



Shaping Places for Healthier Lives
Food Insecurity Project
Focus: South-West Shropshire
Appendix 8

Information presented on the on-line platform

Engagement period:
February to April 2021

Publication date:
11 November 2021

Food Insecurity

What is food insecurity?

- Food insecurity is when you do not have enough affordable and nutritious food to help you live healthily.
- We know that some people in rural communities can face additional challenges in getting food locally and need to travel to shop. This adds to any financial difficulties they may already experience because of lower wages and higher energy bills.
- **What are the solutions to food insecurity?**
- The Shaping Places project has aimed to understand the reasons behind food insecurity by online surveys, lived experience interviews, zoom sessions for organisations involved and data mapping. After listening to the difficulties in South-West Shropshire, the project is now seeking further discussion on potential projects and solutions to begin to address some of the issues raised.
- The tools below are open for comment from people who have participated in the zoom sessions during the project. If successful, the project will secure additional funding over the next 3 years to deliver the co-developed programmes.
- Please click on 'Our Vision' to tell us what you think about vision statement and proposal. Please click on the findings tab to give us your feedback on our findings. We look forward to hearing your views.

Please tell us what you think about our findings

Our findings are the four documents listed on the right-hand side of the project page.

- A shopping basket - Healthwatch Shropshire Volunteers conducted a shopping basket price comparison to look at the price of 20 everyday food and household items from key supermarkets in the distinctive towns. This table shows the total cost of the items
- Case study - We spoke to 11 people with lived experience this is one person who kindly shared their story with the project
- The solutions map demonstrates the complexity of food insecurity and the surrounding issues. The pink arrows highlight solutions which were discussed in the zoom sessions
- Finally there is a summary of the themes which were covered across all 4 zoom sessions.

Please take the time to look at these 4 short documents and then let us know what you think here.

You need to be signed in to comment in this Guest Book. Click here to [Sign In](#) or [Register](#) to get involved

The shopping basket project was "shocking" shopping!
Even more surprising is that historically Harry Tuffins always was known as a budget supermarket, a treasure trove of £1 aisles etc

[Are we on the right track?](#)

2 months ago

Please use our ideas board to tell us what you think about our vision statement and our proposal.

Our vision

Statutory and voluntary services work together to ensure everyone in Shropshire has access to the help and support they need to prevent them experiencing food insecurity. This includes addressing the issues of low income, access to sufficient good food and the knowledge and skills needed to prepare healthy food.

Our Proposal

Our project areas

We are putting together a bid to the Health Foundation and Local Government Association for £300,000 to be allocated over three years. We want to find the projects which will make the most impact and improve the lives of people in South-West Shropshire who are at risk of food insecurity. If successful, the funding would us to test which approaches work best so we can improve the system. Our ideas fall into four main categories:

Economic

Help for people at risk of food insecurity to maximise their incomes. Proactive steps taken to identify those at risk. Frontline staff and volunteers trained to ask questions, identify and signpost; and referral pathways established. Explore ways to improve navigation of the system to assist people with multiple areas of need e.g. CAB first-aider training offered to frontline staff or a new 'navigator role'.

Social

Reframe the perceptions and myths of benefits claimants and reduce stigma. Harness the ideals of caring for others in our community. Raise awareness that food insecurity and poverty is a health issue.

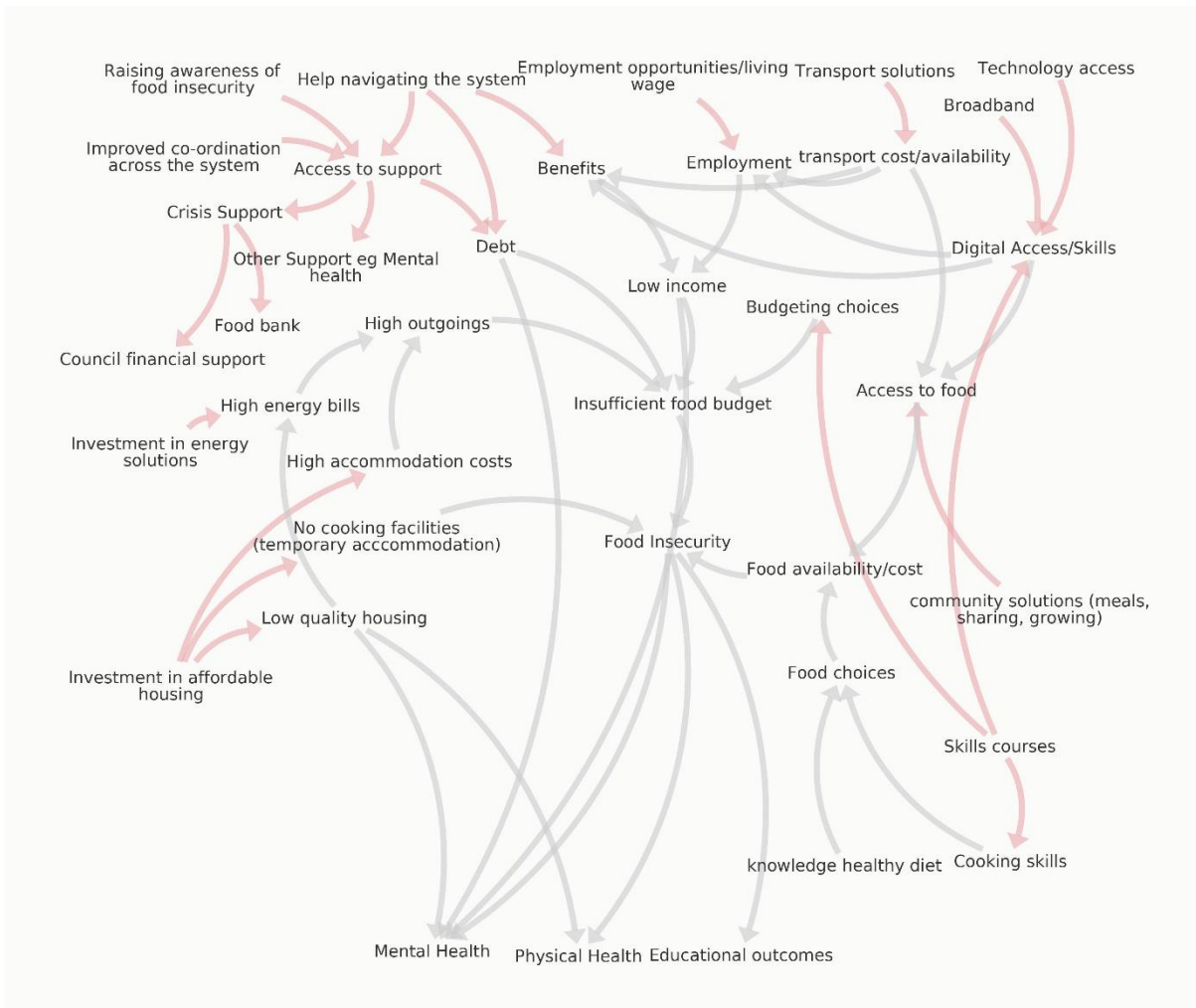
Community

Harness the passion in our communities to build on local assets and develop local co-produced community food projects which help people to access sufficient good food and build food skills.

Changing the system

A whole systems approach to addressing food insecurity alongside other complex issues across the statutory and community sectors. Reducing health inequalities and providing accessible services placed at the heart of decision making.

Solutions Map



Summary of Zoom sessions - key themes

Improving awareness of food insecurity

- Improve awareness of frontline health workers of food insecurity. Encourage GPs to screen for hunger and make foodbank referrals.
- Combat negative attitudes to people who claim benefits. Acknowledgement that in many cases benefits are paid to working households or households with disabled or long-term illness.
- Preference for cash first approaches rather than vouchers/food parcels. Trust people to make their own choices.

Co-ordination across the support system

- People in crisis often have multiple issues which need support. Create a system where the individual is kept at the centre. Improve communication

channels across organisations to ensure easier signposting and a package of support to be developed around the individual.

- Develop routes to help people navigate the support system. Create a 'navigator' role to help?
- Break down organizational and professional barriers. Recognise that services are offered by statutory, community & voluntary sectors and that everyone in the community has a role to play. Encourage linkages with business.

Communication around food insecurity

- Frame communications to avoid stigma
- Assess if communications are available to all (low literacy)
- Ensure communications are available via non-digital means

Crisis Support

- Improve links between foodbanks and wider crisis support. Direct routes of referral for clients with multiple support needs. Create routes for information sharing.
- Review how calls to Shropshire Council first point of contact are dealt with - are people linked to support/ dealt with sensitively
- Assess if changes could be made to improve foodbank provision to provide wider food choice, improved signposting and a dignified service to overcome issues of stigma.
- Consider what kinds of support are suitable for people at different stages. People in crisis often don't have the capacity to engage with longer term skills courses e.g. cooking/ growing projects.

Access to services

- Review how services are being delivered in South-West Shropshire. Do people want online/telephone access or face to face? Are services being offered in a way which suits the individual?
- Review if face to face services are accessible within a reasonable travel distance (especially mental health & drug testing)
- Help available for travel expenses when services are not available locally. E.g. Job Centre in Leominster, Herefordshire.

Access to advice and income

- Improved rates of pay for people in low paid employment. Campaigns around real living wage and encouragement for secure job contracts.
- Support to navigate the benefit system. Benefits checks to help maximize income.
- Support with budgeting and managing money.

Address transport issues

- Provide services locally to avoid travel time and expense. When travel is unavoidable ensure appointment times take into account travel time and public transport availability.
- Support for schemes to help people get to work. Explore ways of subsidizing travel expenses of people on very low incomes
- Explore solutions for areas where supermarket delivery is unavailable

Digital skills/access

- Explore how digital skills can be improved. Intergenerational buddy projects?
- Link households so that those with digital skills can help others to do online shopping
- Recognize that digital isn't going to be right or accessible to everyone.

Access to food

- Encourage shops to sell more healthier food at a cheaper price. One idea would be to encourage the sale of more 'wonky' fruit and vegetables.
- Encourage discount supermarkets (e.g. ALDI & LIDL) to deliver. Review minimum spend for home delivery.
- Explore alternative approaches e.g. smaller community shops or food voucher schemes

Community food solutions

- Explore community run solutions which increase the availability of low cost or free food (social supermarkets, community fridges, food hubs).
- Explore community run solutions which provide cooked meals including meals on wheels and community meals.
- Explore community run solutions which link growers with people on low incomes e.g. community gardens or food box schemes

Improve food skills

- Run cooking courses to help people improve their skills and expand their food choices. Courses available for different groups (cooking in school, older men). Courses available in locations which are accessible. Ensure that courses reach and attract the people who would benefit from them most.
- Campaign around food storage to avoid food waste and reduce food budget
- Buddy systems to link volunteers to people who would like support with meal planning, shopping and cooking

Housing

- Ensure advice is available to reduce energy costs
- Look at the policy of providing social housing without floor coverings