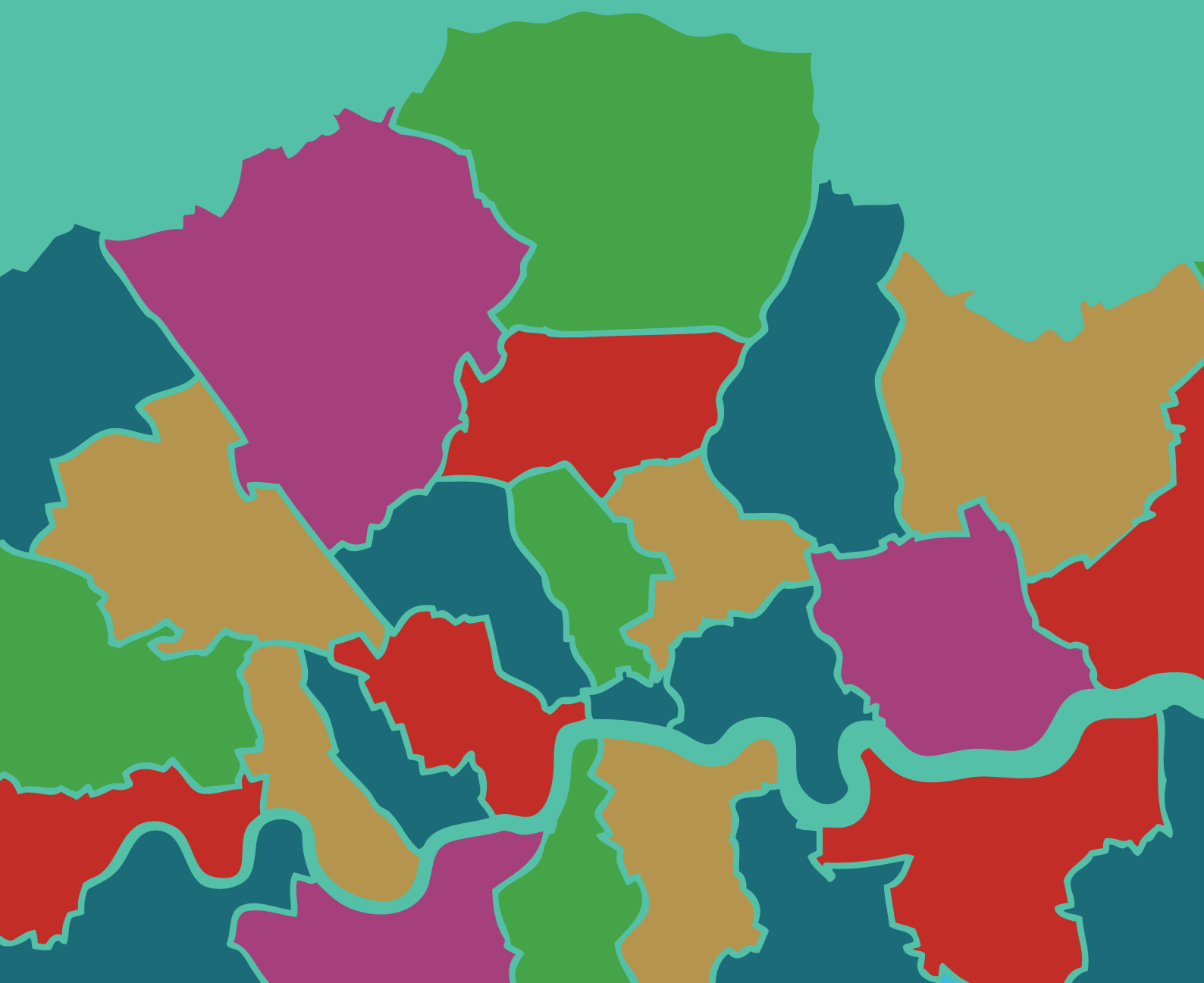


Beyond the Food Bank

London Food Poverty Profile

2018





Foreword by Ben Reynolds

Deputy Chief Executive, Sustain

Food insecurity is increasingly being recognised as an important indicator of poverty and disadvantage across the capital. Throughout the year media reports on food related issues such as holiday hunger and Universal Credit (in particular its effect on free school meal entitlement) have continuously shown how if left unaddressed these issues affect the most vulnerable in society. Nationally politicians like Emma Lewell-Buck, through the Food Insecurity Measurement Bill, and Frank Field, through the School Holidays (Meals and Activities) Bill, have tried to enshrine these

concepts into law. At the London level, the Mayor of London's draft Food Strategy identifies the need to address this issue. More London councils are also proactively reacting by creating action plans to avert or ease food poverty for their constituents.

This report contributes to the work being carried out across the country by showing the practical actions that London councils can take to help people eat well, and to improve the food environment in their boroughs for everyone. Though results vary across the capital, the report shows

that many councils have increased the number of activities undertaken to address food poverty. While this on its own is in no way enough to combat poverty, especially amidst rising house prices, stagnant wages, reduced benefits and rising living costs, I certainly believe it's a step in the right direction.

About the report

This is London Food Link's fourth *Beyond the Food Bank: London Food Poverty Profile* report. It tracks what London's 33 councils are doing to improve household food security, which according to accepted definitions means helping residents to 'feed themselves and their dependents adequately, healthily and without anxiety'.¹

Our report focuses on 10 policies that are within the influence and control of local councils, which if acted on will improve health and reduce inequality across the capital. Data for the report has been collected via a questionnaire which assesses the level of activity by boroughs on each of these measures. 23 councils responded to our questionnaire.

This year the report makes two major changes to its top line measures. The first combines the two measures on childcare provision and children's centres into one measure. The second expands on the measure previously dedicated to 365 days food provision for children to make a clearer distinction between children accessing food during term time, and outside school when many face holiday hunger.

Notes

The statements and opinions expressed in this report should not be attributed to any individual or organisation unless explicitly connected by quotation with that person or organisation.

The London borough maps of actions that are shown in this report are correct to the best of the evidence available to us at the time of publication. We have made every effort to ensure that we highlight the good practice of London boroughs. Boroughs should contact Sustain if there is any relevant data or information which have not been included.

The organisations that run the various accreditation schemes highlighted in the chapters and maps in the body of this report are sometimes referred to collectively as 'Sustain's partners' or 'our partners' for the purposes of this publication. Sustain's expertise is in food and farming, including food poverty. Where analysis and recommendations are included that touch on matters such as income, benefits, social services and local authority responsibilities, we have taken the expert advice of our partners and others.

Download this report at
www.sustainweb.org/foodpoverty/profile/

London Food Link

Part of Sustain, London Food Link is an independent network of individuals, businesses and organisations working for better food in the capital.

We run and partner on policy initiatives, campaigns and practical projects that improve the food system including Urban Food Fortnight, the Urban Food Awards, the Capital Growth network, The Jellied Eel magazine, London Food Poverty Campaign, the Good Food for London report as well as running good food training and networking events.

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We are particularly grateful to those boroughs that responded to our survey and contributed good practice advice. We are also grateful to Trust for London and the Mayor of London for funding this work.

Survey and report developed with support from: Alexandra Rose Charities, Helen Crawley, Dr Martin Caraher, Child Poverty Action Group, Family and Childcare Trust, Food Matters, Living Wage Foundation, Lindsay Graham, Magic Breakfast, Myles Bremner, National Association of Care Catering, School Food Matters and Sustainable Food Cities and the Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative.

Recommendations for action

We recommend that councils continue or take on these actions to develop a local response to food poverty and the factors that drive it.

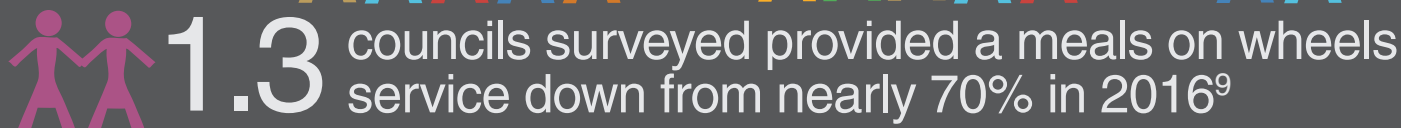
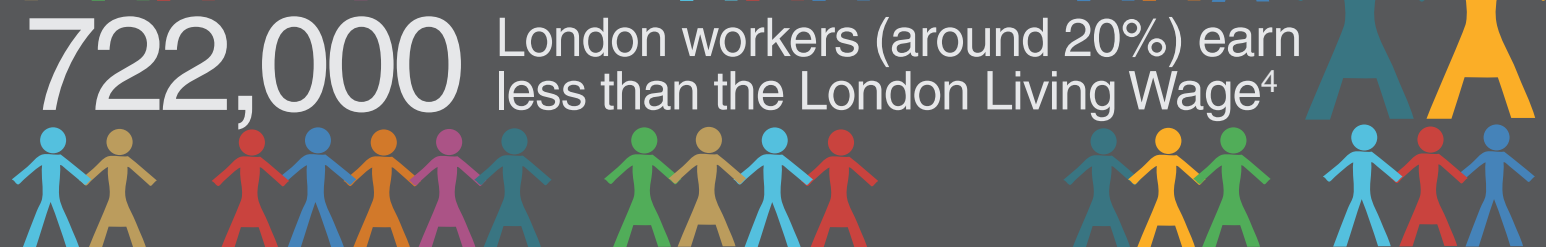
1. Have a comprehensive plan to reduce food poverty which would include these subsequent recommendations.
2. Have a designated Healthy Start coordinator and an integrated programme of activities to reach a minimum local uptake for 80% uptake.
3. Increase the prevalence of breastfeeding by working towards Unicef UK Baby Friendly accreditation.
5. Improve the implementation and uptake of free school meals.
6. Ensure that all children have access to nutritious food 365 days a year.
4. Take action to ensure that statutory provisions for children are sufficient and used to deliver concrete actions to tackle food poverty.
7. Lead on activities to improve physical access to good food by working with planners, retailers and caterers.
8. Reinvigorate provision of meals on wheels, developing a 'more than the meal' approach.
9. Become an accredited London Living Wage employer and contractor, champion the London Living Wage with local employers and become a Friendly Funder.
10. Minimise the burden of Council Tax payments for residents on low-income.

Which London boroughs are leading the way in tackling food poverty in their area?

	Food Poverty Action Plan	Healthy Start	Baby Friendly	Children's Services	Holiday Hunger	Free School Meals	Physical Access	Meals On Wheels	Living Wage	Council Tax Reduction	Overall Score
Lambeth	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	76
Tower Hamlets	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	76
Islington	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	73
Greenwich	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	69
Lewisham	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	60
Southwark	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	60
Croydon	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	56
Brent	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	51
Kingston upon Thames	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	51
Merton	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	50
Camden	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	47
Hackney	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	44
Barnet	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	40
Redbridge	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	39
Enfield	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	37
City of London	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	33
Hounslow	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	32
Sutton	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	32
Waltham Forest	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	32
Barking and Dagenham	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	25
Haringey	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	25
Newham	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	23
Ealing	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	21
Havering	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	21
Bexley	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	*
Bromley	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	*
Hammersmith and Fulham	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	*
Harrow	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	*
Hillingdon	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	*
Kensington and Chelsea	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	*
Richmond upon Thames	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	*
Wandsworth	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	*
Westminster	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	*

* No survey response received and these councils have not been scored, but we have included the data received from the Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative and the Living Wage Foundation for all councils.

London food poverty in numbers



Why this matters

Food poverty action plans are coordinated strategies that map the current situation, identify gaps in provision and offer potential solutions. Because of this they are able to create clarity about the best ways to ensure all local residents have good access to affordable, nourishing food. When developed

collaboratively with key stakeholders in a borough's food and inequality ecosystem, they work to address the structural issues that underlie food poverty and provide a solution to address both short and long term food poverty.



- Council has a food poverty action plan or equivalent
- Council is developing a food poverty action plan or equivalent
- Council does not have a food poverty action plan or no data provided

What can councils do?

1. Download Sustain's Guide to *Developing Food Poverty Action Plans* and review examples of other areas' plans.¹⁰
2. Establish a steering and/or working group and hold an initial workshop or summit bringing together a wide range of organisations addressing food poverty.
3. Carry out a needs analysis and map current activity across the borough.

Tracking progress

The number of councils developing or implementing food poverty action plans has increased from last year with 16 councils reporting they had a plan in place or in progress. Eight participating councils had food poverty action plans, and five more were developing them. Sadly, one council had abandoned its plan since last year. Of the 16 councils, 12 had resources allocated to ensuring the plans were either developed or implemented; 12 had multi sectoral groups contributing to or overseeing the implementation of plans; and 5 had a designated lead councillor championing the plan.

Developing food poverty action plans in ten London boroughs

In 2016 the GLA announced that it would invite London boroughs to apply for £5,000 each to develop food poverty action plans. The funding, which was made available to five boroughs per year over a course of two years, has seen ten London boroughs successfully develop plans that take into consideration the most pertinent issues faced by their constituents. In 2016 the first five boroughs, Croydon, Enfield, Merton, Redbridge and Tower Hamlets, successfully developed and published their action plans. In 2017, a further five (Islington, Kingston, Barnet, Southwark and Waltham) received the same amount of funding to develop similar plans. Sustain has provided technical assistance to each borough.

In this section we provide an update on how one of the boroughs from the 2017 cohort is implementing its plans, as well as pull out some of the key activities and learning that has taken place for some of the boroughs from the 2018 group.



Croydon (2017)

Croydon's food poverty work is being led by Residents and Gateway Services, with support from Public Health and Education. A year into the plan, we have opened a FareShare food collection point, launched a local Food Stop for residents on low income, started tackling holiday hunger through Kitchen Social and launched a Healthy Start campaign, involving training for frontline officers. A 'One year on' event is planned for November, offering local organisations the opportunity to reflect on and feed into future food poverty priorities.

Barnet (2018)

The Council's Public Health team produced a Food Security Needs Assessment, which highlighted areas in the borough where people might be most at-risk of experiencing food insecurity. The team also organised a Food Summit that brought together Council officers, local businesses and VCS organisations to discuss the local context in Barnet and identify solutions and opportunities for joint working. The Summit also helped to identify key themes to address in the action plan, which will form part of Barnet's Healthy Weight Strategy and Action Plan, as food insecurity relates to people's ability to access healthy food.

"The research and engagement we undertook has allowed us to identify what services exist and estimate the level of need throughout the borough. The Summit generated enthusiasm among local stakeholders and helped to form a network that allows us to share resources and better coordinate our work to ultimately ensure that residents have consistent and equitable access to good food. An important way of achieving this will be through diverting good food from being wasted so that it is circulated back to those who need it most."

Dr Tamara Djuretic
Director of Public Health

Southwark (2018)

Southwark appointed a public health project officer to lead on food insecurity. This has resulted in preparing a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for the council, as well as a borough-wide action plan. The work has been done in partnership with Southwark's Food Action Alliance – an umbrella body of 39 local organisations who are all invested in tackling food insecurity. A steering group has been meeting monthly to develop the plan. Along the way, we have partnered with Guy's and St Thomas' Charity to deliver a pilot holiday hunger programme, made connections with local MP, Neil Coyle who heads the All Party Parliamentary Group on hunger and held a lively food insecurity awareness-raising event in the council lobby, with stallholders and art exhibits.

“Developing the action plan for Southwark has been a great vehicle for working across sectors to develop a shared understanding and vision for tackling food insecurity. Since starting work on the plan, we have been connecting with MPs, clinicians, academics, public sector staff, voluntary sector organisations, charitable trusts, grassroots activists and those with lived experience of food insecurity – weaving together exciting new partnerships and possibilities. It feels like many productive seeds have been sown. There are some fantastic programmes going on in Southwark and many passionate, dedicated individuals. This is coupled with a great deal of need. The action plan has provided a way to gather the pieces together, create momentum around food insecurity and identify ways forward.”

Professor Kevin Fenton
Director of Public Health

Waltham Forest (2018)

The Waltham Forest Public Health team, together with 'OrganicLea' (a local food growing workers' cooperative) and Barbara Goldberg, a Public Health nutritionist and food poverty researcher, coordinated work to produce the Waltham Forest food poverty action plan. Two workshops were held that brought together residents, community and voluntary organisations, councillors, and NHS and council departments. The first workshop's focus was identifying the level of food poverty in the borough, community assets, and any existing food poverty interventions. Using the life course approach we reviewed the needs, existing provision and gaps. The second workshop focussed on solutions. Presentations from several organisations helped generate ideas for local action. The Waltham Forest food poverty action plan prioritises taking full advantage of existing opportunities to increase food security for all.

“Within Waltham Forest, our vision is that we want all of our residents to be safe, well, independent and resilient. Addressing food poverty will have real impact on this goal, and on improving resident's life chances. The process of developing a food poverty action plan has helped to assess food poverty in the borough, highlighted existing interventions and galvanised local action. In September a community organisation- Transition Leytonstone- launched a community fridge that is addressing both food waste and food poverty. This is a great example of a local initiative and partnership working to increase food security for our residents.”

Joe McDonnell
Director of Public Health

Kingston (2018)

Kingston collaborated with Kingston Voluntary Action (KVA) to co-produce its Food Poverty Action Plan. The approach adopted was to involve as many people from the community as possible asking for their experiences, stories and ideas about solutions. The first step was a survey which asked about experiences of food insecurity, barriers to eating well and how underlying causes might be tackled. Following this, KVA hosted a workshop; engaged in individual discussions with staff of Voluntary and Community Sector organisations and partners in Kingston; and then held sessions with groups of beneficiaries from three organisations working with: those affected by homelessness; those in mental health recovery; children and families. The plan has now been drafted and some of the actions outlined in the plan are starting to be taken forward. The issue of food insecurity has been raised at Kingston Strategic Partnership and more presentations are planned in other partnership meetings. KVA will hold its annual health conference early in 2019 and is already planning to devote a significant part to the issue of food insecurity.

Some of the main points to emerge from the work so far include: better coordination of food collection and distribution; awareness raising about the impact of poverty and low income on food insecurity; promote the London Living Wage; role of cooking and sharing of food in prevention – overcoming social isolation, loneliness, depression and anxiety; need to increase uptake of Healthy Start vouchers and promotion of breastfeeding.

“Our research showed that there is some good work going on in Kingston around food insecurity involving some very dedicated volunteers, but stronger coordination and closer partnership working could contribute to even better outcomes and ensure that the food that is available reaches those that need it.”

KVA Partner

Why this matters

Healthy Start is a programme funded by central government that aims to provide a nutritional safety net to young and low income pregnant women and low income families with children under 4 years of age. Through the programme eligible families are given vouchers worth up to £6.20 to spend on fresh and frozen vegetables, fruit, cow's

milk and infant formula. Yet poor access and low knowledge of the programme has contributed to variable uptake rates, with over 22,000 eligible women and children missing out.¹¹



- Council taking at least 5 significant actions to support Healthy Start vouchers
- Council taking at least 3 significant actions to support Healthy Start vouchers
- Council taking at least 1 significant action to support Healthy Start vouchers
- No reported action or no data provided

What can councils do?

1. Designate and support a council officer or health professional to have overall responsibility for Healthy Start vouchers and vitamins.
2. Set a target of 80% uptake of Healthy Start vouchers.
3. Ensure that information on Healthy Start is available in all relevant settings and that workers and volunteers are sufficiently trained.

Tracking progress

No borough has achieved the 80% uptake rate target with boroughs' average ranging from 53% (Redbridge) to 77% (City of London) over a 13 week cycle. Performance on promoting the uptake of Healthy Start varied between boroughs with only half actively carrying out a wide variety of activities to improve voucher uptake. More than half of London boroughs are providing information on use of the vouchers to eligible women and families, and are requesting information on the number of women and families entitled to the vouchers.

However less than half of councils provide training on the scheme to health professionals and relevant organisations, which reduces the amount of families who are aware of the scheme. The breadth of retailers accepting vouchers across London still remains low with only nine boroughs taking action to increase the number and diversity of retailers accepting vouchers and only eight mapping out which retailers accept vouchers.

Greenwich

Activities undertaken by Greenwich to improve the uptake of Healthy Start Scheme include:

- The creation of a multi-agency steering group, which oversees the implementation of an annual Healthy Start Improvement Plan. The group has helped co-ordinate activities centrally and improve communication between partner organisations.
- Implementing universal vitamin provision for pregnant women which has led to an increase in the number of early self-referrals to Healthy Start among pregnant women. This has meant that eligible families also start to benefit from the food vouchers aspect of the Healthy Start scheme sooner.
- Providing information about how to use Healthy Start vouchers to women and families who are in receipt of, or eligible for the vouchers at 5 Children's Centres across the borough. These Children's Centres' have Healthy Start registered fruit and vegetable stalls. The Children's Centres' staff talk to parents about what they can buy, relating advice to the produce available at the stalls. They also allow mums to use their voucher over the duration of the week as a lot of the mums only have limited storage space. Three centres have created 'introducing solids' bags and talk to the families about how to use them. Some Children's Centres' also have displays showing what vouchers can be used for.

Merton

Merton's uptake of healthy start vitamins is very low with only 65% of those eligible for the scheme receiving vouchers for food and vitamins. Exchanges for voucher vitamins are considerably lower than food vouchers with only 2-11% of issued vitamin vouchers being exchanged. To improve the uptake of healthy start vitamins in the borough, Merton ran a pilot looking at the effect of increasing the number of outlets where beneficiaries could exchange vouchers for vitamins. Based on findings from this pilot, they increased the number of outlets which stocked Healthy Start vitamins from 1 clinic to 2 clinics and 3 Children's Centres. They also ran a promotional campaign alongside this to increase awareness of the Healthy Start Scheme, which included a poster campaign, provision of training of health professionals and placing adverts in local media.

Hackney

In 2017, the borough successfully ran an evaluation pilot which mapped local assets and identified effective strategies for increasing awareness and uptake of healthy start vitamins. Following this the borough commissioned a new provider – HENRY – in April 2018. HENRY will manage Hackney's new 0-5s healthy eating and obesity service to administer and provide Healthy Start vitamins through venues such as pharmacies and Children's Centres while also supporting efforts to increase uptake among eligible residents. This work is backed by a detailed specification of required actions and has buy in from partners. Other activities focused on improving healthy start uptake include:

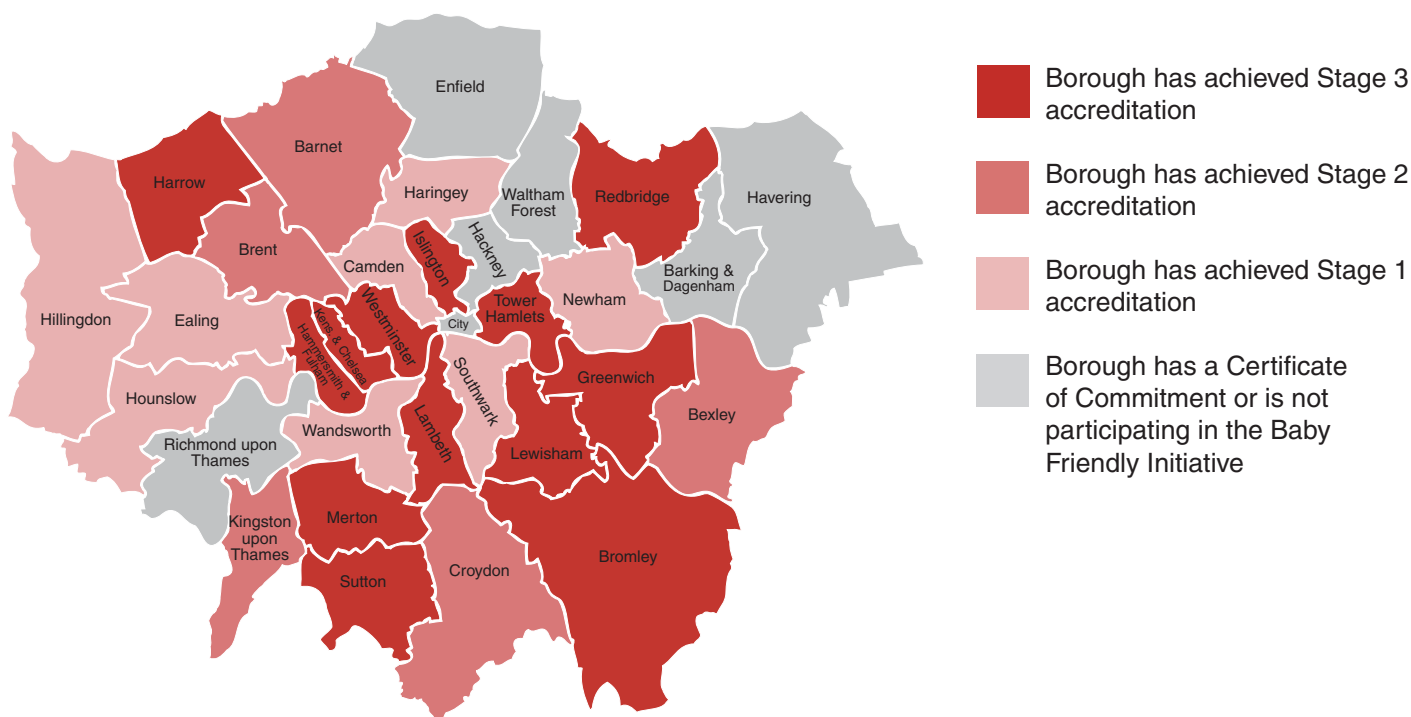
- In partnership, the borough supports the development of new and innovative ways of raising awareness of Healthy Start Vouchers and engaging residents. For example it funds and supports the Alexandra Rose Charity, which provide Rose Vouchers for Fruit and Vegetables for use at local markets and are distributed through Children's Centres. Rose vouchers double the value of Healthy Start food vouchers for families in need.
- Running a full programme of free cook and eat courses on local estates, Child Centres etc; and providing skills and nutritional information to individuals and families within which the Healthy Start schemes are actively promoted to eligible households.

Why this matters

The World Health Organisation recommends that babies should be exclusively breastfed for the first six months, to boost child and maternal health. But in the UK only 1% of infants are still exclusively breastfed at six months. Importantly, women living on low incomes or in deprived areas are among those least likely to breastfeed. Social and cultural factors are held to be

the main obstacles, so promoting breastfeeding and supporting mothers is a shared responsibility. To ensure that new mothers have the knowledge and confidence to begin and continue breastfeeding, boroughs can become accredited with the Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative.¹² This uses a set of interlinking standards for maternity, health visiting, neonatal and

children's centre services. Analysis has shown that the initiative is an effective strategy for increasing breastfeeding rates. Local authorities can also play an important role by welcoming breastfeeding in all public spaces and council-run workplaces.

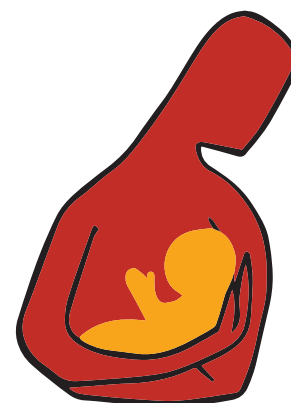


What can councils do?

1. Work towards full Unicef UK Baby Friendly accreditation for health visiting, public health nursing and children's centres.
2. Join the National Infant Feeding Network for London.¹³

Tracking progress

Two new boroughs have achieved accreditation at Stage 1, bringing the number of London Boroughs with Stage 1 or above accreditation to 26. 13 boroughs have achieved Stage 3, the highest level of accreditation. Eight boroughs have achieved or stayed at Stage 1 accreditation while five boroughs have achieved or stayed at Stage 2.

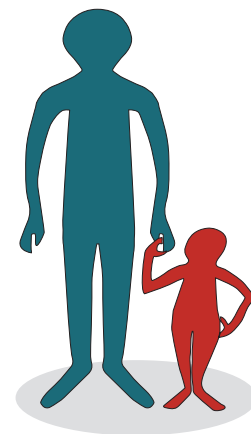


Why this matters

Free school meals provide vital support for low-income families and for almost a third of children, school lunch is their main meal of the day. Yet more than a million children in poverty are missing out on free school meals. These figures are projected to increase with the roll-out of Universal Credit which will see eligibility limited to families earning

less than £7,400 a year. Councils can help in a variety of ways which include:

- Ensuring that all those entitled to free school meals (FSM) claim them (as universal provision applies only to infant pupils).
- Providing universal free school meals to more age groups.



- Council taking significant action to improve the implementation and uptake of free school meals
- Council taking moderate action to improve the implementation and uptake of free school meals
- Council taking limited action to improve the implementation and uptake of free school meals
- No reported action or no data provided

What can councils do?

1. Ensure that all eligible children are registered for free school meals.
2. Ensure that schools are maintaining the number of children registered for free school meals from year 4 upwards.
3. Provide free breakfasts to pupils in receipt of free school meals, and provide universal free school breakfasts in schools with greater than 35% FSM eligibility.

Tracking progress

FSM uptake rates for London are generally good with the Department for Education reporting that 83% and 79% of eligible primary and secondary pupils, respectively, claim free school meals. While measuring and reporting take up of free school meals is an important step to improving FSM uptake and is regularly carried out at the local level, councils scored poorly on other crucial activities aimed at increasing uptake. For example, only four offered a free meal to children of preschool age. When asked about

additional support provided to boost FSM uptake (beyond government funded KS1 provision), only five provided funding for universal free school meals to all primary students and four offered funding for breakfast clubs. Council engagement with businesses and community partners was also low with only six asking partners to provide support for breakfast clubs.¹⁴

Free School Meals

Southwark

In Southwark, Free School Meal (FSM) sign up will be added to Reception intake forms to capture as many eligible families as possible. Communication with the schools has increased take up through consent of data used by our internal Finance and Governance teams to help eligible families sign up.

Islington

The council is working closely with the charity Magic Breakfast, which provides healthy school breakfasts to hungry and malnourished children in disadvantaged areas of the UK, to ensure that all schools can benefit from the charity's offer. Currently 27 (out of 65) schools in the borough get their breakfast provided by Magic Breakfast- a number the council hopes to increase due to the increased funding the charity has received to scale up its support to breakfast clubs. Schools not on the Magic Breakfast project are provided with breakfast through other arrangements such as through the Greggs Foundation's Breakfast Club, Kellogg's vouchers or without external funding.

Hackney

Hackney carries out the following support and promotional activities to increase FSM take up:

- Hackney Learning Trust (HLT) promotes free school meals, by email and letter, to all parents alongside their Primary, Secondary or in year admission offer. Parents are encouraged to use the online application for free school meals/ pupil premium outlined in these forms of communication.
- A visual step by step guide to assist parents in applying for FSM, which is available on the Hackney Learning Trust (HLT) website.
- Reminders, which are sent to schools with the new pupils list asking them to include links to the HLT online system in their parent/pupil induction information. The large majority of schools also have links to the HLT free school meals application page on their school website.
- HLT regularly shares information with schools about sources of funding for free breakfast clubs such as Magic Breakfast and Kellogg's Free Share.

Lewisham

Chartwells, Lewisham's school meals provider, offer a free Bright Start breakfast for every school within the centrally managed school meals contract. This means that Lewisham is able to provide every child at a Lewisham school a free, nutritious bowl of porridge. Currently, 59 primary schools and 9 secondary schools are part of the centrally managed school meals contract.

- All nine secondary schools that are part of the school meals contract are in receipt of free porridge.
- Approximately 30% of the 59 primary schools are in receipt of free porridge.
- In total, 40% of primary and secondary schools on the Lewisham school meals contract are in receipt of free porridge.
- A total of 34% schools within the centrally managed school meal contract offer a breakfast club.

The council's commitment to increasing the uptake of FSM has also seen its Pupil Support Team conduct an exercise to identify children in the borough that are entitled to FSM but are not currently in receipt of the meals. Over 4,700 families have been identified and the council is in the process of writing to families with details of the scheme. It is hoped that by making direct contact with families the uptake of FSM will increase.

Enfield

Enfield Council promotes health and wellbeing to schools through various means such as the Healthy Schools Lead, headteacher's forum and an annual brochure which highlights the health and wellbeing offer to schools in Enfield. The council also has a Healthy Schools section on the Healthy Enfield website. This covers lots of topics including healthy eating, guidelines for breakfast clubs and funding opportunities.

The Council is also providing support to The Felix Project, which is supporting 21 schools through *The Felix Project - Schools Programme*. Crates of surplus food are provided to schools on a weekly basis to offer to children and families at the end of the school day. Although schools can deliver the programme as they see fit, all schools have offered the food universally to avoid any stigmatisation. The Felix Project aims to offer support to all Enfield primary schools. The Council supports the initiative by promoting it through the headteacher's forum, events and meetings; arranging meetings with food companies in Enfield who could donate to the charity (e.g. JJs Food Service); and linking the charity with our Communications team.

Ealing

The School Partnerships and Enrichment team have created resources for schools to use to help promote the take up of FSM, particularly across primary and special schools. Schools with high FSM numbers are also signposted to funding opportunities for breakfast clubs; and schools looking to develop provision can access support from the School Partnerships and Enrichment Services to Schools.

Holiday Hunger

Lewisham

Lewisham's Food Poverty Sub Group has a wide membership which consists of committed community partners. The Food Poverty Sub Group enabled a collaboration between Lewisham Council's Public Health Team, Lewisham' council's school meal provider Chartwells, FareShare and Youth First to deliver a holiday meal service during the 2018 school summer holidays.

The scheme ran across one week in August 2018 at nine of Youth First's sites, with one or two sites being catered for each day. Youth First deliver a range of youth services to over 11,000 young people, the services are delivered from 5 adventure playgrounds and 5 youth centres.

Over the course of the week, 500 young people were provided with a hot lunch. Their ages ranged from 8 to 18 years, with half of those aged between 10 and 13.

142 of the young people attending Youth First Centres throughout the week completed a survey about their eating habits during term time and in the holidays.

- 57% reported they would usually have a school lunch.
- 37% reported they went without lunch the day before.
- 63% reported they ate lunch the day before.

Looking further into the responses, many reported consuming snacks or drinks for lunch, which were foods and drinks high in fat, salt and sugar. This would indicate the proportion of young people having a nutritious lunch as much lower than 63%.

The reasons given for not having lunch included:

- Not being hungry.
- Being too busy playing.
- Not being bothered to make something to eat.

This highlights that many children could be missing out on meals during the school holidays and therefore the importance of the holiday meal scheme.

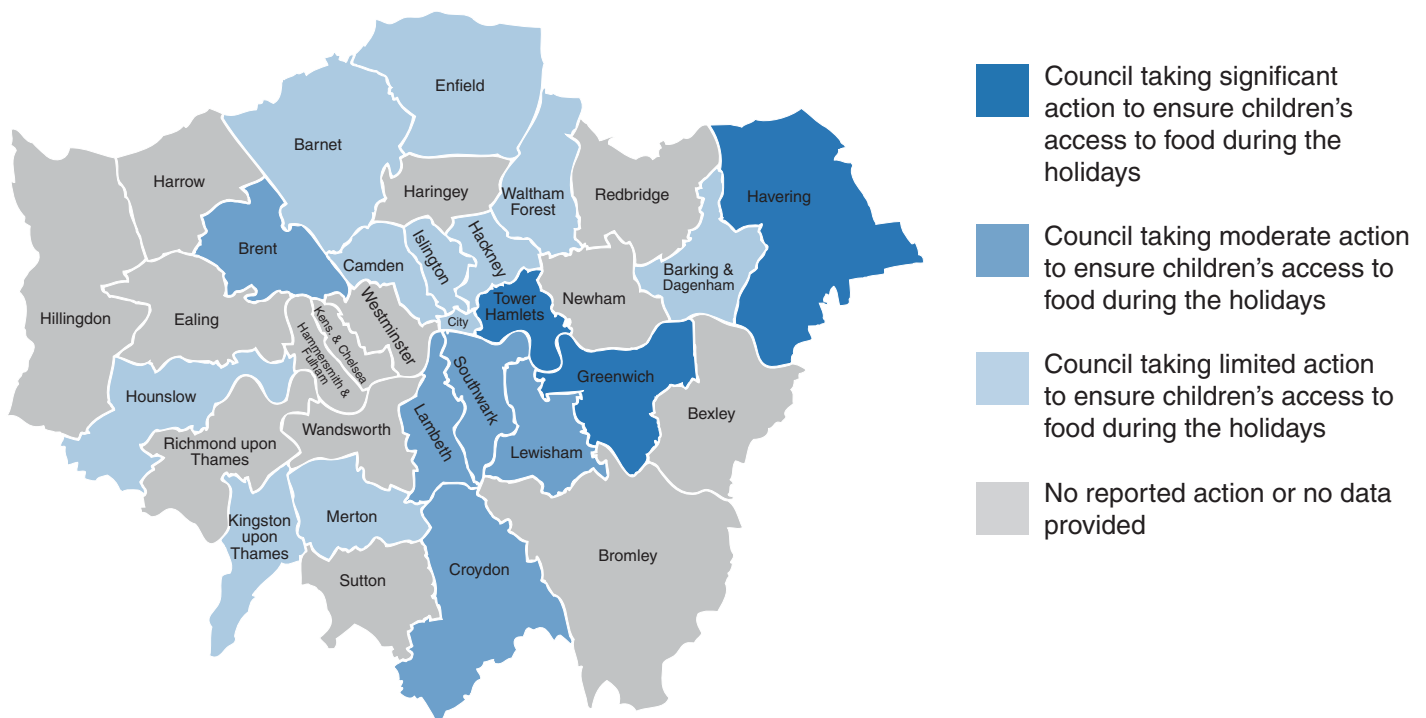
Ealing

Ealing's School Partnerships and Enrichment work closely with Ealing Foodbank to provide a fast track route for families at risk of food poverty during the school holidays (Easter, Summer and Christmas). The Foodbank accepts the schools referral as proof of food poverty and families that usually access FSM, receive food parcels to support them through the longer school holiday periods. Families with multiple siblings are a priority.

Why this matters

With almost 4 in 10 (37%) of the capital's children living in poverty,¹⁵ there is no doubt that many experience hunger. Research for the GLA found that 9% of London children sometimes went to bed hungry,¹⁶ with these numbers increasing outside term time when children no longer have access to free school meals.

Holiday hunger pushes many families into food poverty and insecurity as many parents cannot afford the extra £30-40 a week (per child) it costs to feed their children during the holidays.¹⁷ Councils can tackle 'holiday hunger' by ensuring that children have access to nutritious food on the 170 days a year when they are not in school, particularly over long holiday periods.



What can councils do?

1. Provide funding and other support for holiday provision with food.
2. Designate and support a council officer or health professional to have overall responsibility for holiday provision with food.
3. Collect and share information on local activities where food is available during the holidays and work with partners to refer children who may be at risk of holiday hunger.
4. Contact Kitchen Social (run by the Mayor's Fund for London) or the Department for Education who may be able to offer support.

Tracking progress

Councils are steadily understanding the importance of having a holiday food provision coordinator with 13 councils reporting they had a designated point of contact. More councils have also reported engaging with businesses to provide support for holiday schemes. Despite these improvements, only five councils provided funding for holiday meal provision. When it came to raising awareness about ongoing meal provision in their boroughs and coordinating referrals of children to meal schemes only eight and six reported taking any action respectively.

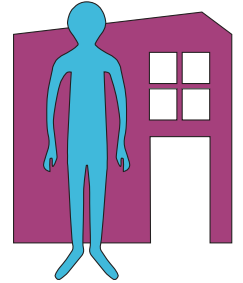
Why this matters

Statutory provision such as access to high quality affordable childcare and children's centres directly support families at risk of food poverty. By providing a range of services centred on health and wellbeing, education and learning, and parenting support and development, children's centres are able to support and promote better outcomes for the most vulnerable

families with the greatest needs.¹⁸ Similarly, access to high-quality, affordable childcare is central to supporting parents to increase household income through work or by accessing education and training. Boroughs can improve on this by:

- a) Protecting children's centres and using these spaces to provide advice on food poverty and holiday hunger.

- b) Ensuring local authorities have enough childcare available to meet the free childcare entitlement for working parents; carry out regular Childcare Sufficiency Assessments, and produce plans where there is a shortfall in provision.



- Council taking at least 10 significant actions to address food poverty via children's centres and childcare provision
- Council taking at least 6 significant actions to address food poverty via children's centres and childcare provision
- Council taking at least 1 significant action to address food poverty via children's centres and childcare provision
- No reported action or no data provided

What can councils do?

1. Continue to protect funding for children's centres and the number of children's centres.
2. Make maximum use of children's centres to address food poverty supporting Healthy Start, income maximisation, or debt and employment advice.
3. Consider how children's centres can play a role in increasing access to fresh fruit and vegetables, for example through stalls or coops.
4. Keep childcare assessments up to date, and ensure provision is both adequate and appropriately distributed throughout the borough.
5. Draw up plans to remedy deficiencies in the quantity or spread of childcare available.
6. All children cared for over a mealtime should be provided with a healthy meal and healthy snacks. Water should be available as a drink throughout the day, and staff should be sufficiently trained to support healthy eating.

Tracking progress

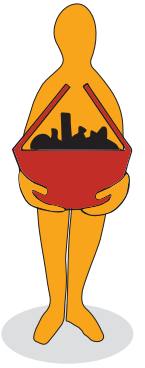
Though funding for children's centres has either decreased or remained the same, councils have taken concerted efforts to ensure that the number of children's centres in their boroughs remained the same. Those scoring highly used centres to provide multiple services to help avert food poverty, including, benefits and debt advice, employment services, information about Healthy Start and childcare, breastfeeding support and cookery sessions. However, more councils need to utilise these centres to deliver information and holiday meals as only four boroughs reported using the centres in this manner.

Why this matters

London has no shortage of food outlets, but Londoners do not have equal access to food, with some densely populated areas lacking access to shops selling fresh produce, and some high streets dominated by fast food. Local authorities can intervene to ensure that residents have access to a variety of healthy foods. To begin with, they can map food provision to

see which areas have limited access to certain types of shop; whether public transport routes link to food shops; and whether, for example, outlets selling unhealthy snacks are congregating near school gates. They can then use their planning powers to encourage a spread and diversity of shops and markets, ensure that new developments have enough food shops, and support

good public transport links. They can also play an important role in encouraging local businesses to provide healthier options, and to accept both Healthy Start vouchers and, where available, the charitably funded Alexandra Rose vouchers, redeemable for fruit and vegetables.



- Council taking significant action to improve physical access to good food
- Council taking moderate action to improve physical access to good food
- Council taking limited action to improve physical access to good food
- No reported action or no data provided

What can councils do?

1. Map food access, checking how easy it is for lower income groups and those who face other barriers such as people with disabilities, older people or parents to get to local shops that sell varied affordable and healthy foods.
2. Use planning processes and business rates to foster shops, shopping areas and markets selling healthy diverse foods, including healthy takeaways.
3. Provide information to local businesses about Healthy Start, the Healthy Catering Commitment and where available the Alexandra Rose scheme, and encourage them to participate in these schemes.

Tracking progress

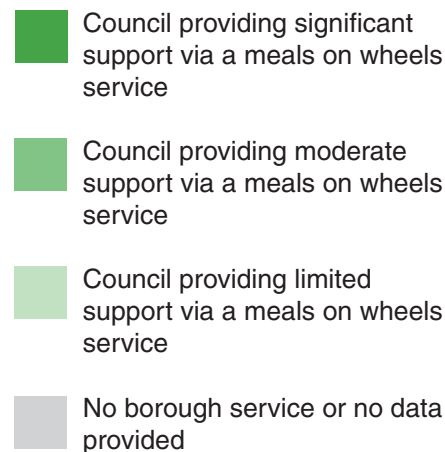
Councils are carrying out significant activities to increase the numbers of healthy food retailers in close proximity to residents. Half of the councils surveyed mapped food access across the borough in consideration of markers like transportation routes, income level, health outcomes and proximity to buildings designated for children. More than half of the councils consulted the appropriate health body on planning decisions and two thirds link decisions to their local development plan.

Why this matters

Poor nutrition in older people, or in people who for various reasons cannot easily get out to buy food, is part of a vicious circle: lack of nourishment makes them frailer, which in turn makes them less able to provide nourishing food for themselves. With an aging population and a well-publicised shortfall in social care budgets,¹⁹ meals on wheels services, which

deliver some sort of meal to people in need have never seemed like a better idea – but they are in decline in London. Research last year found that fewer than half of councils across London were providing a service, whereas two years earlier, two-thirds had been supplying a daily hot meal.²⁰ There is great scope for London councils and their partners to use meals on wheels as a way to

help people retain their health and independence and there are working examples of services doing this.²¹

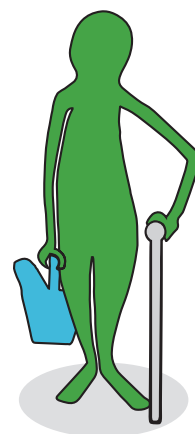


What can councils do?

1. Explore examples of effective models for meals on wheels services which address a wide range of needs and councils' objectives.
2. Maximise referrals to local services by ensuring all relevant staff are aware of local provision and how people can register.
3. Ensure local services link in with meals on wheels services to bring multiple benefits, such as nutritional advice, falls prevention and fire safety.

Tracking progress

Meals on wheels provision has drastically reduced across London with only 11 councils offering some kind of service. Of these only two prepare and distribute meals; three buy and distribute meals and two put their meals on wheels service contract out to tender (and provide some level of funding). The remainder signpost residents to external services.



Islington

The council is working with a primary school in the borough to pilot having older people come in once a week for a school meal. This is coordinated with the support of homes and communities, and VCS to ensure that all relevant organisations are involved so that the older people requiring the support are identified and supported to attend. Caterlink has offered a discount on the meals provided. If successful, the pilot will be rolled out to other suitable schools.

Lewisham

Age UK Lewisham & Southwark have successfully secured funding to set up a service called Food2You. Food2You is a shopping delivery service, supporting older people to live healthier, independent and dignified lives. The service is aimed at people aged 50+ who are experiencing, or who are at risk of malnutrition.

In June 2018 Food2You began delivering food one morning a week, with just a handful of volunteers. Since then, the service has steadily grown to three days a week. Over 125 deliveries have been made and volunteers have dedicated over 250 hours of time to help launch and run the service. All customers are asked for feedback six weeks into the service.

The service has received very positive responses, with 100% of customers agreeing they are satisfied or very satisfied with the service. One service user is quoted as saying *“The service is good in every way, because I am stuck here and can’t get out”*.

How the service works:

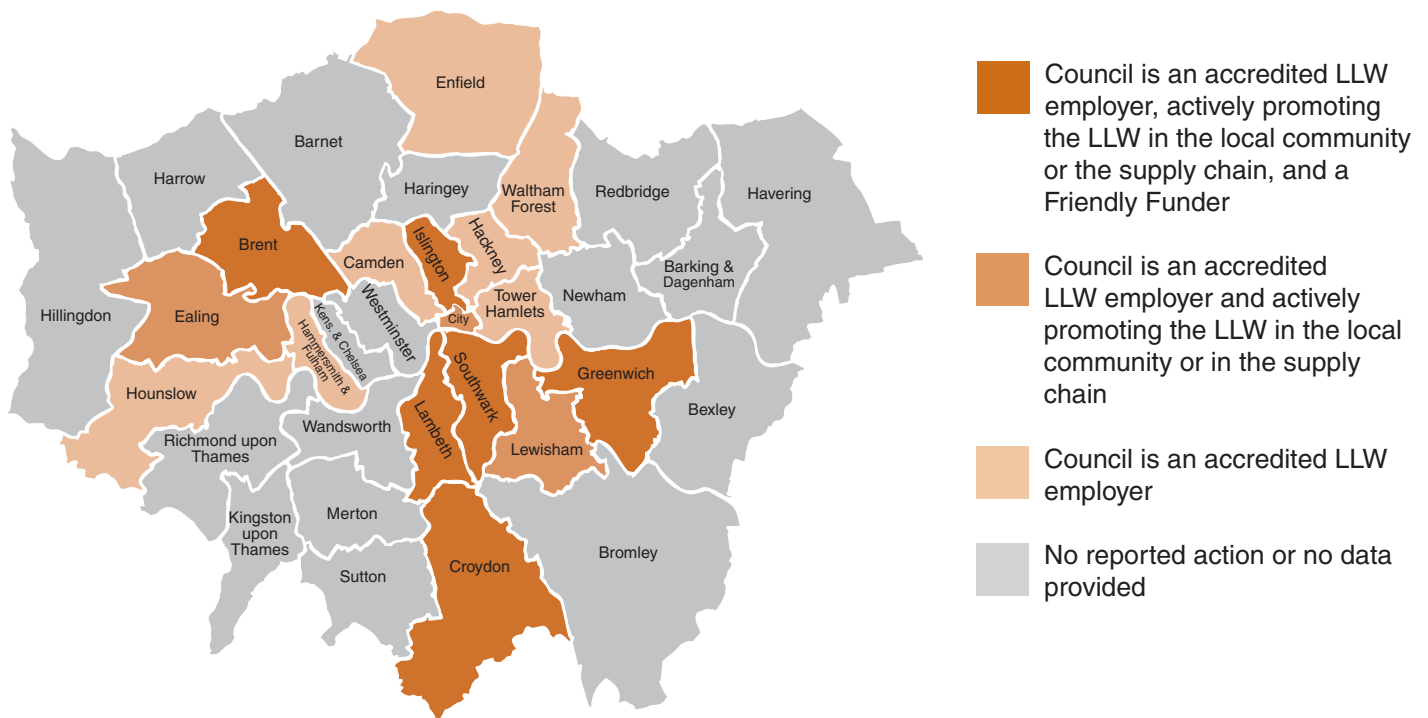
- Membership is £1 for 1 year.
- Customers complete a shopping list which is collected by volunteers.
- Volunteers shop for the food and deliver it.
- Volunteers put things away if needed, also providing an opportunity for a conversation with the older person.
- The service is flexible and can be provided on a weekly/quarterly/yearly basis.
- Delivery charge is £5 per shop.
- Volunteers are also able to help refer people to a service that connects them with local services to help them maintain their independence, safety and wellbeing.

Why this matters

Raising incomes is the surest way to lift people out of poverty, and therefore food poverty. The London Living Wage (LLW) is set at £10.20 an hour, based on what people in the capital need to live on, and applies to all workers over 18. Being paid the LLW can mean the difference between 'just about managing' and earning enough for a decent life, including being able to

afford adequate, good quality food. Currently almost one in five jobs in London pays below the LLW, with female part-time employees and young people suffering most from the implications of living on a low wage. Councils can lead the way, both by becoming accredited Living Wage employers, and by setting an example to local businesses. Accredited employers pay all their directly

employed staff and onsite contractors (such as cleaners) the LLW. This creates a demonstrable ripple effect, with London businesses more likely to pay the LLW if their local council is an accredited Living Wage employer. Councils can also use rate incentives to encourage sign-up and become Friendly Funders to ensure charities receiving council funding are able to pay the LLW.

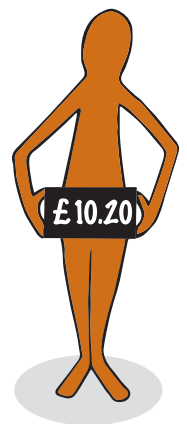


What can councils do?

1. Become an accredited London Living Wage employer.
2. Promote the London Living Wage by holding awareness events, advising local businesses on accreditation, and offering incentives, such as business rate discounts, to accredited employers.
3. Become a Friendly Funder.

Tracking progress

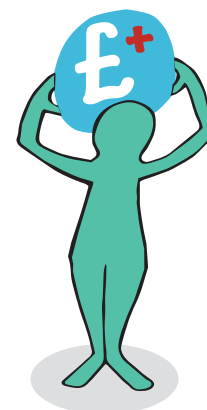
Though the number of accredited London Living Wage councils remained the same as last year, more councils have started promoting the scheme to employers with a small number offering accredited employers Business Rate incentives and holding events to promote the scheme to local businesses.



Why this matters

The Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme helps people on low incomes and/or certain welfare benefits to pay their council tax bill. This frees up more income for families to spend on necessities, including food. However councils administer their own, locally devised schemes, with reduced funding from central government. This increases

the financial uncertainty Londoners in boroughs without this scheme face. Councils can help ensure that Londoners with the same needs and income, regardless of location, are entitled to the same amounts of support and offering financial advice to those who need it.



- Council has minimum Council Tax payment of 0%
- Council has minimum Council Tax payment of 10% or less
- Council has minimum Council Tax payment of 20% or less
- Council has minimum Council Tax payment of 21% or no data provided

What can councils do?

1. If possible, do not require residents on very low income to pay any Council Tax.
2. If essential, keep minimum payments at 10% or lower.
3. Refrain from using bailiffs to recover debt from Council Tax support claimants.

Tracking progress

Not every council is changing how Council Tax Benefit works – 8, or 18% of councils, are maintaining support at the same level. The majority, however, are requiring everyone, regardless of income, to pay some council tax. Nine boroughs required no minimum payment; two had minimum payments of under 10% and six kept payments under 20% of liability.

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Beyond the Food Bank

London Food Poverty Profile

A Sustain publication
November 2018

Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming, advocates food and agriculture policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, improve the living and working environment, enrich society and culture, and promote equity. It represents around 100 national public interest organisations working at international, national, regional and local level.

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Part of the food and farming charity Sustain, London Food Link is the voice of good food in London. Our network is made up of individuals, enterprises and organisations who are working for better food in the capital and represented on the London Food Board.

We lead and partner on policy initiatives, campaigns and practical projects to improve the food system. These include the Good Food for London report, the London Food Poverty Campaign, Capital Growth, Urban Food Fortnight and The Jellied Eel magazine.

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