



FOOD POVERTY NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2021

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Executive summary

Food poverty relates to the inability to consume adequate food in socially acceptable ways. Food poverty has been a growing issue in the UK for several years. The measures in place to control the Covid-19 pandemic has further increased food poverty through the effect on both people's incomes and ability to access food. Foodbanks reported an unprecedented increase in demand in 2020. Official measurements of food security have only recently been included as part of the Family Resources Survey¹, aiming to measure the proportion of people in the UK who are 'food insecure' within the previous 30 days of the survey. In terms of food poverty, the number of households visiting foodbanks are only the tip of the iceberg.

Evidence shows that being in food poverty can have negative health and social impacts at all ages including being overweight or obese, poorer mental health and poorer social development in children. One of the immediate impacts of being in poverty include not being able to buy nutritious food. A poorer diet can increase risk for a range of health conditions including type 2 diabetes and cancer. For children experiencing food poverty can lead to poorer educational attainment.

The key driver for food poverty is low household income. Those most at risk include younger people, single parent households especially female single parents, people who rent their home especially social renters, those who are homeless, and households with a member with a long-term health condition or disability. There is some evidence to suggest that black and minority ethnic groups are also at greater risk of food poverty.

This needs assessment reviews the available evidence for food poverty aiming to understand how this issue affects the population in Hertfordshire. A mixed methods approach has been adopted including an evidence review, quantitative analysis of a range of national and local data sources, qualitative analysis and stakeholder engagement.

Our analysis has shown that an estimated 10.3% (123,112 people) of the total population in Hertfordshire are at highest risk for food poverty. In comparison, for all of England the same calculation identifies 8,898,344 people and represents 15.8% of the population.

The greatest need in Hertfordshire appears to be concentrated in **Stevenage, Broxbourne, Watford**, however there are pockets in all parts of the Hertfordshire county which have need based on the food poverty risk profile, Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) averages, and child poverty measurements. There is greater area level deprivation in Stevenage, Broxbourne and Watford. East Herts and St. Albans experience the least area level deprivation however do still have areas (lower-super output areas) within the top 10% most deprived.

Stevenage has double the proportion of lone-parent households, a high-risk group for food poverty, at almost 10% compared to households in St. Albans at just 5%. Proportion of socially rented households is highest in Stevenage (28%), Welwyn Hatfield (27%) and Dacorum (22%) another group at higher risk for food poverty.

There are inequalities in income across the county, you are more likely to earn more money if you live in North Herts or East Herts than if you live in Stevenage. You are more likely to be claiming Universal Credit if you live in Watford than if you live in St. Albans.

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Households in fuel poverty is highest in Watford, Welwyn Hatfield and North Hertfordshire. Levels of homelessness are significantly higher in Broxbourne. Broxbourne also has a statistically higher level of those in temporary accommodation.

These findings suggest that food poverty and the negative consequences of being in food poverty (e.g. poorer health and diet) are concentrated in more deprived areas and are influenced by people's personal circumstances. Targeted action is therefore required to address inequalities in health and income.

In many parts of the UK, local action is already in place to address growing food poverty levels. Local Authorities and local organisations can take forward an approach to address local food poverty including forming food poverty alliance and implementing a local food poverty action plan.

This needs assessment considered the best available evidence and practice on addressing food poverty by Local Authorities and other local organisations. Four key recommendations for action in Hertfordshire are suggested as follows:

- Recommendation 1: Establish local leadership on food poverty
- Recommendation 2: Form a Hertfordshire Food Poverty Alliance with key local organisations
- Recommendation 3: Develop a Food Poverty Action Plan
- Recommendation 4: Establish a food aid network

1. Introduction

*Food poverty is 'the inability to consume an adequate quality or sufficient quantity of food in socially acceptable ways, or the uncertainty that one will be able to do so.'*²

1.1. Food poverty in the United Kingdom

Food poverty has increased significantly in the UK³ and has some of the highest levels in Europe.⁴ In 2016-18, an estimated 8-10% of UK households experienced food poverty.⁵ Use of foodbanks has increased continually since 2005.⁶

COVID-19 has skewed the data this year. Whilst food poverty was an issue before the pandemic, 2020 saw unprecedented demand on local services for financial and food support recognised in our own services locally in the county (for example foodbanks and free school meals).

Official measurements of food security have only recently been included as part of the Family Resources Survey⁷, aiming to measure the proportion of people in the UK who are 'food insecure' within the previous 30 days of the survey.ⁱ In terms of food poverty, the number of households visiting foodbanks are only the tip of the iceberg.

Being in food poverty has an overall negative impact both on the health and on social wellbeing of individuals at all stages of the life course. One of the immediate impacts of being in poverty include not being able to buy nutritious food. A poorer diet can increase risk for a range of health conditions including type 2 diabetes and cancer. For children experiencing food poverty can lead to poorer educational attainment.

1.2. Aims and objectives

Current understanding of food poverty and how it may affect the population of Hertfordshire is limited.

Aim

The aim of this Needs Assessment is to review and present the evidence on food poverty and how this impacts the population in Hertfordshire. The needs assessment also makes recommendations based on these findings.

Objectives:

The objectives are to understand:

- the level and trends around food poverty in Hertfordshire
- the key drivers of food poverty
- the support available and accessibility of those experiencing food poverty
- the issues that services may be facing in delivering a local service in addressing food poverty
- the experiences of those affected by food poverty in Hertfordshire
- examples of best practice in addressing food poverty in the UK

ⁱ According to the methodological notes, the survey questions do not provide directly measure 'hunger', but 'instead explore the financial situation of households and how that affects their access to food.'

2. Methods

The Food Poverty Needs Assessment was carried out in September 2020 to September 2021. The Needs Assessment uses a mixed methods approach drawing on a range of evidence, data and collecting new information about food poverty in Hertfordshire. The following steps were employed to complete this needs assessment.

1. Evidence review:

Evidence was reviewed as part of understanding the background, key drivers, health and social impacts of food poverty using pragmatic literature searches of the available evidence. Sources included government reviews, strategies and commissioned reviews, papers from peer reviewed journals and grey literature.

2. Creation of a food poverty steering group:

Representatives from across Hertfordshire from Research, Education, Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector, Local Government and Health were invited to form a steering group. Steps involved gathering local intelligence from the stakeholders including using an online survey and focus groups to support understanding around service provision in Hertfordshire (see **Appendix A** for list of stakeholder organisations involved).

3. Quantitative analysis:

A range of data sets were analysed to understand associated factors with food poverty in Hertfordshire for example child poverty, housing tenure, homelessness, income etc. To understand food poverty risk in Hertfordshire, analysis was carried out by the University of Southampton, using the *Food and Economic Insecurity in Local Areas Mapping Tool*.ⁱⁱ There are two broad categories to define higher risk individuals: the type of household they live in and whether they are claiming benefits appropriate for their age group. Using an established method,⁸ the percentage of people in each Middle-Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs) that live in a higher-risk household was calculated:

- Age 0-64: those living in a household where the representative person works in a routine, semi-routine occupation, is long-term unemployed or is a student AND lives alone or has dependent children.
- Age 65 and over: single person household
- The second aspect is calculating the percentage in each of these two age categories claiming benefits. This was based on benefit claimant counts by MSOA from the DWP for the May 2020 quarter of data. For these calculations anyone age 65 and over claiming only state pension was excluded.

For all calculations the 2019 Mid-Year Population Estimates for MSOAs released by the ONS were used as denominators. Highest risk areas are those where the percentage of people either in a household type of high risk and claiming benefits is in the top quintile for Hertfordshire.

ⁱⁱ University of Southampton. Food, economic insecurity in local areas: my local map. <https://www.myllocalmap.org.uk/iaahealth/>

4. Qualitative analysis:

A formal collaboration was established between Hertfordshire County Council and the University of Hertfordshire to carry out qualitative research within Hertfordshire. The aim of this research was to assess the range of services and agencies operating across Hertfordshire that support households experiencing food poverty. The secondary aim was to explore Hertfordshire households' experience of accessing these support services and their experience of food poverty generally. To address these aims a mixed methods approach was undertaken with (1) households living in Hertfordshire; and (2) organisations providing support for households experiencing food poverty. Data collection was carried out from February – May 2021. Ethics approval was granted by the University of Hertfordshire.

A survey and telephone in-depth interviews were carried out with households living in Hertfordshire. Households were asked about their experience of accessing support services in Hertfordshire in the previous 12 months, including: how they found out about the services; barriers/facilitators to access; whether the service addressed their needs; and whether there was anything that they did well or could have done better. Those who had not received support from services were asked why and if they found an alternative to address their needs at the time. Households were also asked about their general food practices and experience of food poverty.

An online survey and remote focus groups were carried out with service providers (e.g. local authority, food banks, faith organisations, family centres) to examine the following: the role of these organisations in supporting those experiencing food poverty; the key barriers and facilitators their service experiences; what they perceived the local trends/drivers of food poverty are; the gaps in current provision across Hertfordshire; and their recommendations to improve service provision and reduce food poverty. A summary of the findings is presented later in this report. Further details about the methodology and findings can be found in the main report.⁹

5. Forming of recommendations:

The final stage involved developing the recommendations for action. The recommendations were informed by the available evidence and best practice. The Food Poverty Steering Group were invited to comment and shape these recommendations.

3. Background

3.1. What is poverty and food poverty?

Poverty is when a person's resources are below their minimum needs, including the need to take part in society.¹⁰ 'Individuals, families and groups can be said to be in poverty if they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged or approved in the societies to which they belong'.¹¹

In the UK, poverty is usually measured by government as household income less than 60% of median income, adjusted for their household size and type, this is known as relative poverty.¹² Other indications of poverty include a minimum income standard, in order to reach a minimum socially acceptable living standard. In order to reach the minimum income standard in 2020, a single person needed to earn £19,200 a year and a couple with two children each need to earn £18,700.¹³

It is well evidenced that being in poverty is bad for health. The social gradient of health means that health inequalities are starker for those in poverty, resulting in reduced life expectancy and developing ill health sooner in life.^{14/15} Food poverty is linked to access and financial constraints. However, food poverty is not an inevitable outcome of being in poverty and there are a range of factors that may increase an individual's risk of being in food poverty.

The terms food poverty and food insecurity are often used interchangeably. The definitions of food poverty are as below:

- **Food poverty**, is defined as 'the inability to consume an adequate quality or sufficient quantity of food in socially acceptable ways, or the uncertainty that one will be able to do so.'¹⁶
- **Food insecurity**, is limited access to food due to lack of money or other resources.¹⁷ Food insecurity can refer to the sustainability of the food supply chain at levels from the individual, nationally and globally.¹⁸
- **Food security**, exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.¹⁹

The needs assessment adopts the term '**food poverty**' referring to the inability of individuals to obtain food in socially acceptable ways (i.e. not long-term foodbank use) and the quality (health, food safety) and quantity (enough to avoid hunger, meet health and social needs) of this food.

Food poverty is a public health concern because of the impact on health, wellbeing, and health inequalities. Food poverty is a likely contributor to inequalities in cancer, diabetes and coronary heart disease due to poorer diet.²⁰

Currently in the UK, food poverty is not directly or routinely measured by Governments. This can create challenges in trying to assess food poverty in local populations. Foodbank use should not be used as the only indicator of food poverty because people may only seek food aid as a last resort²¹ and many more may be in food poverty than those who use foodbanks.²²

The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations have developed a tool for measuring the level of food insecurity experienced by people globally and applied to a continuous scale known as the Food Insecurity and Experience Scale (FEIS), as shown in Figure 1. ²³

Figure 1: Food Insecurity and Experience Scale

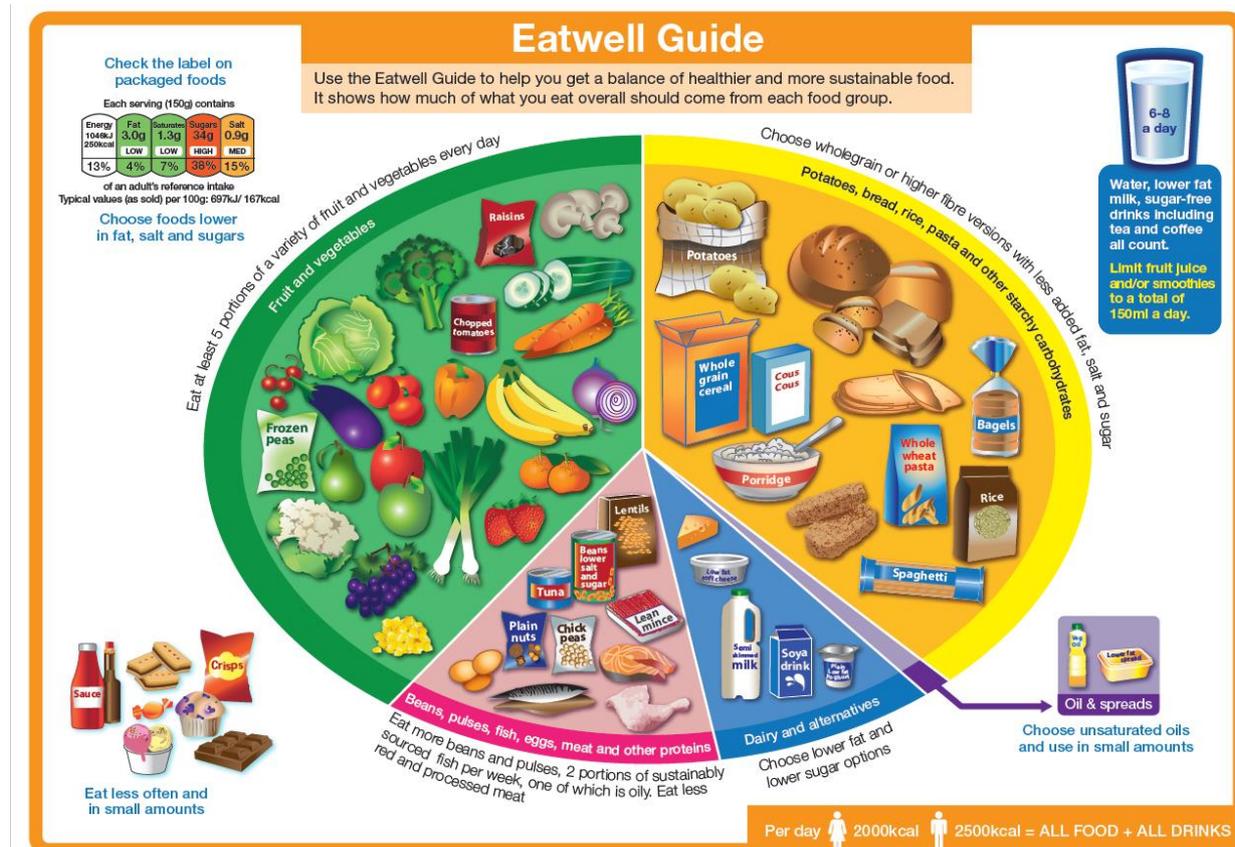


3.2. Eating a healthy diet in the UK

A healthy diet is one which works to promote health and reduce risk of ill health, it provides adequate energy and nutrients to prevent deficiency without promoting excess weight.

The Eatwell Guide is a policy tool used to define government recommendations on eating healthily and achieving a balanced diet. The guide is designed to apply to most people regardless of weight, dietary restrictions/ preferences or ethnic origin (note doesn't apply to children under 2). ²⁴

Figure 2: The Eatwell Guide



Source: Public Health England. The Eatwell Guide. 2016. Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide>

The cost of a typical diet that meets the Eatwell Guide is higher than the average UK household spends on food.²⁵ Recent data suggests that households in the lowest income quintile (quintile 1) would have to spend 76% of their disposable income (after housing costs) to meet the cost of the Eatwell Guide compared to 6% for those households in the highest income quintile (quintile 10; 2017-2018).²⁶ This leaves many people unable to meet the requirements of a healthy diet.

Socioeconomic differences, demonstrated by those on lower incomes having higher rates of obesity and chronic diseases, such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease (CVD) contributes to health inequalities.²⁷ Diet is a modifiable risk factor for such outcomes.^{28 29}

3.3. Covid-19 impact on the population

Covid-19 is an infectious viral disease in humans caused by the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2.

The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised health and social inequalities. Measures to control the spread of Covid-19, such as lockdown, social distancing and self-isolation, are impacting on food systems, household food practices and organisations supporting vulnerable people.³⁰

The impacts of the measures to control the spread of Covid-19 on the population in the UK include (but not limited to):

- **Increase in those claiming benefits** – from March 2020 to July 2020, the benefits claimant countⁱⁱⁱ increased by 46%.³¹
- **Fewer people in employment** - Office for National Statistics data showed that there were 220,000 fewer people in employment from April to June 2020 than there were from January to March 2020.³² People in part-time work, low paid work and the self-employed have been most effected.³³ Younger people (aged 16-24 years), those from BAME (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic) background, women and disabled workers have been experienced the worst economic impact.³⁴ Mothers are more likely to have quit or lost their job, or to have been furloughed, since the start of the lockdown. For example, compared to fathers, mothers are 1.5 times more likely to have lost or quit their job.³⁵
- **Furlough provided some protection against food poverty** - Individuals who were furloughed rather than made unemployed were somewhat protected from food poverty (18.5% of unemployed people, 10.2% of furloughed and 7.4% people who were still working reported experiencing food poverty between May and July 2020).³⁶
- **Increase in those eligible for Free School Meals** - 1.4 million students (approx. one in six) were eligible for means-tested free school meals (FSM) in January 2020, however by the end of April this had risen to 1.9 million children in primary and secondary school.³⁷ A report stated that half of children entitled to FSMs did not receive them in the first lockdown (in April 2020).³⁸

ⁱⁱⁱ The claimant count is a count of the number of people claiming benefits primarily because they are unemployed or eligible for unemployment-related benefit support on Universal Credit. It includes people who receive unemployment-related benefit support on Universal Credit and people who receive Jobseeker's Allowance. The data reported here are available from the Office of National Statistics. www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/uklabourmarket/august2020#claimant-count-experimental-statistics

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- **Increase in people using foodbanks** - the number of people who reported accessing food through a foodbank or charity increased from 7% in May 2020 to 10% in June 2020, remaining consistent into July 2020 (9%).³⁹ Younger people, those aged 16-24 years, were significantly more likely to access foodbanks, than adults above this age group.⁴⁰

Food poverty was an issue in the UK prior to Covid-19, however due to the measures in place to control the pandemic, has increased significantly. A report from the Food Foundation⁴¹ looking at the drivers of food poverty over the Covid-19 pandemic included:

- 55% not having enough money
- 31% social isolation
- 23% lack of supply (e.g. low stock of items in stores).

4. Drivers of food poverty

This section looks at the key drivers for food poverty, the leading factors affecting risk of food poverty, and demographic risk factors, individual factors which may increase risk of food poverty. Being in **poverty** or on a **low income** are the main drivers for food poverty.

4.1. Demographics

4.1.1. Sex

Evidence suggests that sex has a role in food poverty risk and that women are at greater risk than men. Women are more likely to live in poverty^{iv} than men (20% compared to 18%), with single women most at risk of poverty.⁴²

Budgeting in low-income families with children is often the responsibility of women and mothers may shield their families from poverty by going without food and other resources themselves.⁴³

Lone parent mothers are the most common type of lone parent accounting for 86% (in 2019) of this family type.⁴⁴ Lone parents have the highest poverty rate among working age households⁴⁵ and also more likely to experience food poverty compared to other household types (17% of lone parents versus 6% of households with two or more adults and no children under 16).⁴⁶

4.1.2. Age

Evidence suggests that age has a role in risk of poverty and subsequent food poverty. However, poverty and food poverty are issues not confined to one age group and can affect anyone at any stage in the life course.

Children are the age group most likely to be in poverty (after housing costs are accounted for) compared with other age groups. In 2018/19, 30% of children, 21% of working age adults and 16% of pension age adults were in relative poverty^v (after housing costs accounted for).⁴⁷

According to research by the Trussell Trust, younger people are more likely to report being in food poverty, with the highest rates among those aged 16-24 (16%) and lowest among those aged 65+ (2%).⁴⁸ There are a variety of reasons as to why younger people may be more likely to experience food poverty and these are mostly linked to low-incomes, for example:

- Young people are more likely to be in full time education therefore potentially relying on parents/carers to provide them with financial resource.
- More unemployment in young people.⁴⁹
- Negative economic impact of COVID-19 on younger age groups, for example the CV-Library reported a 60.3% reduction in graduate vacancies (January to July 2020) compared to the same period 2019⁵⁰ and reduced apprenticeship opportunities.⁵¹

^{iv} Where poverty is based on Department for Work and Pensions figures for households below 60% of contemporary median household income after housing costs, as part of their HBAI statistics series.

^v Relative poverty is a condition where household income is a certain percentage below median incomes. For example, the threshold for relative poverty could be set at 50% of median incomes (or 60%)

- Under-25s were more likely to be furloughed than any other age group. With more than half of eligible 16 to 24-year-olds placed on the furlough scheme in the first three months of lockdown, compared with one in four 45-year-olds.⁵²

Although evidence suggests there may be smaller numbers of older people experiencing food poverty compared to younger people, food poverty in this age group may be more hidden. Evidence suggests that older people, as well as experiencing financial constraints to food, may also have additional constraints to accessing food (e.g. shopping for food, preparing food) that younger people may not experience. A recent study in the UK identified there were various threats to food security specific to older adults including health related threats e.g. eyesight, mobility and food practice threats e.g. losing a partner who prepared meals or barriers to transport for shopping.⁵³ Research by the UK Malnutrition Task Group showed that older adults were experiencing access constraints that can lead to food poverty for example in challenges to shop for food, 18% of people aged 60–69 years and 38% of people aged over 70 have a mobility difficulty, and over 2 million people aged over 65 live with sight loss, making shopping challenging. They also found that in challenges to accessing food outlets, 11% of people aged over 65 have difficulty accessing a corner shop, 12% find it difficult to get to their local supermarket and 28% of rural households do not have access to a supermarket within 4 kilometres.⁵⁴

4.1.3. Ethnicity

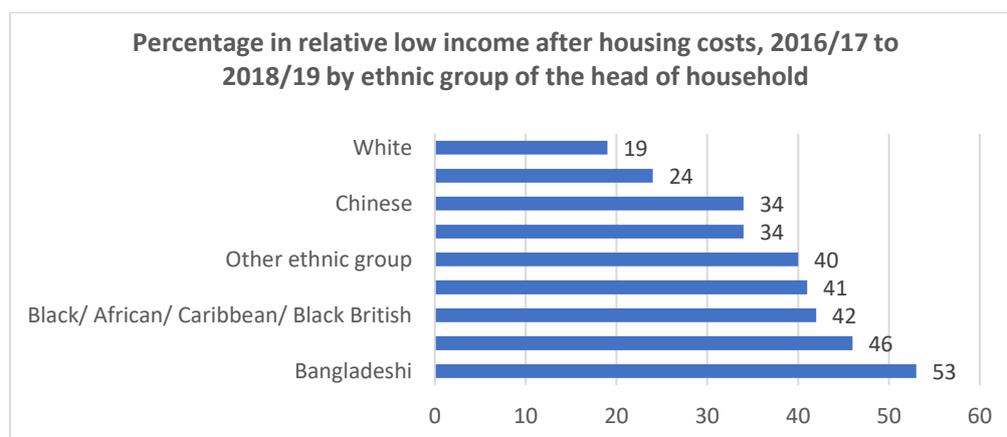
Whilst there is evidence for a link between ethnic group and poverty, there is limited evidence to suggest a link between food poverty and ethnicity. However, some recent evidence does suggest that black and minority ethnic (BAME) groups were more likely to experience food poverty during the Covid-19 pandemic.⁵⁵

In 2019, people from all ethnic minority groups except Indian, Chinese, White Irish and White Other groups were more likely than White British people to live in the most overall deprived 10% of neighbourhoods in England.⁵⁶

Households from Pakistani or Bangladeshi ethnic groups have higher rates of poverty than other ethnic groups.⁵⁷ Children living in households where the head of the household was from the Pakistani ethnic group and Bangladeshi ethnic group are the ethnic groups most likely to be in poverty after housing costs. Children living in households where the head of the household^{vi} was from a Black ethnic group also had a greater risk of being in poverty compared to white ethnic groups.⁵⁸

^{vi} head of the household is the person in the house who is responsible for making decisions and earning money.

Figure 3: Percentage of people in relative low income, 2016/17 to 2018/19 by ethnic group of the head of household



Source: Department of Work and Pensions Households Below Average Income, Table 3.5db

Figure 3 above shows the percentage of people in relative low-income by ethnic group. White ethnic groups experience the lowest levels of relative low-income. Evidence suggest that differences in age, family type and family work status accounted for around half of the ‘excess’ income poverty rates suffered by minority ethnic groups compared with White British people.⁵⁹

The evidence around the effect of ethnicity and food poverty is still developing. A study in the UK (Bradford) in 2017 found that food poverty was more likely among White British women than Pakistani women⁶⁰ suggesting that there may be differences in the mitigating factors against food poverty between ethnic groups regardless of socioeconomic status.

A more recent study in 2020 in the UK, found that BAME adults were twice as likely to experience food poverty compared to White British adults over the COVID-19 pandemic period. In January 2021, 20% of BAME households had experienced food poverty in the past 6 months compared with 9% of White British households.⁶¹

4.2. Income and worklessness

4.2.1. Poverty and Low-income

The association between poverty and subsequent food poverty is well established.⁶² However, the terms poverty and food poverty should not be used interchangeably, due to the possibility for someone to be regarded as in poverty but not be experiencing food poverty due mitigating factors (e.g. family support or networks, benefits allowance).

The main measure used in the UK for measuring relative poverty is *low income as defined by any household earning less than 60% of the national median pay*.^{vii} The relative poverty rate in 2018/19 was 22% (1 in 5 people living in poverty), levels have fluctuated little since the early 2000s.⁶³

Being in poverty or on a low-income can:

^{vii} Median household disposable income in the UK was £29,600 in financial year ending (FYE) 2019, based on estimates from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Living Costs and Food Survey.

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- Affect affordability to buy food, referring to financial access to food: the ability to pay for a nutritionally adequate diet.⁶⁴ When funds run short spending on food is often what gets cut first.⁶⁵
- Result in proportionally more of income spent on food and fuel, sectors where prices have increased faster than overall inflation.⁶⁶
- Can cause or compound issues such as a lack of equipment to cook or store food or may not have the cooking skills.⁶⁷
- Those on low income have lower levels of car ownership⁶⁸ which may restrict where they can purchase foods, supermarkets are often more affordable than smaller convenience stores.⁶⁹

4.2.2. Worklessness

Workless households are defined as households where no one aged 16 years or over is in employment. These members may be unemployed or economically inactive. Economically inactive members may be unable to work because of family commitments (e.g. childcare), retirement or study, or due to long-term sickness or disability. People living in workless families are more likely to be in poverty than people living in families where at least one person works.⁷⁰ In 2018–19, absolute poverty among non-pensioners in workless households was 56% (62%), compared with 32% (36%) among non-pensioners in households with one worker and 9% (10%) among those in households with at least two workers.⁷¹

4.3. Housing tenure, fuel poverty and homelessness

4.3.1. Housing tenure

Housing tenure can be associated with poverty in the UK. Type of housing and housing quality is a key determinant for health, poor housing is associated with increased risk of cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases, depression and anxiety.⁷²

Poverty and low-income prevent people from accessing potential housing options for example buyer mortgaged properties. Those who are socially renting or privately are more likely to be in poverty (based on relative low income) than those who are own their homes or have a mortgage.⁷³ Data published in 2019 showed that the proportion of households on relative low income by tenure is as follows:

- 43% of social rented
- 37% of private rented
- 15% in owned outright
- 10% in buyer mortgaged households⁷⁴

Evidence suggests that households in the private and rented sectors are more likely to be users of foodbanks than households who own or mortgage their homes.⁷⁵ Evidence shows that in October 2020, 37% of social renters who had seen their income drop since March had reduced spending on food for the family, with 8% of those with children specifically having to cut back on food for their children.⁷⁶

4.3.2. Homelessness

Homelessness in the UK is often defined in two ways as shown below:⁷⁷

1. statutorily homeless, i.e. those households which meet specific criteria of priority need set out in legislation, and to whom a homelessness duty has been accepted by a local authority. These households are rarely homeless in the literal sense of being without a roof over their heads but are more likely to be threatened with the loss of, or are unable to continue with, their current accommodation.
2. those who are rough sleeping, ie people sleeping in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments) or in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or 'bashes').

Homelessness is associated with severe poverty and is a social determinant of health. It can be associated with adverse health, education and social outcomes, particularly for children. Mortality rates are substantially higher in those who are homeless compared to the rest of the population.⁷⁸ Homeless households are at greater risk for food poverty and are a group likely to access and use foodbanks. A study found that nearly 18% of those accessing foodbanks are homeless.⁷⁹

Local Authorities have a duty to house people who make a homeless application and fall under the criteria under the Homelessness Act 2002. Temporary accommodation is often allocated to people in the first instance while more suitable and longer term accommodation is sought. This may be years due to the housing shortage in England.⁸⁰

People living within temporary housing may face additional challenges that create barriers to around food for example:

- some temporary housing may not have any cooking facilities i.e. hotel rooms
- shared facilities for cooking, inadequate storage for food, inadequate cooking equipment and shared fridges may prevent food preparation and cooking

Requirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic to place in temporary accommodation those homeless may have had negative consequences for some. As suggested by a Shelter report in 2020, people placed in unfit temporary accommodation, had challenges in preparing and eating food, some reported they had lost weight, or suffered health problems as a result. The main issues were the lack of safe kitchen facilities, and lack of storage.⁸¹

4.3.3. Fuel poverty

Fuel poverty is defined as households that must spend a high proportion of their household income to keep their home at a reasonable temperature. England currently uses the 'Low Income High Costs' (LIHC) definition of fuel poverty. Under this definition, a household is fuel poor if:

- the amount they would need to spend to keep their home at "an adequate standard of warmth" is above the national median level
- and if they spent that amount, their leftover income would be below the official poverty line⁸²

Fuel poverty drivers include a household's income, their fuel costs, and their energy consumption (which in turn can be affected by the energy efficiency of the dwelling).⁸³ These drivers are strongly

linked to cold homes and living in cold homes is associated with poor health outcomes and an increased risk of morbidity and mortality for all age groups.⁸⁴

Being in poverty may lead to both food and fuel scarcity. Cost of fuel (e.g. gas and electric) has been highlighted as a deterrent for cooking.⁸⁵ Energy can cost more if on a pre-payment meter, which is more common amongst those in poverty, this is known as a poverty premium (when low-income households pay more for essential goods and services).⁸⁶ In a Government Select Committee Review, Exeter Foodbank stated that many of their clients have been cut off from their energy supply: “We frequently see people, particularly those on energy meters, whose gas/electricity supply has been cut off entirely.”⁸⁷

4.4. Disabilities and long-term ill-health

Disability as described by the Equality Act 2010 is: *‘a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.*

Evidence shows a link between both poverty and food poverty for with those living with disability or long-term health conditions. Households with one or more person with a disability are more likely to be in poverty than those who do not have anyone in the household with a disability.^{88/89} Some of the reasons for this include:

- disabled people face higher costs of living:⁹⁰ on average, £583 per month (for expenses related to their impairment or condition) and one in five has costs of more than £1,000 per month.⁹¹
- differences in educational attainment: 19% of disabled adults have a degree or above, compared with 35% of non-disabled adults which impacts on earning potential⁹²
- disability, ill-health and society’s response to these conditions often prevent people from working⁹³
- disabled people tend to earn less than their non-disabled counterparts even if they have the same qualification levels⁹⁴
- disabled workers have been one of the groups most negatively economically impacted by the covid-19 pandemic⁹⁵

Households with members living with a disability or long-term health conditions are at greater risk for food poverty. The Trussell Trust in 2019, identified that nearly 75% of foodbank users reported at least one health issue in their household, 54% of which were mental health problems.⁹⁶ It was estimated in 2017 that households with a disability are over-represented by about three times amongst foodbank households (after accounting for economic status).⁹⁷ In 2021, the Food Foundation reported at the start of the pandemic, adults identifying as being limited a lot by health problems or a disability were three times more likely to be food insecure than those without. These inequalities have increased further and in January 2021, they were five times higher.⁹⁸

4.5. Household composition

Household composition^{viii} (e.g. the make-up of a household) can affect household income potential. Households with children face higher risks of poverty because of the extra costs incurred, e.g. food and childcare, and because of the effect on parents' working hours, e.g. parents may work reduced hours or not be able to work to enable them to care for young children. There is strong evidence for the link between family composition and food poverty.

17% of adults with dependent children ("working-age parents") were in relative low income, before housing costs, compared to 14% of working age adults without dependent children. After housing costs, the poverty rate was higher for working-age parents at 25%, compared to 19% for working-age adults without dependent children.⁹⁹

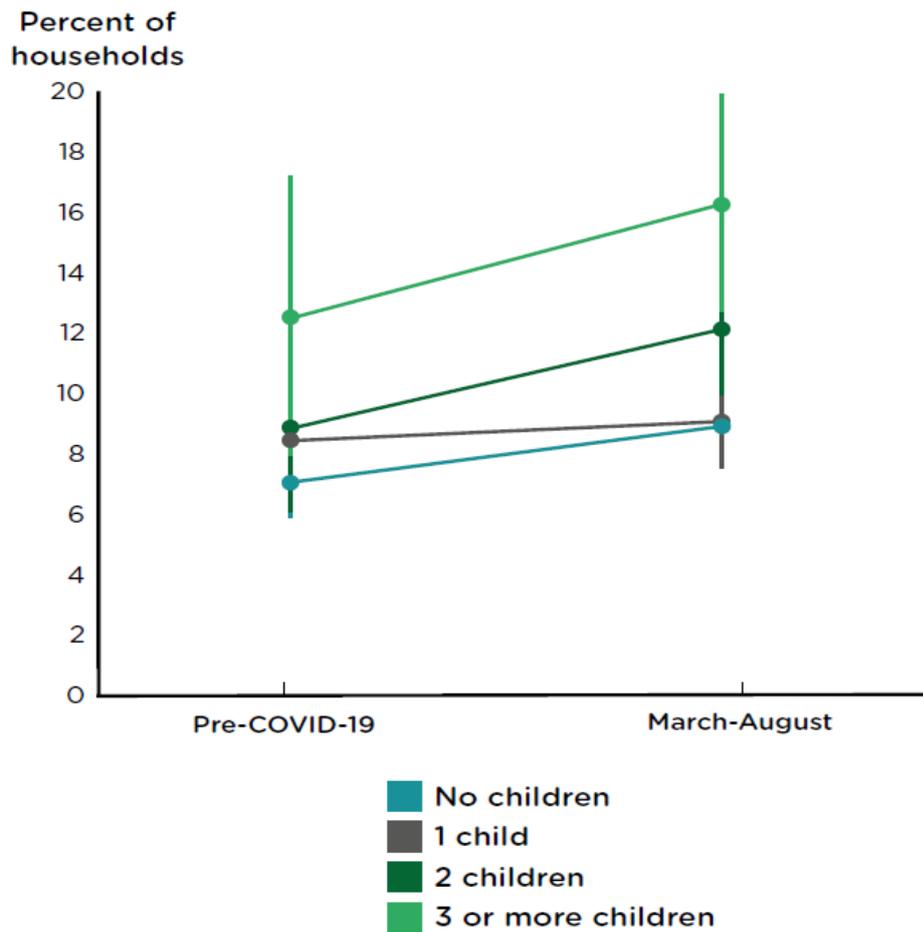
A Food Foundation survey in 2020 of 2,309 adults in the UK found that 14% of adults with dependent children reported experiencing moderate or severe food poverty in the period March to September 2020.¹⁰⁰ This compares to pre-COVID-19 levels of 11.5% amongst households with children.

Lone parents are more likely to experience poverty than those in a couple. Lone parents are more likely to be in poverty due to the lack of an additional earner, low rates of maintenance payments, gender inequality in employment and pay, and childcare costs. Childcare and housing are two of the costs that take the biggest toll on families' budgets.¹⁰¹ 20% of children in lone parent families were in persistent low income before housing costs 36% after housing costs.¹⁰²

As shown in Figure 4 below, a report by the Food Foundation showed that the proportion of households in food poverty has increased in the period March-August 2020 compared to pre-COVID-19, rising from 12-16% overall. The biggest rise is seen in those with 3 or more children.¹⁰³

^{viii} One person living alone, or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room or sitting room or dining area. This excludes people living in communal establishments.

Figure 4: Food insecurity in UK households by number



Source: Graph from *Build Back Fairer: The covid-19 Marmot Review*. Available from: <https://www.health.org.uk/publications/build-back-fairer-the-covid-19-marmot-review>. Notes: Analysis comparing 12-month food insecurity data for 2016 to 2018 to 6-month food insecurity data from YouPoll collected at the end of August, 2020. Analyses are adjusted for age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, region, and employment status.¹⁰⁴

5. Health and social impacts of food poverty

This section considers the evidence around health and social impacts to those affected by food poverty. Food poverty can be considered both a cause and consequence of ill-health.¹⁰⁵ The impact of food poverty both directly and indirectly worsens health across all age groups and can negatively affect social development of children and young people.

The health impacts of food poverty may include:

- poorer physical health
- de-prioritisation of self-care and health promoting behaviours
- poorer dietary related health and malnutrition including being overweight, obese or underweight
- poorer mental health

The social impacts of food poverty may include:

- social and behavioural problems in children
- lower levels educational attainment in children and young people
- social exclusion, bullying and stigma
- social isolation leading to malnutrition

5.1. Children's physical and social development

Young children in persistent food poverty may have poorer physical and mental health, social development and educational attainment.

Children experiencing food poverty are at increased risk of hospitalisation, poorer physical health, iron deficiency, social and behaviour problems (such as hyperactivity/inattention), and poorer mental health.^{106/107/108} Children in England from the most deprived households were shorter at age 10 than those in the least deprived households which may indicate impaired growth.¹⁰⁹

Evidence shows lower academic performance in children and young people experiencing food poverty. Food poverty predicted poorer academic performance for girls and boys, in reading and mathematics, in children aged 5-6 years (in a study in the USA). There was also a greater decline in social skills for boys, and greater weight and BMI gains for girls.¹¹⁰

Children who are hungry at school struggle to concentrate, perform poorly¹¹¹ and have worse attendance records.¹¹² Low/middle socio-economic status (SES)^{ix} adolescents who rarely consume breakfast were significantly less likely to achieve higher Mathematics grades compared to low/middle SES adolescents who frequently consumed breakfast.¹¹³ Suggesting that regardless of SES, consumption of an adequate diet is a key determinant in educational attainment.

^{ix} *Socio-economic status (SES), a measure of an individual's or family's social position relative to others, in the UK this is usually based on household employment.*

5.2. Diet related health

5.2.1. Diet and malnutrition

Evidence suggests that lower income households, will prioritise purchasing food that will avoid hunger and not necessarily the nutritional value of food.¹¹⁴ The cost of eating a healthy balanced diet aligned to the National Eatwell Guide is out of reach for many households on low income.^{115 116}

In 2019, 10.7% of all UK deaths could be attributed to dietary risk factors such as high fasting plasma glucose (associated with Type 2 Diabetes), high body mass index and low consumption of fibre, fruit and vegetables.¹¹⁷ Type 2 diabetes is estimated to be 40% more prevalent in people in the most deprived quintile than in the least deprived.¹¹⁸ Two-thirds of men and women on low-income had cholesterol levels high enough to be associated with increased risk of cardiovascular disease.¹¹⁹

It is estimated that fewer than one in 1000 people in the UK meet all nine of the Eatwell Guide dietary recommendations.¹²⁰ The National Diet and Nutrition Survey evidenced that total fruit and vegetable intake increases with household income for people of all ages and sexes across years 2008/09 to 2016/17.¹²¹ Adherence to the recommendation on fruit and vegetable intake is independently associated with reduction in total mortality risk compared with those who do not meet the recommendations for “5 a day”¹²², and is central to meeting dietary requirements for fibre and micronutrients.

Malnutrition refers to deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in a person’s intake of energy and/or nutrients.¹²³ Malnutrition, in all forms, is a leading cause of poor health.¹²⁴ The different types of malnutrition are as follows:

- Overweight and obesity - defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that may impair health often indicated by body mass index (BMI)¹²⁵
- Undernutrition - defined as insufficient intake of energy and nutrients to meet an individual's needs to maintain good health.¹²⁶
- Nutrient imbalances - suboptimal nutritional status caused by a lack of intake, absorption or use of one or more vitamins or minerals.

5.2.2. Overweight and obesity

Excess body weight is known to increase the risk of a range of chronic diseases including type 2 diabetes, many cancers, liver disease and cardiovascular diseases.¹²⁷ In 2018/19, there were 11,117 hospital admissions with a primary diagnosis of obesity.¹²⁸

There is a strong income gradient associated with overweight and obesity in children, young people and adults in the UK: the more deprived population groups have greater prevalence of overweight and obesity.¹²⁹ 35% of men and 37% of women living in the most deprived areas were obese compared with 20% of men and 21% of women in the least deprived areas.¹³⁰ Food poverty can be associated with excess weight, and even experiencing food poverty occasionally can lead to weight gain.^{131/132/133} The factors that may be involved in this association include:

- the cost of food to meet government dietary guidelines is unaffordable for low income households^{134/135}
- micronutrient poor foods are frequently cheapest whilst higher in calories¹³⁶

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- households on low incomes are more likely to purchase less healthy foods¹³⁷
- there is a greater density of takeaways in more deprived areas¹³⁸

The combined effect of economic factors of being in poverty and the environmental factors of living in a deprived area influence diet and behaviour. As an example, adolescents, particularly girls, living in poverty are more likely to be overweight and obese and more frequently consume sugar-sweetened drinks and fast food and less frequently consume fruit and vegetables.¹³⁹

5.2.3. Undernutrition

Undernutrition can have substantial consequences for health across all stages of the life course. In pregnancy and in early childhood, periods of rapid growth and development occur, nutrient imbalances at this stage can have irreversible effects and long-term health consequences including chronic diseases in adulthood (e.g. higher BMI, type 2 diabetes, some cancers).¹⁴⁰

Older adults above 65 years of age are a group at risk of undernutrition. An estimated one in ten, older people are malnourished or at risk of malnutrition (undernutrition), and older people are disproportionately represented in malnourished groups.¹⁴¹ Data on undernutrition and poverty within the UK is limited, but a hospital based study found those admitted to hospital were more likely to be malnourished on admission if living in more deprived areas as measured by Index of Multiple Deprivation.¹⁴² It is estimated that 93% of malnourished people are living in the community (i.e. not in a hospital or care home).¹⁴³

Despite high levels of overweight and obesity indicating adequate or excess caloric intake, there is evidence of inadequate consumptions of micronutrients (e.g. vitamins and minerals) amongst various population groups.¹⁴⁴ Low income restricts ability to buy foods rich in protective nutrients and can also limit the access to food retailers where healthy food is most affordable.¹⁴⁵

5.3. Mental health

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. Mental health has a significant role in management and experience of stress, relationships, and decision making. People can experience issues with their mental health at any stage in their life, and conditions such as depression, anxiety, stress disorders may present in childhood and adolescence, and continue throughout adulthood.¹⁴⁶

Being in poverty increases the risk of mental health problems and can be both a causal factor and a consequence of mental ill health.¹⁴⁷ Research shows that low-income groups have higher rates of mental health conditions, particularly severe and long-term problems, compared to high-income groups.¹⁴⁸ In children, there is a threefold difference in prevalence of any mental disorder between rich and poor households.¹⁴⁹ People experiencing challenges and issues relating to employment or finances, with no previous history of mental health problems, may develop them as a consequence of having to cope with the ongoing stress of job insecurity.¹⁵⁰

Pregnant and postnatal women experiencing food poverty has been linked to higher rates of pre-natal and post-natal depression.¹⁵¹ Pregnancy and breastfeeding are nutritionally demanding and can lead to or worsen existing nutritional deficiencies.¹⁵² Studies suggest a lack of adequate recovery, or supplementation, of key nutrients post-partum may be linked to an increase in

depressive symptoms.¹⁵³ Maternal and early postnatal nutrition may also have an effect on behavioural and emotional problems in children.¹⁵⁴

5.4. Social exclusion and health

Food is not just about avoiding hunger and maintaining health, it is connected to our social status and cultural wellbeing. Food and eating practices are influenced by our social position.¹⁵⁵ Evidence from studies in the UK suggest that food poverty can have direct and indirect impacts on social health and wellbeing at all ages. For example, those affected by food poverty may experience the following:

- Parents may choose not to participate or host social occasions¹⁵⁶
- Young people may choose not to take part in usual activities for their age group such as after school or weekend activities involving food¹⁵⁷
- Children on free school meals may experience exclusion, shame and stigma¹⁵⁸
- Children especially in secondary school may fear being bullied or teased due to free school meals and as result not take up the offer¹⁵⁹
- In older people social isolation and loneliness can lead to malnourishment (undernutrition)¹⁶⁰
- Stigma around food aid (e.g. using foodbanks or accessing free school meals) may prevent people from accessing the support they require¹⁶¹

6. The Food environment and food poverty

6.1. What is the food environment and how is it linked to food poverty?

The food environment refers to the availability, affordability, convenience, and desirability of food.¹⁶² Swinburn in 2014, defines food environments as “the collective physical, economic, policy and socio-cultural surroundings, opportunities and conditions that influence people’s food and beverage choices and nutritional status. These include things as such as food composition, food labelling, food promotion, food prices, food provision in schools and other settings, food availability and trade policies affecting food availability, price and quality.”¹⁶³

The food environment is recognised as one of the primary factors leading to excess weight in populations.¹⁶⁴ Links have been made between obesity and poor diet as a result of deprivation, highlighting the increased prevalence of fast food outlets and lack of healthy food options in deprived areas, making unhealthy foods the most convenient choice for residents.^{165/166}

Areas with limited or no healthy food options are sometimes referred to as ‘food deserts’. A ‘food desert’ is an area with limited availability of healthy food.¹⁶⁷ How a food desert affects the people living there depends on a wide range of factors such as the characteristics of the individuals (incomes, access to a car, use of online groceries and disability status) and access to public transport.

The food environment may compound factors related to food poverty for example:

- Households in more deprived areas and on low-income are the hardest hit by food price fluctuations¹⁶⁸
- Limited retailers of healthy and affordable food in areas of higher deprivation¹⁶⁹
- Limited ability to access/ travel to healthy food retailers - e.g. too far to walk, expensive or inadequate public transport¹⁷⁰
- Prevalence and low cost of fast food in local area - making it a convenient and inexpensive choice^{171/172}

6.2. Supermarkets and stores

Supermarkets are often the most affordable avenue for buying food.¹⁷³ Access to supermarkets may be a factor in enabling healthier food purchasing as they generally offer a wide range of products at a different price points.¹⁷⁴ Evidence suggests that supermarket presence is not associated with area-level deprivation, from studies in both rural¹⁷⁵ and urban areas¹⁷⁶. However, presence alone is not the only factor in accessing supermarkets, transport plays an important role, and larger supermarkets are often designed around the car user. Lowest income households have higher levels of non-car ownership.¹⁷⁷ According to research:

- Approximately 70% of the population can access up to three or more food stores within 15 minutes by public transport.¹⁷⁸
- Over 6% of the population (roughly 3.34 million) cannot reach any food stores within 15 minutes, and 10% can reach only one food store within this journey time and this is marginally worse in more rural areas.¹⁷⁹
- 28% of rural households do not have access to a supermarket within 4 kilometres.¹⁸⁰

Supermarkets in Hertfordshire

Analysis by Highways and Transport in Hertfordshire County Council of supermarket provision in Hertfordshire showed that there was not a statistically significant (at 95% confidence) difference in journey time between indices of deprivation in Hertfordshire to all supermarkets in the county. See **Appendix C** for analysis.

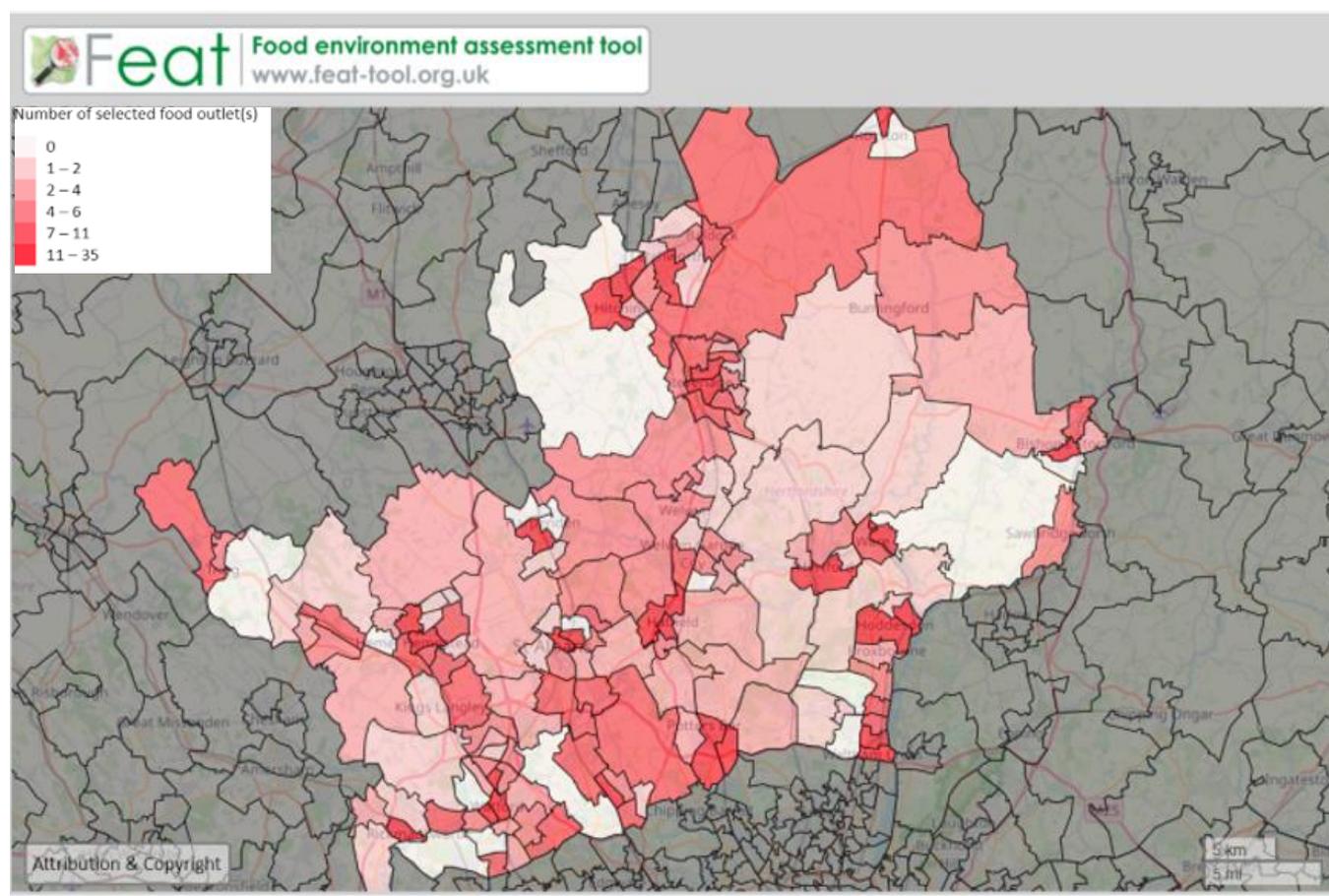
6.3. Takeaways and unhealthy food

Evidence demonstrates greater proliferation of takeaways, or fast food outlets, in deprived areas.¹⁸¹ Whilst some fast food takeaways may provide healthier options, often the food served is of large portion size, energy dense (high in calories) and sold at a low prices.¹⁸² Studies have modelled the impact of this on health as demonstrated in the association of greater odds of obesity (OR = 2.43, 95% CI: 2.09, 2.84), with lowest income and higher volume of fast-food outlets in local environment.¹⁸³ This presents a double burden of low income and unhealthy neighbourhood food environment contributing to health inequalities.

Takeaways in Hertfordshire

As of June 2018, Hertfordshire contained 3971 food outlets, 977 of which were classed as takeaways (based on class use A5 Hot food takeaways for the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises). Watford had the most takeaways at 1.16 per 1,000 people (a total of 105), Stevenage had 1.12 per 1,000 people (a total of 94), whilst Three Rivers had the fewest 0.69 per 1,000 people (a total of 60).

Figure 5: Takeaway density by MSOA in Hertfordshire, June 2018



Source: FEAT tool. Available from: www.feat-tool.org.uk

Figure 5 above demonstrates the density of takeaways across Hertfordshire by MSOA. Across the middle super output area (MSOA)^x boundaries, the average number of takeaways in each is 6.4. The median number is 4. For England, the average number of takeaways across all MSOA boundaries is 8.8 and the median is 6.

6.4. Community growing schemes and allotments

Home grown/produced food may include the use of community allotments, private allotments, growing in private garden spaces and animal rearing such as keeping chickens. Self-producing food in England is not common practice, in 2018/19, only 3% of fresh fruit and vegetables entering the household came from free sources, mainly gardens and allotments, this is unchanged from 2017/18.¹⁸⁴ The growing of fresh produce can have a number of benefits to health such as improving dietary health,¹⁸⁵ including increasing consumption of fruit and vegetables,^{186/187} providing a form of outdoor physical activity,^{188 /189} and improving mental health and wellbeing.¹⁹⁰

^x A Middle Layer Super Output Area (MSOA) is a geographic area and designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales.

Community growing schemes, sometimes referred to as community growing hubs, are common in the UK. Whilst community growing schemes are unlikely to alleviate food poverty, as self-grown produce requires intensive resource (time, money, space and effort), there are a range of health and social benefits including transfer of skills.¹⁹¹ For example, building of skills and knowledge around food growing; teaching school children about nutrition and the environment¹⁹²; improving mental health^{193/194/195}; reducing social isolation (particularly in older age)¹⁹⁶; and improving physical health through providing a form of exercise¹⁹⁷. Community garden projects in disadvantaged neighbourhoods can be important drivers of social capital in urban spaces.¹⁹⁸ For example in Luton, the “Groundwork Community Food Growing Gardens”, are schemes as part of their Food Poverty Action Plan, which involve the local community in growing fresh food, some of the produce is provided to the Luton foodbanks to complement their provision.¹⁹⁹

Allotments in Hertfordshire

In Hertfordshire, the District and Borough Councils are responsible for the provision of community allotments, with some the responsibility of Parish councils. Many community allotments have waiting lists and to use one of the allotments comes at an annual fee which varies depending on size and location with concessions available usually for those over the age of 60, unemployed, receiving disability benefit or income support, or for full-time students over 18 years. Watford Borough Council have an Allotment Strategy (2020-25) which aims to provide good quality allotment stock to its residents.²⁰⁰

6.5. Sustainability and food

Sustainability of the food systems that we operate and access, and sustainability of the diets we consume, are system factors intertwined with population health. Whilst sustainability and food poverty may not be linked in a direct way, both issues have similar links to health (e.g. diet), behaviour (e.g. consumption, food waste) and the economy (e.g. price fluctuations of food affecting those on low income). In 2019, a Lancet paper stated that: “Malnutrition in all its forms, including obesity, undernutrition, and other dietary risks, is the leading cause of poor health globally. In the near future, the health effects of climate change will considerably compound these health challenges.”²⁰¹

The Marmot Review in 2010 discussed the interrelationship between health inequalities and sustainability making the recommendation to improve food environments in local areas across the social gradient.

In the Hidden Cost of UK Food report by the Sustainable Food Trust, it was estimated that for every pound spent on food in the UK there is an un-costed 97 pence worth of harm being done to the system.²⁰² Suggesting that the true cost of our food is almost twice what we pay for it at the till. These costs include: natural capital degradation; biodiversity loss; production-related ill-health; **diet-related disease**; imported food; farm support payments and regulation and research.

There are many charities across the UK which aim to redirect surplus food that would otherwise go to waste and by doing so also address hunger. For example, the Charity Gratitude in Hertsmere (see **Appendix B**).

7. Population at risk for food poverty in Hertfordshire

This section considers the populations at risk for food poverty in Hertfordshire. As outlined in Section 4 (drivers of food poverty), the following groups are at most risk of food poverty:

- younger people
- people on low-income
- children in low-income families
- single parent households, especially female single parents
- people who rent their home, especially social renters, and those who are homeless
- people with disabilities and long-term health conditions
- newer evidence suggesting black and minority ethnic groups

7.1. Food poverty risk in Hertfordshire

Using methodology from a UK study,²⁰³ see methods **Section 2**, the below measures were employed to identify populations at risk for food poverty. These measures include:

- Occupation of Household (representative person is in routine, semi-routine work on long term unemployed, or a full-time student)
- Household composition (either a single adult household or where there are dependent children)
- Count of people claiming benefits (job seekers allowance, employment and support allowance, pension credit)

Out of 153 Middle-Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs) in Hertfordshire, there are 16 MSOAs where the populations are in the top quintile for estimated household risk as well as the percentage of benefits claimants for the entire population. This includes a population of just over 123,000, or 10.3% of Hertfordshire's population predicted to be at higher risk of food poverty. In comparison, for all of England the same calculation identifies 8,898,344 people and represents 15.8% of the population.^{xi}

The greatest need in Hertfordshire appears to be concentrated in **Stevenage, Broxbourne, Watford**, however there are pockets in all parts of the Hertfordshire county which have need based on the food poverty risk profile, IMD averages, and child poverty indices. There is greater area level deprivation in Stevenage, Broxbourne and Watford. East Herts and St. Albans experience the least area level deprivation however do still have areas (lower-super output areas) within the top 10% most deprived.

Stevenage has double the proportion of lone-parent households, a high-risk group for food poverty, at almost 10% compared to households in St. Albans at just 5%. Proportion of socially rented households is highest in Stevenage (28%), Welwyn Hatfield (27%) and Dacorum (22%) another group at higher risk for food poverty.

^{xi} A note about the data - these are the populations who are at highest risk but may not experience food poverty. Likewise, those who are in food poverty but not claiming benefits or are in households which are newly unemployed may be missed. All the household 'type' data are drawn from the 2011 Census for the proportions and applied to newer population counts, but if more households are now low income than in 2011 it may underestimate.

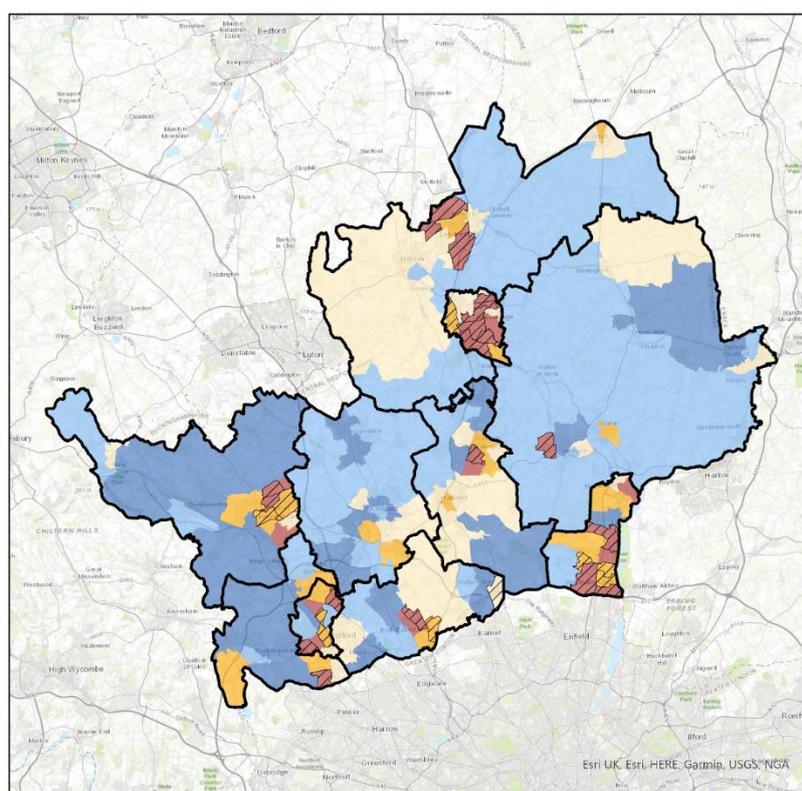
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There are inequalities in income across the county, you are more likely to earn more money if you live in North Herts or East Herts than if you live in Stevenage. You are more likely to be claiming Universal Credit if you live in Watford than if you live in St. Albans.

Households in fuel poverty is highest in Watford, Welwyn Hatfield and North Hertfordshire. Levels of homelessness are significantly higher in Broxbourne. Broxbourne also has a statistically higher level of those in temporary accommodation.

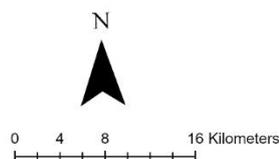
These findings suggest food poverty and the results of being in food poverty (e.g. poorer health, food and diet) varies depending where you live in Hertfordshire and your personal circumstances. Targeted action may therefore be required to address inequalities in health and income.

Figure 6: Map of working age population (below 65) at risk for food poverty, Hertfordshire



Data from 2011 Census, 2020 DWP, 2020 OS, 2019 ONS
 High risk includes low income households with dependent children or single adults on low incomes. Benefits data are from the Working Age Claimant Group (May 2020).

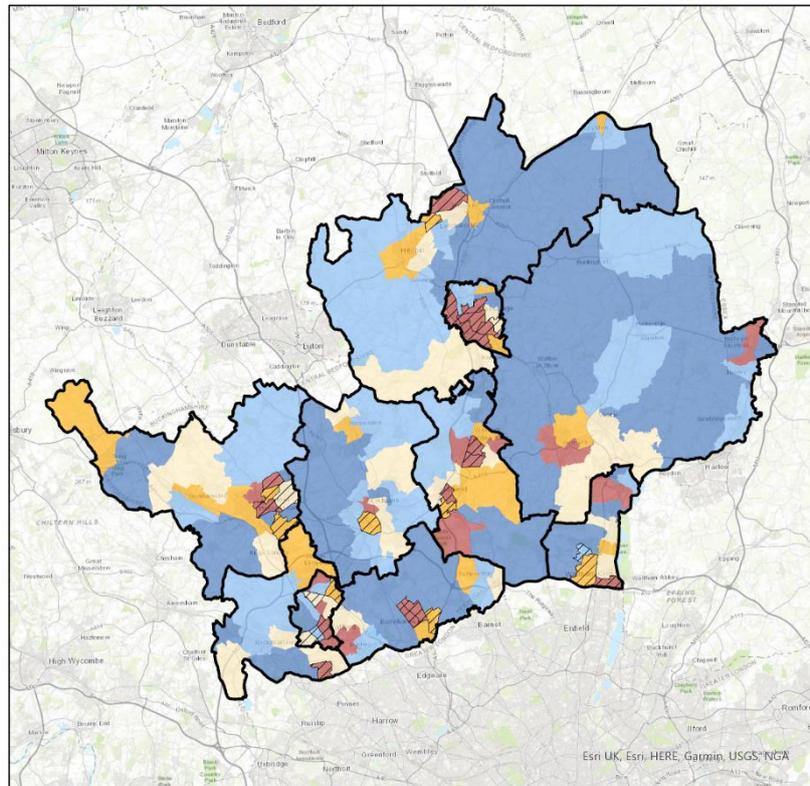
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The map above in Figure 6, shows the MSOAs containing the highest risk for food poverty are those between 14.9% to 23.6% of the population at risk. The districts with highest percent of at-risk population (under 65s years) for food poverty include **Stevenage**, **Watford** and **Broxbourne** (as indicated by the areas in red with diagonal lines). However, 9 out of 10 Hertfordshire districts (excluding St Albans) have MSOAs with populations at the highest risk.

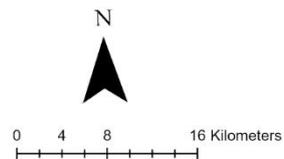
Figure 7: Map of pension age (over 65 years) population at risk for food poverty Hertfordshire



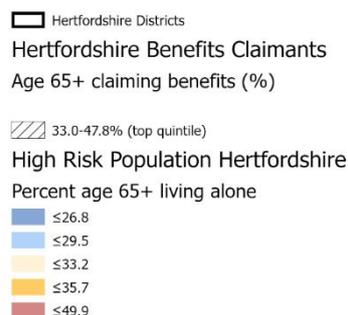
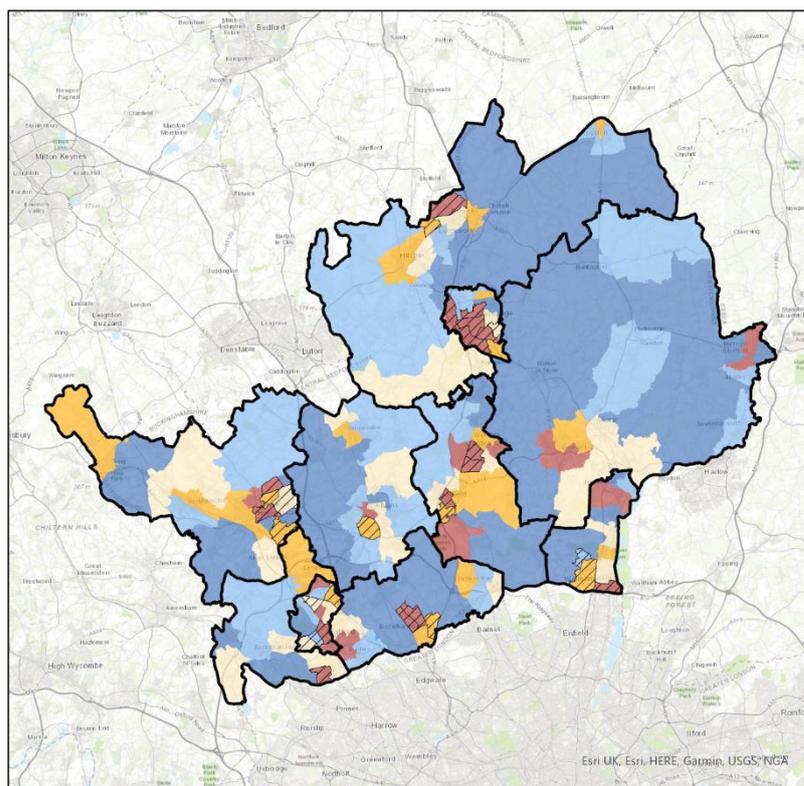
 Hertfordshire Districts
Hertfordshire Benefits Claimants
 Age 65+ claiming benefits (%)
 33.0-47.8% (top quintile)
High Risk Population Hertfordshire
 Percent age 65+ living alone
 ≤26.8
 ≤29.5
 ≤33.2
 ≤35.7
 ≤49.9

Data from 2011 Census, 2019 ONS, 2020 DWP. High risk in this age group includes those age 65 years and over who live alone. Benefits data are from DWP May 2020 Pension Age Claimant Group and excludes those claiming State Pension only.

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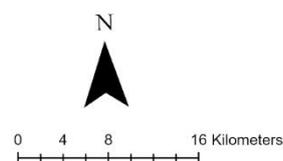


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Data from 2011 Census, 2019 ONS, 2020 DWP. High risk in this age group includes those age 65 years and over who live alone. Benefits data are from DWP May 2020 Pension Age Claimant Group and excludes those claiming State Pension only.

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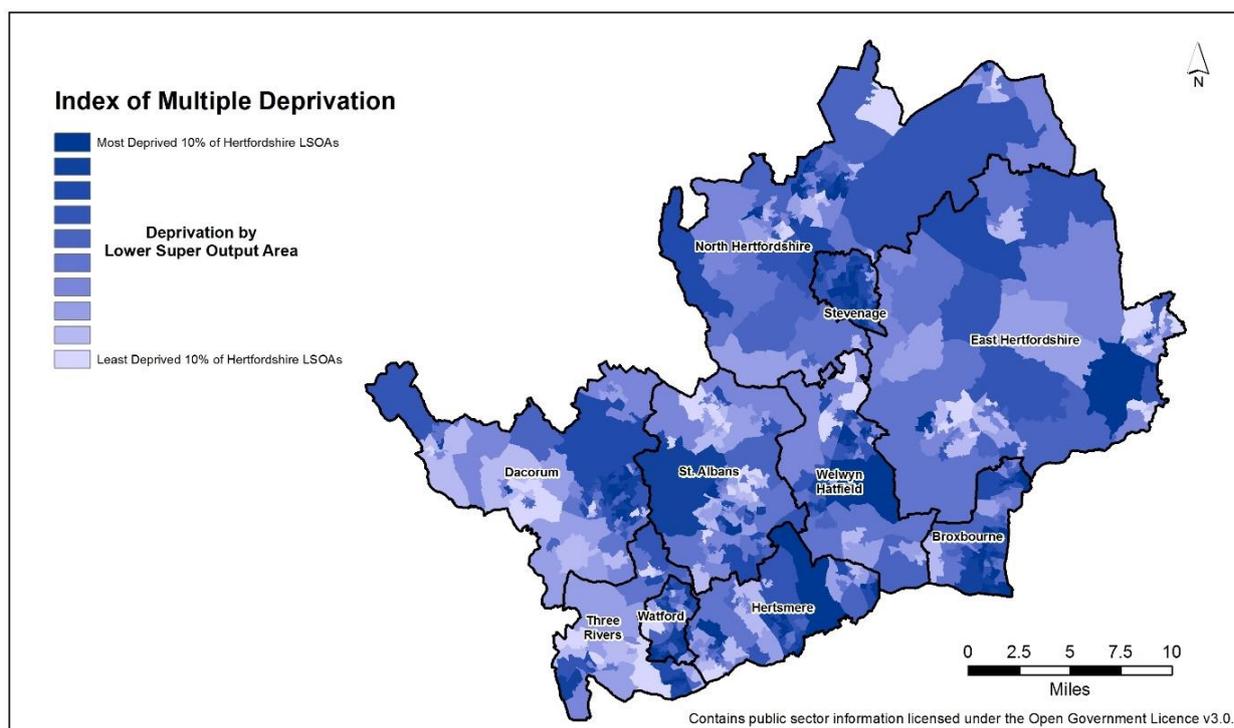
The map above, shows the proportion of the pension age population (65 years plus) at risk for food poverty at county level. **Stevenage** has a higher proportion of at-risk adults above 65 years, however parts of **Watford**, **Dacorum** (Hemel Hempstead), **Broxbourne** (Waltham Cross), a small part of **North Herts**, and 2 areas in **Welwyn Hatfield** (Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City) also have areas with populations at high risk for food poverty.

See maps in **Appendix D** for a closer look at Broxbourne, Stevenage and Watford as identified as areas of having high risk for food poverty.

7.2. Area level deprivation

Hertfordshire is often considered an affluent county with low levels of deprivation. The county has a lower level of deprivation compared to England and the East of England.

Figure 8: Map showing index of multiple deprivation in Hertfordshire, 2019 (Hertfordshire quintiles)



The map in Figure 8 above, shows the index of multiple deprivation (IMD)^{xii} in Hertfordshire by Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in 2019. Hertfordshire experiences differences in the levels of deprivation across the county. The greatest concentration of LSOAs within the most deprived 10% are in **Stevenage, Broxbourne** and **Watford**. East Herts and St. Albans experience the least area level deprivation however do still have LSOAs within the top 10% most deprived.

7.3. Income, employment and workless households

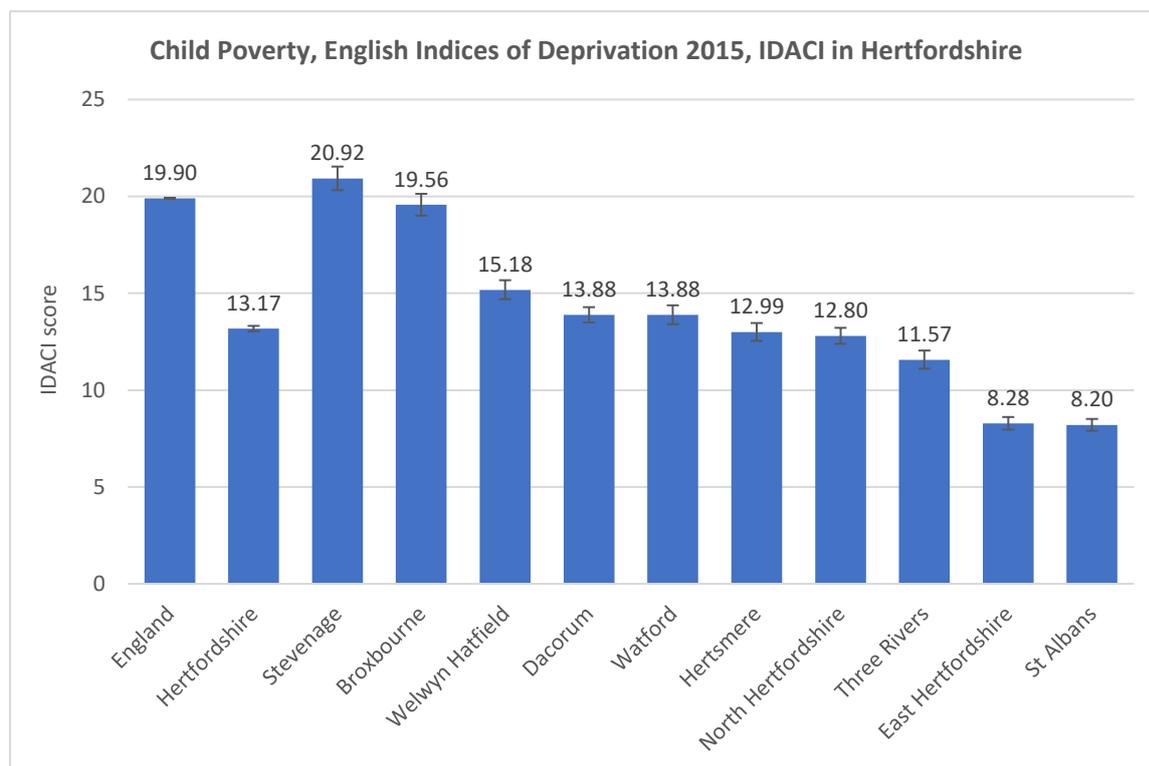
Income and employment are factors strongly associated with food poverty.

7.3.1. Childhood poverty measure – IDACI in Hertfordshire

The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) measures the proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 years living in income deprived families and is a measure of children living in poverty.

^{xii} Index of multiple deprivation (IMD), is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. There are 39 different indicators that make up the IMD 2019.

Figure 9: Child poverty in Hertfordshire, IDACI 2015



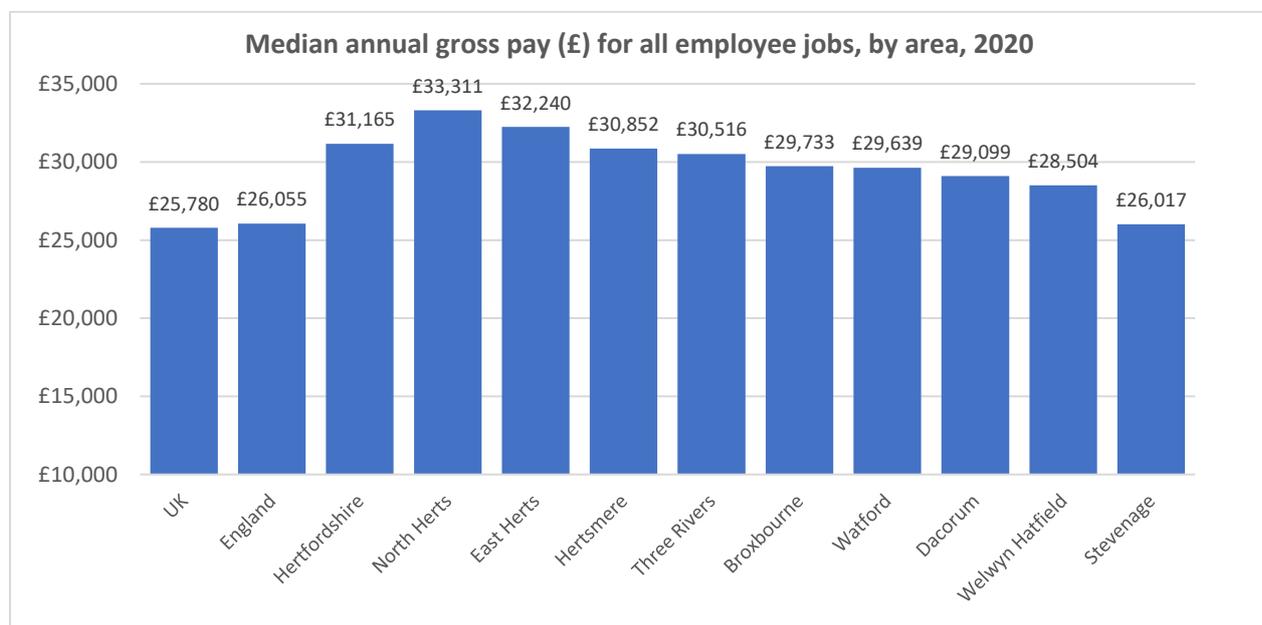
Source: National Statistics UK Government, 2015, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015>

As shown in Figure 9, Hertfordshire’s IDACI score in 2015 was on lower average compared to England, however there is variation across districts. Stevenage has IDACI levels above the average for both Hertfordshire and England. Stevenage, Broxbourne, and Welwyn Hatfield have the greatest proportion of income deprivation affecting children in the county and East Hertfordshire and St. Albans the least.

7.3.2. Income statistics in Hertfordshire

Median annual gross pay can be used to give an indication of income levels across the county.

Figure 10: Annual pay based on the median, 2020



Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), 2020, www.ons.gov.uk/surveys/informationforbusinesses/businesssurveys/annualsurveyofhoursandearningsashe

As shown in Figure 10 average annual pay for those living in Hertfordshire is £31,165 based on the median. This is above the average annual pay in UK and England. Across Hertfordshire average pay varies from £33,311 in North Herts to £26,018 in Stevenage (note data for St. Albans was unavailable).

7.3.3. Employment in Hertfordshire

According to ONS data (extracted in Dec 2020), the working age population in Hertfordshire had an employment rate^{xiii} of almost 80% and unemployment rate of 4% in the 12-month time period July 2019 to June 2020. This is a slightly higher (at a statistically significant level) compared to Great Britain (76.2% +/- 0.2%) and the Eastern region (78.3 +/- 0.8%). Employment rate varies across the districts however not at a statistically significant level. The unemployment rate is statistically similar to GB and East of England (the differences across districts is not accurate to compare).

COVID-19 has had a huge impact on the job market and in Hertfordshire this has been felt most significantly by those in retail and caring roles. A report from the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership showed that sales, customer services, leisure and the caring professions reduced by 4.2% whilst managerial, professional and associate professional grew by 6.8% between June 2019-June 2020.²⁰⁴

^{xiii} In the UK the official employment/unemployment rate is defined as the percentage of the labour force that is classed as employed/unemployed. The rates allow changes in the labour market to be interpreted in a wider context by allowing for changes in the population. The headline measure of employment for the UK is the employment rate for those aged from 16 to 64 years.

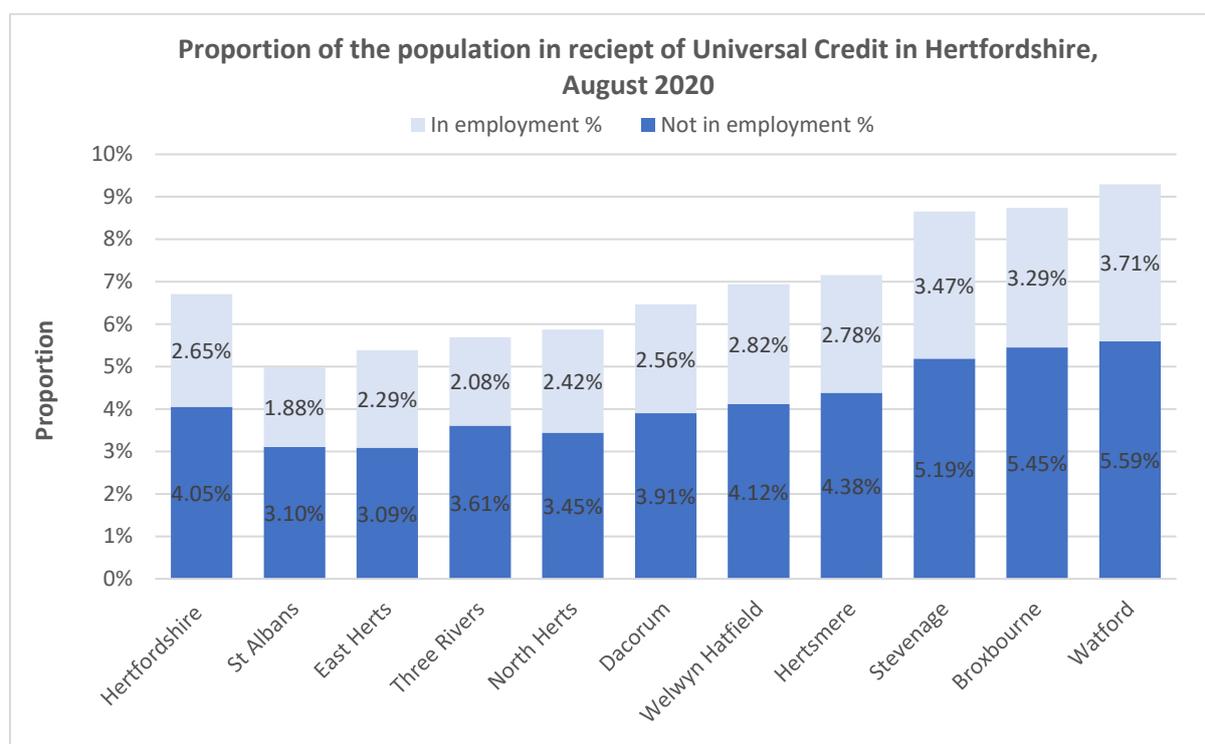
7.3.4. Workless Households in Hertfordshire

Data from 2019 suggests that Hertfordshire, has one of the lowest levels of workless households in the east of England region. 9.3% households classified as workless in Hertfordshire compared to 11.8% in east of England²⁰⁵ (data is not reliable enough to compare between districts).

7.4. Receipt of benefits in Hertfordshire

Universal credit is the main benefit applicable to people who may not be working or on a low income.

Figure 11: Proportion of population in Hertfordshire in receipt of Universal Credit, August 2020



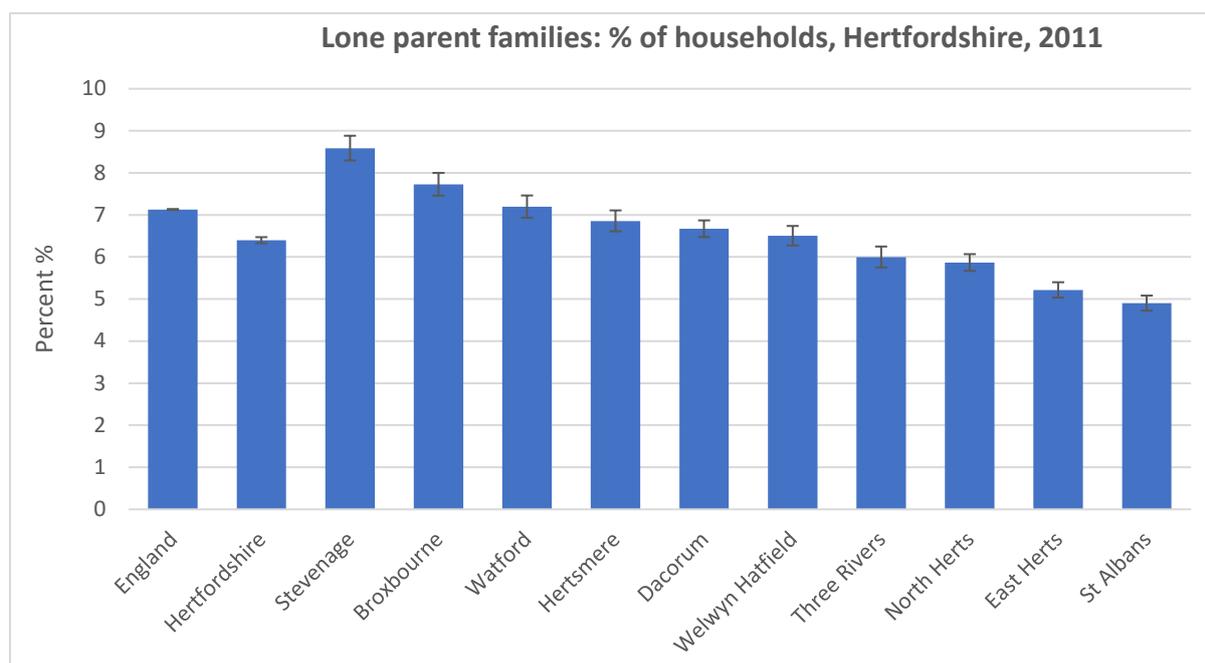
Source: Universal Credit data from Department of Work and Pensions August 2020 and ONS mid-year population estimates 2019

As shown in Figure 11, in Hertfordshire 6.71% of the population were in receipt of Universal Credit in August 2020. **Watford, Broxbourne** and **Stevenage** have the highest proportion of population claiming Universal Credit.

7.5. Household composition in Hertfordshire

Resident make-up of a household affects income. Those at greatest risk for food poverty are families with dependent children and single parent households.

Figure 12: Lone parent households in Hertfordshire, 2011



Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics

As shown in Figure 12, 6.4% of households in Hertfordshire in 2011 (most recently available data) were estimated to be made up of lone parents, statistically significantly lower than England. **Stevenage**, **Broxbourne** and **Watford** had statistically significantly higher proportions of lone-parent populations compared to England and Hertfordshire.

7.6. Housing tenure, fuel poverty and homelessness

7.6.1. Housing tenure in Hertfordshire

As discussed in earlier sections, those in rented accommodation can be associated with poverty and homelessness with severe poverty. Hertfordshire is one of the most expensive places to buy a property outside London, with average house prices at £441,791.²⁰⁶

Figure 13: Household Tenure in Hertfordshire, 2011



Source: ONS, 2011 Census, Table KS402EW

Figure 13 shows the distribution of household tenure in Hertfordshire. In Hertfordshire, 18% were socially rented and 13% privately rented, these household groups may be at more risk for food poverty.

Table 1: Housing Tenure by district, 2011

	Owned	Private rented	Social rented	Living rent free	Shared ownership
Broxbourne	73%	11%	14%	1%	1%
Dacorum	65%	12%	22%	1%	1%
East Herts	72%	13%	13%	1%	1%
Hertsmere	68%	13%	17%	1%	1%
North Herts	66%	13%	19%	1%	1%
St Albans	73%	14%	12%	1%	0%
Stevenage	58%	11%	28%	1%	1%
Three Rivers	73%	11%	15%	1%	1%
Watford	62%	20%	16%	1%	1%
Welwyn Hatfield	57%	14%	27%	1%	1%

Source: ONS, 2011 Census, Table KS402EW

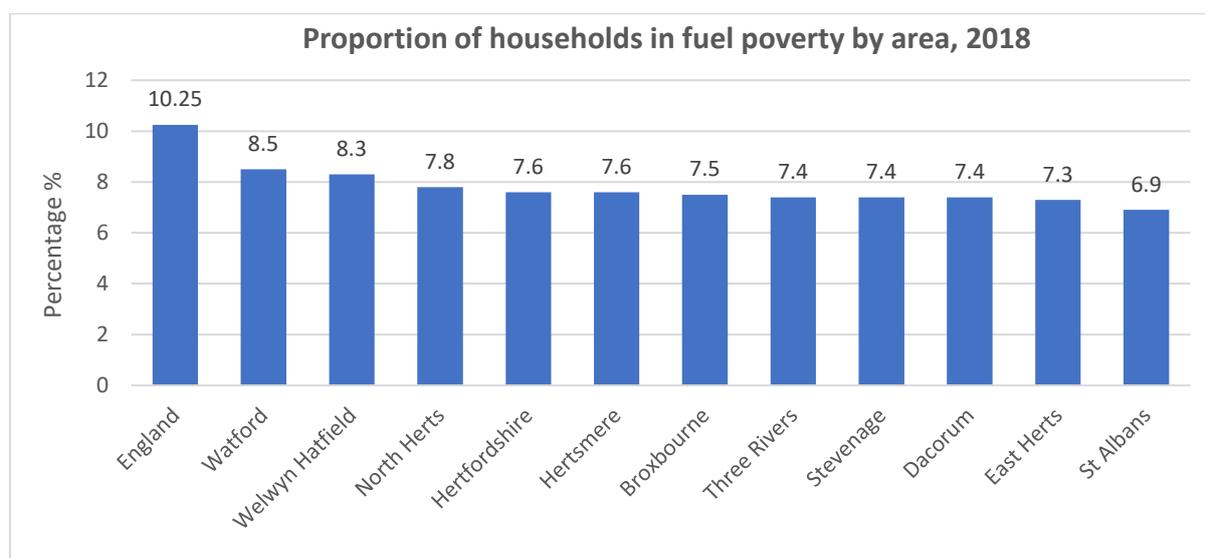
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Shown above in Table 1, the areas with greater proportion of social renting is in **Stevenage** (28%), **Welwyn Hatfield** (27%) and **Dacorum** (22%).

7.6.2. Fuel poverty in Hertfordshire

Fuel poverty is another consequence that people may experience if on a low-income and is routinely measured in England (as discussed in earlier sections).

Figure 14: Fuel poverty, 2018



Source: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial strategy, 2018

Figure 14 shows that fuel poverty levels vary across Hertfordshire with the highest percentage of households in fuel poverty in **Watford, Welwyn Hatfield** and **North Hertfordshire**.

7.6.3. Homelessness in Hertfordshire

Those homeless are often in severe poverty and are a group at high risk for food poverty.

An in-depth analysis on homelessness and housing support in Hertfordshire was carried out in the Housing Related Support Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) in 2019.²⁰⁷ The JSNA highlighted the following key points regarding homelessness in Hertfordshire:

- **Statutory homelessness**

Statutory homelessness in Hertfordshire (measured as a crude rate per 1000 people) increased from 1.8 in 2013/14 to 2.7 in 2017/18. A similar trend to the England average. The Hertfordshire district with the highest rate of statutory homelessness was **Broxbourne**, which saw a statistically significant increase from 2.6 in 2013/14 to 6.2 in 2017/18. In 2017/18, the districts with statistically significant higher rates of statutory homelessness than the Hertfordshire average (2.5), were **Broxbourne** (6.2), **Welwyn Hatfield** (3.9), **Hertsmere** (3.6) and **Watford** (3.4).

- **Statutory homelessness in temporary accommodation (TA)**

The rate (crude per 1,000) of statutory homelessness, households in temporary accommodation (TA) in Hertfordshire saw a statistically significant increase from 1.8 in 2013/14 to 2.7 in 2017/18. The England average saw a similar statistically significant increase over the same time period.

- The Hertfordshire district with the highest rate (crude per 1,000) of statutory homelessness, households in TA, was **Broxbourne**, which also saw a statistically significant increase from 4.8 in 2013/14 to 11.4 in 2017/18.

- In 2017/18, the districts with statistically significant higher rates of statutory homelessness, households in TA than the Hertfordshire average (2.7) were **Broxbourne** (11.4), **Watford** (4.5) and **Hertsmere** (3.6).

- **Homeless young people**

The crude rate (per 1,000) of homeless young people aged 16-24 in Hertfordshire saw a statistically significant decrease from 0.85 in 2013/14 to 0.56 in 2017/18. The England average saw a similar statistically significant decrease over the same time period.

Analysis by Shelter showed that, in Q2 of 2020, Broxbourne had the 9th highest rate of homeless people in TA in England at 608 people (1 in 160 homeless people in TA).²⁰⁸

7.7. Health measures

7.7.1. Breastfeeding in Hertfordshire

The World Health Organisation recommends exclusive breastfeeding until the child is at least 6 months of age, at around which point solid food is introduced. Breastfeeding provides long and short-term health benefits both to baby and mother. For babies this includes reducing risk of infections, diarrhoea and vomiting, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), obesity, cardiovascular disease in adulthood. In mothers, breastfeeding lowers risk of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease and obesity.²⁰⁹

In the UK the proportion of babies being breastfed decreases rapidly over the weeks after they are born, and the prevalence of breastfeeding is lower amongst those in areas with more deprivation.²¹⁰ In England and Wales, duration of breastfeeding is inversely associated with Indices of Deprivation, mothers living in more affluent areas tend to breastfeed for a longer period.²¹¹

In 2018 The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Infant Feeding and Inequalities published an Inquiry into the cost of infant formula in the United Kingdom.²¹² This report found that the cost of infant formula ranged from £27.90 to £139.50 for a 2-3-month-old baby. It also noted that ready to feed formulas, i.e. not powder, which may be safer for families living in circumstances where sterilisation facilities and equipment are limited, are more expensive than powdered equivalents. It therefore follows that supporting breastfeeding may have a positive impact on the entire family's finances. It is of note that foodbanks are discouraged from providing infant formula.²¹³

A 2012 Cochrane review found that all breastfeeding support from both professionals and lay people had a positive effect on breastfeeding duration for both exclusive and partial breastfeeding.²¹⁴ The

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same review found that support was most helpful at extending duration in areas with high breastfeeding initiation rates.

Advice from Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust's Infant Feeding Coordinator is that currently families in Hertfordshire are signposted to websites, voluntary groups and peer support. They have two full time Infant Feeding Coordinators and nine breastfeeding support clinics across the county, that cover each day of the week for families to attend.

National data is collected on breastfeeding, however, the provider in Hertfordshire has not met the national threshold for submitting data. The latest national data for England shows that 46.2% (2018-19) of infants were breastfed at 6-8 weeks. As an interim measure, locally collected data for percentage of infants breastfed at 6-8 weeks, is as below:

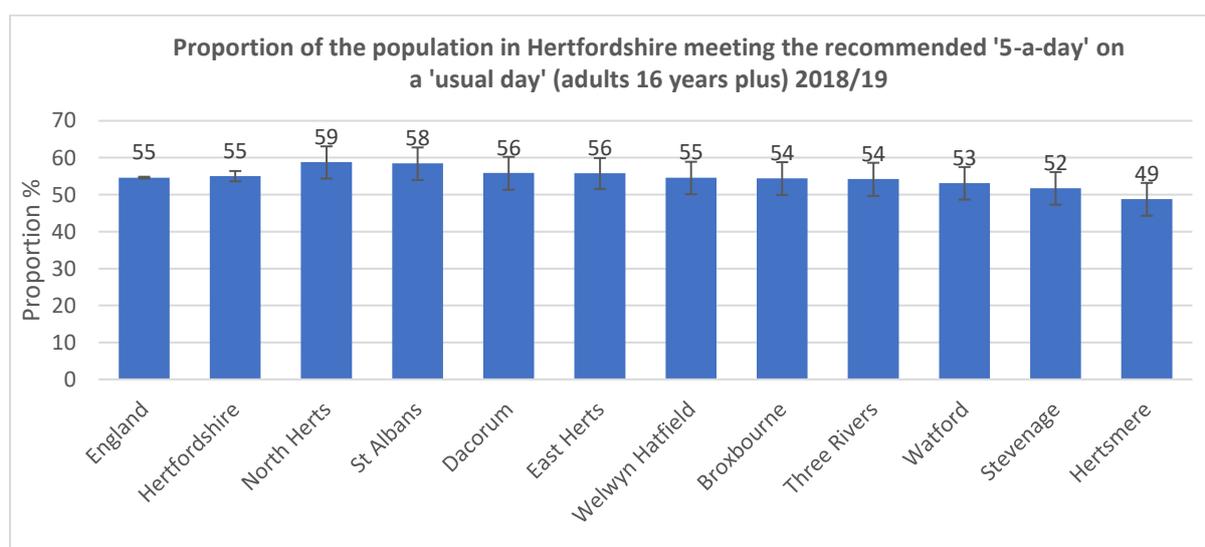
- Hertfordshire 53.9 % (quarter 2, 2020/21)
- Hertfordshire 56.1% (quarter 2, 2019/20)

7.7.2. Healthy eating in Hertfordshire

Eating healthily is a marker of good overall health and poor diet is linked to a range of dietary related illnesses for example type 2 diabetes and certain types of cancer. Healthy diet is closely associated with socioeconomic status, those with a higher status are more likely to be consuming a healthy diet. ^{215/216}

There is limited data for eating or dietary behaviours at a local level. Data from the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) showed that in England 33% of adults, 40% of older adults aged 65 to 74 years, 27% of older adults aged 75 years and over and 12% of 11 to 18 year olds meet the 5 A Day recommendation.

Figure 15: Eating '5 a day' adults, 2018/19



Source: Active Lives Survey, 2018/19 <https://www.sportengland.org/research/active-lives-survey/>

Data from the Active Lives Survey (as shown in Figure 15), showed that 55% of Hertfordshire residents are meeting the recommended '5 a day' (portions of fruit and vegetables) on a usual day (in 2018/19). North Herts has the highest proportion of adults (59%) meeting the recommendation

and Hertsmere the lowest (49%) however the difference is not statistically significant across all areas.

8. Policy action, initiatives and services to address food poverty

8.1. National food poverty action

Since the early 2000s, there have been a range of measures implemented by Government to address and alleviate poverty and associated food poverty. Measures to address poverty in England include the combined benefit allowance known as Universal Credit announced as part of the Welfare Reform Act 2012²¹⁷ and the introduction of the National Living Wage announced in 2015.²¹⁸ Despite a range of measures, poverty levels have remained at similar levels for more than 15 years with a poverty rate of 22% (1 in 5 people living in poverty).²¹⁹

COVID-19 in 2020, has significantly amplified health and income inequalities in the UK and the impact on poverty as a result of the pandemic is yet to be realised. In response to this, additional policies were announced by Government to support people and businesses affected by the pandemic. These measures included the Furlough Scheme; a temporary increase in Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit; and the Eat Out to Help Scheme.

Measures to directly address food poverty are more limited and action often happens at a more local level for example local food aid. National government action has included funding for services and programmes to alleviate food poverty for example the current free school meal scheme introduced in 2013²²⁰ and the healthy start scheme introduced in 2006.²²¹ Services funded by the Government to support those who may be at risk of food poverty are outlined in the list below (note *this is not an exhaustive list*).

Services provided nationally, funded by Government

The Healthy Start Scheme, 2006²²²:

- To support the health of pregnant women and families with young children who are in receipt of certain benefits.
- Scheme provides free vouchers for food and free vitamins.
- In November 2020, the Government announced the value of the vouchers will be increased from £3.10 to £4.25 from April 2021.²²³
- The vouchers are for those who are pregnant, families with babies under the age of one and families with children aged over between one under four.
- Vouchers can be spent on milk, fresh, frozen, and tinned fruit and vegetables, fresh, dried, and tinned pulses, and infant formula milk
- The vitamins are for pregnant women and children under the age of 4.

Free School Meals (FSMs), September 2013²²⁴:

FSMs are a statutory benefit available to school-aged children from families who receive other qualifying benefits and who have been through the relevant registration process.

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- Families receiving Universal Credit must have after-tax earnings of £7,400 or less; those on working tax credits must earn £16,190 or less to be eligible for FSM.²²⁵
- FSMs are provided as a lunch time meal and available for infant school pupils (pupils in reception and years 1 and 2) in state funded schools in England.
- FSMs can also be provided to children in years 3 and above and in receipt of certain benefits.

Holiday Activities and Food Programme 2018²²⁶:

- First announced in 2018 to test the approach, it was not initially provided universally across the country. In November 2020, the government announced that the programme will be expanded across the whole of England in 2021.
- In 2021 the scheme will cover the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays.
- The programme involves the provision of a free meal (usually a lunch time meal) alongside a range of activities such as sport, play sessions and cooking classes for children during school holiday term times.
- Children are eligible if they are already in receipt of a FSM and attendance is optional.

National School Breakfast programme (NSBP) 2018:

- Not currently provided universally across all schools and current funding runs to 31 March 2021, the scheme is available to schools to apply for.²²⁷
- Targets children in the most disadvantaged areas of England providing access to a healthy breakfast at school.
- Schools are eligible for the Programme if at least 50% of pupils fall within IDACI bands A-F (the most disadvantaged categories in the Government's 'Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index') and where there is no existing provision, or the provision has scope for improvement.
- Participating schools receive a free, healthy breakfast food delivered to the school, support from NSBP staff, detailed resource pack, invitations to regional best practice events, a £500 start-up grant to buy necessary equipment such as toasters or a freezer.

An independent review of the food system in England was commissioned by the Government and Part One of the review was published in July 2020 (The National Food Strategy). The review made recommendations for Government about how to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 and impact of the EU transition on people's ability to afford and access food. For example, the recommendations included expanding eligibility for the FSM scheme; extending the Holiday Activity and Food Programme to all areas in England; and increasing the value of Healthy Start vouchers.²²⁸

8.2. Local action on food poverty in England

Across the UK, there are many examples of action by local authorities and other organisations to address food poverty despite limited financial support to do so and often limited robust evidence for food poverty action at the local level.

Sustain, a registered national charity, works with Local Authorities to develop action plans addressing food poverty. Food Power, is a Sustain initiative, aiming to strengthen the ability of local communities to reduce food poverty.²²⁹ Food Power has previously provided both specialised and

financial support for the development of food poverty alliances food poverty action plans and/or strategies.²³⁰

It is often Local Authorities that take the lead on food poverty action in collaboration with a range of stakeholders from the voluntary, public and private sector. Sustain has set out steps local authorities can take in addressing food poverty as below.²³¹

- Improving the uptake of the Healthy Start Vouchers
- Promoting breastfeeding via the Baby Friendly Initiative
- Harnessing the value of children’s centres
- Ensuring low-income families have adequate access to childcare
- Ensuring children access to food is 365 days a year
- Becoming a living wage employer and promoting the Living Wage
- Ensuring all residents have physical access to good food
- Supporting and enhancing meals on wheels provision
- Supporting financial advice services and providing crisis support
- Developing an action plan to tackle food poverty

8.2.1. Food poverty action plans and alliances

Food Poverty Action Plans are usually created in collaboration with a range of organisations, to work towards a shared goal on food poverty.²³² Typically led by Local Authorities, but not always, and set out for a three-year period. Food poverty action plans in England were initially started in London, however, have expanded nationally and are now seen in areas across England.

Food Poverty Alliances are partnerships or consortium of organisations, often involving public, voluntary, community, faith and sometimes private sectors, who commit to working together to tackle food poverty in a geographical area.²³³ Sustain have created a map to show where food poverty alliances exist in England.^{xiv}

Below are some case studies of Food Poverty Action Plans in England.

Food Poverty Action Plan case studies

Islington Food Poverty Action Plan (2019-2022)

The Islington food poverty action plan was developed following a Food Poverty Needs Assessment and formation of a Food Poverty Alliance. The action plan includes aims around accurate identification and measurement of food poverty; action to mitigate and tackle the root causes of food poverty; action to ensure there is adequate crisis support and action to improve cross-service communication.

A range of partners were involved in the development of the action plan including public health, council members, voluntary sector organisations incl. FareShare, FoodCycle and Trussell Trust, NHS organisations and Homelessness services/charities.

^{xiv} [Map of member alliances | Food Power \(sustainweb.org\)](https://www.sustainweb.org/map-of-member-alliances/)

The action plan identifies priority groups, those most at risk for food poverty, and tailored approaches for these groups. Messages for key local stakeholders have been developed to inform stakeholders about how to get involved and the actions they can take to support food poverty locally.

As measured in an annual review by Sustain, Islington was the highest performing London Borough in 2019 for action to address for poverty (with an overall score of 69%).²³⁴ Recent work (in 2020) in Islington has included an up-to-date interactive map of community food projects, which are being supported by the council and shared communication means to distribute surplus food in the county^{xv}.

Luton Food Poverty Action Plan (2020)²³⁵

In Luton, work on food poverty is being led by the voluntary sector organisation Groundwork and a range of stakeholders in the public and voluntary sector. A food poverty action plan was published in 2020 and the alliance has oversight of its progress. The actions within the plan include building skills and education around horticulture and meal planning; improving access to key services including the healthy start scheme; and increasing school holiday food provision. A total of five community growing spaces within Luton have been established and this builds skills around growing food being taught to community members and the food provided supplied to local foodbanks.

Brighton & Hove Food Poverty Action Plan 2015 – 2018 ²³⁶

Brighton & Hove’s action on food poverty is set within the Brighton & Hove Food Strategy which aims for healthy, sustainable and fair food for all including addressing food waste.



The food poverty action plan was published in 2015. Food poverty action is led by the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership, overseen and steered by its elected Board of Directors. The Brighton & Hove

^{xv} [Coronavirus information and advice for VCS food projects | Islington Council](#)

Food Partnership is a non-profit organisation helping people learn to cook, eat a healthy diet, grow their own food and waste less food.

The food poverty action plan has over 50 cross sector partners are signatories to the plan and agreed to adopt 10 principles underpinning this approach to food poverty work including focusing scarce resources on those most at risk and seeking to measure levels of food poverty in order to better understand it and track progress. Key stakeholders include:

- Brighton & Hove City Council (partners in over half of the actions)
- Other statutory sector organisations
- Community, voluntary & faith groups
- Food banks – via the Emergency Food Network
- Shared meals settings
- Advice services

A report on the progress of the action plan stated that there was progress on 78 out of 84 actions (93%).²³⁷ Some of these actions include:

- Integrating food banks with other services including money advice and welfare support.
- Promoting Healthy Start vouchers for free milk, vitamins, food and vegetables to families on a lower income.
- Expanding the meal and activity clubs to address school holiday hunger to sites across the city.

A food aid network is also established in Brighton & Hove which brings food banks together with other services. The network allows services to learn from each other's good practice and develop joint solutions including:

- Mapping food bank & emergency food provision in the city
- Referrals into food banks: how people are referred in and who can refer
- Referrals out of food banks: how people are signposted to advice
- Advice and guidance offered within the food banks and stronger links with other advice services
- Sharing information on increasing demand and how to address this.

The evidence around the impact and effectiveness for food poverty action plans in tackling food poverty is limited however there is current work by Sustain to improve the way food poverty action is monitored and recorded.²³⁸ Food poverty actions plans often are a recent endeavour by local organisations. Furthermore, local organisations may face barriers in evaluating at a measurable scale the impact of their interventions. In particular, the lack of a national or universal measure for food poverty creates barriers in monitoring food poverty and makes it difficult for robust evaluation or comparisons.

A report by Sustain in 2018 looked at the impact of food poverty action plans drawing out a range of beneficial factors including:²³⁹

- Raising the profile of food poverty, especially with local decision-makers
- Developing a shared positive vision
- Creating a sense of empowerment for experts by experience
- Empowering diverse groups to raise their voices to call for food justice
- Ensuring the local council and other partners take ownership of agreed actions
- Sharing of good practice across local authority boundaries to support specific projects
- Being allocated funding to map local food aid provision
- Fostering links with local food businesses
- Joining up food aid with advice organisations or employment and employability schemes
- Drafting joint information materials and online resources
- Developing plans to ‘poverty proof’ schools
- Prompting successful joint bids for funding and engaging new partners to support specific projects
- Running local monitoring of food poverty by robust surveys
- Joining up food poverty strategies with wider food strategy action plans, social inclusion strategies and initiatives

8.2.2. Place based approaches to address food poverty

Place based approaches recognise that to make a significant change to health outcomes at a population level it is necessary to not just treat disease or the causes of disease but to address the wider determinants of health and to consider the impact of psychosocial and protective factors.²⁴⁰

Sustainable Food Places (previously Sustainable Food Cities)^{xvi} is an example of a place-based approach to sustainable and healthy food. Running as a partnership programme established by the Soil Association, Food Matters and Sustain, and funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and The National Lottery Community Fund. The ambition is to create a transition to a healthy, sustainable, and more equitable food system. Addressing food poverty is an objective of the Sustainable Food Places model and has been adopted by more than 50 towns, cities, boroughs and counties across the UK. A report suggested that almost 60% of public health members felt strongly that undertaking the Sustainable Food Places model had initiatives that had contributed to or have the potential to contribute to reducing food poverty.²⁴¹

The aims of Sustainable Food Places include:

- improving the sustainability of procurement and supply of food
- improving health of food to improve dietary relating issues such as obesity
- addressing food poverty
- addressing climate change and biodiversity

^{xvi} <https://www.sustainablefoodplaces.org>

9. How food poverty is addressed in Hertfordshire

The below assessment has been carried out using the Sustain Assessment Framework^{xvii} to measure Local Authority action against food poverty.

Assessment on Hertfordshire County Council's Local Action Plan on Food Poverty (version 1.0 23/03/21)

Partnerships and collaborative approaches to action on food

1. Food poverty action plan

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
1a	A food poverty action plan (or similar set of actions), laying out local priorities for tackling the root causes of food poverty and foodbank use	No	Is a recommendation of the Needs Assessment
1b	A named officer or officers responsible for oversight of the food poverty action plan, including ensuring the recommendations within it are carried out	No	Is a recommendation of the Needs Assessment
1c	A designated multi-sectoral group responsible for implementing the recommendations of the local food poverty action plan (This could be a group such as the Health and Wellbeing Board or comparable group, rather than a food poverty-specific group)	No	Is a recommendation of the Needs Assessment
1d	Funding and/or resources to implement recommendations and actions	No	

2. Food poverty alliance or sustainable food partnership locally

^{xvii} <https://www.sustainweb.org/publications/assessing-local-authority-action-food-poverty/>

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ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
2a	A food partnership or food poverty alliance with council staff time allocated to coordinate or work with the group	No	Is a recommendation of the Needs Assessment
2b	Food related activity commissioned by the council prior to Covid-19 e.g. commissioned school meals	Yes	<p>In Adults services - Commissioning of Herts Independent Living Service (Meals on Wheels Service). Occasional funding of foodbanks via adult's care services. May be some inhouse services that provide food e.g. adult disability.</p> <p>In Children's Services - Holiday term time cover is new since Covid funding from winter grant.</p>
2c	Any other formal relationship with local voluntary or community for example through commissioning	No	

'Cash-first' approaches

3. Investing in local welfare assistance, Discretionary Housing Payment or equivalent local schemes

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
3a	Has a local welfare assistance scheme that provides grant funds directly to residents?	Yes	HCC Herts Help operates this and funding also allows for the provision of the HCC Money Advice Unit.
3b	Has a direct referral route from the local welfare assistance scheme into preventative or support services (e.g. debt or benefits advice, children's services, homelessness services).	Yes	The Money Advice Unit or Citizen Advice Bureaus (and many other orgs/services)

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3c	Has funding for welfare benefits and debt advice services (either in-house or contracted)	Yes	The Money Advice Unit provides advice on welfare benefits. For debt advice information is provided for national support services. Recent additional funding has allowed for a 1 year project targeting people affected financially or health wise to support them with benefits advice or debt advice (by CAB).
3d	Has a Discretionary Housing Payment scheme for residents in economic hardship with at least 90% of the budget for this spent	NA	District council's role.

4. Having a low minimum Council Tax payment

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
4a	Has a low council tax minimum payment of 8.5% or lower for low income residents	NA	District council's role.

Food access

5. Investing in meals on wheels services and other food support for older adults and disabled people

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
5a	Funds in-house preparation of meals	Yes	Funds food parcels via the Covid Crisis Pathway and Herts Independent Living Service.
5b	Funds in-house delivery of meals	Yes	HCC Adult Care Services part funds the Herts Independent Living Service to provide a meal on wheels service which is topped up by the client. A

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			hot lunch and dessert delivered to your door is £5.10 (as of March 21).
5c	Funds complementary services to meals, such as welfare checks, falls prevention, nutritional advice	Yes	Part funded by HCC and all provided in-house by Herts Independent Living Service. Falls is commissioned by NHS England – Active Ageing Programme.
5d	Funds purchase of meals from another organisation	No	
5e	Funds delivery of meals by another organisation	Yes	HCC Adult Care Services part funds the Herts Independent Living Service to provide a meal on wheels service which is topped up by the client. A hot lunch and dessert delivered to your door is £5.10 (as of March 21).
5f	Signposts people to meals on wheels services for example via social services and information	Yes	Referring agencies are broad to the meals on wheels (MOW) service. HCC social care and Herts Help are common referring agencies. Other referrals to MOW come from Hospital Discharge Teams, self-referrals and next of kin.

6. Ensuring all residents have physical access to good food

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
6a	Mapped access to various food shops including those selling affordable fresh fruit and vegetables in the borough by any of the following: transportation routes; income or deprivation levels; health outcomes; proximity to schools or other child-oriented spaces; ethnicity	Yes	The food poverty needs assessment considers the access to supermarkets by IMD 2019.

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6b	Adopted policies to improve access to healthy food and/or to limit access to unhealthy food such as a Local Development Plan	NA	District and Borough Council Level
6c	Supplementary Planning Document(s), Health and wellbeing guidance or a Good Food Retail Plan	NA	District and Borough Council Level

Children's access to food

7. Investing in the Healthy Start scheme

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
7a	A designated person who acts as the central point of contact for information and questions about Healthy Start in the local authority.	No	Ongoing co-ordination of distribution of HS vitamins through Children's Services and Family Centres. Some work recently by the Money Advice Unit to improve uptake of the Healthy Start Scheme.
7b	A local strategy for coordinating and promoting the Healthy Start scheme, both fruit and veg vouchers and vitamins	No	

8. Supporting access to free school meals

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
8a	A mechanism in place to measure free school meal (FSM) uptake e.g. cashless catering, OR requires schools to measure and report take-up of free school meals	Yes	But may not be very accurate – the Spring School Census contains a count of pupils who are eligible for FSM and took a meal on census day. That can then be compared to the total number of FSM eligible pupils which is also in the census.

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8b	Provides funding for universal free school meals beyond KS1 (that is, all primary school children)	No	
8c	Offers free school meals to children with the immigration condition 'no recourse to public funds'	Yes	During term time these groups have had access to FSMs. FSM vouchers for the school holidays has been provided as part of Covid Winter Grant Scheme since October 2020. This enabled schools to provide vouchers to children with no recourse to public funds during the school holidays.
8d	Provides funding for breakfast clubs and/or engages businesses and other community partners to provide support for breakfast clubs	No	
8e	Provides funding for the fruit and veg in schools scheme (beyond government funded SFVS for 4-6-year olds)	No	No additional funding is provided.

9. Supporting holiday provision with food

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
9a	A designated person who acted as the central point of contact for information and questions about holiday provision including food	No	Not a single body or person but various departments or funded agencies can provide advice re holiday provision. This includes: Money Advice Unit, SEND information advice and support service- for people with additional needs., Herts Help, Schools themselves

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9b	Funding for holiday provision with food and/or engaged businesses and other community partners (such as housing, faith or youth groups) that provided support for holiday provision with food	Yes	COVID holiday scheme for Easter, Summer and Christmas holidays in 2021. Led by HCC and funded through DfE grant. County Scheme is called Hertfordshire's Holiday Activity Programme (HAPpY).
9c	Tracking of the location and/or number of holiday meal schemes and/or holiday play/activity schemes that included food provision	No	This will be tracked for the above scheme (9b)

10. Breastfeeding promotion

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
10a	Promoting breastfeeding through the UNICEF UK Baby Friendly scheme (accreditation 1-3)	Yes	All Family Centres have UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative stage 2 accreditation. Public Health Nursing are stage 3 accredited

Food growing and production

11. Supporting food growing, including allotments, community gardens, orchards and larger scale farming

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
11a	Council officers supported and/or led initiatives or partnered with external organisations to develop new orchards, community gardens or school food gardens (if this is an external partner please tell us who below)	NA	District and Borough Council Level

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11b	Council officers provided or partnered with external organisations to provide ongoing support to existing food growing projects	NA	District and Borough Council Level
11c	Funded or provided small grants that were accessible to food growing projects and community groups, or other resources to support food growing in the borough	NA	District and Borough Council Level
11d	Included food growing into a food strategy, or other relevant strategies or include food growing in the council's approach to improving public health	NA	District and Borough Council Level

12. Increasing access to land

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
12a	Encouraged and enabled use of publicly owned land, including housing estates, for community food growing, with a clear route for residents to request use of land to grow food	NA	District and Borough Council Level
12b	Developed food growing initiatives within public parks and/or work with friends of parks groups to support food growing (please name at least one park where the residents grow food)	NA	District and Borough Council Level
12c	Proactively increase the amount of land available to grow food in the last year (please provide a recent example)	NA	District and Borough Council Level
12d	Worked to make publicly owned land or assets (e.g. glasshouses) available for larger scale food production	NA	District and Borough Council Level

13. Ensuring food growing is supported and protected in local plans

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ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
13a	Is specific support for community food growing included in the planning policies? Or are there plans for planning policies to support food growing through offering protection for food growing land?	NA	District and Borough Council Level

Good food economy

14. Plans or strategy for a good local food economy

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
14a	Has a food strategy or plan in place that covers the local food economy and food retail	NA	District and Borough Council Level
14b	Has economic development strategies that included targets and actions to support food businesses and the wider local food economy	NA	District and Borough Council Level
14c	Has or were developing a Good Food Retail plan that aimed to increase access to healthy and environmentally sustainable food	NA	District and Borough Council Level
14d	Includes a focus on food business in any waste or climate strategy	NA	District and Borough Council Level

15. Resources and support

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
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15a	Provided financial support (e.g. grants, loans or business rate reductions), business planning advice or financial advice, and/or access to premises for food retailers and enterprises	NA	District and Borough Council Level
15b	Has a team, officer or programme that provided support to small and medium food enterprises above statutory requirements	NA	District and Borough Council Level
15c	Takes specific action to support retailers that sell fresh, healthy food with reduced climate and nature impact or that encourages them to do so	NA	District and Borough Council Level

Climate and Nature emergency

16. Climate emergency

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
16a	Has the council declared a Climate and Nature Emergency?	Yes	Yes, and there is a Sustainability Strategy
16b	If yes does the plan include action on food?	No	Only on food waste.

17. Food waste

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
17a	A food waste collection service is provided to households	NA	District and Borough Council Level
17b	A food waste collection service is provided to food businesses	NA	District and Borough Council Level
17c	A food waste collection service is provided to schools	NA	District and Borough Council Level

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17d	Actions are being taken to reduce the amount of food wasted (for example awareness-raising campaigns)	Yes	As part of the Sustainability Strategy and the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership
17e	Space and resources (e.g. premises) are provided for redistributing leftover food	NA	District and Borough Council Level

18. Food procurement and in-house catering

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
18a	Council internally serves environmentally friendly meals (particularly less-but-better meat) in the council catering	Yes	
18b	Food businesses within the borough are incentivised or rewarded for helping tackle the climate and nature emergency, for example with reduced businesses rates or license fees	No	
18c	A sustainable food policy is in place for festivals and events hosted on council land	No	

19. Food production and food growing including tree planting plans and other actions

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
19a	The Council has a plan to plant more trees	Yes	As part of the Sustainability Strategy there has been more trees planted a formal plan will be developed - an overarching tree strategy

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19b	The tree planting plan includes a proportion of edible (fruit and nut) trees	No	Yet to be formalised
19c	The climate was considered in Covid-19 emergency food provision, for example by prioritising fruit, veg and non-meat protein, and/or using local food	No	
19d	50 (or more) publicly accessible drinking water fountains have been installed, or a plan is in place to work toward this number	Yes	HCC takes part in the refill scheme in February 2019 there were 197 stations.
19e	The most polluting food delivery vehicles are restricted (e.g. takeaways and supermarket deliveries)	No	

Healthier Catering

20. Healthier Catering Commitment

ID	Council activities or work	Met (Yes/No)	Comments
20a	Is the council participating in the Healthier Catering Commitment or has developed its own healthier catering scheme for businesses?	No	One district council in Hertfordshire has the EatOut EatWell Scheme. Healthier catering schemes/commitments will be considered as part of the Whole Systems Obesity Programme led by Public Health.

9.1. Service provision in Hertfordshire

Some of the key services and how they meet need in Hertfordshire is discussed in this section.

Appendix B provides an overview of services in Hertfordshire that can support those with needs relating to poverty and/or food poverty.

9.1.1. Children's and Family Services in Hertfordshire

Some of the key children's and family services in Hertfordshire that may support with food poverty needs are discussed below and include:

- Healthy Start Scheme
- Free School Meals
- Fit, Fed and Read

Healthy Start Scheme

The Healthy Start Scheme operates from the Family Centre Service in Hertfordshire. The scheme provides free vouchers for food and free vitamins for those who are pregnant, families with babies under the age of one and families with children aged over between one under four. Vouchers can be spent on milk, fresh, frozen, and tinned fruit and vegetables, fresh, dried, and tinned pulses, and infant formula milk (vouchers are worth £4.25 from April 2021). The vitamins are for pregnant women and children under the age of 4.

Figure 16: Six-month trend Healthy Start Scheme, Sep 20 to Feb 21

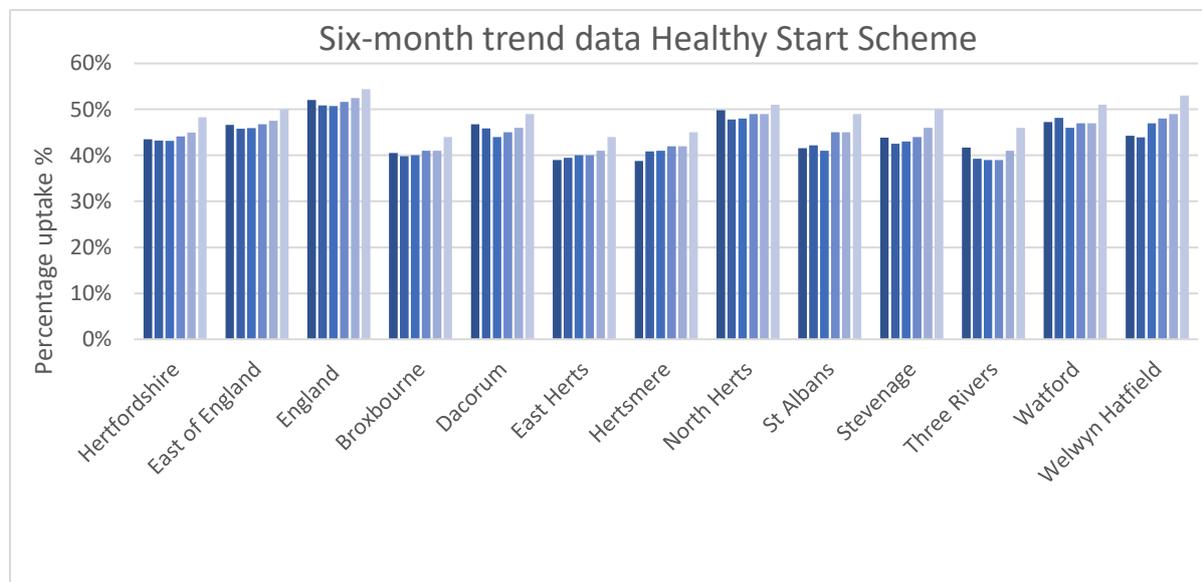


Figure 16 above shows the take up of the healthy start scheme for those eligible nationally, regionally and across Hertfordshire in the time period September 2020 to February 2021.

Hertfordshire has a lower overall uptake of the healthy start scheme compared both regionally and nationally over this time period. Looking at the average uptake over this period shows that Hertfordshire's uptake over this time period was 44.55%. The highest was in North Herts at 49.1% and the lowest in East Herts at 40.57%. There is an upward trend in the uptake of the healthy start

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scheme over the period September 2020 to February 2021 in Hertfordshire, East of England and England.

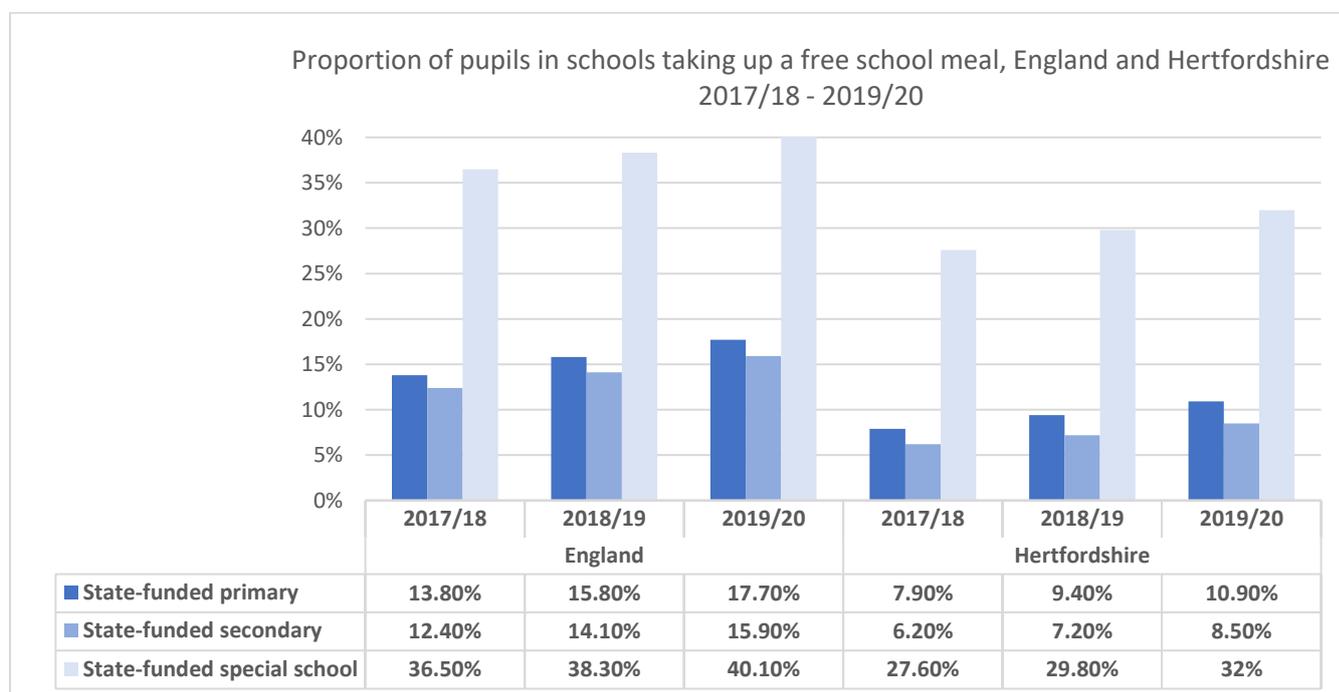
Free School Meals (FSMs)

FSMs in Hertfordshire are provided across all state schools by the provider Herts Catering Limited. National data shows that the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for FSMs has increased across all schools (excluding independent schools) from 13.6% in 2018 to 17.3% in 2020.²⁴²

In Hertfordshire, data for those eligible for FSMs is as follows:

- 19,820 pupils from reception age to secondary school were eligible for FSMs in 2019/20. Latest data from Hertfordshire County Council in December 2020 showed that a total of 23,833 children were receiving FSMs in Hertfordshire.
- Hertfordshire has seen an increase in those eligible for FSMs year on year, from 7.4% in 2018 to 10% in 2020.
- In 2020/21 the FSM service in Hertfordshire County Council received an average of 135 new applications each week.
- The number of students aged 16-18 years attending Further Education Colleges in Hertfordshire (of which there are 4 colleges in Hertfordshire) eligible for FSMs is 897 in January 2021.

Figure 17: Proportion of pupils taking up a free school meal, England and Hertfordshire 2017/18 - 2019/20



Source: Department for Education, 2020, <https://lginform.local.gov.uk/>

Figure 17 above shows the proportion of pupils **taking up** FSMs between 2017/18 to 2019/20 comparing England to Hertfordshire. There appears to be an upwards trend over the time period in primary, secondary and state funded special schools.

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Of those eligible but not taking up FSMs in Hertfordshire several factors have been identified as to the reasons why by Children's Services at Hertfordshire County Council:

- Children within Education Support Centres (maintained schools) are dual registered. This cohort seem to find application of FSMs more challenging. This could be due needs of family who could be finding the application process difficult; family/child relationship with the school or other factors that we do not know of.
- Some families have discussed not feeling that they needed the FSM allowance, stating the money could be spent elsewhere or on someone else.

Research suggests that factors that influence uptake of all school meals (not just FSMs) should be considered for example, food choice, queuing and the social aspects of lunchtime such as eating with friends to increase uptake.²⁴³

Holiday Activities and Food Programme

Since 2018, Herts Sports Partnership (HSP) has provided Fit Fed & Read a school holiday meals and activity programme. The programme is currently funded by the National Lottery Community Fund to deliver the service in 10 locations every Easter and summer school holiday until (and including) 2022.

The service is offered to school aged children who are eligible for FSMs aged between 8-11 years. The service is promoted mainly through the Families First network within Hertfordshire County Council.

The attendance on the programme in the summer term 2020 was 60% (178 total children attended) and 52% in the summer term 2019, suggesting the programme has capacity for more children to attend.

In November 2020, the government Department for Education (DfE) announced funding into the national Holiday Activities and Food programme for children aged from 5 to 16 years who are eligible for FSMs. Covering the school holiday periods Easter, summer and Christmas holidays in 2021. The DfE have committed to provide £2.7 million to Hertfordshire County Council as the responsible authority for the Holiday Activities and Food Programme. HSP have been appointed as the lead coordinator of the initiative and are in the process of setting up the Hertfordshire Holiday Activities Programme (HAPpy).

HAPpy will run in Easter for 1 week, summer for 4 weeks and Christmas for week in 2021 for all children eligible for FSMs which is estimated to be around 23,833 children.

9.1.2. Foodbanks in Hertfordshire

Foodbanks provide short term emergency food for those who are not able to afford food. Foodbanks are not a solution to food poverty but provide support in crisis situations. Trussell Trust charity^{xviii} is the main provider of foodbanks in the UK and their vision is for a UK without the need for food

^{xviii} The Trussell Trust network is about two thirds of the foodbanks in the UK.

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banks. There are also a range of independent charities and not-for-profit organisations that provide foodbanks.

The primary reasons for referral to Trussell Trust foodbanks in 2019-20 included low income, benefit delays (usually a 5 week wait for Universal Credit) and benefit changes.²⁴⁴ Experience of an adverse life event e.g. divorce, job loss, ill-health in the previous year was also a key driver for use of a foodbank.

The most common approach for foodbanks is to provide a food voucher which can be exchanged for 3 days of emergency food. Food vouchers are often provided by a referring agency such as Citizens Advice, children's centres, health visitors, housing associations and other services such as drug and alcohol services. An example of what a typical foodbank voucher may get you is shown in Table 3.

Table 2: Typical foodbank provision, based on the Trussell Trust typical food 3-day parcel

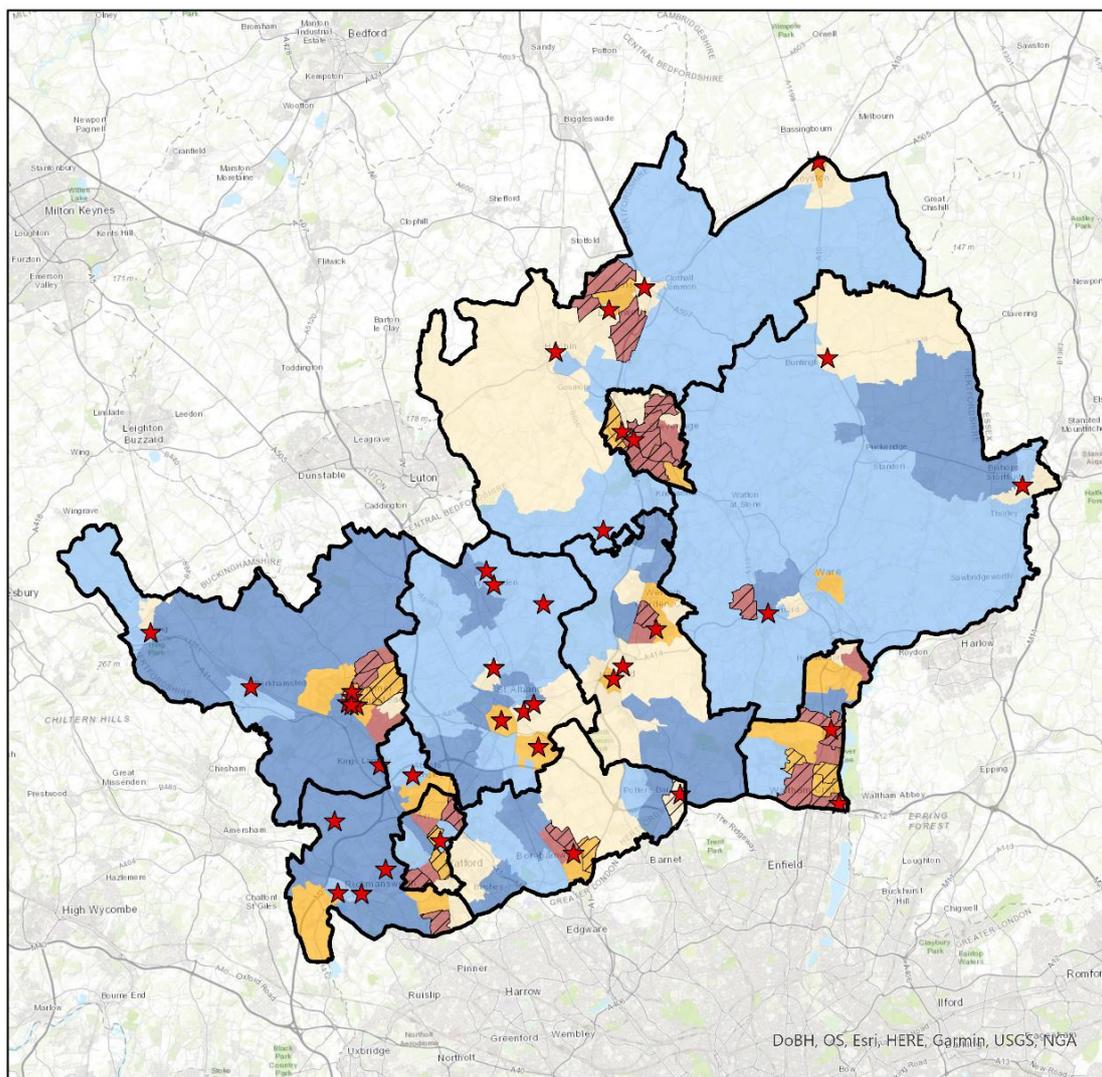
Food items	Non-food items
breakfast cereals, soup, pasta, rice, pasta sauce, tinned beans, tinned meat, tinned vegetables, tinned fruit, tea or coffee, sugar, biscuits, snacks	toiletries and period products, baby basics

Note: foodbanks may be able to adapt food parcels to meet dietary needs for example, gluten free, halal or vegetarian

Some foodbanks also provide additional and more holistic support in the form of holiday clubs, support with job seeking, and financial, welfare and housing advice.

A total of 39 foodbanks were recorded in Hertfordshire in March 2021 (note this figure includes both centres and associated sites and is subject to change as new foodbanks are created or others close/reopen). In addition to foodbanks there are a range of other services that offer food aid (see **Appendix B** for a more detail).

Figure 18: Map of foodbanks in Hertfordshire overlaying food poverty risk (in under 65 age group)



▭ Hertfordshire Districts

★ Food bank

Hertfordshire Benefits Claimants

% under 65 claiming benefits

▨ 17.48-24.94% (top quintile)

High Risk Population Hertfordshire

% under 65 at higher risk

- ≤ 6.7
- ≤ 8.2
- ≤ 11.9
- ≤ 14.8
- ≤ 23.6

Data from 2011 Census, 2020 DWP, 2020 OS, 2019 ONS
High risk includes low income households with dependent children or single adults on low incomes. Benefits data are from the Working Age Claimant Group (May 2020).



0 4 8 16 Kilometers

Contains National Statistics data
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The map in Figure 18 shows where these foodbanks are located in relation to the food poverty risk in the under 65s (further details on food poverty risk can be found in Section 6.5). Broadly, the foodbanks are in locations where food poverty risk in the under 65s is greatest.

Demand for foodbanks in Hertfordshire

In line with foodbanks nationally, Hertfordshire has seen a similar trend, with an increase in the use of foodbanks. The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant influence on this. In a recent study in the east of England, all foodbanks stated there had been an increase in demand and Health Visitors reported there has been a sharp increase in the number of mothers asking for foodbank referrals since the lockdown. *“For example, one Health Visitor stated referrals have increased from two every five months pre-Covid, to approximately one every week during COVID-19”*.²⁴⁵

Borehamwood in the Hertsmeire District of Hertfordshire reported an increase of 122% in the number of client’s food provided for in 2020 compared to 2019 (3,412 people in 2019 and 7,580 in 2020).

Barriers to access and limitations of foodbanks

One of the groups identified by two foodbanks in Hertfordshire who do not appear to access foodbanks are the over 65s. *“Over 65s are often too proud to accept support.”* Broxbourne Foodbank.

9.1.3. Other food aid services

Similar to the increase in foodbanks across the UK, other food aid services have grown in numbers.²⁴⁶ This includes for example: community supermarkets and pantry schemes; free or subsidized breakfast and afterschool healthy snack/ meal provision for children, holiday food provision schemes, soup kitchens, pay-as-you-feel cafes, and charities using and redistributing surplus or near-expiry food.²⁴⁷

In Hertfordshire there are a large range of voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sector schemes that provide food aid or low-cost meals see **Appendix B**. One example of a key service that supports adults is the Hertfordshire Independent Living Service (HILS) commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council. The service provides:

- meals on wheels
- nutritional screening
- training on nutritional screening to care homes
- lunch clubs (prior to covid-19)
- tea and breakfast packs
- nutrition boosts
- food pack services for hospital discharge and to those shielding from covid-19
- additional emergency food packs throughout the COVID-19 pandemic period

9.1.4. Monetary and general advice services in Hertfordshire

These types of services can support with employment, gaining access to the benefits they may be eligible for, and advice with debt. In Hertfordshire there are a range of services which provide this support for example, the Money Advice Unit and Herts Help (see **Appendix B** for more detail).

Herts Help offer a centralised point for support around money, housing and other issues, including making referrals to foodbanks. Herts Help has provided a vital role during the Covid-19 pandemic in Hertfordshire by providing a single point of access for support to those who were shielding through the provision of food parcels and signposting people to additional support where needed.

9.1.5. Housing and Homelessness services in Hertfordshire

*Hertfordshire is one of the most expensive places to buy a property outside London, with average house prices at £441,791.*²⁴⁸ See section 7.6.3 for key statistics on homelessness in the county.

Hertfordshire County Council has a duty under the Care Act 2014, to ensure that people's eligible care and support needs are met. In addition, the County Council also has a responsibility to promote wellbeing and prevent or delay the need for care and support services. The County Council has responsibility for commissioning housing related support services, while the district councils have responsibility for meeting the duty to relieve homelessness and the duty to prevent homelessness.

Accommodation providers and day centres provide a wide variety of services to address individuals' needs. Some district councils in Hertfordshire have their own housing stock and others rely entirely on housing associations.

*A JSNA on Housing-related Support – Adults with a Complexity of Needs was published in 2019 and provides a more in-depth analysis.*²⁴⁹

9.1.6. Faith and community groups in Hertfordshire

The role of faith and community organisations in the provision of food and other resources to those in need has long been established in the sector.

Foodbanks are often associated with the Christian Church, for example the Trussell Trust founding values are that they are anti-poverty charity founded on Christian principles.

In Hertfordshire there are many faith and community organisations, groups and forums, see **Appendix B**. These groups are well connected in the communities they serve and have had significant involvement recently in food provisions since the Covid-19 pandemic, recognising the local need in their community.

10. Local insight from Hertfordshire Residents

The following section is a summary of the findings from the University of Hertfordshire's report. The findings can be found in detail in the main report.²⁵⁰

10.1. Hertfordshire Household Survey

A total of 23 respondents took part in the household survey.^{xxix} Households were asked about their food and eating at home to ascertain whether they had experienced food poverty in the previous 12 months. Thirteen (56.5%) stated that they or their household had experienced food poverty in the previous 12 months.^{xxx}

Of the 23 respondents, 10 (43.5%) reported that they had accessed support services in relation to food within the previous 12 months. The type of service that respondents accessed varied, including food banks (n=6), mental health charity (n=1), a school (n=1), financial advice (n=1), the HCC crisis team (n=1), 'Herts Help' (n=1) and 'Step Change' (n=1).^{xxxi} All stated that they had accessed these services between November 2020 – March 2021. Five households reported that they were accessing the service(s) 'at least once per week'; three stated '2 – 3 times per month'; and two stated 'only once or twice'. Most households (n=8) had been referred for support from other services including their GP, Citizens Advice, family services and their probation officer.

Service users (n=10) were asked if their experience of getting support was 'positive', 'neutral' or 'negative'. Three said their experience was 'neutral' and six said 'positive'.^{xxxi} All but two households reported that their needs in relation to food and/or money were met. Households that had accessed support services were also asked if there was anything that made it easy or difficult for them to access the service and/or receive support (e.g. location, opening hours, referral process). Respondents were positive about the staff they had spoken to, particularly those at 'Herts Help'. Difficulties included COVID-19 restrictions and opening hours.

Twelve respondents (52%) stated that they had not accessed support services in the previous 12 months.^{xxxi} When asked why they had not accessed support services, most stated it was because they did not require support because their income was sufficient. However, one household stated that they were unaware of what support services were available to them. This particular household had experienced food poverty in the previous 12 months. Households who had not accessed any support services were also asked what could have helped or encouraged them to seek support, should they have needed to. Awareness of what services were available as well as how to access these services was an issue for some, specifically, ensuring that support services are offline as well as online.

All households were asked what improvements (if any) could be made to service provision across Hertfordshire. It was suggested that Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) carry out a 'mapping' of all available services and work with other agencies to ensure all residents are supported. There was consensus with most respondents that there should be more information about what services are available to them, for instance it was suggested via a newsletter, pamphlet, via the 'gov.uk DWP [Department for Work and Pensions]' webpage or advertising via television/radio.

^{xxix} Full detail of participant demographics can be found in the main report (Hamilton and Dickinson, 2021).

^{xxx} Based on four questions asking if they or anyone in their household had 'sometimes' or 'often': skipped meals, were hungry, went without eating for a whole day or ran out of food at home because they could not afford food in the previous 12 months.

^{xxxi} Step Change is a national charity organisation that provides free advice and solutions in relation to financial debt, including debt management plans, debt arrangement schemes and bankruptcy (see: <https://www.stepchange.org/>)

^{xxxi} One respondent did not answer this question.

^{xxxi} One respondent stated they were unsure if they had accessed support services.

10.2. Interviews with Households

Five Hertfordshire households took part in in-depth, semi-structured telephone interviews. All households were of working age. Households were asked about their food and eating practices, including their experience of food poverty. They reported a range of factors that had led to them being 'pushed' into poverty, often with multiple causes at a given time. The interviews illustrate that for households, food poverty is due to having insufficient money. In other words, food poverty is one aspect of poverty. The factors described by households as contributing to their food poverty included:

- Illness and/or disability (mental and physical)
- Low-paid and/or insecure employment (e.g. zero-hour contracts)
- Debt
- Expensive housing (often in poor condition)
- Unemployment, reduced hours and/or furlough due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Lack of child support payments (CSA)
- Universal Credit

10.2.1. Physical and Mental Illness

Illness, both physical and mental, moved people towards food poverty. All but one of the participants were experiencing physical and/or mental health issues at the time of the interviews. For instance, Paul was unable to work due to his ill-health and was awaiting treatment for his back, which had been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He explained how his mental health had deteriorated as a consequence of his physical health issues which had left him confined to his home and unable to visit friends.

Poor physical and mental health are not only contributing factors to experiencing food poverty, but food poverty also further compromises health and well-being, creating a negative spiral. Households were aware of how the food 'choices' they were forced to make impacted on their ability to choose the food that they wanted to buy, eat and feed their children, including their ability to purchase healthier food. They described how food poverty forced them to compromise on their own and their families' health in order to survive by filling up on less nutritious food. Poor and inadequate housing (e.g. damp and mould), which participants said they felt 'trapped' in, also contributed to the worsening of physical and mental health.

10.2.2. Low-pay, Insecure Employment and Universal Credit

Low-paid and insecure employment was a feature for those working but still struggling to earn a sufficient income to lift them out of poverty. For example, Claire, a single-mother of two children, had been placed on furlough then made redundant during the pandemic. At the time of the interview she had found a new job in a supermarket and was claiming Universal Credit. However, this new job paid less than her previous job and was insecure with a zero-hours contract. She accepted any additional overtime available. However, due to the cost of childcare and COVID-19 restrictions on inter-household mixing, she was unable to work outside of school hours.

Alongside low-paid and insecure employment, Universal Credit was also a contributing factor. In particular, recipients stated that their payments had reduced since transferring from 'legacy benefits' and the calculations used to determine their payments was not transparent. For instance, even those who were earning the same amount of money from employment each month described

how the amount they received from UC varied from month to month. This made it impossible for them to plan and budget effectively, pushing them into precarity and financial insecurity.

10.2.3. Managing Household Budgets and Eating Less

Households described a number of different strategies that they used to attempt to cope with and address the challenges related to food poverty. Food budgets are often the most flexible, despite food being a necessity. Households described in great detail their food shopping experiences and strategies to enable limited budgets to go further. Outgoings such as housing and utility (gas and electric) payments were prioritised. Food budgets were allocated once these priority payments had been made. This meant that the food budget could vary greatly week to week. An unexpected financial crisis (e.g. replacing a broken oven or washing machine) meant that spending had to be curtailed elsewhere, usually the food budget.

Many stated that they had to compromise on their diets, having to choose between less of the expensive healthier foods, or more of the cheaper 'unhealthy' foods which are also often low quality. Households reported spending a great deal of time and effort managing their budgets and knew the prices of each item they bought, and in which stores they could purchase the cheapest items.

For households with children, ensuring they were fed was a priority for parents. Parents reported changing their own diets to eat what their children liked in order to avoid wasting food (and money). They also stated that they ate children's leftovers at the end of meals rather than cooking something separate for themselves. Parents also described skipping meals or not eating at all in order to ensure their children had enough to eat. For instance, Erica explained that during and before the COVID-19 lockdown she ate less because she could not afford to feed herself and her child.

10.2.4. Accessing Support Services

All households described how they accessed a range of formal support services in Hertfordshire, to some degree. These services allowed them to access food and/or financial support during the pandemic or for a specific crisis they had experienced. These services included free school meals, 'Herts Help', food banks and Citizens Advice. Households were mostly positive about their experiences of accessing support services but described how they had often struggled to find out where they could obtain help from. Support services were mostly found through word of mouth or from being referred by health professionals or other services. In line with data from the household survey, households in the interviews suggested that support services could be better and more widely advertised across Hertfordshire. For example, Paul suggested that there should be better signposting of the available services with a joined-up approach to help people navigate the complexity of the system more easily.

10.3. Service Provider Survey

Services supporting households experiencing food poverty across Hertfordshire were asked to complete an online survey about the role of their organisation in supporting households. Twenty-one organisations completed the survey. Of those, 11 were from the voluntary sector (mostly food banks), followed by four local government, two housing sector, two schools and one an NHS organisation. All of the organisations reported that they have a role in supporting households

experiencing food poverty. Half of the services stated that they provide multiple forms of support for residents (n=10). All, but one, service provider stated that they refer service users onto other organisations including Citizens Advice, mental health charities, food banks, adult and/or children's services, Herts Help and the Jobcentre. Some stated they refer onto other specialist services that provide advice about housing, immigration or being a carer. Only 10 service providers stated that they have a strategy or target directly related to addressing food poverty.

Service providers were also asked if they were aware of any specific population groups that they perceived to have unmet need in relation to food poverty. In particular, two organisations stated that those over the age of 65 have unmet needs because they are 'often too proud to accept support'. Another noted that Gypsy/Traveller and ethnic minority communities are often 'historically reluctant to reach out for support'. Numerous service providers also stated that the following population groups often have unmet need in relation to food poverty: those with long-term ill-health or disabilities; those living in temporary housing; families with Child Protection Plans; single-parent families; those furloughed due to COVID-19; and single-person households without children.

10.4. Focus Groups with Service Providers

Fifteen representatives from a range of service-providers supporting people in Hertfordshire in relation to food took part in one of three focus groups. The support services covered four sectors including children's services, voluntary food aid, housing and community, and money and adult services. There were three main themes from the focus groups: (1) perceived causes of food poverty; (2) current responses to food poverty; and (3) the need for a public health informed strategic response.

It was established that 'food poverty is poverty'. The majority of service providers agreed that the root cause of food poverty is a lack of money. Though the lack of money could be a consequence of a range of issues, often multiple. The discussions indicated that it was important to look beyond the simplistic causes or seek simple solutions. Participants agreed that a multifactorial approach to address the wider determinants of health, inequality and food poverty was required and any local responses needed to be multi-agency. For example, if an individual has issues with their housing 'they need to make sure that their housing is sorted out' before they can focus on dealing with issues such as food, health and employment. Linking these support services for residents will be relevant in supporting them with food. Expensive housing and Universal Credit payments were recognised as specific issues affecting Hertfordshire residents.

Whilst it was recognised that the main issue is a lack of money and inability to afford food, the services providers also suggested that there were many factors that might lead to someone requiring financial support, and in turn support in relation to food. For example, relationship breakdown, addiction, changes to benefits and mental ill health. It was also suggested that food poverty is not necessarily just about hunger, but also malnutrition.

10.4.1. Current Responses to Food Poverty in Hertfordshire

A range of services supporting people experiencing food poverty are available across Hertfordshire. However, the service providers stated that the provision was varied, and residents were often unaware of what was available to them. In addition, it was thought that some areas in Hertfordshire had more support services available than others.

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One of the main support services available to Hertfordshire residents was food banks, including those newly set-up to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, one of the main issues was the lack of regulation of these new organisations. One of the service providers suggested that there should be a registration scheme for food banks with associated guidelines. This would also allow HCC to map what services are available for who and make it easier for residents to be referred for the appropriate support.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, there had been a huge increase in the demand for food banks across Hertfordshire and that the demographics of the service-users had changed. The change in demographics also shifted throughout the pandemic. For instance, early in the pandemic (March 2020) it was mainly families with children, because parent(s) couldn't work due to the pandemic. The 'initially loss of jobs... and the benefit delays was horrendous' and this led to households with previously high incomes and high expenses seeking support for the first time. Another food bank stated that in the latter part of 2020 and early 2021, less families and more single men were seeking support with food as well as an increase in the numbers of older people who have traditionally not used food banks. There was consensus that those who had rarely or not accessed services in the past required different support, such as accessing the state benefits system for the first time or applying for new benefits they were previously unaware of.

Working with other organisations in partnership was viewed as positive and services themselves raised the need for better, more effective joined up collaboration in order to better support residents. This would also ensure that residents can better access the support services they need: 'what we actually want to do is work as a district-wide and actually support people the best we can. Rather than someone coming to our service then maybe going to another.' (Hazel, Food Bank Manager). Despite consensus that more effective collaboration is needed, there were good examples of existing partnership working from a range of organisations at local levels. Many organisations described how they now work with multiple charities and organisations to ensure that service-users' multiple needs are being met as best as possible.

10.4.2. Future Responses to Food Poverty in Hertfordshire

A major theme arising from the focus groups was concern that organisations are currently working in a fragmented and disjointed way in response to food poverty in Hertfordshire. Some organisations are working well together and some organisations and districts have also begun to develop strategies in response to food poverty. However, there was strong sentiment that the impact of these interventions could be greatly strengthened if the initiatives were countywide with strategic leadership and co-ordination to bring stakeholders together.

There were concerns about the lack of a formal database of support services. It was agreed that there was a risk that some families could fall between the 'gaps' and there would be missed opportunities to support them with food access as well as their other needs. The lack of registration or database also led to concerns that better regulation and monitoring was required, particularly of food banks. It was agreed that a formal database should be established to ensure residents are supported as effectively as possible.

Currently, the lack of a coordinated approach means that there are gaps in provision, impacting Hertfordshire residents' access to sufficient quantities of quality food that support their health and well-being. Service providers suggested strategic leadership and oversight is required, in particular from the HCC Public Health team. There was a general consensus that a food poverty strategy should

be developed for Hertfordshire. There was recognition that engagement with both local organisations providing support, and including the local communities living in Hertfordshire is needed to develop solutions and enable communities to help support each other.

10.5. Recommendations

In summary, an alternative to the current fragmented reactive response is a public health approach, with established priorities and outcomes, that is both preventative and sustainable in the longer-term, as opposed to one that provides food in reaction to an immediate crisis: ‘...there’s no point always focusing on down the river where there’s people drowning, and you are pulling them out, actually what’s going on up further in the river to cause the issue.’ (Hazel, Food Bank Manager). Based on the findings from this report, the research team from the University of Hertfordshire have developed three recommendations, detailed below:

- 1. Create an accessible countywide directory or database of services that support households struggling to access sufficient quantities of quality food across Hertfordshire.**
- 2. Establish strategic leadership to develop a countywide food poverty strategy informed by key stakeholders, including Hertfordshire residents who have or are experiencing food poverty.**
- 3. Set ambitious short, medium and long-term targets and priorities that aim to reduce the prevalence and risk of food poverty in Hertfordshire. Targets should include objective outcome measures.**

11. Future need

The needs of the population in relation to food poverty will have an affect locally and nationally on future service provision or policy direction. The latest (mid-2019) estimated population of Hertfordshire is 1,189,519. By mid-2041, the total population of Hertfordshire is projected to be 1,364,100 an increase of almost 15%. The trends in population need are likely to be significantly influenced by the measures to control the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic changes as a result, for example increases in unemployment. Some of the expected population trends are outlined below:

- **Increase in poverty** - Poverty rates previously have been stable at 22%.²⁵¹ Predictions suggest that the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to lead to reduced household incomes and increases in absolute poverty^{xxiv} in the coming years.²⁵²
- **Increase in food poverty** – The absolute number and percentage of those in food poverty is unknown however evidence does suggest there has been year on year increases in those experiencing food poverty demonstrated in the increases in need for services e.g. foodbanks²⁵³ and free school meals.²⁵⁴ Food poverty is expected to increase further based

^{xxiv} absolute poverty is a condition where household income is below a necessary level to maintain basic living standards (food, shelter, housing). This condition makes it possible to compare between different countries and also over time.

on increases in unemployment in the UK ²⁵⁵ and as result of the suggested increases in poverty above.

- **Widening health inequalities** - Evidence suggests there was a widening of health inequalities in the UK (even prior to covid-19).²⁵⁶ The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this trend. For example, the mortality rate from the virus in the most deprived areas has been more than double that of the least deprived.²⁵⁷
- **Widening health inequalities in ethnic minorities** – There have been significantly higher COVID-19 mortality rates in some ethnic minorities than those seen in the white population. For example, mortality among Black African and Black Caribbean groups is approximately double, while for Pakistani and Indian groups the mortality rate is 1.3 times that of the white population.²⁵⁸

It is not clear how health behaviours may change in the future as a result of the pandemic and how this will influence population need in the future. However, the evidence around the impact of COVID-19 on health behaviours, in the short term, demonstrates at the population level some of these behaviour changes to be as follows:

- ⇒ **Increase in alcohol consumption** – including binge drinking in the over 25s ²⁵⁹
- ⇒ **Decreases in smoking rates and e-cigarette use** ²⁶⁰
- ⇒ **Dietary behavioural changes** – in a nationally representative poll more than half of people report spending more time cooking, a third reported that they had eaten much or slightly healthier main meals, and a third reported that they had eaten more unhealthy snacks.²⁶¹
- ⇒ **Physical activity changes** – physical activity levels for adults had dropped during the first few weeks of full lockdown between mid-March and mid-May 2020. The proportion of the population classed as active dropped by 7.1% representing over 3 million fewer active adults.²⁶²

The impact of these changes in behaviour may also compound the already projected increases in overweight and obesity in children. ²⁶³ Poorer national mental health is also predicted, particularly among women and young adults. ^{264/ 265}

National strategy and policy changes

There has been a range of governmental measures implemented to support those in need as a result of the economic downturn. Some of these are due to expire, for example the uplift to Universal Credit which will have significant impact on the those in receipt of the benefit.

In July 2020, part one of the ‘National Food Strategy’ was launched and made recommendations for urgent action to address dietary inequalities and food poverty for children. Further, it identifies that COVID-19 has highlighted the inequities and failings of the UK food system.²⁶⁶ Part two was published in July 2021 which includes recommendations to extend the eligibility criteria for free school meals, launching a new ‘Eat and Learn’ initiative for schools, expanding the Healthy Start scheme, funding the holiday activities and food programme for the next three years and trialling a ‘Community Eatwell’ programme. A government white paper is expected in response in the next six months.²⁶⁷

12. Recommendations for action

The following recommendations for actions have been identified based on the evidence collated in this needs assessment. The food poverty key stakeholders (See **Appendix A**) were engaged with and helped to shape these recommendations. Hertfordshire County Council has recently set up a 'Building Life Chances' steering group aimed at reducing inequalities. It is led by Children's Services, Adult Care Services and Public Health which will oversee a programme that will enable work on food poverty.

Recommendation 1: Establish leadership on food poverty

Leadership on food poverty in Hertfordshire should draw on existing leaders, experts, as well as Hertfordshire residents who have experienced food poverty. A lead body is required to coordinate and steer local action to address food poverty in Hertfordshire. Often Local Authorities are best placed to do this.

Using the local authority food poverty needs assessment as a baseline there are clear actions to take forward a food poverty workstream.

Leadership will recognise that a food bank-only model will not tackle the root causes of food poverty. The model adopted should take a system-wide approach, there are clear links between the wider complex issues facing populations such as poverty and sustainability. It is recommended that work on food poverty is linked to existing workstreams such as these to increase resilience and raise the profile of the food poverty agenda.

⇒ **Recommendation 2: Form a Hertfordshire Food Poverty Alliance**

A Food Poverty Alliance will provide direction and collaboratively address food poverty in the County. A food poverty alliance will:

1. Bring together key partners to work together on a shared agenda to address food poverty
2. Consider Hertfordshire's position in food poverty action to indicate a 'baseline' and identifies the key areas for improvement.
3. Develop a food poverty action plan for the county.
4. Adopt a collaborative approach with the Alliance members.
5. Monitor progress and impact on local action to address food poverty.
6. Seek a robust method for measuring food poverty levels/trends in Hertfordshire at least annually for monitoring purposes.
7. Support the provision of a directory or database of support services in collaboration with partners

⇒ **Recommendation 3: Develop a Food Poverty Action Plan**

With guidance from the Food Poverty Alliance, a Hertfordshire Food Poverty Action Plan should be developed. This may be a county wide template that district councils can adopt or separately developed action plans for different areas noting the areas in greatest need. There may be opportunities for accessing available funding to support development (see Food Power, Sustain).

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A good Food Poverty Action Plan will include:

- Aims and objectives that include addressing the root causes of food poverty
- Be signed up to by a cross section of organisations in the public, voluntary and potentially private sector
- Use the assessment as set out in section 9 (based on the sustain impact tracker or similar tool) to baseline and monitor impact/progress including objective outcome measures.

⇒ **Recommendation 4: Establish a food aid network**

Food aid networks include members of services such as foodbanks, food pantries and other food aid schemes. The purpose of these networks allows for sharing of good practice and developing joint local solutions with examples of such networks in Suffolk, Brighton and Hove, and Islington.

Foodbanks in Hertfordshire have suggested this would be beneficial to connect with other services; share good practice particularly around provision of holistic support or onwards referrals; and provide consistency in services across the county.

Considering the significant increase in food aid services due to COVID-19 there may also be economies of scale that could be met by establishing a network for example through the distribution of surplus food. Dedicated resource would need to be identified to take this forward and this would not necessarily need to be led by the Local Authority.

APPENDIX A – Food Poverty Stakeholder Steering Group

A Food Poverty Steering Group was formed to inform and support the development of the Needs Assessment. Members from the following organisations represented the Food Poverty Stakeholder Steering Group.

Adult Care Services (Hertfordshire County Council)

Adult Care Services (Personalised Care Programme, Hertfordshire County Council)

Borehamwood Foodbank

Broxbourne Foodbank

Broxbourne Borough Council (Community Development)

Children's Services (Commissioning Team, Hertfordshire County Council)

Children's Services (Safeguarding Team, Hertfordshire County Council)

Community Services, Broxbourne Council

Complex Needs and Homelessness Services (Hertfordshire County Council)

Family Centre (East Herts One YMCA)

Family Centre (Stevenage Barnardo's)

Hatfield Foodbank

Hertford and District Foodbank

Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust

Hertfordshire Independent Living Service

Herts Community Foundation

Herts Help

Herts Inter Faith Forum

Herts Sports Partnership (Fit, Fed and Read)

Money Advice Unit (Hertfordshire County Council)

North Herts District Council (Environmental Health)

One Vision Watford

Public Health Nursing (NHS)

Public Health (Hertfordshire County Council)

Rickmansworth Foodbank

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Sustainability Team (Hertfordshire County Council)

The Vineyard Centre, Stevenage

The Vineyard Church, St. Albans

University of Hertfordshire

APPENDIX B – Services in Hertfordshire

There are many services and organisations across the county of Hertfordshire that can support individuals directly or indirectly with needs relating to food poverty.

The below information provides a brief overview of these services however it is unlikely to reflect the full extent of services in Hertfordshire.

Key services included:

1. **Monetary, employment and general advice services**
2. **Children and family services**
3. **Food provision services**
4. **Housing and homelessness support**
5. **Faith and voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sector groups**
6. **Other services**

1. Monetary, employment and general advice services

Monetary and employment advice services are usually free services to support people with a range of financial issues and concerns including advice around debt, benefits and employment.

Local services:

Service name	Summary	Contact
Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service (HCAS)	Promotes and develops the provision of advice-giving services to the citizens of Hertfordshire. There are ten Citizens Advice services in Hertfordshire, each a separate charity but all offering a similar service.	www.hcas.org.uk
Hertfordshire Macmillan Benefits Advice Service	Support and advice about money in times where cancer may be affecting a family or individual.	www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/money-and-benefits-advice/hertfordshire-macmillan-benefits-advice-service.aspx
Herts Help	Support with covering costs of personal social care, debt counselling, and benefits advice. Service can refer individuals to foodbanks and other types of support.	www.hertshelp.net/hertshelp.aspx
Mental Health Matters - Hertfordshire Employment Support	Mental Health Matters are working with Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust to provide employment related support to individuals who are also accessing the Hertfordshire Wellbeing IAPT service (a mental health and wellbeing service). This service is based in Watford, Welwyn, Hemel Hempstead and Hitchin.	www.mhm.org.uk/hertfordshire-employment-support
Money Advice Unit provided by Hertfordshire County Council	Provides benefits advice and advocacy to a range of client groups - carers, ACS clients, people in crisis, children with disability (CWD) cancer patients, mental health service-users etc. Also provides information, training and policy advice on benefits issues.	www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Adult-social-services/Money-and-benefits-advice/Money-and-benefits-advice.aspx

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Strive in Hertfordshire	Hertfordshire Mind and Hertfordshire County Council provide Support and Transition Routes into Volunteering and Employment (STRIVE) which provides one-to-one mentoring support for individuals facing barriers to employment.	www.hertsmindnetwork.org/strive-in-herts
Work solutions provided by Hertfordshire County Council Adult Care Services	Supports people with learning, physical or sensory disabilities; autism and mental ill health to find and stay in work.	www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/money-and-benefits-advice/work-solutions-help-finding-a-job/work-solutions.aspx
YC Hertfordshire provided by Hertfordshire County Council	A service for young people in Hertfordshire which provides youth work projects, information, advice, guidance, work related learning and wider support for young people.	www.ychertfordshire.org/careers/

2. Child and family services

Child and family services includes a range of services offered to pregnant women, families, babies and infants, children in schools and other settings.

Other local services – families and children:

Service name	Summary	Contact
Breakfast clubs as part of the National School Breakfast Programme (NSBP) in Hertfordshire Schools	<p>Provided in some Primary Schools in Hertfordshire. Breakfast clubs run in partnership with Magic Breakfast are provided at a lower cost to families (for example (£1.50 vs £5.50 per child/per day).</p> <p>Magic Breakfast is a registered charity in the UK ensuring that no child is too hungry to learn through the provision of healthy breakfast food and expert support to schools.</p>	Details vary by school.
Families First	<p>Families First are the Hertfordshire services that work together to support families who need extra help, also known as early help services. Families First can support with issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parenting • mental and physical health problems • drug or alcohol dependency • domestic abuse • school related concerns – such as your child not attending school • debt problems • risk of becoming homeless. 	www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/families-first/families-first.aspx#whatisit
Free School Meals in Hertfordshire	<p>Provided in Primary and Secondary schools across Hertfordshire. The main supplier is Herts Catering Limited.</p> <p>Eligibility is based on household income.</p>	www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Schools-and-education/At-school/Free-school-meals/Free-school-meals.aspx

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	Additional support is available such as uniform grants.	
Hertfordshire Family Centre Service (FCS)	<p>The Hertfordshire Family Centre Service aims to support the health and wellbeing of families and focuses on prevention from the earliest stage.</p> <p>There is an integrated service model between the Public Health Nurse Services (0-5 and 5-19 services) and the Family Support Service.</p> <p>The Hertfordshire FCS is provided in districts across Hertfordshire. The services can support family health and welfare and include for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • antenatal and postnatal care • nutritional support • breastfeeding support • introduction to solid food • screening and immunisations • supply of the Healthy Start Scheme • parenting skills and knowledge • public health nursing in schools <p>The FCS offers full service support to families who may be more vulnerable including mothers who are aged 20 or below and especially to those aged 16 and under, have a disability or learning difficulty, are a Child Looked After or are a Care Leaver (and therefore enhanced support will be offered up to the age of 25).</p> <p>The FCS in Hertfordshire is baby friendly initiative accredited, a UNICEF scheme, setting standards on breastfeeding, safer feeding, nutrition, and supporting close and loving relationships.</p>	www.hertsfamilycentres.org/family-centres.aspx
Public Health Nursing (PHN)	<p>Supports children aged 0 - 5 years and their families with health, development and wellbeing.</p> <p>PHN refer families to Food Banks and signpost to agencies when a family needs financial support.</p>	www.hertsfamilycentres.org/family-centres.aspx

3. Provision of Food

There are a range of services which offer a free or low-cost solution to affording or accessing food to those in need. This includes:

- Food banks - A total of 39 foodbanks were recorded in Hertfordshire in March 2021 (note this figure includes both centres and associated sites and is subject to change as new foodbanks are

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created or others close/reopen). Many foodbanks are associated with Trussell Trust and the others are provided independently.

- Other services that provide food to people across the county. The total number of these services is unknown and the below is unlikely to represent to full picture of food provision across Herts (for example community led initiatives or short-term projects).

Local services – Foodbanks:

Service name	District	Summary	Locations	Opening times
Broxbourne Foodbanks	Broxbourne	Trussell Trust associated foodbanks provided in 2 locations in Broxbourne. broxbourne.foodbank.org.uk	275 Holdbrook Court Holdbrook South Waltham Cross Herts EN8 7SL	Wed 1.30pm - 2.30pm
			Wormley Free Church Slipe Lane Wormley Herts EN10 6AA	Mon-Fri 4pm-5pm
Foodbanks in Dacorum – The DENS	Dacorum	Run in partnership with The Trussell Trust, DENS Foodbank provides up to three food parcels to anyone who is struggling in the community. There are 8 locations across Dacorum. www.dens.org.uk/our-services/foodbank/	DENS Dacorum Foodbank, The Hub, Paradise, Hemel Hempstead HP2 4TF	Mon-Fri 10am-12pm
			Way Inn Christian Centre, 268 High Street, Berkhamsted HP4 1AQ	Mon-Sat 9am-5pm
			St Peter & St Paul Church, High Street, Tring HP23 5AE	Mon-Fri 10am-12pm
			South Hill Centre, Cemetery Hill, Hemel Hempstead HP1 1JF	Mon-Fri 9am- 4.30pm
			Below centres are currently closed due to COVID-19 The Forum, Hemel Hempstead HP1 1DN	Closed due to COVID- 19
			DENS Day Centre - Hemel Hempstead HP1 1HT Liberty Tea Rooms – Hemel Hempstead HP1 1BS Christchurch Baptist Church – Kings Langley WD4 8ET	

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Bishop's Stortford Food bank	East Herts	A registered charity led foodbank. www.bishopsstortfordfoodbank.com/	34B, The Methodist Church, South St, Bishop's Stortford CM23 3AZ	Mon 10am-1pm Tues 10am-4pm Thurs 10am- 4pm
Buntingford and Villages Food Bank and Community Support	East Herts	A community led foodbank www.facebook.com/buntingfordfoodbank	Buntingford in East Herts	Delivery only
Hertford and District Food Bank	East Herts	Trussell Trust associated foodbank hertforddistrict.foodbank.org.uk/	Hertford United Reformed Church, Cowbridge, Hertford SG14 1PG	Pre booked collection only
Borehamwood Foodbank	Hertsmere	Trussell Trust associated foodbank borehamwood.foodbank.org.uk/	291 Shenley Rd, Borehamwood WD6 1TG	Mon 1pm-3.30pm Thu 10am-12.30pm
Potters Bar Foodbank	Hertsmere	Trussell Trust associated foodbank	Wayside Jubilee Centre Potters Bar EN6 5NE	Sat 12.30-2.30pm
Letchworth Foodbanks	North Herts	Trussell Trust associated foodbank provided in 3 locations	Mrs Howard Memorial Hall, Norton Way South Letchworth Garden City SG6 1NX	Tue and Fri 10am-12pm
			Our Lady's Scout Hall Church of our Lady Immaculate & St Andrew 16 Nightingale Road Hitchin SG5 1QS	Tue and Fri 10am-12pm
			St Mary's Church Hall Church Street Baldock SG7 5AE	Tue and Fri 10am-12pm
Letchworth Garden City Foodbank	North Herts	Trussell Trust foodbank	St Paul's Church Office, 179 Pixmore Way, Letchworth Garden City SG6 1QT	Unknown
Codicote Food Bank	North Herts	Food parcels available for residents in need	119 High Street, Codicote SG4 8UA	Unknown

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Royston Foodbank	North Herts	Church run foodbank	Royston Evangelical Church, York Way, Royston SG8 5US	Wed and Sat 9-11am
St Albans and District Foodbank	St. Albans	Trussell Trust associated foodbanks provided in 7 locations across St. Albans. stalbandsdistrict.foodbank.org.uk/	Cunningham Hub, 207 Cell Barnes Lane St Albans AL1 5PX	Tues 4-5.30pm
			Christadelphian Church Hall, 4-6 Abbots Avenue, St Albans AL1 2HX	Wed 12.30-2.30pm
			Hilldyke Community Centre, 17 Hilldyke Road Wheathampstead AL4 8TU	Thurs 12.30-2.30pm
			Crabtree Church, 139 Crabtree Lane Harpenden AL5 5RD	Fri 1-3pm
			Warehouse, 28 - 30 Coldharbour Lane Harpenden AL5 4UN	Tues 12pm-3pm, Thurs 11am-3pm, Fri 12-3pm
			New Greens Christ Church 3 High Oaks St Albans AL3 6DJ	Tues 1-3pm
			(Temporary) London Colney Parish Council, Caledon Community Centre Caledon Road London Colney AL2 1PU	Fri 10am-12pm
Kings Pantry Foodbank	St Albans	Coordinated by The Salvation Army and Bethany Community Church (which operated as the King's Pantry). https://bethanycc.uk/kingspantry/	St. Albans wide	Delivery only
The Vineyard Care Centre	St. Albans	Church provided foodbank. Provides food, as well as other necessities including baby and children's clothes, and free school meals in the holidays. www.thevineyardchurch.co.uk/compassion/	7 Brick Knoll Park, St Albans, AL1 5UG	Mon 10am-12pm
				Wed 1-2.15pm

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The Food Shed at the Vineyard Centre	Stevenage	Church provided foodbank http://www.stevenage-vineyard.co.uk/compassion/foodshed/	The Vineyard Centre, Unit 1, The Orbital Centre, Cockerell Close, Stevenage SG1 2NB	Wed 12-2pm (plus appointments tues-fri)
Stevenage Community Food Bank	Stevenage	A partnership between Stevenage Community Food Bank and Stevenage Citizen Advice. https://stevenagecommunityfoodbank.org.uk/	Daneshill house, Danestrete, Stevenage SG1 1BY	Fri 6-7.45pm
Rickmansworth Foodbank	Three Rivers	Trussell Trust associated foodbanks – 4 locations rickmansworth.foodbank.org.uk/locations/	The Mill Cafe, Methodist Church, Berry Lane, Mill End WD3 7HJ	Tues 2-4pm Fri 1-3
			Croxley Green Baptist Church, 225 Baldwins Lane, Croxley Green WD3 3LH	Mon 1-3pm
			St Lawrence Church, High Street, Abbots Langley WD5 0AS	Closed due to COVID-19
			Pop-up Cafe, Sarratt Village Hall WD3 6AS	Delivery only
Watford Food Bank	Watford	Trussell Trust associated foodbank watfordfoodbank.co.uk	Unit 5, The Empire Centre Imperial Way, Watford WD24 4YH	Mon-Sat 10am-1pm
Red Trust Bushey	Watford	A foodbank is provided as part of Red Trust a community and faith charity. https://redtrustbushey.org/foodbank	Church House, Rectory Lane, WD23 1BD	Fri 10am-12pm
Hatfield Foodbank	Welwyn Hatfield	Trussell Trust associated foodbank hatfield.foodbank.org.uk/	Gracemead Church, Gracemead House, Woods Avenue, Hatfield AL10 8HX	Tue 12-2pm
Open Heavens Christian Centre Foodbank	Welwyn Hatfield	Open Heavens Christian Centre operates a Food Bank which collects and gives food to meet the needs of families struggling to put food on their table due to unemployment. Supports homeless adults and children in need of food and clothing during holiday period. www.openheavenshatfield.com	62a, Town Centre, Hatfield AL10 0JJ	Fri 1-4pm

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New Zion Christian Fellowship	Welwyn Hatfield	Church run foodbank. Vouchers available from front line services/ organisations including Family Centres, CAB & CAP.	140 Cole Green Lane, WGC, AL7 3JE	Wed 9-11.00am
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Other food services:

Service name	District	Summary	Further info
Herts Independent Living Service (HILS) commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council	County wide	<p>HILS is the community meal provider for Hertfordshire County.</p> <p>A provision of hot meals delivered for adults in Hertfordshire, to their home, at a low cost.</p> <p>To be eligible adults either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have difficulty preparing a meal safely • have a mental or physical disability • have a carer who is unwell or on holiday • have just come out of the hospital or recovering from an illness • are unable to cook meals for yourself after someone dies <p>COVID-19 food parcels were provided for those who were shielding between April and August 2020.</p>	www.hertsindependentliving.org
Salvation Army is a Christian Church and a Registered Charity	County wide	Can provides emergency food parcels and helps with utilities in a crisis	https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/st-albans
JEDIDIAH a registered charity	County wide (but not all districts)	<p>Food Parcels- Bags of Hope established 14/5/20.</p> <p>Provided for families who attend schools in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheshunt/ Waltham Cross • Hoddesdon • Stevenage • Ware • Welwyn Garden City, Hatfield 	https://www.jedidiah.org.uk/

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Hearts Helping Herts a registered charity	Broxbourne	A newly registered charity (since September 2020) providing food support to vulnerable families. Location is The Beaumont Community Centre, 6 Rowlandsfields, Turners Hill, Cheshunt, Waltham Cross EN8 9BG. Opening Times: EVERY Sunday 2-4pm. Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month 4:30-6:30pm.	https://www.facebook.com/heartshelpingherts/
Gratitude a Registered Charity	Hertsmere	Running a community pantry which redistributes surplus food through free meals projects, community pantry and a network of local charities. The charity aims to fight both hunger and food waste.	https://www.gratitude.charity/
Ashwell Food Pantry a project of the St. Mary's Ashwell Church	North Herts	Food pantry	http://stmarysashwell.org.uk/pantry/
Best Before Café Letchworth	North Herts	Surplus or unsold supermarket food is donated to the café and can be collected by residents for a small donation.	https://bestbeforecafe.co.uk/
Feed Up Warm Up Hitchin a registered charity	North Herts	Food parcels available for those in need across the district	http://feedupwarmup.co.uk/
Hitchin Food Rescue Hub provided as a project by Getting Rooted C.I.C. Hitchin	North Herts	Surplus or unsold supermarket food is donated to the club and can be collected by residents for a small donation.	https://www.foodrescuehub.uk/
Hitchin Food Provision Team provided by Hitchin Partnership a registered charity	North Herts	Provide supermarket vouchers for families with school age children who are struggling and suffering additional financial hardship due to the Covid-19 pandemic.	http://www.hitchinpartnership.org/
Ickleford Community Larder	North Herts	Offering essential food parcels and rescue food for local residents	https://www.facebook.com/IcklefordCommunityLarder/
The Need Project a registered charity operating in Bedfordshire and	North Herts	Provide food parcels and essential items to people who are struggling financially.	www.theneedproject.co.uk

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North herts (Letchworth)			
Park Street Residents Association (PSRA) A community group providing a local food	St Albans	A voluntary organisation providing a local foodbank/food parcels working with two local schools - How Wood Primary School and Nursery and Park Street Primary Schools. Funding is through crowd funding and donations. This service has been set up during the covid-19 period.	https://psra.org.uk/
ASCEND (South Oxhey) 'The Step In – Take Out Food Hub'	Three Rivers	The Food Hub is available to those in need living in South Oxhey and Carpenders Park. The hub stocks near to date, seasonal and surplus food along with basic personal products and pet food. Open twice a week (Monday 10am to 1pm and Thursday 2pm to 4pm) but visits are currently limited to once a week.	https://www.ascend.org.uk/
Mill End Community Trust	Three Rivers	Operates a Cafe and Foodbank (Rickmansworth Foodbank) alongside a range of other community support services for example financial support and plans for a community growing garden.	www.millendcommunitytrust.org/food-bank
Manna Food Project	Watford	A community sector service as part of Watford Elim Church, providing food parcels to individuals and families in the community.	01923 221 544
St Helen's In-House Food Bank within the Roman Catholic Church	Watford	Food parcels are provided to the local community with the food coming from donations. This service has been set up during the covid-19 period.	https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/watfordnorth/st-helens-covid-action-group/
Watford One Vision Food Programme	Watford	Provides food parcels and meals to households in Watford in need over the covid-19 pandemic.	https://www.onevisionproject.org/
Sewa Day Watford	Watford	Helping local foodbanks and shelters by collecting food bags from people's front doors	www.sewaday.org/

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Food for All	Watford	A charity providing free hot meals and food bank in Watford (among other areas across the UK). Gokula Cafe, 65 Market Street, Watford, WD18 0PR Referral is not required. Provided on Monday and Thursday: 11am to 3pm Every Wednesday: 11am to 1pm – by appointment only (suitable for elderly, families, organisations).	https://foodforalluk.com/watford/
Cellar Club – Food for the Homeless & Vulnerable provided by the Welwyn Garden City United Reformed Church	Welwyn Hatfield	Provision of free meals – on Thursday afternoons 4.15pm – can just turn up, no need to book	Welwyn Garden City United Reformed Church AL8 6PS http://www.wgcurc.org.uk/

4. Housing and Homelessness Support

Hertfordshire County Council has responsibility for commissioning housing related support services, while the district councils have responsibility for meeting the duty to relieve homelessness and the duty to prevent homelessness.

Local services:

Service name	District	Summary	Contact
Hertfordshire County Council – Complex Needs Services	County wide	Overall commissioning of county wide housing related support services.	NA
Catalyst - Britannia Foyer	Broxbourne	Temporary housing support for young single homeless people aged 16-25 with support needs and young single parents.	Bishops' College, Churchgate, Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, EN8 9XD www.broxbourne.gov.uk
Catalyst Osbourne House	Broxbourne	Temporary housing support for young single homeless people aged 16-25 with low-medium support needs.	As above.
Dacorum Emergency Night Shelter (DENS)	Dacorum	Temporary and short-term accommodation for individuals and families. Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day Centre & Open Space – Daytime havens where people can get a hot meal, develop their skills and seek advice The Elms Hostel – Providing temporary 	DENS Day Centre, Bury Lodge, 1 Queensway, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 1HT http://www.dens.org.uk

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		<p>accommodation to those facing homelessness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move On Service – A transition service for residents who are ready to take the next step on from The Elms, however still require support around independent living • Resettlement Service – Supporting clients who are moving from the Elms into council, social housing or private rented accommodation • Foodbank – Providing emergency food supplies and household provision to struggling local families • Social Enterprise Projects – Development of employability skills and self-confidence in a supportive environment 	
Feed Up Warm Up charity	North Herts and Stevenage	<p>Two hubs open, one evening per week, providing services for homeless people to meet basic needs including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a meal • advice from the team • haircuts • feet tended • clothing or toiletries 	<p>The Scout Hut, Our Lady's Church, Grove Road, Hitchin</p> <p>St Andrew & St George Church, The corner of St George's Way and Cuttys Lane, Stevenage, SG1 1XX</p> <p>http://feedupwarmup.co.uk/</p>
Haven First	North Herts & Stevenage	Registered charity providing shelter and support for the homeless in North Herts (Hitchin) and Stevenage. Can provide food deliveries to those in need.	https://www.havenfirst.org.uk/
Hightown HA - Dacorum Young People's Housing	Dacorum	Housing support for young single homeless people with support needs.	<p>30 George Street, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 5HJ</p> <p>http://www.hpcha.org.uk</p>
YMCA East Herts (Bishops Stortford) and the Fleur Dell: The Night shelter Bishops Stortford	East Herts	Registered charity providing support to young people including supported housing, an emergency crash-pad facility and personal development programmes as well as information, advice and guidance for career and educational development.	<p>4 Northgate End, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 2EX</p> <p>www.easthertsymca.com</p>
Catalyst - Hertsmere Lots Scheme	Hertsmere	Support for young single people aged 16-25 with low support needs who are homeless or in housing need. Including young pregnant women and single parents with children. Must have a	<p>c/o Homeless Persons Unit, Hertsmere Borough Council, Civic Offices, Elstree Way, Borehamwood, WD6 1WA</p> <p>www.hertsmere.gov.uk</p>

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		local connection to Hertsmere Borough Council area.	
Hertsmere Sapphire Independent Housing - Townsend House	Hertsmere	Provides accommodation and support to a diverse resident group.	135 Aycliffe Road, Borehamwood, WD6 4HA www.sih.org
North Herts Catalyst - N Herts YP Service	North Herts	Support for young single homeless people aged 16-25 with support needs, including care leavers. Including single parents with children. Priority given to applicants with a local connection to the North Herts area.	North Hertfordshire District Council, Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3JF http://www.north-herts.gov.uk
Stevenage Haven - North Herts Sanctuary	North Herts	A registered charity providing support to those experiencing homelessness in North Hertfordshire. Two sites - Hitchin and Stevenage.	25 Nightingale Road, Hitchin, SG5 1QU www.stevenagehaven.org.uk
St Mungo's operate through probation in St Albans and Hemel Hempstead	St Albans	Registered charity, St Mungo's outreach teams go out each night to meet people who are homeless and to help them off the streets. Working alongside Hightown Housing who operate Martin House, Kent House and Open-door night shelter. Martin House - Hightown Housing Association provides temporary accommodation for single homeless men over the age of 25 with support needs.	Martin House 23-25 Upper Lattimore Road, St Albans, AL1 3UD http://www.hpcha.org.uk
St Albans Open Door	St Albans	Drop-in day service & night shelter	8 Bricket Road, St Albans, AL1 3JX www.opendoorstalbens-district.org
Kent House - Hightown Housing Association	St Albans	Kent House provides temporary accommodation for 16 single homeless people and 2 couples with support needs. The hostel is located in St Albans City Centre and is within easy access of statutory and voluntary agencies.	1 New Kent Road, St Albans, AL1 3XF www.hightownha.org.uk/care-and-support/scheme-search/kent-house/
Emmaus	St Albans	Homelessness charity.	Emmaus Hill End Lane, St Albans, AL4 0FE www.emmaus.org.uk/st-albens
Catalyst - Artisan Crescent, St Albans	St Albans	Housing support for young people at risk aged 16-25 with support needs. Can also accommodate 1 single parent with children under	66 Artisan Crescent, St Albans, AL3 5UL http://www.chg.org.uk

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		12 months old. Must have a local connection to the area.	
Centre 33 (St Albans) Limited	St Albans	A registered charity, Centre 33 provides a service for people who are homeless and disadvantaged including a Day Centre.	2a Spicer Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 4PQ, United Kingdom http://www.centre33.org
St Albans Action for Homeless	St Albans	A registered charity which provides food, clothing and also fundraising to support homelessness.	https://www.actionforhomeless.co.uk/
Stevenage Haven	Stevenage	Registered charity providing housing support for single homeless people aged 18+. Priority given to applicants with a local connection to Stevenage (at least 6 months living in the area).	6 Ditchmore Lane, Stevenage, SG1 3LJ www.stevenagehaven.org.uk
Catalyst - Young Persons Services	Stevenage	Housing support for young single homeless people aged 16-25 with support needs, including those with low level drug, alcohol or mental health issues. Priority to applicants with a local connection to Stevenage Borough Council area.	Hutton House, 18 Bradman Way, Stevenage, SG1 5RE www.chg.org.uk
Group for The Rootless in Watford (GROW)	Watford	A registered charity offering medium to long term hostel accommodation to vulnerable, homeless men in and around the Watford area.	Grow House 36 Rickmansworth Road, Watford, WD18 7HT www.growhostel.org.uk
Watford YMCA	Watford	Registered charity providing housing support to young people.	YMCA West and Central Herts Charter House, Charter Place, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD17 2RT https://oneymca.org
Hightown HA - Young People's Housing Service Watford	Watford & Hemel Hempstead	A young people's housing service in Watford and Hemel Hempstead provides accommodation and support for young people aged between 16-24 years.	60 Rickmansworth Road, Watford, WD18 7JA www.hightownha.org.uk
New Hope	Watford, Three Rivers & Hertsmere	Registered charity providing homelessness services. including: The Sanctuary Emergency Accommodation and the Community Home	www.newhope.org.uk
YMCA West and Central Herts	Welwyn Hatfield	Registered charity providing housing support to young people.	Welwyn Garden City 90 Peartree Lane, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 3UL www.oneymca.org
Hightown HA	Welwyn Hatfield	Support for homeless in Welwyn & Hatfield Borough.	Mably House 111 Lemsford Road, Hatfield, AL10 0DT

5. Faith and voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sector groups

There are various faith and community groups across the county of Herts. Some examples are as below, however please note there are many other smaller groups that operate in Hertfordshire.

Name	Description
The Hertfordshire Inter Faith Forum (HIFF)	A Forum including most large faith groups in the county. https://e-voice.org.uk/hertsinterfaithhub/
Hertfordshire Asian Women's Network	A voluntary organisation providing support specific to Asian women in Hertfordshire including language skills, support around money and finance, a social group and a community growing garden. http://hawaherts.co.uk/
One Vision Watford	One Vision is a community project which provides practical support to vulnerable individuals and families in the district of Watford. One Vision promotes networking and partnerships with local business and community organisations through the exchange of information and co-ordinated activities. https://www.onevisionproject.org/ One Vision responded to the Covid-19 pandemic (set up in March 2020). Support is provided to those who self-identify as needing relief as a result of inequalities caused by food poverty and social deprivation. Hot meals, food bags and other essential items are provided. The One Vision Hub is open Monday-Saturday 10am-3pm. During this time, we receive food donations which are then sorted into food bags and those items which can be used by the kitchen team will be used to make hot meals. The meals are delivered to the Watford community daily (Mon-Fri). Food parcels are delivered twice weekly to recipients.
Herts Community Foundation	An independent charity that aims to encourage local philanthropy, the giving of time, resources or both by local people to help support their local communities. https://www.hertscf.org.uk/
Communities First	Communities 1st develops, connects and supports local voluntary and community organisations, helping to improve the quality of people's lives across the districts of St. Albans and Hertsmere. https://www.communities1st.org.uk/
Stevenage World Forum for Ethnic Communities	A registered charity aiming to give the ethnic communities a voice and platform. https://www.stevenageworldforum.org
Watford African-Caribbean Association (WACAS)	WACAS aims to protect, promote and support the interests of the African and Caribbean community in and around Watford

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	through the provision of a range cross-generational user-led services. https://www.wacas.org.uk/
Sikh Gurdwara, Watford	Sikh Gurdwara provide food to those in need in the Watford area.
Oshwal Centre and Jain Temple, Potters Bar	Oshwal Centre and Jain Temple provide food to those in need in the Potters Bar area.
Bhaktivedanta Manor, Watford	Provide food to those in need in the Watford area.

6. Other services

Other services as outlined below may indirectly support those facing or in food poverty. Furthermore, these types of services are key partners in referring adults and families for more support with financial needs or food access needs.

Other local services		
Service type & summary	Services available	Weblinks
Healthy Lifestyle Services Supports peoples physical health and wellbeing commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council.	Hertfordshire Healthy Lifestyle Service Stop smoking services Weight management Sexual health Drugs and alcohol services Hertfordshire Healthy Hubs In addition, there are a range of services provided by District and Borough Councils, and other organisations in the county.	www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/health-in-herts/health-in-herts.aspx https://www.healthyhubs.org.uk/home.aspx
Mental Health Services Supports adults and/or children who may have mental ill-health.	HPFT Adult Community Mental Health Services HPFT Wellbeing Service (IAPT) Herts Mind Bereavement services Cruse Bereavement Care (grieving and isolation advice, online and over the phone) JustTalk Herts Herts Help	www.hpft.nhs.uk www.hertsmindnetwork.org www.justtalkherts.org www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/births-deaths-marriages-and-citizenship/deaths/bereavement-services.aspx#bereavement
Vulnerable Children and Adults' Services These services support those who may be vulnerable.	Safeguarding adults services Adults Social Care Children's services Domestic abuse services	www.hertfordshire.gov.uk

APPENDIX C – Access to Supermarkets in Hertfordshire

Accessibility Analysis: Journey Times to Class B Supermarkets carried out by Hannah Regis and Joshua Bethell Joshua.Bethell@hertfordshire.gov.uk Hannah.Regis@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Index of Multiple Deprivation Decile showing Supermarket A Locations

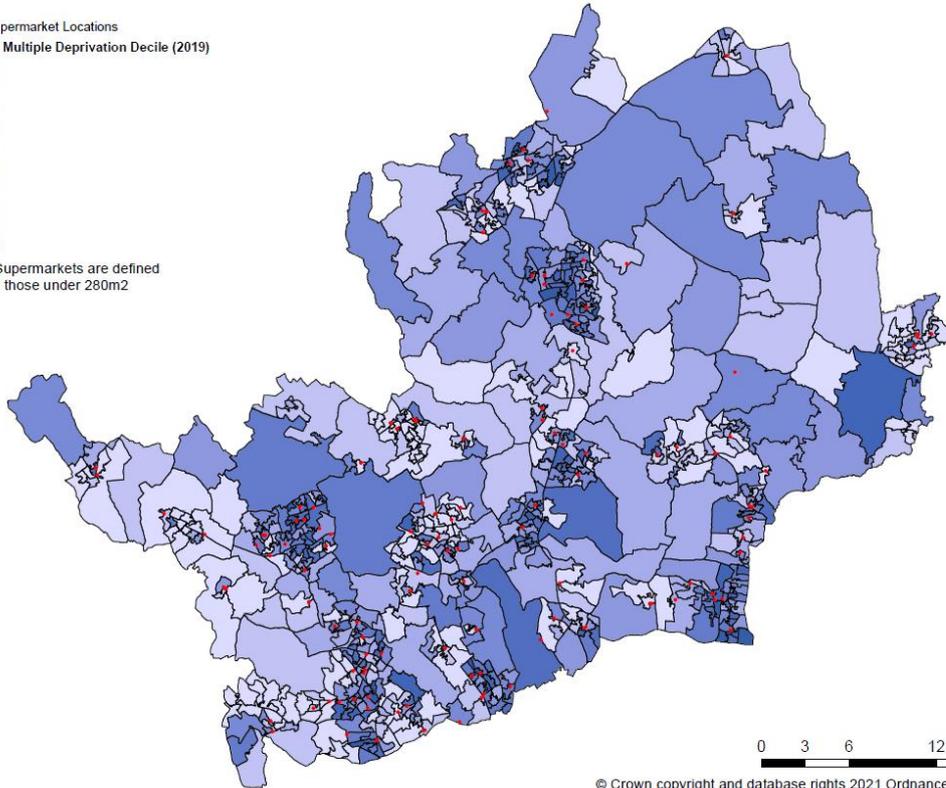
Key

• Supermarket Locations

Index of Multiple Deprivation Decile (2019)

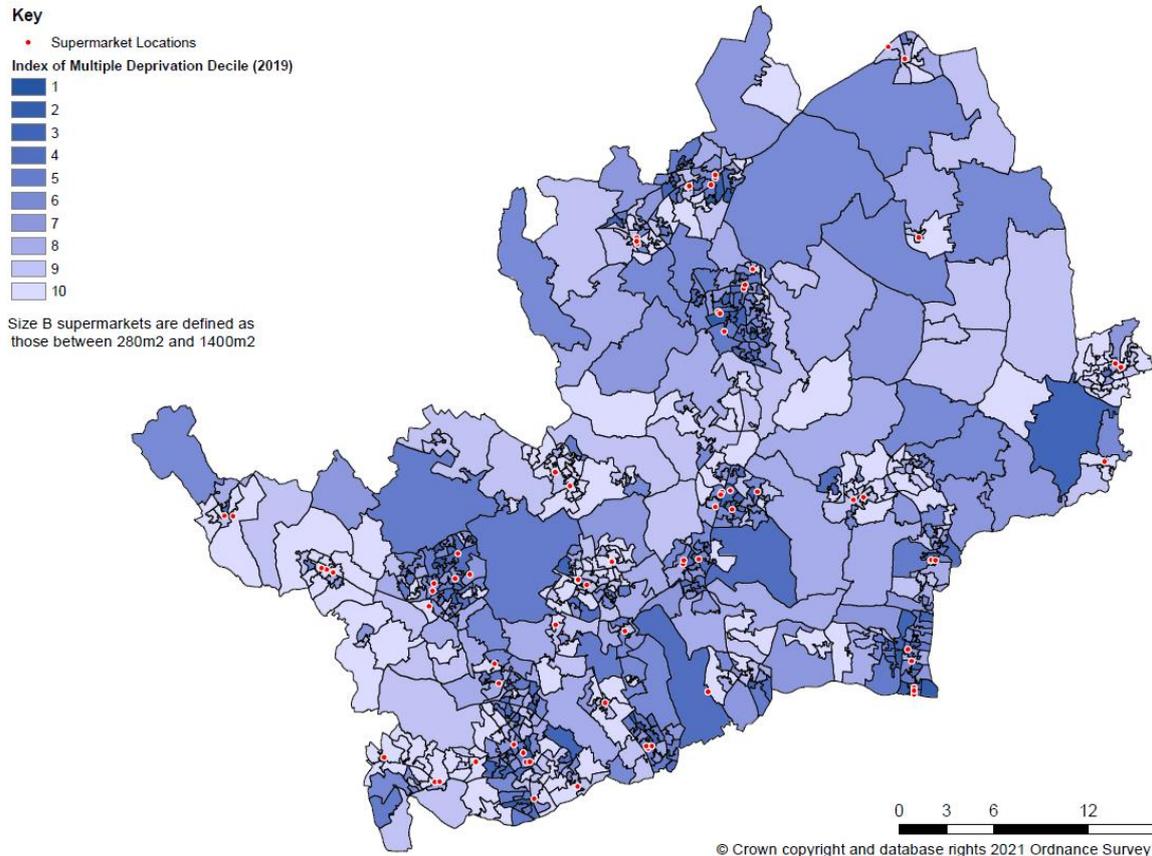
- 1
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- 10

Size A Supermarkets are defined as those under 280m²

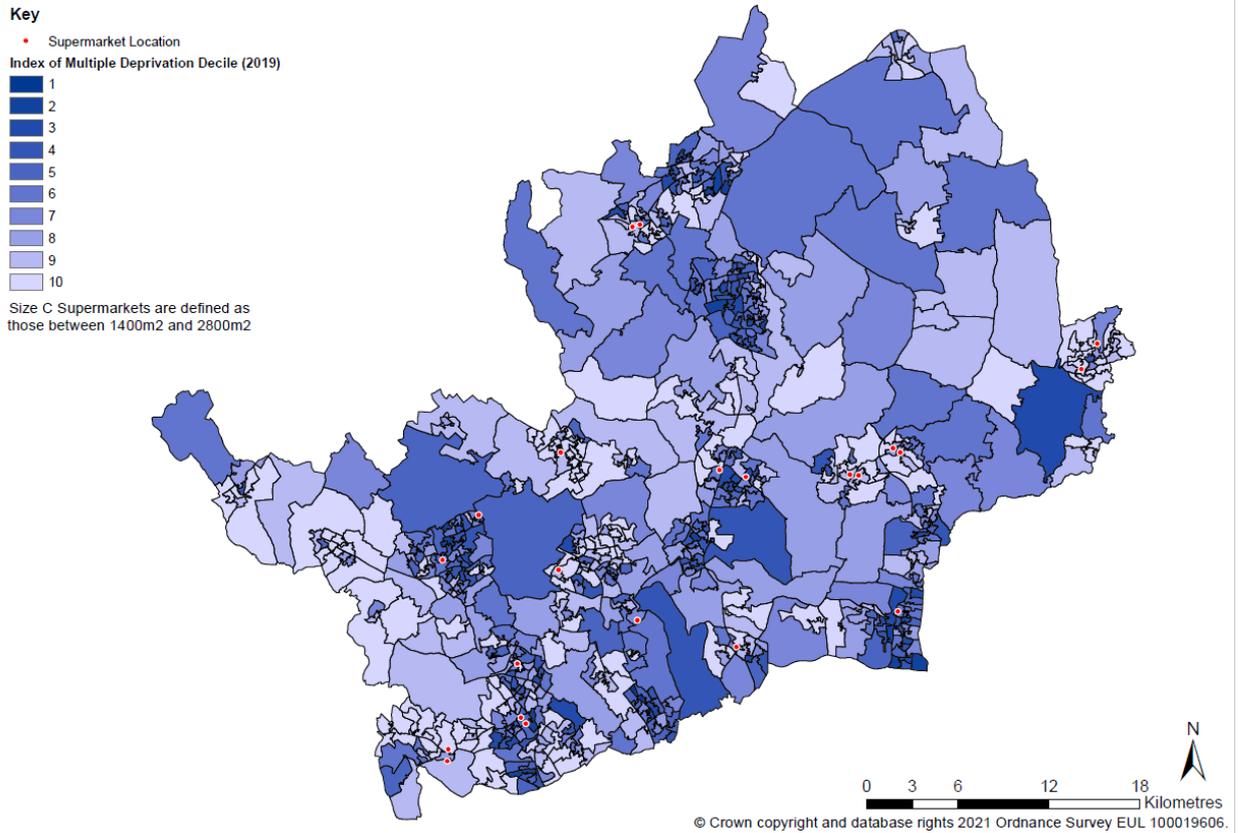


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Index of Multiple Deprivation Decile showing Supermarket B Locations



Index of Multiple Deprivation Decile showing Supermarket C Locations



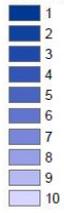
FOOD POVERTY NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2021

Index of Multiple Deprivation Decile showing Supermarket D Locations

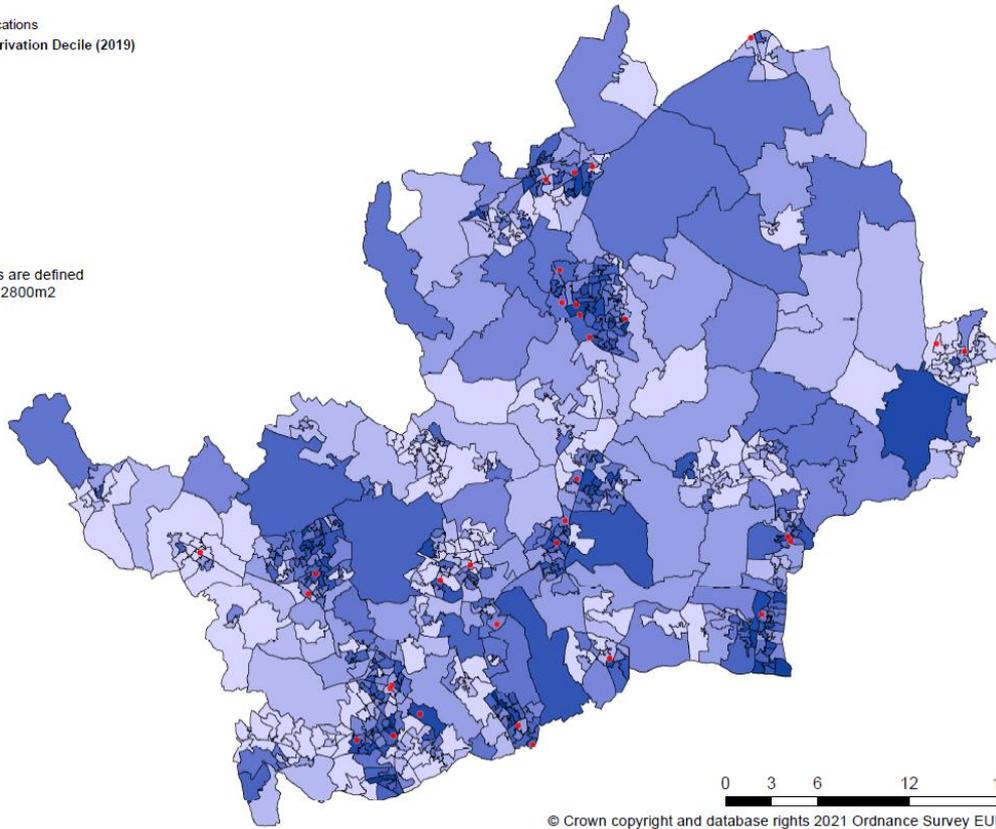
Key

• Supermarket Locations

Index of Multiple Deprivation Decile (2019)



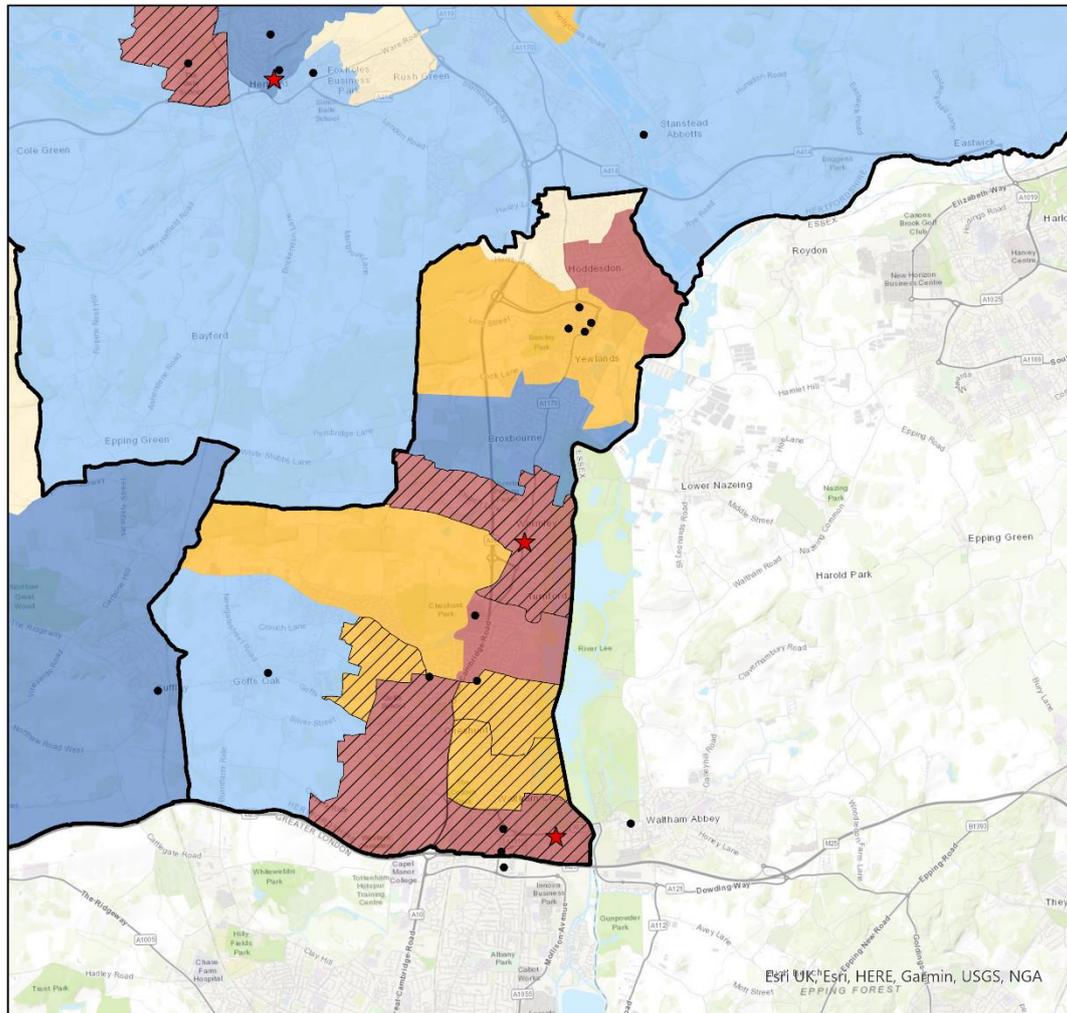
Size D Supermarkets are defined as those above 2800m²



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APPENDIX D – Other maps for food poverty risk

Map of Broxbourne



▭ Hertfordshire Districts

★ Food bank

• Chain supermarket

Hertfordshire Benefits Claimants

% under 65 claiming benefits

▨ 17.48-24.94% (top quintile)

High Risk Population Hertfordshire

% under 65 at higher risk

■ ≤6.7

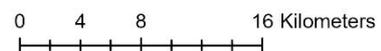
■ ≤8.2

■ ≤11.9

■ ≤14.8

■ ≤23.6

Data from 2011 Census, 2020 DWP, 2020 OS, 2019 ONS
 High risk includes low income households with dependent children or single adults on low incomes. Benefits data are from the Working Age Claimant Group (May 2020).

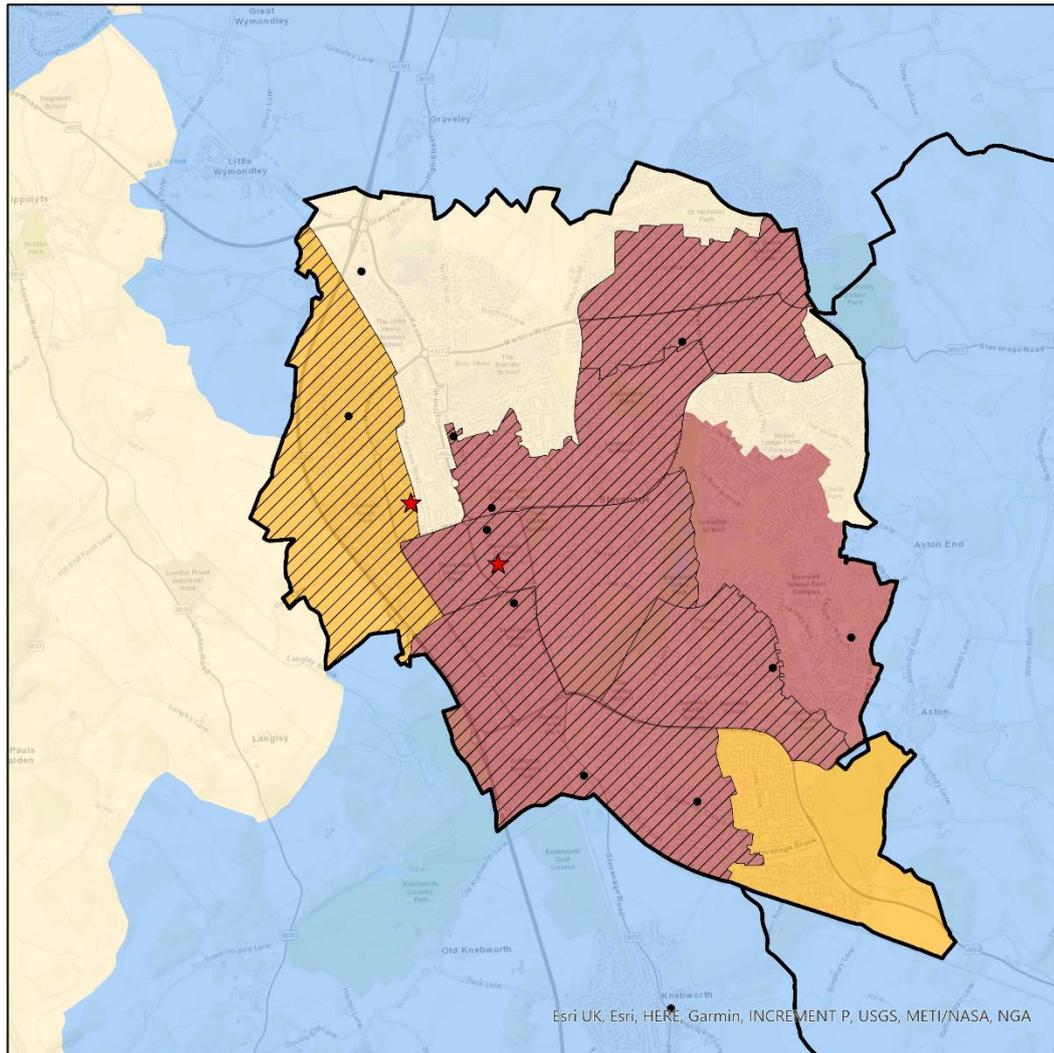


Contains National Statistics data

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Map of Stevenage



▭ Hertfordshire Districts

★ Food bank

• Chain supermarket

Hertfordshire Benefits Claimants

% under 65 claiming benefits

▨ 17.48-24.94% (top quintile)

High Risk Population Hertfordshire

% under 65 at higher risk

■ ≤6.7

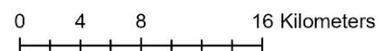
■ ≤8.2

■ ≤11.9

■ ≤14.8

■ ≤23.6

Data from 2011 Census, 2020 DWP, 2020 OS, 2019 ONS High risk includes low income households with dependent children or single adults on low incomes. Benefits data are from the Working Age Claimant Group (May 2020).

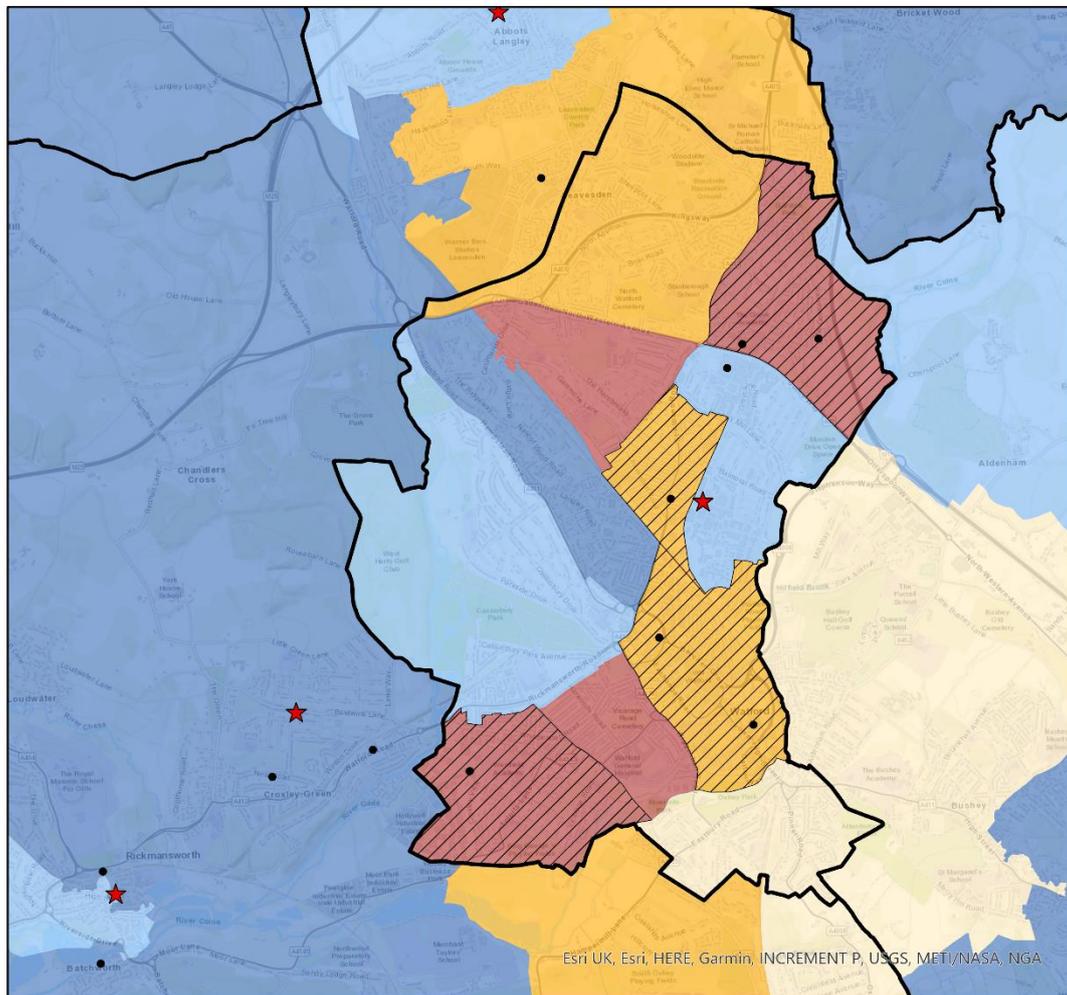


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Map of Watford



▭ Hertfordshire Districts

★ Food bank

• Chain supermarket

Hertfordshire Benefits Claimants

% under 65 claiming benefits

▨ 17.48-24.94% (top quintile)

High Risk Population Hertfordshire

% under 65 at higher risk

≤6.7

≤8.2

≤11.9

≤14.8

≤23.6

Data from 2011 Census, 2020 DWP, 2020 OS, 2019 ONS
High risk includes low income households with dependent children or single adults on low incomes. Benefits data are from the Working Age Claimant Group (May 2020).



0 4 8 16 Kilometers

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