



Community &
Voluntary Services
cheshire east

A map of Cheshire East, England, showing various towns and roads. The map is overlaid with a yellow banner containing text. The banner is split into two sections: the top section contains the text 'Community food support across Cheshire East' and the bottom section contains 'Topline survey findings - October 2023'. The map shows major roads like the M56, M53, and A500, and towns such as Runcorn, Widnes, Knutsford, Wilmslow, Congleton, and Leek.

Community food support across Cheshire East

Topline survey findings - October 2023

Background

Methodology:

- We spoke to or visited 23 projects ahead of the survey being released
 - To increase response rates, we offered support to complete they survey + presented to a group of Crewe Community Food projects
- Survey sent to 31 organisations from CVSCE food network – we received 27 responses (87%)
 - In total we've had 33 responses (6 from projects we didn't know about)
 - Following up with all other groups & identifying other groups to contact (long tail – ongoing...)

Previous CVSCE exercise – June 2022



20

Food Bank



6

Community Pantry



9

Community Cafe's



28

Other Services

Accessing food aid & support



Contents:

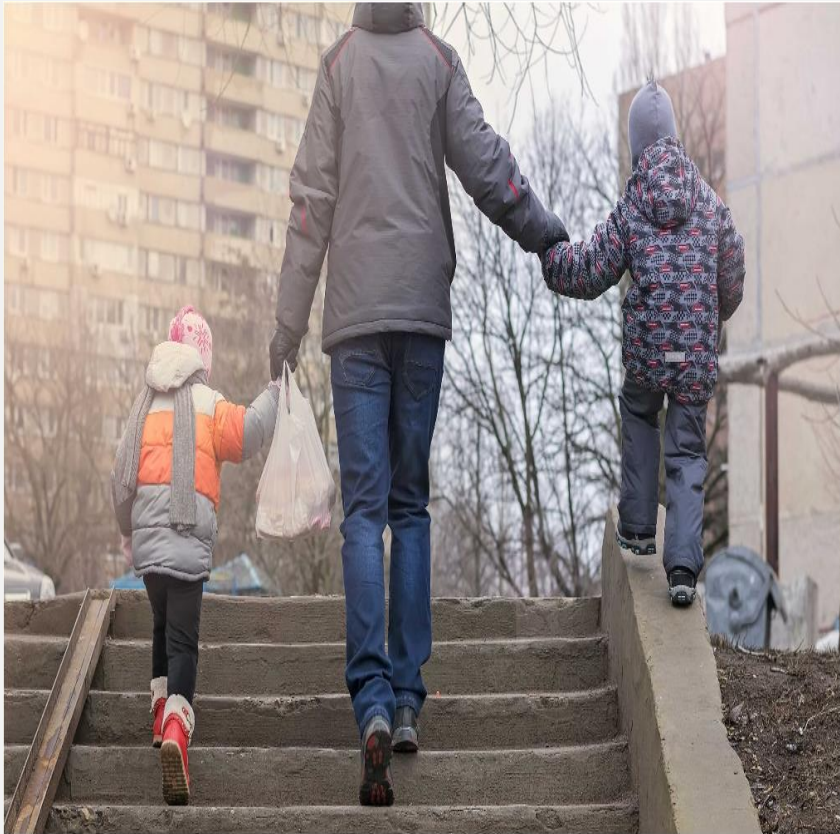
- What support exists
- Who is accessing food aid
- How many people are accessing food aid
- How are people accessing food aid
- What food and support is available
- Referring to support services
- Evidence of coordination.

What community food support exists?

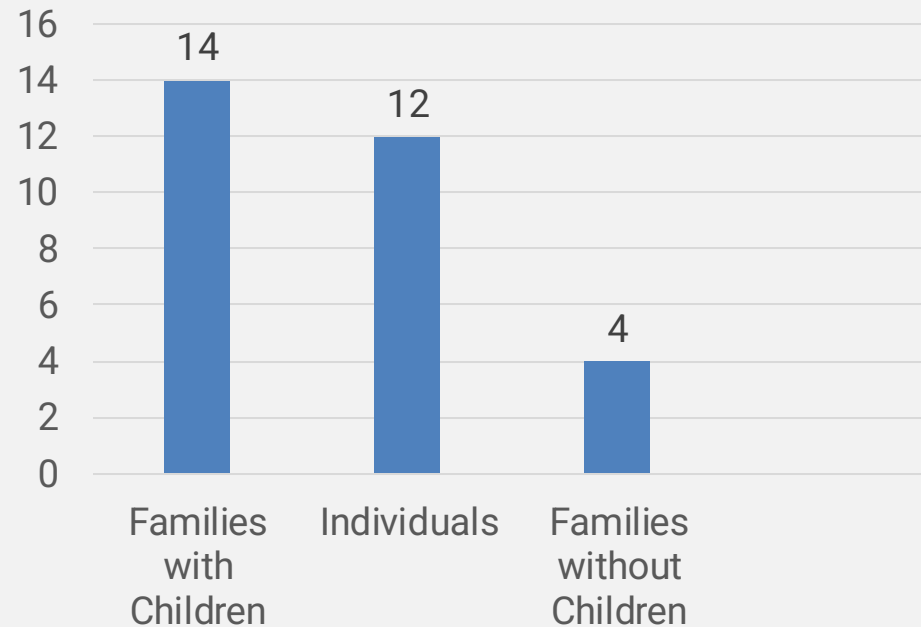
- Data collected from Cheshire East Community food projects (August / September 2023)
- Based on responses received there are 54 projects, provided by 36 different organisations (excluding HAF)

Community food support – by type	2023 survey	2022 survey
Emergency support (e.g. foodbanks)	16	20
Affordable food support (e.g. social supermarkets)	13	6
Cafes and community meals	16	6
Growing projects (e.g. allotments, gardens)	3	-
Cooking projects	3	-
Meal or food delivery service (e.g. meals on wheels)	3	-
Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF)	40	-

Who is accessing food aid?



Who is accessing food aid? (n 30)



No difference in Families with Children – at FB / AF

How many people are accessing community food support?

- The table below outlines the average weekly numbers accessing emergency and affordable food provision
 - Based on responses from 15 emergency and 12 affordable food providers
 - It is possible that there is some double counting – people maybe accessing emergency and affordable food provision at the same time. People may also be accessing more than one affordable food provider in the same week

Support type	Individuals	Households
Emergency food	465	1046
Affordable food	1068	2915

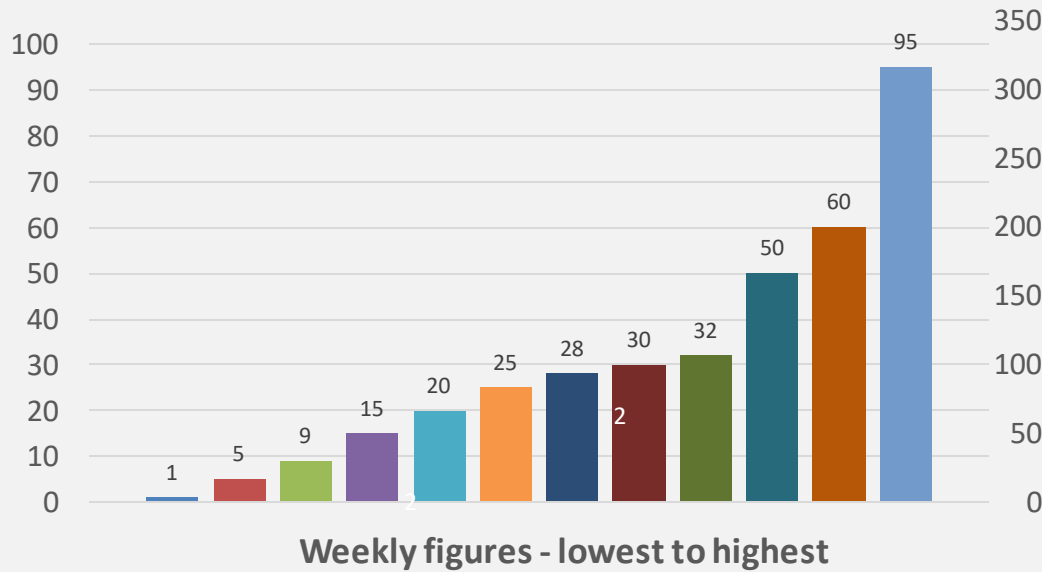
The data on those accessing other forms of community food support are limited:

- Cafes / community meals – 190 (based on 2 responses)
- Delivery service – circa 200 per week

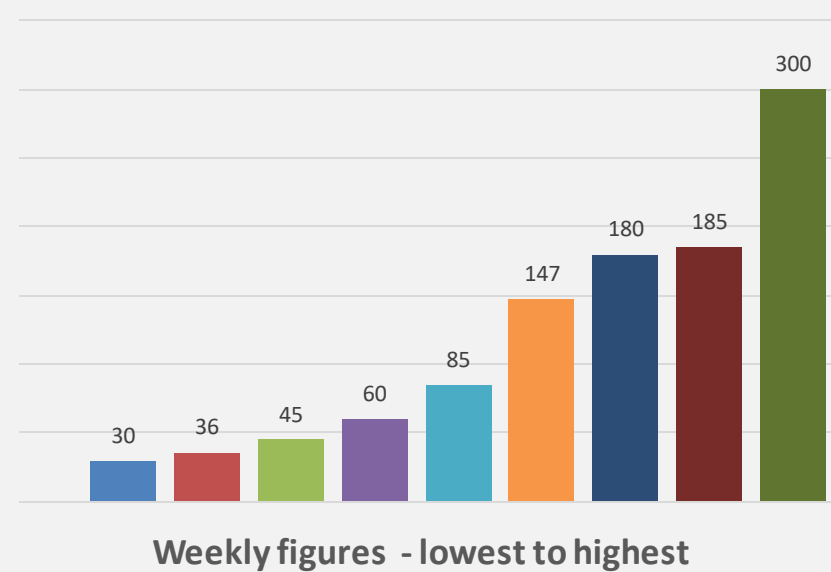
Spread of community food support...

The graphs below show the weekly numbers accessing food support...

Emergency food support



Affordable food support



How are people accessing food aid?

Range of different access models



What restrictions are in place?

- 8 projects restrict access (only 50% of those are foodbanks)
- 7 have no restrictions in place (including 2 foodbanks)
- Foodbanks likely to restrict – based on how often e.g. 2 parcels per 3 months
- Accessible food providers – likely to restrict on how many times someone can shop per week (1 visit per week is most common)
- 2 FBs / AFPs apply no restrictions whatsoever

What food and support is available?

Personalisation and choice

- 10 organisations can meet dietary requirements vs 4 who can't
 - 4 foodbanks vs 2 foodbanks
- 7 projects offering Choice / Personalisation
 - Pantries / social supermarkets most likely to, but also 1 Foodbank.

Not just about food

21 (out of 26) organisations who responded are also providing Household items (washing powder, toilet rolls), Toiletries Dental and Sanitary products – in addition to food.

Referring to other food projects or support services

Do you refer / signpost to other food projects?

- 13 out of 14 (refer – 1 doesn't)
- Limited number of agreements in place 3 formal / informal, 2 refer – yes no agreement (9 didn't provide any data)

Which support services do they provide or refer to?

Non-food support offered

- 7 out in 14 offer support with getting people back into work
- 5 out of 14 offer mental health support
- 5 out of 14 offer housing support

- 12/14 refer to non-food support services
 - 8 in 14 refer to financial management services

Evidence of coordination...



Organisations in Crewe are working in a coordinated way e.g. one organisation stated it worked with at least 6 other community groups

There's evidence of projects working together in other parts of CE – but it's not as integrated as it seems in Crewe e.g. in Macc – only one organisation named another they worked with (or answers weren't provided)

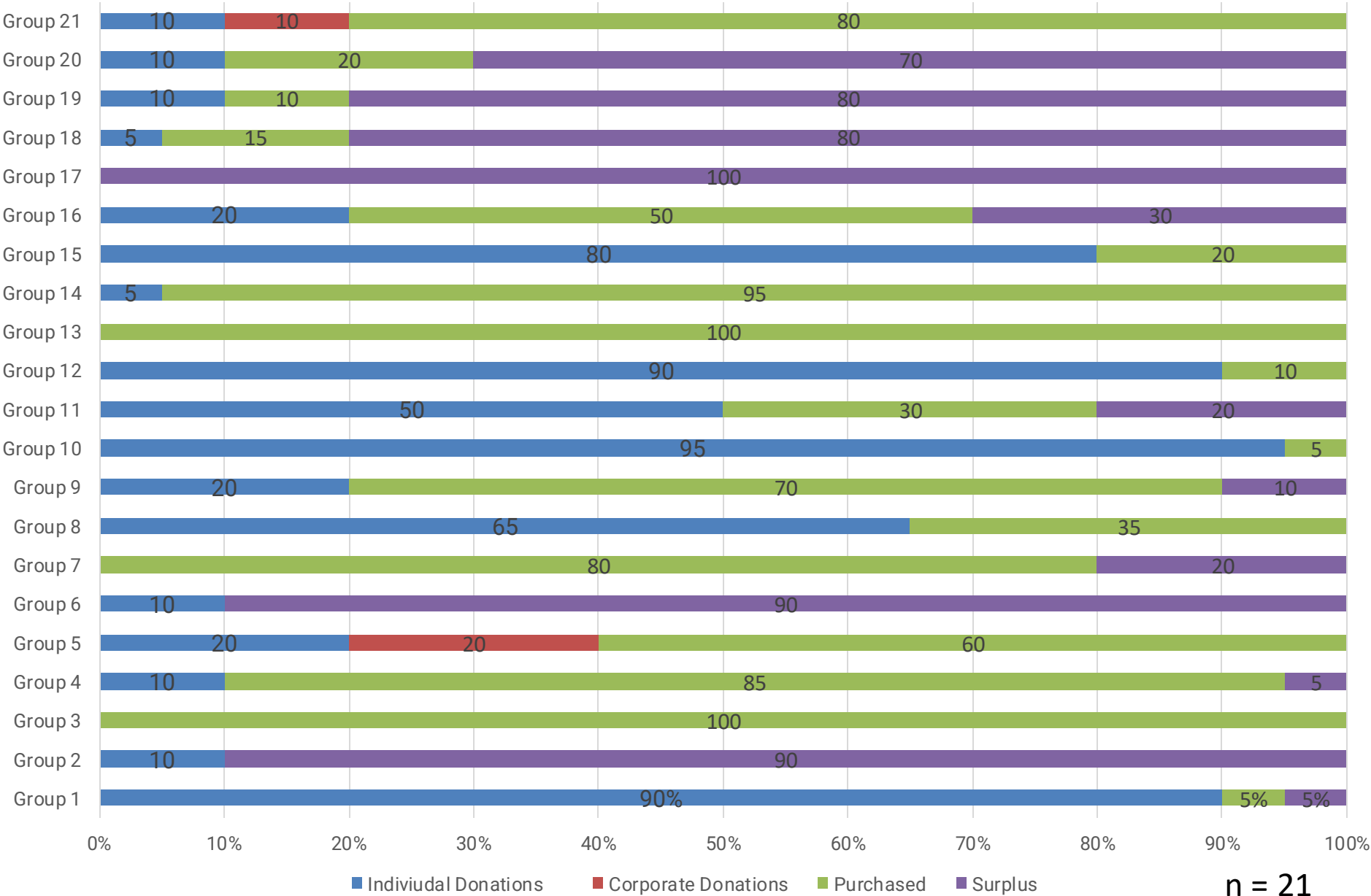
Sources of food, funding & resources



Contents

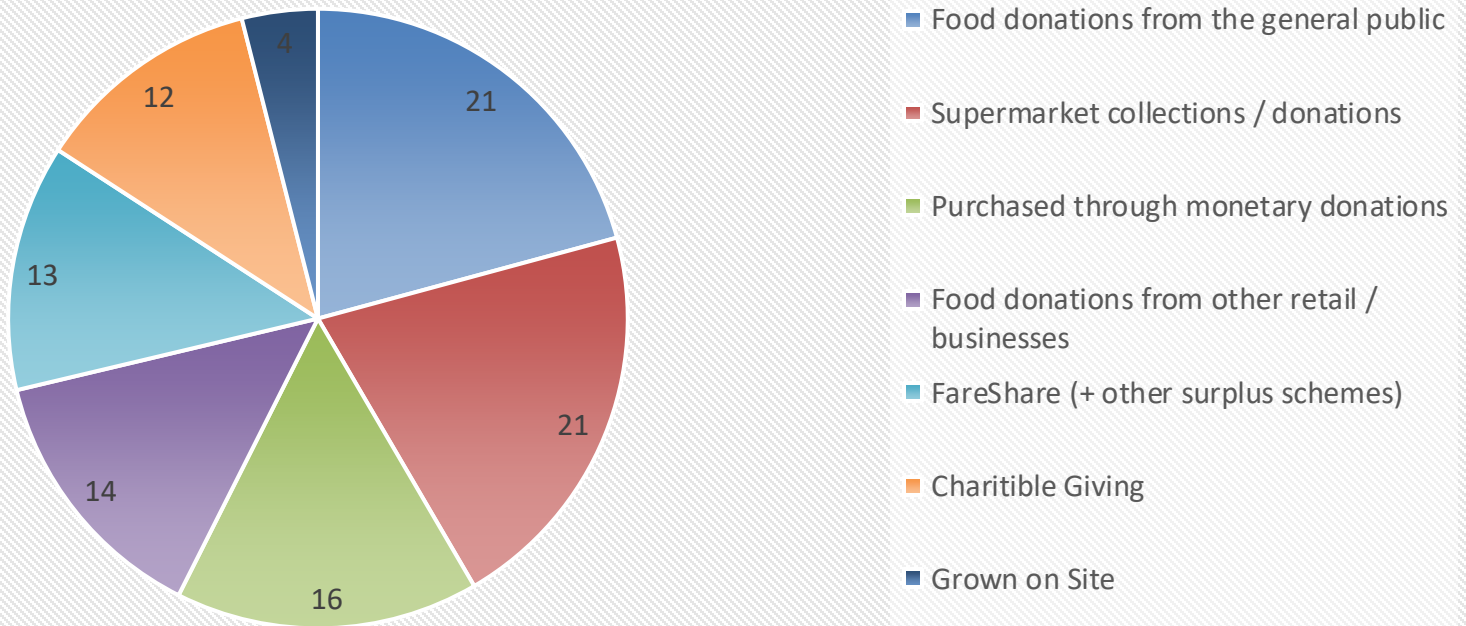
- Community food projects – sources of food
- Food costs: service users and community groups
- Food projects: sources of funding
- Spending on Food projects
- The benefit of Alliances
- Staffing and infrastructure.

Community food projects – main sources of food (by %)



How are food projects getting food

Sources of food (n 21)



Where food is coming from...



Food costs...

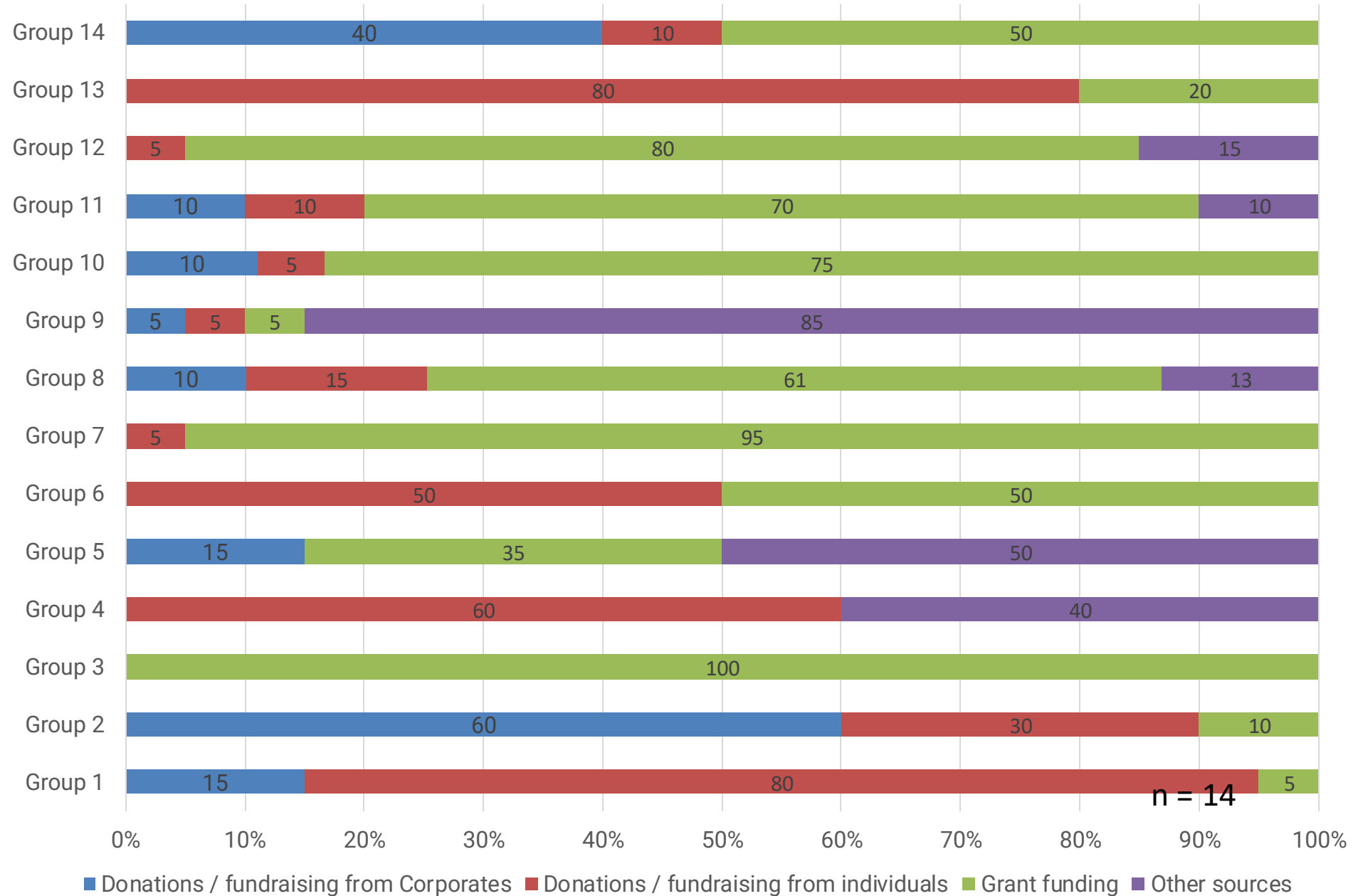
The cost for service users

- All food banks are free to use
- Nine affordable food projects ask their members / users to pay
 - Prices ranges from £3 - £8.50 per shop
 - The mean cost to shop is £4.37
 - £3 is the most common (3 projects) weekly shopping cost.

Community projects – spending on food

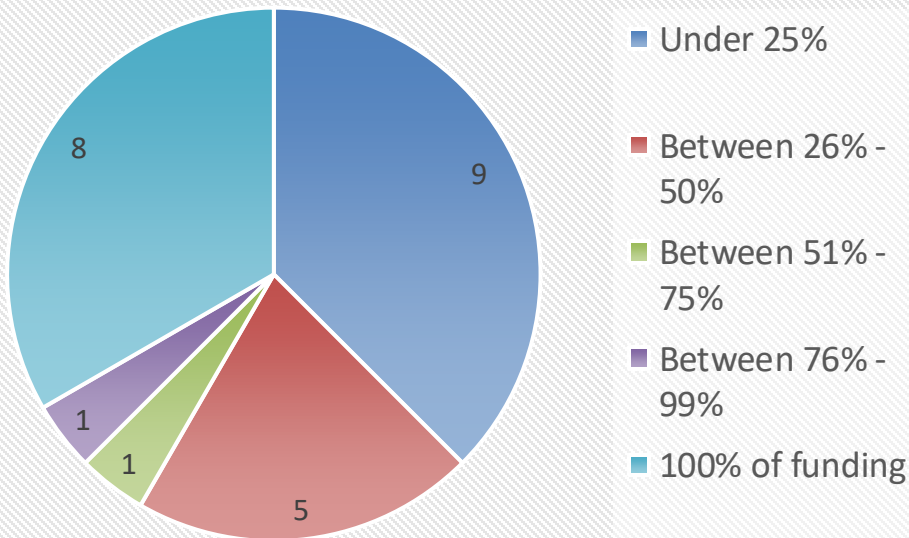
- Collectively community food projects are spending circa. £168k per year on food
 - Ranges from £240 - £2000 per month
 - Both foodbanks and affordable food projects spending £2k per month
 - 7 projects spending over £12k per year
 - 4 projects spending over £20k per year
 - The mean spend is circa £12,800.

Food projects – main sources of funding (%)



Spending on Food projects

% of spend on food project



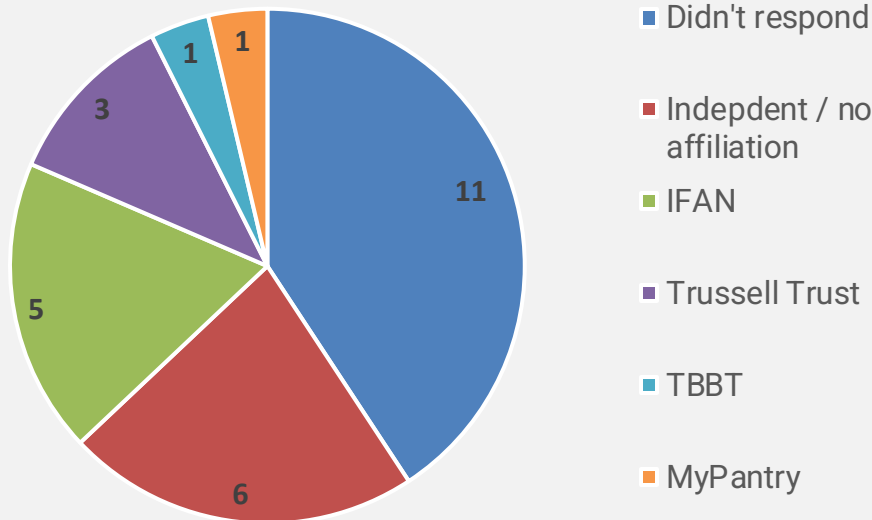
Eight projects spending all their income (funding) on food projects.

n = 24

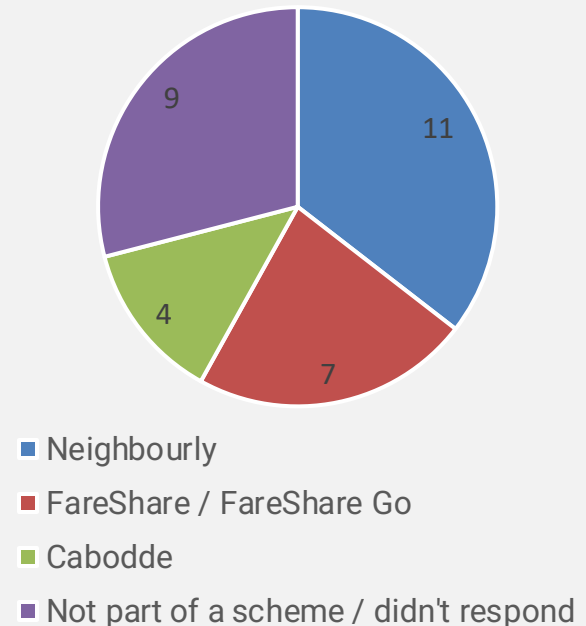
The benefit of Alliances...

We asked if projects we're part of an existing food alliance / network or surplus distribution scheme

Existing membership of alliances (n)



Membership of surplus food redistribution scheme (n)



Staffing and infrastructure

Staffing / volunteers

- 10 projects employing full-time staff
- 13 employing p/t staff
- 25 groups using volunteers
 - 4 don't have any of the following in place: Induction programme, Safeguarding or Food hygiene training
- 6 projects not using volunteers.

Access to Transport

- 13 projects have - no access to vehicles
- 3 projects providing transport support for others.

Adapting to meet challenges head on

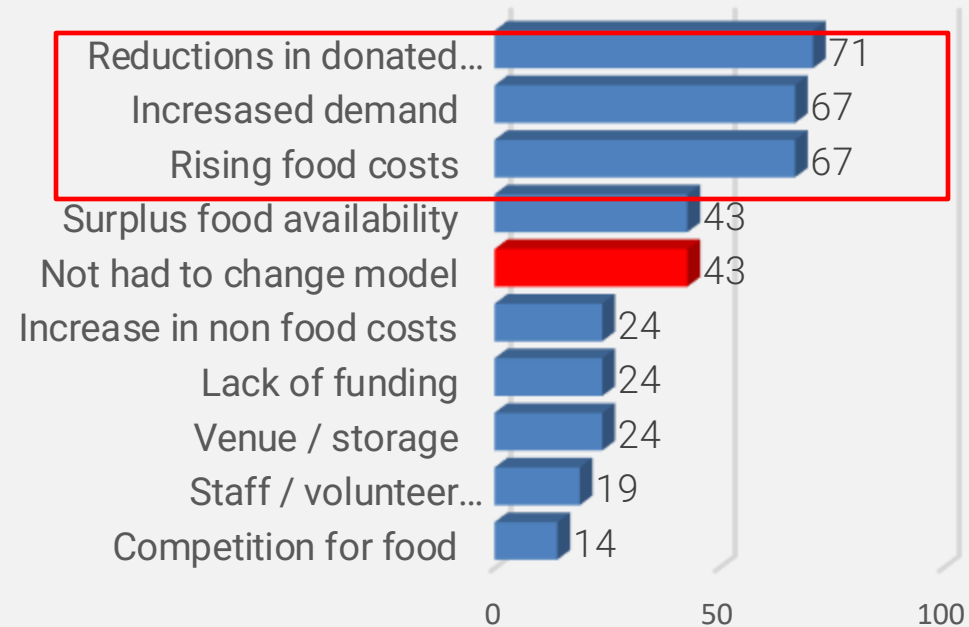


Contents:

- Adapting food models
- Future demand
- Unmet needs.

Have you adapted your food model? Main reasons given for adapting food model (%)

- 9 respondents indicated they haven't had to adapt their model (43%) (4 Foodbanks, 3 affordable food projects)
- Reductions in donated Food is the most quoted reasons (15 responses) (71%)
- Increased Demand + Rising Food costs – ranked joint second 14 (responses each) (67%)
- 7 projects didn't respond
- N = 24



Future demand...

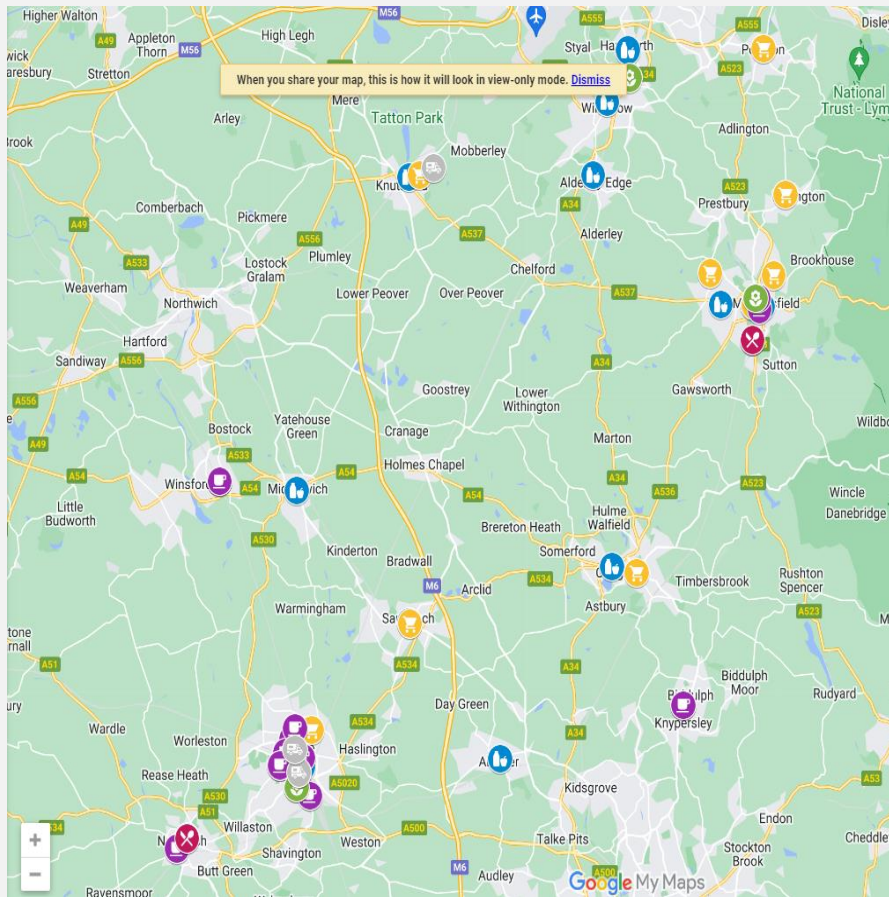
- No one predicting demand to go down
- 17 organisations expect to see increases (9 stay the same: 4 foodbanks and community pantries) (5 non-responses)
- 22 organisations stated that non-food support is needed
 - 4 stated no additional support needed
- Help with - fuel costs & financial management / budgeting is the most common support needed
- Mental health support - cited by over 60% of respondents

- Nearly 50% struggling with supply of electrical goods.

Unmet non-food needs %

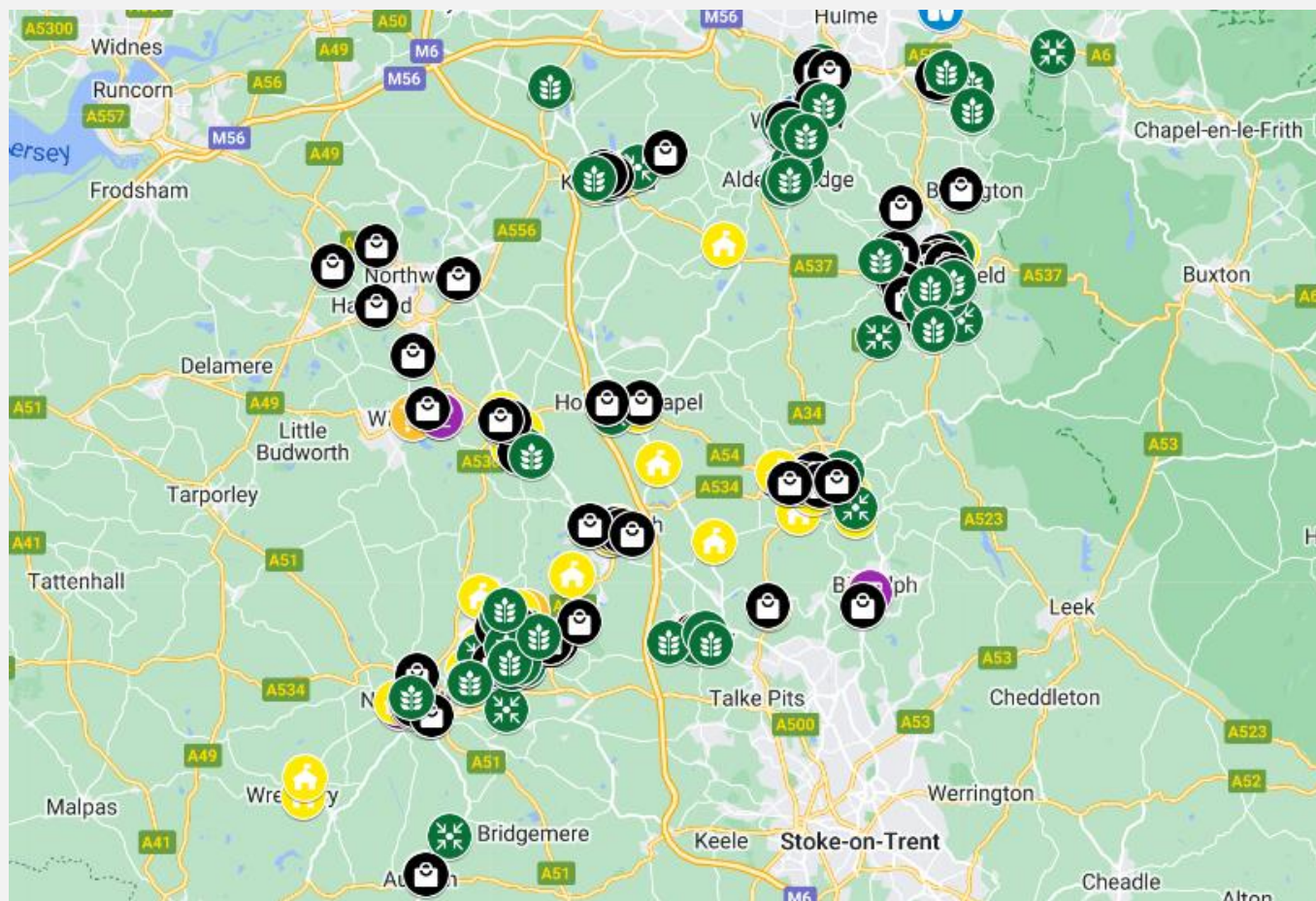


Initial observations on coverage / gaps



1. Emergency and affordable food support in Macc, Crewe, Congleton, Knutsford & Sandbach
2. Emergency food provision, but no affordable food provision in Nantwich, Wilmslow and Alderley Edge
3. Limited community growing and cooking projects
4. No provision in Holmes Chapel!
5. No - Community Fridges, Message Trust Community Grocery's, or Company Shop - Community Shops
6. No one using His Church (?), or FoodDrop to access food.

Cheshire East Community Food map



Next steps...

Data set

1. More granular analysis
2. Follow-up conversations with food projects
3. Final report published

Map

1. Version for general public
2. Version for referring agencies
3. Planning tool

Planning tool may include:

- Social deprivation / Health data
- Priority places for food index / Food desert map
- [Food ladder category](#)
- Proximity to retail outlets / food wholesalers / food producers / Agriculture
- Transport links - community transport and others
- Parliamentary Constituency / Council Ward data - support and influence MPs & councilors.