Bags of Taste
IMPACT REPORT

2024-2025

Been supported by over

33

FABULOUS FUNDERS

Worked with over

736

REFERRAL PARTNERS

21

LOCATIONS

2,400

PEOPLE

Supported through the Bags of Taste Mentored home cooking programme

Worked with over

192

WONDERFUL VOLUNTEERS

93%

found ways to

REDUCE SPENDING

As an average, participants told us they could save

£18.05 A WEEK

£938.60 A YEAR

76%

COMPLETED

91%

Out of those completed:

MORE CONFIDENT

92%

Out of those completed:

COOK MORE

CHANGING DIETS | CHANGING LIVES

Bags of Taste

CHANGING DIETS | CHANGING LIVES

2024-2025

We know many people enjoy community based cookery classes, BUT they don't work for everyone, especially the most disadvantaged in our community.

The **BAGS OF TASTE** programme is designed to support those who experience multiple challenges to eating well and our aim is to help them to improve their diets for the long term.

By delivering the programme to people in their own homes, it's inclusive, accessible and flexible.

Today, we work with around

2,400

people a year across

21

locations of the UK, in their own homes.

OUR BENEFICIARIES

2024-2025

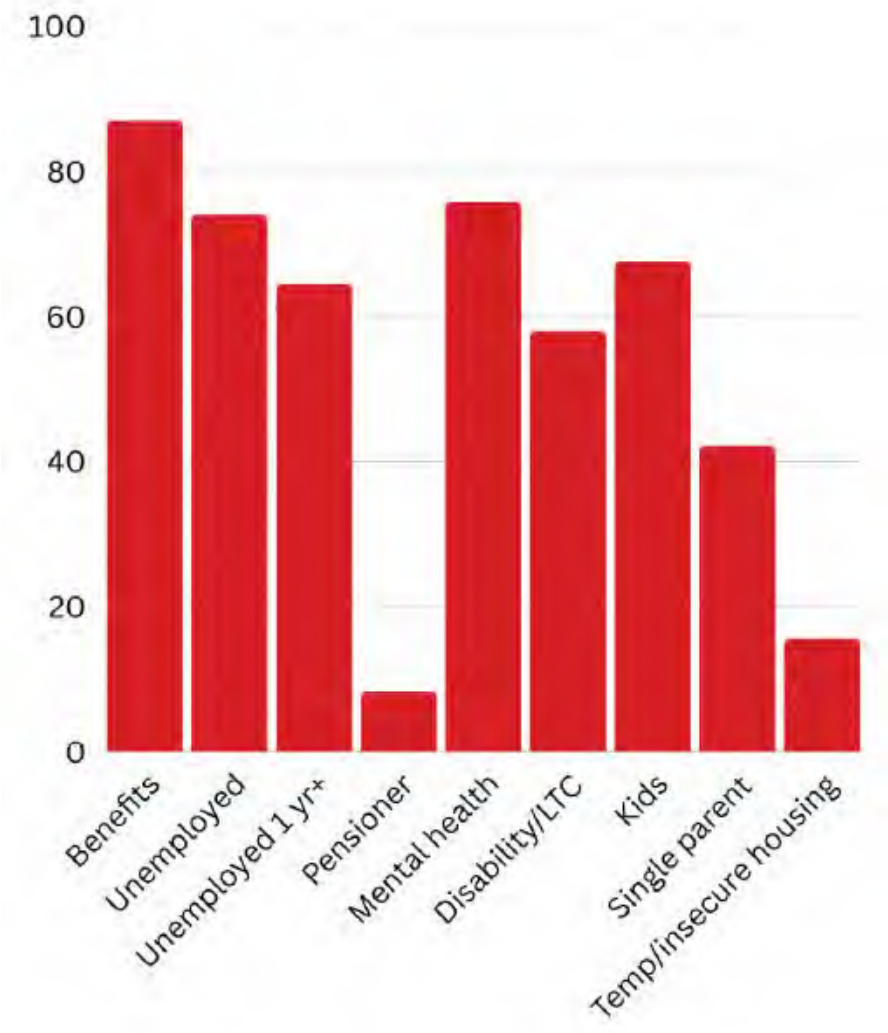
WHO WE SUPPORTED

We interviewed all participants at the start and asked a series of questions. Data shows that beneficiaries across all our locations were typically struggling with a combination of 5 of these vulnerabilities.

We asked about current consumption of take-aways and vegetables.

Average take-away expenditure was **£25.81** per week so **£1342.12 per year.**

12% of participants also reported living with diabetes.



Bags of Taste

OUTCOMES
for local residents

2024-2025

Making friends

Improved health and well-being

Significant cost savings

Motivation to cook again

Cooking and eating with the family

Confidence building

Eating less ultra-processed food

Improved mental health

CHANGING DIETS | CHANGING LIVES

FEEDBACK

2024-2025

"My neurological disorder means that I can struggle with understanding and following things. The recipe cards with simple and clear instructions and a picture allowed me to overcome that entirely. This has made a huge difference to our lives. I have some independence again which has improved my mental health."

"I loved being in an enthusiastic WhatsApp group. I felt supported. I have started bulk cooking and my husband and I can enjoy a great meal in a relaxed way. We've learnt about new ingredients and how to budget and this will help us save lots of money."

Angela, Ipswich

What People Told Us

2024-2025

"This course has made me and my daughter cook recipes together - she's 10 and likes to be involved. We've been googling recipes and she's been browsing the Bags of Taste Facebook page and saying 'let's do this one mummy!'. It's been a lovely thing to do together."

Stephen, Wandsworth

"I often relied on takeaways and didn't cook much from scratch. I joined Bags of Taste to learn how to cook healthy meals on a budget and gain more kitchen confidence. Now, I feel much more empowered and plan to continue cooking from scratch regularly. This course has helped me start a positive change in my eating habits, and I even look forward to involving my family more in cooking and sharing meals together."

Miriam, Haringey

"This course has made a massive difference to me in such a short time. I didn't think it was possible to do things so quickly and easily, it's really helped me. I have a toddler and I work full time, so with cooking it's got to be quick and easy. Before this I just used to get takeaways."

Danielle, Thanet

"It really opened my mind to the enjoyment of making my own food. I used to get brain freeze when I shopped, but now I have ideas for preparing meals and realise that with just a few ingredients you can turn something simple into a meal that will save so much time and money."

Anna, Newcastle

"Within a week I could see a massive cost difference between following a recipe and buying takeaways. I used to spend £30-£40 a week, and now I will save £30. It's also so fun and rewarding. Being in the group holds you accountable and the others prompt you to cook if they go first. The mentor was so supportive, enthusiastic and motivating."

Halima, Sheffield

"Sarah told me that since starting the cooking course, she's noticed a significant improvement in her overall health. She's now eating more nutritious meals and has also introduced her family and friends to healthier eating habits. Sarah has also started involving her family in cooking, which has brought them closer together."

Fred, mentor in Hackney

FEEDBACK
Patricia, Newham

2024-2025

Patricia is 53, has been unemployed for over a year and has diabetes, arthritis, anxiety, and depression, which makes cooking and standing for long periods difficult. Patricia's primary challenge is managing her health while trying to cook. Due to arthritis and diabetes, she finds it difficult to prepare meals from scratch and often resorts to takeaways or ready meals, spending around £40 a week. Her depression also contributed to a lack of motivation and energy to cook.

Patricia said:

"I was surprised I could do it, it tasted so good. I would never have thought of using tins – I always thought fresh ingredients were necessary, but this was much easier."

Her mentor said:

"The course has had a significant impact on Patricia's cooking, emotional health, and overall well-being. It helped her regain confidence in the kitchen, with recipes that were simple and quick enough to fit her energy levels. Patricia plans to continue cooking from scratch and experimenting with healthier, plant-based meals to better manage her diabetes and overall health. She intends to stick to a shopping list to avoid unnecessary purchases and will continue batch cooking to save time and reduce waste. Patricia also plans to try new herbs and spices each month, which will allow her to expand her cooking skills and make meals more interesting without overwhelming her budget. Overall, Patricia is committed to maintaining these changes, feeling more empowered in the kitchen, and using her new skills to improve her health and save money in the long term."

FEEDBACK

2024-2025

"I would not have thought that two weeks could change things so much. Getting the kids involved in cooking encouraged them to help out and try new things. We're eating more healthily, saving money and enjoying time together.. total win win. This is the way forward for me."

Toni, Hastings

"I would have found going on a cookery course intimidating. It was good to work at my own pace in my own kitchen, using my equipment. The course made us plan more and gave us inspiration for what to cook, instead of thinking I'm starving, let's order a takeaway."

Shondell, Birmingham

FEEDBACK

Graham, Lowestoft

2024-2025

Graham is 60 and had spent years caring for his parents and grandparents before moving out. He has been unemployed for over a year and lives on a tight budget, relying on benefits. Struggling with depression and anxiety, he never learned to cook. He was spending £25 a week on takeaway pizzas and ready meals. He wanted to stop relying on takeaways and eat healthier and more nutritious meals.

Graham said:

I was so proud to master how to chop onions and sharpen my knives, which had been gathering dust for years. The simple, easy-to-follow recipe cards made the whole experience less overwhelming and the pre-measured ingredients saved me time and helped me feel more in control.

Going forwards, I'm going to batch cook two meals a week from scratch, which will allow me to enjoy homemade meals four times a week, with takeaway pizza as a treat on weekends. I'm also going to continue experimenting with new dishes from my Ken Hom recipe book, which seemed too difficult in the past to attempt but I'm ready now!"

His mentor said:

Graham did amazingly and the programme has been not only transformative in the kitchen but has also had a positive impact on his mental health. The act of cooking,which he once saw as a daunting task, became a therapeutic and rewarding activity. It also gave him a sense of achievement and purpose.

To stay on track, Graham plans to shop for ingredients on Mondays after planning his meals on weekends. With his newfound skills, he's excited to continue improving his health, saving money and enjoying his time in the kitchen."

Thank You

TO ALL SUPPORTERS AND DONORS

2024-2025

We're hugely fortunate to have some wonderful funders and supporters which means that we can continue to help as many people as possible each year.

A massive thank you to everyone that has supported us - every donation big or small makes a big difference.

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