



# FareShare

South West

## Our Impact

2022-2023

*Fighting food waste and hunger  
across the south west*



# Welcome and thank you

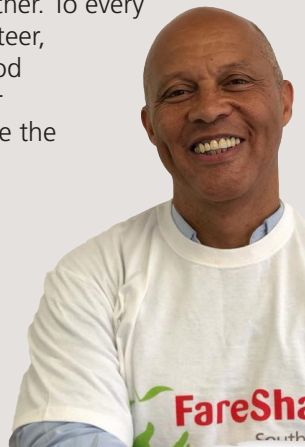
Our mission is plain. 14 million people in the UK live in food poverty, yet over six million tonnes of good-to-eat food is wasted across the UK food industry every year, contributing to the climate crisis. At FareShare South West, we turn an environmental problem into a social solution, acting as a vital link between food suppliers and hundreds of charities, schools and community groups to get in-date nutritious food away from waste and onto people's plates.

When I became Chief Executive in 2022, I knew two things: that we were facing mounting national hunger and climate crises, and that the team here were exactly the people you would choose to tackle it: skilled, knowledgeable, and immensely determined.

In this past year our Plymouth warehouse officially opened, delivering food for one million meals a full six months before expected. 21 young people moved through our new employability scheme, FareChance. Every meal, every full belly, has meant so much more: dignity, relief, access to education, a connection to the local community.

As I hand the reins over to Lucy Bearn as CEO in 2024, I'm proud of what we've achieved together. To every team member, volunteer, fundraiser, donor, food supplier and member charity who has made the work in this report possible: thank you.

*Gene*  
Gene Joyner, CEO



“There is no way we could run without FareShare South West. It is invaluable and vital.”

Dartmoor Community Kitchen

## Our impact in numbers

Thanks to you...

We delivered food for **3.96 million** meals



Our volunteers donated **57,000** hours of time



We provided food to **47,600** people across the South West



We supported **417** frontline charities, schools and community groups with food



We distributed **1667** tonnes of food across the region (that's more than 100 tonnes per month), saving 4385 tonnes of CO2



We supported **21** young people through the FareChance employability programme



# How we work

1



We work with food suppliers of all shapes and sizes to rescue surplus food from across the industry.

2

Instead of sending it to landfill, our food suppliers divert their good-quality, surplus food to our warehouses in Plymouth and Bristol.



3

once safely stored in the warehouse, our volunteers sort and pack food, ready to deliver to each of our member organisations.



4

our volunteer van crews make daily deliveries to our members across the South West who provide the people that use their services with food parcels, hot meals and essential provisions.

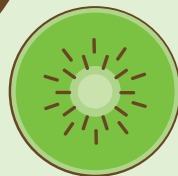


“

If you're choosing to come to us, you have a reason. It doesn't have to be because you're on a low income. It might be because you're isolated, you're lonely. It's for everyone.”

Kelly, Plymouth Food Cooperative

# Our network of members



## Supporting those on the frontline

This year, you helped get food to 417 charities, schools and community groups.



Our community food members are dotted across the south west – from Tewkesbury to Tintagel.



Together, they support people from all corners of society including those who are homeless or rough sleeping, refugees and asylum seekers, adults and children with learning disabilities, older people at risk of isolation and families simply struggling to make ends meet.

For many of these organisations, the food they receive is more than sustenance – it brings people together, creates a sense of community and encourages connections.

- Children and families **35.5%**
- People on low or no income **14%**
- Homeless people and rough sleepers **13.5%**
- The local community **15.7%**
- Older people **6.3%**
- People with drug or alcohol addiction **5.1%**
- Refugees **2.4%**
- People with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, and/or mental health problems **3.1%**
- Other\* **4.4%**

\*Includes those affected by domestic violence, ethnic minority groups, ex-offenders, care leavers, young people.

## Tamar Valley Community Fridge



Tamar Valley Community Fridge is an open-access, seven-days-a-week food waste project which also helps locals who are struggling financially.

LiveWest Community Connector Mai Evans began with food outreach in car parks in early 2022, aiming to educate people about food waste. But supermarkets weren't donating reliable amounts, while the cost of living meant demand kept rising.

FareShare South West's regular deliveries saved the project. Mai hopes that as well as taking advantage of the free food, people also experiment with new ingredients.

With a permanent chiller provided by LiveWest and support from the Cornwall Gleaning Project, it's become a true local collaboration. In the first year, the fridge saved more than 1.3 tonnes of food from waste – enough for over 3,000 meals.



*Our Friday FareShare South West deliveries are always full of quality, nutritious food and are a highlight of the week!"*

# Our suppliers

## Looking local to fight food waste

This year, FareShare South West grew our network of local food suppliers

from 45 to  
**60**



### Why does surplus matter?

In the UK, food production creates 35% of greenhouse gas emissions. Meanwhile, enough food for seven billion meals is wasted every year, all while people go hungry. At FareShare South West, we support food suppliers – farmers and growers, manufacturers, and retailers – to put their surplus to good use for local people.

In the last year, we rescued 400 tonnes of food from local suppliers – on top of the 1267 tonnes of food that our partner charity FareShare UK sends to us from national sources. That's food like turkey from Field & Flower, brassicas from Riverford Organic, tofu from DragonFly Foods, chilled soup from Greencore, surplus pumpkins from Farrington's Farm Shop and bread from DHL (Nisa).

We expanded our food team to help unlock more good quality surplus from across our region, with a new staff member to support our work in Devon and Cornwall.

We've also invested in a 7.5 tonne truck: perfect for large pallets, oversized collections, and delivering food at scale between our warehouses.

## Charlie Bigham's



“

By working closely with FareShare South West, we have a good understanding of the organisations they support.”

Claire Gibbs, Deputy Head of Food, Charlie Bigham's

Charlie Bigham's handmade food is a cut above the average ready meal, and their commitment to sustainability shines.

Not content with reducing food waste by sending their surplus ready meals to FareShare South West, in 2022 they also pledged to donate any surplus they generate during the production process.

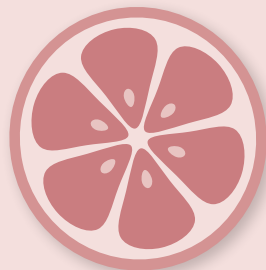
“We knew that smaller charities simply couldn't use 20kg catering packs, so we've put time and effort into packaging our food into smaller, convenient sized portions that are accessible to more people,” explains Claire Gibbs, Deputy Head of Food.

Rice, sauce, portions of cooked and marinated chicken: it's the kind of quality surplus which is often generated during production but is also complex to save. The Charlie Bigham's team have placed sustainability and community above convenience, with remarkable results.



Since our partnership began, we have redistributed 11.2 tonnes of Charlie Bigham's food within our region and via the national FareShare network – the equivalent of nearly 27,000 meals.

# Our volunteers



## Real food heroes

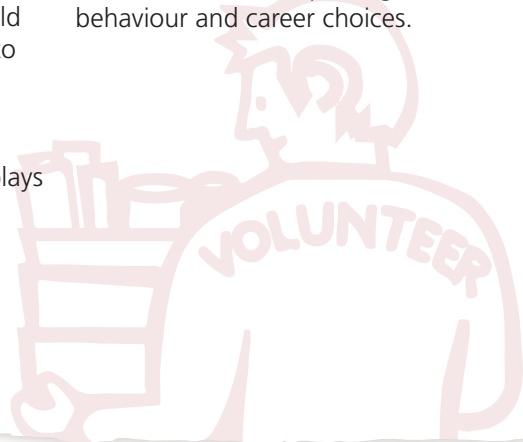
It's 8.30am and the first volunteers start arriving at the warehouse. They meet in the kitchen to catch up and make tea, before putting on a hi-vis vest and a pair of steel toe caps and getting to work.

Our volunteers come from all walks of life – some are recently retired, others are in recovery from addiction. There are students with time between lectures, young people who volunteer alongside their support worker and others looking to gain skills and build their confidence in order to return to work.

Whatever their background or motivation, every single volunteer plays an essential role in getting food to

people who need it. Whether they're packing food into crates, driving the delivery vans or managing food as it comes into the warehouse, our volunteers make an impact.

In return, we aim to provide every volunteer with a meaningful experience, whether that's a useful, sociable way to spend a couple of hours or a stepping stone back into work. For many, the experience of volunteering creates lasting change in the volunteers themselves, improving their life chances, impacting their behaviour and career choices.



Gemma & Bobby



“

I am a little bit shy talking with new people, so it's good to meet with new people, and help them with different jobs.”

Bobby

For this mother and son, volunteering is a family affair. Gemma and Bobby, aged 19, are regular volunteers at FareShare South West's Plymouth warehouse.

Bobby is autistic, and a lot of Gemma's time is focused on supporting him. Volunteering gives them a social community – Plymouth's volunteer hot lunch is legendary! – and a space to learn.

“I like meeting new people, getting new skills, because you do pick up a lot of skills,” Gemma explains. “FareShare South West are a nice little bunch. We started together, mother and son. It gets him out, all builds up his CV.”

For Bobby, it's an opportunity to pick up work experience, and a chance to approach social situations in a supportive, friendly environment.

We supported 364 volunteers this year who gave 57,000 hours of their time and experience – the equivalent of 30 years of work. Thank you.

# New challenges, new solutions



Higher costs driven by inflation and the war in Ukraine have led everyone within the food chain, from farmers to supermarkets, to work harder to reduce their surplus. Where retailers might have previously asked manufacturers for nine months' shelf life on products, they now accept six.

Waste reduction is great news for the planet, but it means less food comes our way to share with people in poverty.

## Fresh, local, nutritious

We've been proactive about finding new sources of food, and we now deliver much more fresh veg, fresh fruit and other chilled produce compared to 'ambient food' (tins or packets).

## More than food

As a result, we've supported more charities who cook on site and provide wraparound support to reduce isolation and address multiple needs. More fresh, nutritious produce also provided us with the opportunity to focus on communities struggling with malnutrition and/or obesity.

The team at Swallow Community Café, Somerset, tell us: "It's fantastic to have such lovely fresh vegetables to make into healthy meals for our community."

## New collaborations

Our Plymouth warehouse officially opened in May 2022, serving 70 community groups across Devon and Cornwall.



ARGYLE  
COMMUNITY  
TRUST

Working with Plymouth Argyle Community Trust, we welcomed dozens of volunteers as part of Project 35, which encourages Argyle football club supporters to pledge 35 hours to volunteer for local charities and community organisations. That support

has been fundamental to the Plymouth team's success – with food for over one million meals delivered by the end of 2022!

Visit [argylecommunitytrust.co.uk](http://argylecommunitytrust.co.uk) to find out more about their work.



# FareChance



## Employability for young people

In 2021, we piloted an employability scheme through Kickstart, supporting seven young people to volunteer as warehouse supervisors - including Rio, who is now an essential staff member at our Vale Lane warehouse. Using everything we'd learned, we launched our own unique 12-week young people's employability programme in Bristol in December 2022.

FareChance supports young people who are out of employment, training, volunteering, or education to increase their qualifications, skills and confidence and move towards employability. In the first three months, 21 young people moved through the programme.

"They bring a good vibe to the warehouse and add value to the operation," explains Nessa Jones, Warehouse Manager. "It's so nice to see them working with our other

volunteers in a team and getting great experience in a unique but applicable work environment."

The results? We saw 100% success in emotional and mental health outcomes, and a 65% success rate in moving these young people into volunteering, formal training (such as construction and education), and/or employment in the warehousing and catering industries.

We built on our partnerships with organisations such as Sixteen Coop, City of Bristol College, the Prince's Trust and the Department for Work and Pensions to increase the diversity of our referral routes.

“

*I loved being a part of everything that was going on - a team that helped give back and a community."*

Taylor

## Fighting holiday hunger

In summer 2022, we worked with Bristol City Council, Somerset City Council, and a range of businesses to run a holiday hunger response, supporting children who would usually rely on free school meals. Over the six-week break, we distributed 11 tonnes of nutritious food to 4600 children.

“

*The meals we cook together sustain them for the whole day - keeping them happy and making friends, whilst also active until home time. Plus, we know it's one less meal for parents to worry about having to provide."*

Southmead Adventure  
Playground Holiday Club

## FoodStock

Winter is a tough time for so many, with rocketing fuel costs, weeks without free school meals and the pressure of Christmas giving. During FoodStock 2022, we provided food, connection and a lifeline to thousands via:

- delivering 234 tonnes of food for nearly 40,000 people
- packing 1700 festive food and activity parcels for families
- partnering with Caring in Bristol by providing food and infrastructure for their big Christmas dinner for the homeless





# Thank you



We never take your support for granted. However large or small, every contribution makes a difference to people living with food insecurity.

Thank you to...



## Food Friends

That's what we call the people who so generously make a regular donation. Our Food Friends help us to tackle food waste and food poverty long term. There are now 240 of you – amazing!

## Appeal supporters

In April 2022, you helped us raise £11,335 through the Green Match Fund, acknowledging our growing environmental impact as we expanded into Devon and Cornwall.

Many of you supported the Big Give Christmas Challenge, raising a record £50,000 in one week for our winter crisis action, FoodStock! We also secured a Holiday Activity and Food grant from Feeding Bristol to top up the most in-demand and hardest to source foods for people struggling that winter.

Our amazing community also supported us through events and challenges throughout the year, from comedy nights and festive choirs to individuals taking on the Three Peaks Challenge. Thank you.

## Businesses

Businesses stepped up through volunteering, fundraising, in-kind gifts and grants.

**Field & Flower** and their customers raised a huge £24,980, and donated 600 pairs of turkey legs.

**Bluefield Group** and **Womble Bond Dickenson** both took on epic cycling challenges and **Touts** enabled over 43,000 meals on their mission towards zero food waste.

**Hargreaves Lansdown** paired volunteering with financial grants. We hugely appreciated regular donations and fantastic fundraising from **Rathbones Group Bristol office, Mesa Catering, Box-E, ALD Automotives, Bristol University Press, Bishop Fleming** and **Plimsoil Productions**.

## Grants

This year we received 51 grants from trusts and foundations to support both our core costs and specific projects. Special thanks to those who gave £10,000 or above:



# Get involved

Food insecurity continues to rise in our region, while millions of tonnes of food go to waste. Here's how you can make a difference.



## Volunteer

Join our friendly teams driving, packing food, or volunteering in the office



## Become a Food Friend

Make a regular financial donation



## Supply food

In the food trade? Let us help stop your surplus from going to waste



## Fundraise

Make FareShare South West your workplace charity of the year, get involved in one of our events – or take on your own challenge!

**Already a supporter? Thank you!** You can always help us reach new people by forwarding our emails, sharing our social media and this report, and simply telling people about what we do.

## What's next

In 2023 – 2024, we will:

- expand our new holiday hunger project to ensure children don't go without over the summer break in Plymouth
- overcome the difficulty of getting vital food deliveries to hard-to-reach corners of Western Cornwall, by partnering with the Cornwall Gleaning Network to secure funding and next steps to set up a 'one stop' enhanced Local Collection Point for our members to access. This will also enable new Cornish suppliers to start supporting our work through deliveries there!
- further develop and diversify our volunteering programme including welcoming more asylum seekers and refugees, and partnering with new corporate supporters
- extend and transform our Vale Lane warehouse in south Bristol into a unique youth-led working warehouse led by a youth steering group and supported through FareChance. It will include a new chiller, our first industrial-size freezer and more warehouse capacity to increase the amount and variety of food we can accept and deliver, as well as dedicated office, garden, training and break spaces
- cut expenditure, including moving the central support team out of our rented office into our overflow warehouse at Ashton Gate until free or low-cost office space can be secured
- welcome back Lucy Bearn as Chief Executive to lead our growing team in 2024

Want to get more involved or keep up to date?

Visit our website, subscribe to our email newsletter or follow us on social media – turn to the back cover for details.





## Stay in touch

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