low birth weight and birth defects, as well as gestational diabetes and maternal depression.<sup>30</sup> This can have a lasting impact: household food insecurity during infancy and early childhood is linked to increased risk of obesity later in life.<sup>31</sup>
- For young people from the poorest backgrounds, being able to access nutritious meals can be challenging. New analysis by the Food Foundation found that, among the poorest fifth of the population, households with young people aged under 18 have to spend 70% of their disposable income on food to afford the National Health Service's recommended nutritious diet.<sup>32</sup> In comparison households in the most well off fifth need to spend 12% of their disposable income.

Food is central to culture and tradition. Children, families and communities who traditionally eat food that takes longer to cook are likely to feel the impact of rising fuel prices most acutely. We also know that the range of foods available varies depending on where people live, and foods that are more common outside the UK can be very expensive to buy.

## Poorest 1/5th (left) & wealthiest 1/5th (right): spending required to afford a healthy diet



# What young people told us

**For this report we consulted young people to understand their views and experiences on community access to food. We did this through focus groups with young people, a survey with VotesforSchools and a survey of Co-op members.**

## Our focus groups with young people

We ran six focus groups, involving 31 young people aged between 9 and 25. Five of the sessions took place in areas where Co-op and Barnardo's are delivering services as part of the partnership – Plymouth (Devon), Ely (Cardiff), Rochdale (Greater Manchester), Hurlford (Ayreshire) and Burslem (Stoke-on-Trent). A focus group was also run online with Co-op's Young Member Group.<sup>33</sup> Four members of the Youth Advisory Group attended the focus groups to help facilitate the sessions.

Young people were invited to share their views about community access to food. In the report we have focused on the following key themes:

- Cost
- Foodbanks, community fridges and pantries
- Accessibility
- Nutritious and ethical food
- Places to share food with others
- Holiday hunger
- Cooking

## Cost

Young people consistently identified cost as the most important issue concerning access to food in their community:

"Money and cost are the most important things. I want to see more items at a lower price. So when you do a week's shopping you've got some money left and you're not stuck, unable to buy anything else."

**Chloe – young person from Hurlford**

"If there was one thing I could change about food in my local area it would be making it cheaper. My mum can only give me £5 to get something whilst I'm out and that's not enough for food. It's the main thing to focus on because some parents don't get enough money and they need to prioritise other things beyond food."

**Jack – young person from Burslem**

"They need to make food cheaper. Obviously because prices are going up as well as rent, house bills and electric. Those other costs are making it difficult. So food has to be cheaper because of the rising cost of living."

**Emily – young person from Ely**



All names in this report have been changed to protect anonymity.

## Foodbanks, community fridges and pantries

### What is the difference between foodbanks, multibanks, community fridges and pantries?

Food banks provide free food parcels to individuals and families facing financial hardship.<sup>34</sup> They typically supply non-perishable food items and operate through donations from individuals, businesses and supermarkets. Many food banks are available to individuals and families who are referred by a social worker, doctor, or a charity such as Barnardo's.

Multibanks operate in a similar way to foodbanks, but provide a wider range of items such as clothing, bedding and toiletries.<sup>35</sup> Multibanks aim to build strong links with local businesses who donate surplus goods.

Community fridges and pantries are spaces that bring people together to share food, meet up, learn new skills and prevent fresh food from going to waste.<sup>36</sup> They aim to increase hope, dignity and choice for those who need to use them. Community fridges are free to access and do not require membership or referral. Pantries are laid out like shops, and members choose their own items, paying a small amount each week, and in return choosing items they need.

"Our activities have enabled the whole family to learn about food together. Spending time in the community garden, planting seeds, learning about the vegetables that are growing in the garden and then taking part in activities related to healthy eating."

**Organiser at a community fridge in Kent supported by Co-op**

Some young people talked positively about food banks, community fridges or pantries in their local area:

"It's like a community shop run by a charity, my nextdoor neighbour works there and would bring us food. You give a small donation and you get bread but also toys and books, there's a pantry and a community fridge and they sell toiletries at a very very low price."

**Megan – young person from Cardiff**

However other young people did not have a positive experience in their foodbank or were apprehensive about visiting:

"Sometimes they don't let young people in. I went into the foodbank with my friend and they didn't let us get anything, they saw us as inappropriate. I think even if young people are being disruptive it's important to give them a chance. My message to food banks across the country would be give young people a chance, most of us aren't rude and disrespectful."

**Emily – young person from Ely**

"Yes I'd go to the food bank if my mum wanted me to but I wouldn't go on my own. Because the one I go to usually has a lot of old people and it makes you feel really uncomfortable and like you shouldn't be there."

**Thomas – young person from Plymouth**

## Accessibility

Accessibility was also an important factor for young people:

"I'd really like a fruit shop, a bigger shop, something that's a bit more accessible for people to get to. A shop that's open before and after school so you can get food after school."

**Jessica – young person from Hurlford**

"I would want food cheaper and for it to be closer. If parents have a lot of kids they can't handle getting to the shop sometimes. There should be a tram or something that goes through the city that makes it easy to go and get food."

**Joe – young person from Burslem**

"Actually taking back your shopping to your house can be a challenge. If it's a big week shop for example, you're having to travel about 40 minutes by bus. That's all fine but actually carrying everything to where you live can be hard – a lot of young people don't drive so things like that can really affect where young people can actually live."

**Amy – Co-op Young Members Group**

**A recipe for success:** How do children and young people want to access food in their communities?

### Nutritious and ethical food

Young people said they would like to eat more nutritious and ethical food but that this was not always affordable for them:

“Growing up now we’re getting used to not having as much fresh food as we used to. Since the Ukraine war, we’re not having fruit and veg in the house because of the cost and it goes off quicker.”

**Holly – young person from Rochdale**

“Ethically sourced food doesn’t matter to me. If I had the money I would but I need to eat and maintaining my health is more important. We did something with a local fishing group a while ago, but it was so much more expensive. We’d love to eat ethically but can’t afford to.”

**Ben – young person from Plymouth**

### Places to share food with others

Young people identified the importance of sharing food with others including friends and family but sometimes found community food spaces unwelcoming:

“I really like Popeyes – our local chicken shop, kind of like KFC – I like it because I can go there with my family.”

**Rhys – young person from Ely**

“I like places where families or friends can hang out and eat together, like a comfy place with cats maybe. That’s really important.”

**Chelsea – young person from Burslem**

“I get that some businesses don’t like young people because they can be loud and annoying but some places don’t care. If they have a problem, we can just sit outside.”

**Sofia – young person from Ely**

### Holiday hunger

In the focus groups for this report some young people we spoke to talked about their experience accessing their local Holiday Activities and Food programme (explained below on page 19):

“Me and my brother used to do the holiday food programme when we were younger but I think that we can’t be bothered to do it now, it’s a bit cheesy and it’s with a bunch of primary school kids, we don’t want to be seen doing that because it’s a bit weird.”

**Kyle – young person from Ely**

“They made us stop going when we turned 16 as most of the programme is aimed at kids from 5-15. I’m 16, what can I do? There needs to be one that goes up to 18.”

**Owen – young person from Plymouth**

### Cooking

Young people in our focus groups told us about the positive impact of services designed for them, including the important role food plays in bringing young people together. For example, some young people talked about the ‘Takeaway Tuesdays’ project being run from their Barnardo’s/Co-op service:



Young people cooking at Takeaway Tuesdays Barnardo’s and Co-op service in Plymouth



“We never know what it is, and whatever it is, we cook something! We’ve cooked a three-course meal, lemonade, soup and pasta with chillies, peppers and tomatoes. Our dessert was bananas and chocolate. We look forward to going to Takeaway Tuesdays - I really enjoy doing it.”

**Reece – young person from Plymouth**

Young people we spoke to also consistently expressed interest in cooking lessons, both as an important life skill and as a tool to interact with others and build relationships:

“We should teach kids better how to cook a proper healthy meal as well. I’m interested in cooking quite a bit but I want to cook more healthy food.”

**Niamh – young person from Rochdale**

“Education around nutrition or teaching young people skills about healthy food needs to be much more of a focus. Because so many young people I know just don’t know how to cook, let alone make anything at home.”

**Nicole - young person from Hurlford**

“We need to have more of a focus on using community spaces to run cooking classes a few days a week and encouraging young people to come and learn and especially if they don’t typically have access to that sort of thing. It’d mean they could cook for their family or siblings. It can be really hard to learn this stuff if you don’t have as much support from your parents or if you’ve got only one parent around they just won’t have time. I think learning good cooking skills was definitely lacking in my school and something that needs to be encouraged.”

**Rayan – Co-op Young Members Group**

# Our survey with VotesforSchools

Barnardo's and Co-op partnered with VotesforSchools for this report to ask young people what they think about access to food in their community.<sup>37</sup> 45,384 young people took part in total and voted on the following questions between Monday 9th and Friday 13th September 2024.

## Can you access healthy food choices in your community?

Young people at Secondary school and college voted on this question. While most reported that they were able to access healthy food choices in their community, 23% of secondary voters and 22% of college voters were unable to do so.

Votes were generally evenly distributed by gender with 22% of male voters, 24% of female voters and 24% of gender diverse voters confirming they were unable to access healthy food choices in their community.

### What voters said

#### ✓ YES voters

"As we are a market town we have access to fresh fruit and vegetables each week if we want them. But I know that not every town has this."

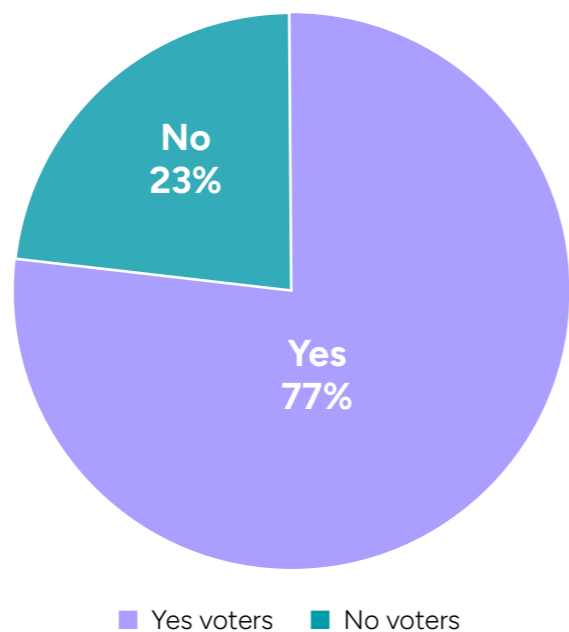
"Larger supermarkets have a really good range of healthy food options."

"They agreed they were healthy options in their communities but they would choose the less healthy options given the choice."

"We believe that if you really want to eat healthily you have to look for it and there are options available, if you try hard enough!"

"Some people desire to eat and maintain a healthy diet, but it is very expensive [...] I'd rather live my life eating unhealthily and it tasting nice."

**Who voted?**  
 Total sample: 45,384  
 Secondary: 42,616  
 College: 2,768



#### ✗ NO voters

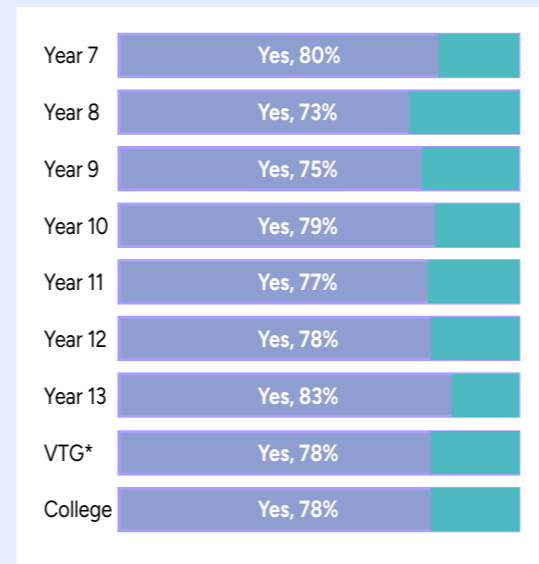
"We literally have a Starbucks, McDonalds, Subway and Sainsburys outside the school gate. Unhealthy options are cheaper so your money can go further."

"Shops in the area focus more on unhealthy food, such as takeaways."

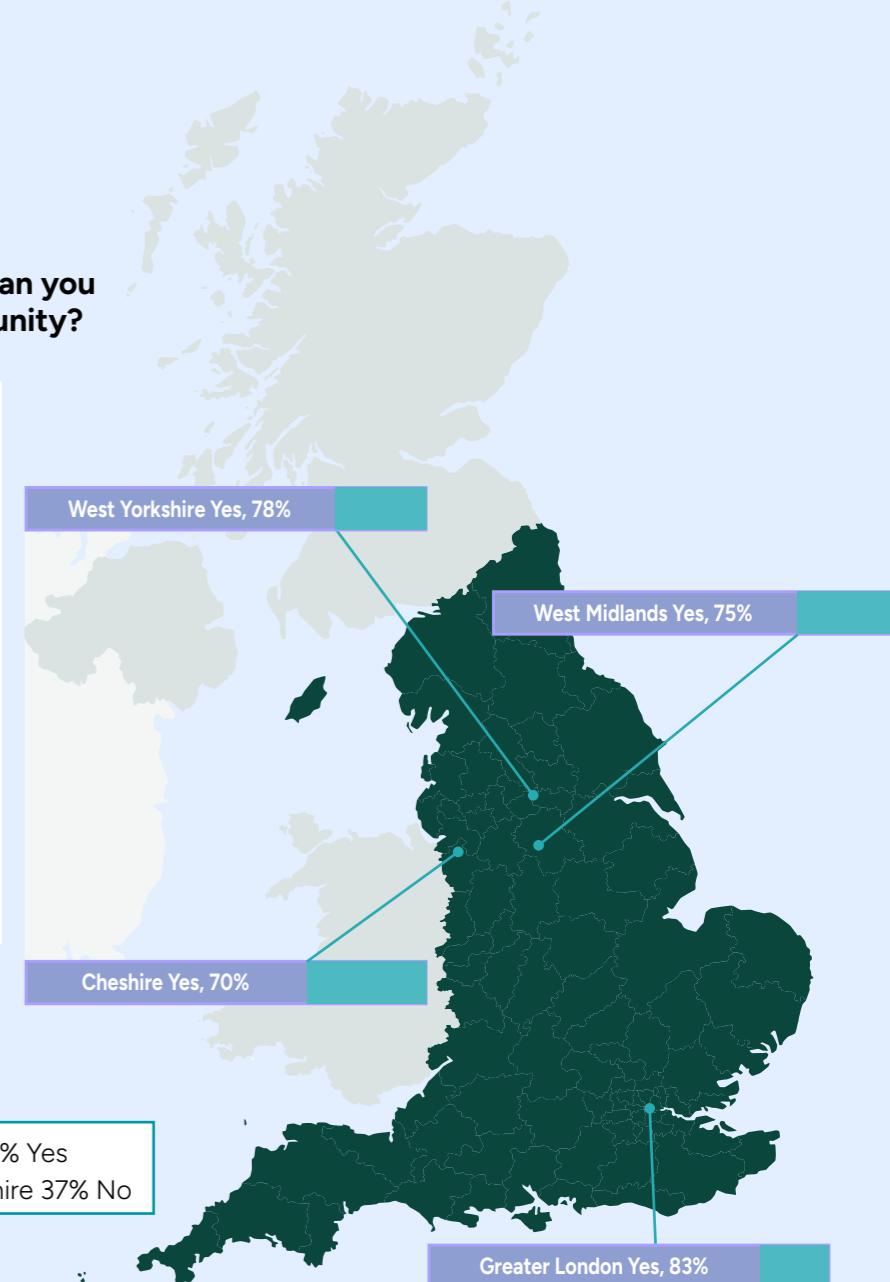
"Without making healthy food cheaper it will be very hard for young people to access nutritious food. Much of this is dependent on how much our parents give us."

"If you live in the countryside it's really difficult, there are really no options."

## Age and geographic breakdown: Can you access healthy food in your community?



\*Virtual Tutor Group

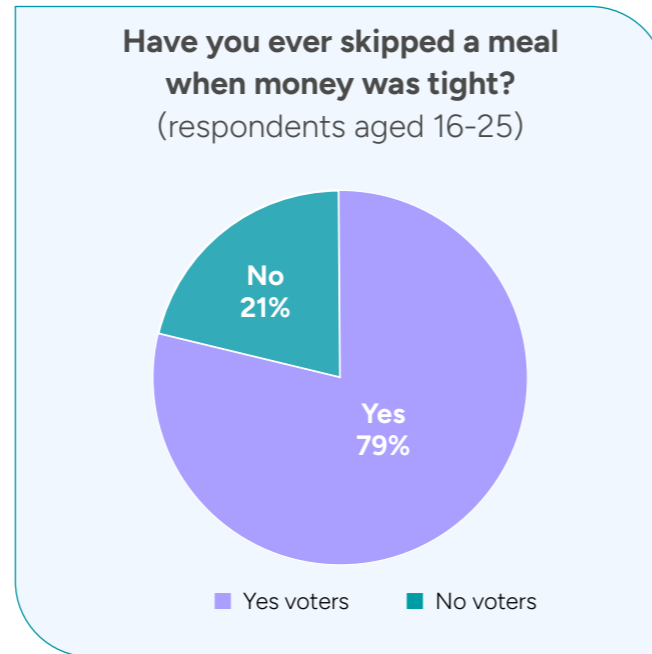
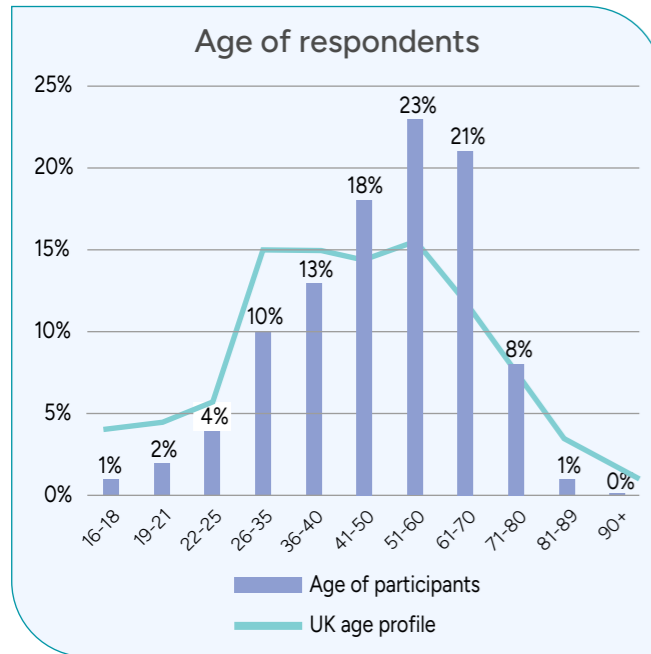


Highest Yes Vote: Berkshire 97% Yes  
 Highest No Vote: North Yorkshire 37% No

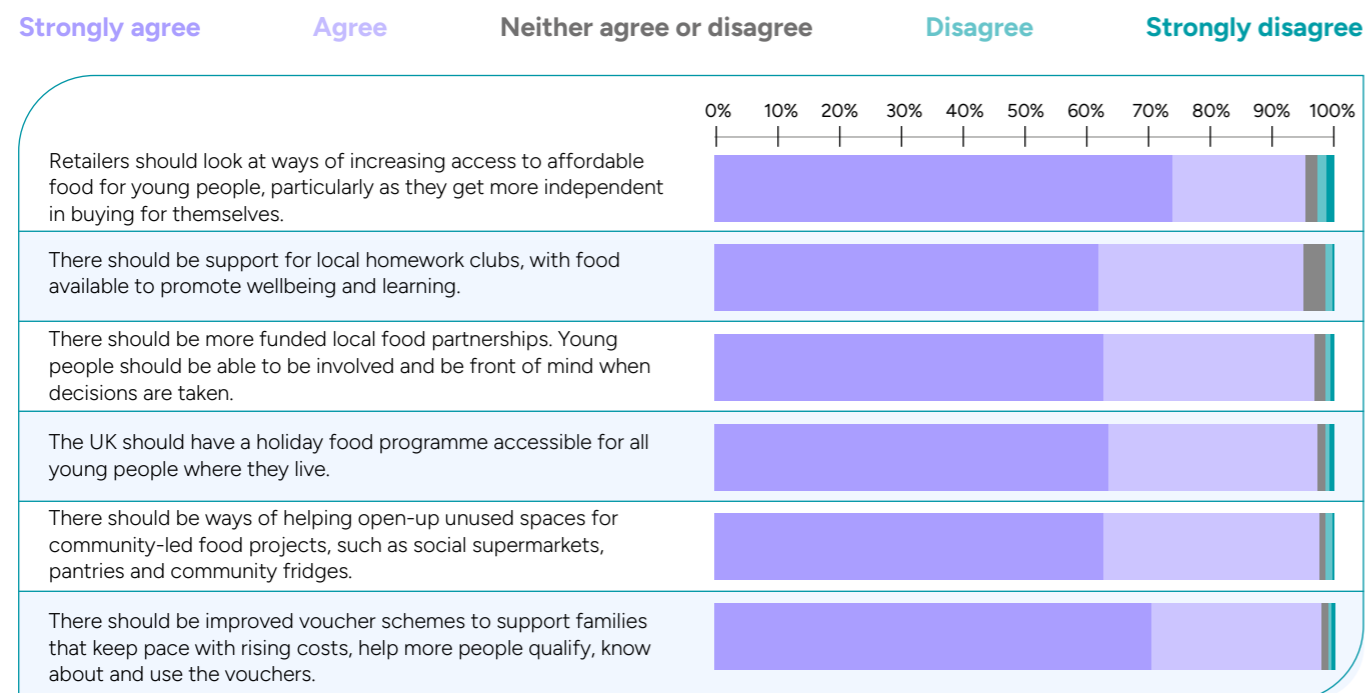


# Our survey with Co-op members

Co-op is owned by and run for its members who are regularly invited to share their views.<sup>38</sup> Between 27th July and 16th August 2024, over 10,000 Co-op members shared their views on young people's access to food in their communities. This included over 600 members aged 16 to 25 (6%).



Co-op members were asked to what extent they agreed with the following policy responses relating to access to food for young people. Respondents aged 16-25 generally supported the proposals:



# What Co-op members told us:

## Local food partnerships

96% of respondents aged 16-25 said there should be more funded local food partnerships and that young people should be directly involved. 90% of all respondents agreed. On this topic, Co-op members aged 16-25 said:

"The idea is perfect, local businesses should be funded to help more on both sides, and everyone should get their say in how or what gets done, and the decision should be made with everyone's input"

**Hannah – Co-op young member**

"Young people need to be included in these things as it's not just about what's healthiest, it's about people that have issues with certain foods and need food that they can handle, for example if they have sensory issues."

**Jacob – Co-op young member**

## Expanding retail discount schemes to all young people

97% of respondents aged 16-25 agreed retailers should look at ways of increasing access to affordable food for young people, particularly as young people get more independent buying for themselves. 90% of all respondents agreed. On this topic, Co-op members aged 16-25 said:

"We need a membership card that gives targeted discounts and rewards to young people, especially care experienced young people moving into semi and independent accommodation."

**Nasir – Co-op young member**

"As people begin to be more independent it's important that companies try their best to help reduce the cost of living, at the very least to ensure people have food to eat"

**Kaitlyn – Co-op young member**

"I was kicked out at the age of 18, I had no idea how the world worked - I'm still trying to figure that out! But having support from shops themselves would have been a massive help instead of relying on councils"

**Connor – Co-op young member**



Young people prepare food at Barnardo's and Co-op service in Cardiff



## Addressing holiday hunger

92% of respondents aged 16-25 agreed the UK should have a holiday food programme accessible to all young people where they live. 85% of all respondents agreed with this statement. Respondents aged 16 – 25 also made the following comments:

“Holidays are meant to be joyous and relaxing, but when money is tight and you can’t have something different or anything at all they can become stressful and daunting. Having help on occasion would greatly help a lot of people”

**Vanessa – Co-op young member**

“I don’t get any student finance during the summer - it’s getting impossible to eat 3 meals a day.”

**Shelby – Co-op young member**

## Food provision in youth settings

Some respondents talked about food provision in youth support settings:

“I used to go to clubs as my parents worked later, and sometimes I wouldn’t always have food for many reasons. When those clubs didn’t have snacks or anything food related I started to realise how much my energy diminished and how it was affecting me”

**Ian – Co-op young member**

“[We need] free or pay as you feel family based cooking programs to promote healthy mindsets around food for the entire family. Some parents don’t have that knowledge and it’s a bonding experience!”

**Mary – Co-op member**

## Affording essentials

Some respondents also talked about challenges affording essentials:

“I have found it so difficult trying to eat well and enough to be able to form and grow into my best as I am new to independent living as an adolescent”

**Isaac – Co-op young member**

“I am one of those people that, according to the government earn too much to qualify for any help. Yet my out goings are more than my income!”

**Aisha – Co-op young member**

## Support for young parents

98% of respondents aged 16-25 agreed that there should be an improved voucher scheme to support families to purchase healthy items like fruit, vegetables and milk. They also agreed that the value of vouchers should keep pace with rising costs. 90% of all respondents agreed. Respondents aged 16 – 25 made the following comments:

“As a young adult with a child I’ve had to skip so many meals just to make sure my daughter is fed. Which I would do over and over again if needed”

**Zoe – Co-op young member**

“I think baby formula should be in this category as the rising costs for formula means that people have to choose formula and not eating themselves”

**Ben – Co-op young member**

“With the prices rising the vouchers’ value should be rising too!”

**Mike – Co-op young member**

# Recommendations

**This section includes analysis of key policy issues relating to young people’s access to food. It summarises what we know from the research on pages 6 to 7, what we heard from young people on pages 8 to 16 and then sets out opportunities to address those challenges. These proposals would enable the UK Government, local government and retailers to improve young people’s access to food in the community and have been tested with Co-op members, including young members aged 16-25.**

## 1. Local food partnerships in every community

**Recommendation 1:** Councils should support the establishment of a local food partnership (LFP) in every local authority area, bringing together local government, businesses, community groups and charities to promote access to nutritious and sustainable food. All local food partnerships should directly involve young people from the outset.

The Government should review what it could do support the development of LFPs, learning from funding and legislative initiatives taken forward in Scotland and Wales\*.

### What we know

Research shows that young people are eager to contribute to their community (page 6). Yet in our focus groups young people told us that some community spaces that were focused around food did not work well for them (page 9). Our work with VotesforSchools found that 23% of young people who voted on the topic could not access healthy food in their community. Local food partnerships (‘LFPs’) provide a mechanism to listen to and address young people’s concerns and young people think they are a good idea: 96% of Co-op members aged 16-25 want to see more local food partnerships and want to be involved in them (page 15).

### What are local food partnerships

LFPs are collaborative networks that bring businesses, not-for-profits and local government together to address food insecurity and improve access to healthy food. Sustainable Food Places is a UK wide programme that supports over 100 LFPs, covering 30% of local authorities.<sup>39</sup>

LFPs do a range of things including coordinating support for food banks, community fridges or pantries, running community gardens and farms, providing meal programmes during school holidays and coordinating activity across organisations embedded in the local food network. During the pandemic many LFPs played a vital role in supporting vulnerable groups with access

to food, rationalising distribution, advising on policies and ensuring that limited resources were focused on the people that needed it most.<sup>40</sup>

Many LFPs are funded and hosted by local authorities however some are hosted and led by community organisations with the engagement and support of their local council, through funding, resources, facilities and expertise. Securing the active support of the local authority is key because councils hold many of the responsibilities, powers, resources, and influence that can make LFPs effective.<sup>41</sup>

Devolved nations have taken steps to support LFPs. In 2022 the Welsh Government allocated £2.5m funding to support every local authority in Wales to develop a local food partnership.<sup>42</sup> An interim analysis of the funding by the University of the West of England found the scheme had accelerated development of LFPs in Wales and provided a platform for organisations to respond more strategically to local food issues.<sup>43</sup> For example, the Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership has used the funds to deliver 80 recipe packs to libraries across the area aimed at encouraging parents to cook nutritious meals on a budget with children.<sup>44</sup> The Scottish Government introduced the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act in 2022.<sup>45</sup> It includes provisions (not yet in force) requiring local authorities to create, implement and consult on local food plans. The Act has been welcomed by existing LFPs in Scotland.<sup>46</sup>

\*Scope: The recommendation for councils is relevant to all local authorities across the UK who are interested in setting up an LFP. The proposed review by UK Government should focus on how to support LFPs in England as devolved governments already have their own frameworks for supporting LFPs.

## What needs to change

We call on all local authorities to support the development of an LFP in their area, working alongside supportive businesses, charities, community groups and infrastructure networks such as Co-op, Barnardo's and Sustainable Food Places. While some already LFPs involve young people, local authorities should ensure young people are directly involved in all LFPs from the outset.

We also call on the UK Government to consider what it could do support the development of LFPs in every local authority area, learning from funding and legislative initiatives in devolved nations.

### How local food partnerships can support young people: Brighton & Hove Food Partnership

Brighton & Hove Food Partnership ran its 'Veg City Challenge' to encourage more young people to eat healthy food in the area.

The Local Food Partnership invited caterers and chefs to pitch new recipes to appeal to teenagers in Brighton & Hove. The winning recipe was trialed at local venues, schools and outlets across the city.

**See: Brighton & Hove Food Partnership (2024), Veg City Challenge**

## 2. Expanding retail discount schemes to all young people

**Recommendation 2:** Retailers should consider ways that 16 and 17 year-olds can access discounted food by amending the terms of their retail discount schemes or considering the introduction of other discounts\*.

### What we know

Many young people face high levels of food insecurity (page 6) and in our focus groups young people told us cost was a major concern for them (page 9). Young people want retailers to take action: 97% of Co-op members aged 16-25 think retailers should look at ways of increasing access to affordable food for young people, particularly as they become more independent (page 15).

### What are retail discount schemes

For many 16 and 17 year olds, price and affordability proves a major barrier to accessing nutritious food. This is particularly true for young people who are responsible for buying their own food or food for others they care for.

Most large food retailers offer retail discount schemes that require individuals to sign-up, enabling them to purchase a range of products at discounted prices. Co-op offers membership which enables members to buy a range of products at a discounted price. These products are selected because they are the goods bought most, such as bread and milk. Members also get access to additional personalised discounts on a weekly basis. The minimum age to become a Co-op

member is 16.<sup>48</sup> Under 16s can be a 'Junior Member' with the permission of their parent or guardian. Morrisons offers its Morrisons More scheme to 16 and 17 year olds.<sup>49</sup>

Other retailers, such as Tesco, Sainsburys and Asda offer loyalty schemes but these are not available to 16 and 17 year-olds living independently.<sup>50</sup> Tesco Clubcard has a minimum age of 18 as do Nectar Card offered by Sainsburys and Asda Rewards. Tesco and Sainsburys schemes allow individuals under 18 to have a card for another adult's account but not one in their own right. This means that any 16 or 17 year old who lives independently cannot access the cost savings on food that these schemes can offer.

There are also schemes such as Young Scot which those aged under 18 can join and many businesses, including food retailers, offer discounts if these cards are presented at checkout.

### What needs to change

Retailers whose schemes cannot currently be used by 16 and 17 year olds living independently should consider allowing them to join their schemes or offer access to discounted food via other types of discount.

\*Scope: This recommendation is relevant to all retailers operating in the UK.

## 3. Addressing holiday hunger

**Recommendation 3:** At the Autumn Budget the Government should set out plans to build on the Holiday Activities and Food Programme to address holiday hunger after the scheme ends in March 2025. This should include changes to ensure the programme benefits all children in households in receipt of Universal Credit and works for teenagers as well as younger children\*.

### What we know

Evidence on children under 18 shows that many experience holiday hunger when school food is not available (page 7). To address holiday hunger the UK Government launched its Holiday Activities and Food Programme ('HAF') as a pilot in 2018 and expanded the scheme in subsequent years.<sup>51</sup> In our focus groups some young people who had used the HAF programme told us that whilst they thought the scheme was positive, it was not available or appealing for all teenagers (page 10). Young people support measures to address holiday hunger: 92% of Co-op members aged 16-25 think the UK should have a holiday food programme accessible for all young people where they live (page 16).

### About the Holiday Activities and Food Programme

The HAF programme provides eligible children with activity sessions and food during some parts of the Summer, Christmas, and Easter holidays. The scheme is available to children in receipt of benefits-related free school meals from reception to year 11, covering ranges between 4 and up to 16.

The HAF programme has been a lifeline for many young people facing hardship. Over 600,000 children benefited from the scheme over summer 2022.<sup>52</sup> The programme also has benefits beyond addressing hunger; parents of young people in Birmingham attending the programme reported less stress and 73% said their children were less likely to engage in anti-social behaviour.<sup>53</sup>

While the HAF scheme has been a success, it is important subsequent policy interventions improve on the existing model. One of the key shortcomings in the existing scheme is that it only provides funding for places for children eligible for free school meals. In the 2023/24 school year over 900,000 children living in poverty were not eligible for free school meals.<sup>54</sup>

Another key issue with the scheme is uptake, particularly amongst teenagers. HAF reached 29% of all children who were eligible,<sup>55</sup> however further analysis has shown that uptake is particularly low amongst young people aged 13-19.<sup>56</sup> As highlighted in the focus groups for this report, the existing HAF does not appeal to teenagers and as a result, many are missing out on food over the holiday period. Delivery models tested by the University of Northumbria aimed at increasing uptake amongst 13 – 19 years olds has shown that involving young people in design and ownership of projects and adapting projects to local areas can lead to weekly turnout exceeding 80%.<sup>57</sup>

### What needs to change

The existing HAF Programme is due to end in March 2025.<sup>58</sup> It is imperative the Government provides clarity on its plans to address holiday hunger beyond 2025 as schools and providers need certainty to ensure they can deliver schemes effectively. Eligibility should be extended to all children and young people in households in receipt of Universal Credit so that more can benefit from the scheme in. A greater focus on co-design and ownership are needed to ensure the programme works for teenagers as well as younger children.



Youth Advisory Group members

\*Scope: The existing HAF Scheme is run by the Department for Education and is for England only.

## 4. Bringing Food into Youth Services

**Recommendation 4:** The Government should ensure food is available to young people using existing afterschool clubs and youth services, including through Family Hubs and the proposed Young Futures Hubs. Young people should be consulted on food provision and on opportunities to develop cooking skills in these services\*.

### What we know

Youth services are under immense financial and workforce pressures (page 6). Co-op young members and young people in our focus groups told us how important youth services and spaces are to them and how important food provision was in those contexts (10 and 11). Young people also told us about their interest in improving cooking skills (page 11). Despite their interest research shows that some young people do not have facilities or resources to cook at home (page 7).

### About Youth Services

There are a range of services for young people in the community, from after school clubs to youth groups and clubs. Food provision is often part of this offer and provides many young people with access to healthy food between school, college or work and returning home.

Family hubs are one type of provision that sit alongside other services for young people. Family Hubs exist in many communities and aim to offer support to parents, carers and children, working with everyone from pregnant mothers to teenagers.<sup>59</sup> Family Hubs can operate in spaces designed with multiple purposes



in mind. For example, this could include facilities to support young people aged 0-19 with accessing food, cooking spaces and social spaces. There are around 400 Family Hubs covering half of all county councils in England.<sup>60</sup> If introduced, the proposed Young Futures Hubs will be another form of support for young people. The Government has committed to creating as many as 90 Young Futures Hubs across the country.<sup>61</sup> The suggestion is that they will focus on support for teenagers at risk of being drawn into crime or facing mental health challenges and, where appropriate, deliver universal youth provision.<sup>62</sup>

### What needs to change

It is important Young Futures Hubs and other support services, such as after school clubs, youth work, and Family Hubs, provide a joined-up offer to young people that makes the best use of available spaces and resources in every community.

Children and young people – like adults – see food as a catalyst for bringing people together and resolving division. It is therefore critical that food provision is a fundamental part of youth provision across the board. Young people should be consulted on food provision in these services and on any opportunities to develop cooking skills as part of their offer.

It is important that Young Futures Hubs and other support services, such as Family Hubs, provide a joined-up offer to young people that makes the best use of available spaces and resources in every community .

\* Scope: The geographic scope of the Young Futures Hubs is not yet known. Existing schemes of this nature are typically devolved.

## 5. Ensuring all young people can afford food essentials

**Recommendation 5:** As part of the planned review of Universal Credit,<sup>63</sup> the Government should equalise the value of payments for all age groups to make sure that under 25s can afford essentials such as food\*.

### What we know

Young people with the least resources are most concerned about food costs (page 7). They also have to spend the largest proportion of their income to afford a nutritious diet (page 7). The cost of food was also consistently raised by young people in our focus groups, alongside other cost barriers to accessing food such as transport costs (page 9).

### About Universal Credit for Under 25s

Young people on Universal Credit face a 21% penalty because of their age. Young people under 25 receive £81.77 less in Universal Credit per month compared to those over 25 and for young couples the figure is £128.37.<sup>64</sup>

Analysis by Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Trussell Trust shows that the reduced rate for under 25s leaves young people with around half of what is needed to afford essentials like food, water and clothing.<sup>65</sup> This is despite the fact that under 25s

are the age group at greatest risk of experiencing destitution.<sup>66</sup> This is when an individual's most basic needs to stay warm, dry, clean and fed cannot be met.<sup>67</sup> Barnardo's research has also found the policy unfairly impacts young people who have grown up in care, since they are far less likely to have access to financial support from their own family.<sup>68</sup>

The Government has committed to addressing policies that penalise young people in other areas. For example, the Government has committed to end "discriminatory wage bands" in the National Living Wage.<sup>69</sup> Many employers, including the Co-op, have already removed differential wage bands based on age.

### What needs to change

The reduced rate of Universal Credit for Under 25s should be removed. The policy reduces the living standards of younger people by design and can particularly affect young people leaving the care system and living independently for the first time.



\* Scope: Social security policy is largely reserved to the UK Government. In Northern Ireland, social security policy is devolved however there is a longstanding convention that it mirrors policy in the rest of the UK.

## 6. Support for young parents

**Recommendation 6:** At the Autumn Budget the Government should set out plans to review the Healthy Start scheme. The review should look at how the amount given to parents should increase in line with inflation and should be updated at least every six months. The review should also look at ways of increasing uptake of the scheme, particularly amongst younger parents. This should include considering auto-enrolment onto the scheme as well as ways of raising awareness of the scheme\*.

### What we know

Young parents are particularly likely to struggle to afford essentials including food (page 7). We also know that food insecurity amongst mothers can lead to maternal depression and is linked to obesity amongst children as they get older (page 21). As noted above, young people in the focus groups told us they were particularly concerned about being able to afford food they needed (page 9). 98% of Co-op members aged 16 – 25 agreed that there should be an improved voucher scheme to support families to purchase healthy items like fruit, vegetables and milk and that this should keep pace with rising costs (page 16).

### About the Healthy Start Scheme

The Healthy Start Scheme provides an important resource for young parents struggling with food costs. The scheme is available to pregnant women or families with children under four in receipt of qualifying benefits or tax credits.<sup>70</sup> Young people under 18 who are pregnant are automatically eligible. Those eligible receive a prepaid card that can be used to purchase healthy foods, including milk, infant formula, fruit and vegetables. A similar scheme also operates in Scotland.<sup>71</sup>

### What needs to change

The current value of Healthy Start is £4.25 per week (£8.50 for children aged 0-1) and has consistently lagged behind rising food costs. Although the value was increased in April 2021 from £3.15 per week, since then food costs have soared over 27%.<sup>72</sup> The current value of Healthy Start is no longer enough to pay for infant formula needed to safely feed a baby in the first six months of life.<sup>73</sup> The scheme's allowances should increase in line with inflation and be reviewed at least every six months to ensure sufficient support is available for young parents.

Poor uptake of Healthy Start also leaves an estimated 200,000 low-income families without support, including many young parents.<sup>74</sup> In June 2024, the overall participation rate in the scheme was just 66%.<sup>75</sup> Participation rates vary widely across the country and are as low as 50% in some places. The Government should consider auto-enrolment in the scheme alongside other means of raising awareness to increase uptake, particularly amongst younger parents.

# Our partnership

**Co-op and Barnardo's are working to bring local communities together to support positive futures of young people across the UK. Our partnership launched in March 2023, after research found that a third of young people do not feel positive about their future. Together, Co-op and Barnardo's aim to raise £5 million to support 750,000 young people to access basic needs like food, improve their mental wellbeing, and create better opportunities for their future.**

### How are we supporting young people?

20 partnership services have been established across the UK in areas which most need support, as identified using a variety of data such as the Co-op's Community Wellbeing Index.<sup>76</sup> These projects, which have been co-designed with local young people, are tailored to local needs and include a wide range of activities largely focused on food, wellbeing, and building life skills in safe, supportive environments.

To reach beyond the 20 locations, we have developed an online support offer on social media that young people can use to look for information and advice. Digital content designed and produced by and for young people is available at <https://www.tiktok.com/@barnardosuk>, including cooking and wellbeing advice and support.



### Case Study: Plymouth Changemakers

A group of Plymouth teenagers are helping combat food waste in the heart of their community by setting up free cooking classes using surplus food.

Young carer Scarlet, 15, is one of a group of teenagers that helped co-design Plymouth Change Makers, a service supporting young people to make positive changes. They have set up 'Take Away Tuesdays', open to 10 to 25-year-olds at free drop-in sessions across the Plymouth area.

"A lot of young people are worried about food at the moment," said Scarlet. "When we were designing this service, we spoke to over 100 other young people, and lots of them said that they didn't get much food because of the cost-of-living crisis." The project will offer vital wellbeing support and opportunities while helping to maintain a healthier living environment.

This should include considering auto-enrolment onto the scheme as well as ways of raising awareness of the scheme.

\* Scope: The Healthy Start Scheme operates in England, Wales and Northern Ireland but not in Scotland. A different scheme operates in Scotland.

# About Barnardo's and Co-op

The following individuals and organisations contributed to the creation of this report:

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## About Barnardo's

At Barnardo's, our purpose is clear – changing childhoods and changing lives, so that children, young people, and families are safe, happy, healthy, and hopeful. Last year, we provided essential support to 373,200 children, young people, parents and carers through more than 800 services and partnerships across the UK. For over 150 years, we've been here for the children and young people who need us most – bringing love, care and hope into their lives and giving them a place where they feel they belong.

## About Co-op

Co-op is one of the world's largest consumer co-operatives with interests across food, funerals, insurance and legal services. Owned by millions of UK consumers, the Co-op operates almost 2,400 food stores, over 800 funeral homes and provides products to over 6,000 other stores, including those run by independent co-operative societies and through its wholesale business, Nisa Retail Limited. Employing 56,000 people, the Co-op has an annual turnover of over £11billion and is a recognised leader for its social goals and community-led programmes. The Co-op exists to meet member owners' needs and stand up for the things they believe in.



# Footnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Barnardo's and Co-op (2023), 'Youth Opportunities Tracker: Fairer Futures'
- <sup>2</sup> Barnardo's (2023), 'Barnardo's and Co-op Partnership'
- <sup>3</sup> Barnardo's (2024), 'Co-op Youth Advisory Group'
- <sup>4</sup> Government statistics show that more than 1 in 4 children live in poverty: Department for Work and Pensions (2024), 'Households Below Average Income, Summary Results – 1995 to 2023'
- <sup>5</sup> For more information about Votes for Schools see: Votes for Schools (2024), 'Find Out More About Votes for Schools'
- <sup>6</sup> More than 1 in 10 young people (12%) experience 'very low food security', more than double the rate compared to other age groups. Very low food security is when a person disrupts their eating patterns or reduces their food intake because they lack money or other resources for food. Office for National Statistics (2024), 'Family Resources Survey', Table 9.4.
- <sup>7</sup> In this report we use the term 'community' to refer to the publicly accessible spaces young people use in their local area such as town centres, food banks or pantries and high street shops.
- <sup>8</sup> Barnardo's and Co-op (2023), 'Youth Opportunities Tracker: Fairer Futures'
- <sup>9</sup> Office for National Statistics (2024), 'Family Resources Survey', Table 9.4
- <sup>10</sup> House of Commons Library (2024), 'Who is experiencing food insecurity in the UK?'
- <sup>11</sup> Office for National Statistics (2024), 'Family Resources Survey', Table 9.4. See also: UK Parliament (2023), Food poverty: Households, food banks and free school meals, page 8
- <sup>12</sup> Office for National Statistics (2024), 'Family Resources Survey', Table 9.15
- <sup>13</sup> National Lottery Community Fund (2022), 'Press release: Community Research Index 2022'
- <sup>14</sup> Peer Action Collective (2023), 'Leading Research Driving Change: Youth insights and solutions'
- <sup>15</sup> Youth Endowment Fund (2022), 'Children, violence and vulnerability', page 13.
- <sup>16</sup> National Youth Agency (2024), 'Manifesto: Youth Work for All Young People'
- <sup>17</sup> Feeding Britain (2024), 'About Us'
- <sup>18</sup> Feeding Britain (2021), Healthy Holidays, page 1
- <sup>19</sup> Trussell Trust (2022), 'Briefing: Families, hunger, and the holidays'. See also: Independent Food Aid Network and Feeding Britain Briefing (2020), 'Parliamentary Briefing'.
- <sup>20</sup> Stretesky, P.B.; Defeyter, M.A.; Long, M.A.; Ritchie, L.A.; Gill, D.A. (2020), 'Holiday Hunger and Parental Stress: Evidence from North East England'.
- <sup>21</sup> Mintel (2016), 'Article: 60% of UK 16-34 year olds'
- <sup>22</sup> YouGov (2022), 'How confident are Britons in the kitchen?'
- <sup>23</sup> Centrepoint (2022), Young, homeless and hungry: The impact of food insecurity on vulnerable young people, page 17
- <sup>24</sup> House of Commons Library (2024), 'Who is experiencing food insecurity in the UK?'
- <sup>25</sup> SEEN (2024), 'We Are SEEN'
- <sup>26</sup> Analysis of SEEN's project will be published in its forthcoming report, available at: SEEN (2024), 'We Are SEEN'
- <sup>27</sup> House of Commons Library (2024), 'Who is experiencing food insecurity in the UK?'
- <sup>28</sup> Office for National Statistics (2024), 'Family Resources Survey'. Analysis using Stat-Xplore shows that 47.96% of household aged 16 to 24 that experience food insecurity are households where one or more person has a disability. 29.75% of households aged 16 to 24 that do not experience food insecurity are households where one or more person has a disability.
- <sup>29</sup> Action for Children (2017), 'The Next Chapter: Young People and Parenthood', page 3.
- <sup>30</sup> Ivers LC, Cullen KA, American Journal of Clinical Nutrition (2011), 'Food insecurity: special considerations for women'. See also: Food Foundation (2021), 'The Critical Importance of Early Years Nutrition in Prevention of Childhood Obesity'

<sup>31</sup> Metallinos-Katsaras, Must, Gorman, Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (2012), 'A Longitudinal Study of Food Insecurity on Obesity in Preschool Children'. See also: Food Foundation (2021), 'The Critical Importance of Early Years Nutrition in Prevention of Childhood Obesity'

<sup>32</sup> Food Foundation (July 2024), 'The impossible challenge: Affording healthy food for low income families with children'

<sup>33</sup> More information on Co-op's Young Member Group is available online: Co-op (2024), 'Young Member's Group'

<sup>34</sup> The Trussell Trust and Independent Food Aid Network support large networks of foodbanks in the UK. For more information see: Trussell Trust (2023), 'Impact report 2022-23'; Independent Food Aid Network (2024), 'IFAN data'

<sup>35</sup> Gordon and Sarah Brown Foundation (2023), 'The Multibank and How to Create One'

<sup>36</sup> For more information about community pantries see: Co-op (2024), 'Your Local Pantry'

<sup>37</sup> VotesforSchools work with schools and colleges across the UK to support young people with weekly discussions on challenging topics and empower them to share their views. For more information visit: VotesforSchools (2024), 'About Us'

<sup>38</sup> More information on Co-op membership is available here: Co-op (2024), 'Become a member'

<sup>39</sup> Sustainable Food Places (2024), 'Impact Report: Our Journey 2019 to 2024', page 5

<sup>40</sup> Sustainable Food Places (2022), 'The Value of Local Food Partnerships: Covid and Beyond'

<sup>41</sup> Sustainable Food Places (2024), 'Policy Positions'

<sup>42</sup> Sustain (2023), 'Wales: Food partnerships well equipped to coordinate government funding'

<sup>43</sup> University of the West of England (2023), 'Local Food Partnerships in Wales: Interim Report June 2023'

<sup>44</sup> Food Sense Wales (2024), 'Case Study: The Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership Story'. See also: Sustainable Food Places (2024), 'Evidence Database'

<sup>45</sup> Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act (2022), Section 10 (not yet in force)

<sup>46</sup> Sustainable Food Place (2023), 'The Good Food Nation Act in Scotland: weaving together policies for a fair, just and sustainable food system'

<sup>47</sup> Co-op (2024), 'Become a member: see the benefits'

<sup>48</sup> Co-op (2024), 'Membership: Terms and Conditions'

<sup>49</sup> Morrisons (2024), 'Morrisons More Loyalty Scheme'

<sup>50</sup> Tesco (2024), 'Clubcard terms and condition'; Sainsbury's (2024), 'Nectar Card: Collector Rules'; Asda (2024), 'Asda Rewards Terms and Conditions'

<sup>51</sup> UK Government (2021), 'Evaluation of the 2021 holiday activities and food programme'

<sup>52</sup> UK Government (2022), 'Press Release: Holiday help: holiday activity clubs continue in 2023'

<sup>53</sup> UK Government (2021), 'Press Release: More than half a million children benefitted from healthy food and activities during summer'

<sup>54</sup> School Food Matters (2024), 'Press Release: New government data shows 900,000 living in poverty do not qualify for free school meals'

<sup>55</sup> Department for Education (2022), 'Evaluation of the 2021 holiday activities and food programme', page 6.

<sup>56</sup> Insights North East (2024), 'Rethinking the Holiday Activities and Food Programme for Teenagers'

<sup>57</sup> Insights North East (2024), 'Rethinking the Holiday Activities and Food Programme for Teenagers'

<sup>58</sup> Department for Education (2024), 'Guidance: Holiday Activities and Food Programme'

<sup>59</sup> Barnardo's (2021), 'It Takes A Village', page 5.'

<sup>60</sup> Department of Health and Social Care (2024), 'Family Hubs and Start for Life - everything you need to know'

<sup>61</sup> Children and Young People Now (2024), 'Labour pledges new youth hubs in plan to tackle knife crime.'

<sup>62</sup> Labour (2023), 'Announcement: Labour will launch Young Futures programme to tackle knife crime'

<sup>63</sup> Labour Party (2024), 'Manifesto 2024: Change', page 79.

<sup>64</sup> UK Government (2024), 'Universal Credit: What you'll get'

<sup>65</sup> Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Trussell Trust (2023), 'An Essentials Guarantee: Technical Report', page 8. The chart shows that single people under 25 receive £67 in Universal Credit's standard allowance but estimate the amount needed to afford essentials is £120.

<sup>66</sup> Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2020), 'Destitution in the UK', page 14 – 15, Figure 5

<sup>67</sup> Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2023), 'What is destitution and how do we tackle it?'

<sup>68</sup> Barnardo's (2023), 'No Bank of Mum and Dad: The impact of the cost-of-living crisis on care-experienced young people', page 21.

<sup>69</sup> Labour Party (2024), 'Labour's Plan to Make Work Pay: Delivering A New Deal for Working People'

<sup>70</sup> National Health Service (2024), 'What is Healthy Start?'

<sup>71</sup> Scottish Government (2024), 'Best Start Grand and Best Start Foods'

<sup>72</sup> Office for National Statistics (2024), 'Cost of Living Insights: Food': April 2021 – April 2022 inflation 6.7%; April 2022 – April 2023 inflation 19.1%. This gives a compounded inflation rate of 27%.

<sup>73</sup> British Pregnancy Advisory Service (2022), 'Soaring costs of infant formula will "force families to resort to unsafe feeding practices'

<sup>74</sup> Sustain (2023), 'Healthy Start Uptake Analysis'

<sup>75</sup> NHS Healthy Start (2024), 'Data for Healthcare Professionals'

<sup>76</sup> Co-op (2024), 'Community Wellbeing Index'



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