



Sainsbury's
Good food for all of us

Tackling hunger, strengthening communities

Nourish the Nation
2022–2026 Impact Report



Welcome

A warm welcome to our Nourish the Nation 2022–2026 Impact Report.

Nourish the Nation is the community food programme launched by Comic Relief and Sainsbury's in 2022. With increasing numbers of people facing hunger and hardship, we make donations to organisations doing vital work to ensure more people can eat nutritious, balanced meals.

It has been an exceptionally challenging few years for people across the UK. Currently, more than one in ten households (and one in seven families) are experiencing food insecurity, nearly twice the amount from 2020. Children, single parents and people with disabilities or long-term health conditions are among the worst affected.

Since the programme's launch over three years ago, we have raised over £26 million to provide access to good, healthy food that everyone deserves, connecting communities and supporting people's emotional and financial well-being. It has been a fantastic effort at a time when so many people face their own struggles with the cost-of-living crisis.

The money raised has been donated to a range of remarkable organisations and projects focused on three areas:

- **Food clubs** that help people access nutritious food and stretch their budgets further
- **Healthy meals for children** to give them a better start in life
- **Urgent food support** for people facing a crisis

There is a long way to go before no one in the UK goes hungry. But together, we have taken giant strides towards that goal. With more donations expected throughout 2026, we can look forward to a future where millions more people have access to good food.

This report celebrates the collective efforts of Sainsbury's colleagues, customers and suppliers, Comic Relief supporters, and the many brilliant organisations tackling rising food insecurity across the UK.

'Food insecurity' is when people are forced to go without food or cut back on the quality or the amount they eat, because they can't afford it.



“ For over 27 years, Comic Relief and Sainsbury's have joined forces to support people facing life's toughest challenges, raising more than £188 million along the way. I'm incredibly proud of how our partnership has evolved over the years. Launched in 2022, Nourish the Nation has provided vital support to millions of families across the UK. Every day, staff, volunteers and community leaders show extraordinary compassion and determination to ensure no one is left facing hunger. ”

Samir Patel, CEO of Comic Relief

“ We believe everyone deserves access to the joy of good food. Yet across the UK, millions of children and families are growing up without the food they need to thrive. It's vital we work together to drive real change. That's why we're proud that through our partnership with Comic Relief since 2022, we have helped make a real difference, raising over £26 million to support more than 2.4 million people facing food insecurity. ”



Our customers, suppliers and colleagues have played a huge role in helping to drive this – a big and heartfelt thank you to them all for their immense commitment and dedication in helping us support our communities across the UK. There's so much more to be done and we're committed to continuing to play our part until everyone can access joyful, affordable food, every day. ”

Simon Roberts, CEO of Sainsbury's

Our impact at a glance

Between November 2022 and February 2026, Nourish the Nation has made donations to a wide range of organisations and projects that help prevent people across the UK from going without food.



15 

major organisations funded, who support hundreds of local charities and projects



Over **60m meals**

donated



→ Over **2.4m people** supported



Over **16,000**

tonnes of food saved from going to waste



More than **£26m**

raised in total for Nourish the Nation



Food clubs for stronger communities





Food clubs for stronger communities

Food clubs are inclusive community spaces that offer donated food at a very low cost to people who are struggling to get by. By providing funding for [Feeding Britain](#), [The Bread and Butter Thing](#) and [FoodSavers Network](#), we have supported nearly 600 food clubs across the UK – helping them to stay operational day-to-day and open in more locations, especially where people have very limited access to food.

What is a food club?

Food clubs help stretch tight budgets for people struggling to make ends meet. They usually operate a membership service, where people can buy donated food at a heavily discounted price. For example, a person could pay £5 for a basket of food worth more than £20.

The clubs are typically open at least once a week, allowing people to visit regularly for as long as they need. Some have dedicated spaces, some are mobile, and others operate in schools, churches and community organisations. Wherever they're based, staff and volunteers are there week in, week out, providing familiar faces, a warm welcome, and the offer of a friendly chat over a cup of tea.



Main features of a food club:

Fresh, nutritious food

As well as cupboard foods, food clubs offer fruit and vegetables, fridge and freezer products, and even sometimes pre-prepared meals. So cost is no longer a barrier to a healthy, balanced diet.

Access to additional services

Beyond food, many food clubs help connect people with additional services including benefits and debt advice, health services, employment and training opportunities and mental health support – helping them improve their daily lives and build strength and stability for the future.

Less waste

By redistributing donated food to people who need it most, food clubs save good food from going to waste.

Connecting communities

Food clubs are hubs at the heart of communities. They are places people come not only for food but also to build friendships, support their mental health and connect with people living locally. Many food club users become food club volunteers themselves, creating a non-judgmental, mutually supportive environment.

“ Since the cost of living started to rise so quickly, every month has been a struggle. I have two very young children and can't work any more hours as I have to look after them. For my family, being able to go to the food club has meant that we have not had to worry about whether or not we can use our heating or hot water, which makes my life easier. ”

Mira*, who has used a food club supported by Nourish the Nation

*Mira's name has been changed



Impact

Our donations have enabled the food clubs we work with to support over **295,000 people**, provide **45 million meals**, and make a measurable difference:

70% are in the 30% most deprived areas of the UK

71% of people skip meals less frequently

72% of people feel less socially isolated

63% of people worry less about being able to afford food

How are food clubs different from food banks?

Food clubs and food banks both provide vital support for people who are struggling. At food banks, people are referred by various agencies to receive parcels of free emergency cupboard food to last around three days. However, food clubs don't require referrals and provide a choice of fresh food at a low cost, helping people to manage their finances for as long as necessary.



“Since going to a food club, I've been able to feed myself and my son when I haven't had enough money after paying my bills. I can't believe how much food I receive. The first time I went, I actually cried because it was such a lovely place – very helpful and welcoming, and the amount and variety of food was amazing. I was feeling very low but walked out feeling much better. Thank you so much. It has literally prevented me and my son from going hungry.”

Debbie*, who has used a food club supported by Nourish the Nation

*Debbie's name has been changed.

James' story

“I was doing everything right,” James says. But after nearly a decade working in social care supporting adults with autism and learning disabilities, fluctuating hours and rising living costs became too much. “I was working full-time, paying childcare and still coming up short,” he explains. “It was always: do I buy petrol, or do I buy food? And obviously, I'm going to feed my child.” By last winter, rising bills left the family with just £140 a month for food.

Some weeks, James skipped meals so his four-year-old son could eat properly. But when a colleague mentioned The Bread and Butter Thing, James still felt unsure about asking for help.

However, from the very first visit, he felt the pressure ease. For a few pounds, James could take home a bag of fresh, good-quality food. “It felt like breathing again,” he says, “just knowing we'd get through the week”.

“It was always: do I buy petrol, or do I buy food? And obviously, I'm going to feed my child.”

James, who has used a food club supported by Nourish the Nation





A better start for children





A better start for children

Growing up hungry can mean going to school without breakfast or going to bed on an empty stomach. Not only does it affect children’s physical development, but also their mental health and emotional well-being. No parent or carer wants to see their child go hungry – and neither do we. So, we’re proud to be working with organisations, including [Feeding Britain](#), [The Bread and Butter Thing](#), [FoodCycle](#), and several [UK Community Foundations](#), that work tirelessly to ensure children get the nutritious food they need to grow, learn, and thrive.

Holiday Activity and Food programme

The government funds school holiday clubs for children who receive Free School Meals through the Holiday Activity and Food programme (HAF). However, the programme has strict eligibility criteria, is limited in parts of the UK and doesn’t cover all of the school holidays. So many families are left without much needed support.

We work with organisations to provide thousands more free holiday club places for children and young people across the UK. The clubs are safe spaces for them to receive a free, healthy meal, as well as have fun, practise social skills and build confidence through activities including cooking, music and sports. They can also provide routes to employment or further study for older teens.

Our support for the HAF programme provides a vital lifeline for families who are struggling – more children eat the healthy meals they need to thrive and make memories with friends, and more parents get help with childcare so they can better manage work and parenting commitments.

A voice for change

Every child should have access to good food, so we advocate for the continuation and improvement of government schemes that help tackle food insecurity.

We’ve been campaigning to tackle child food poverty – a focus that has seen Sainsbury’s and Comic Relief representatives attend a House of Lords roundtable in October 2024 to advocate for the extension of the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme. We were delighted that after this, the Department for Education confirmed the renewal of the HAF programme until 2029.

We also support the advocacy efforts of the organisations we fund, helping more children experience the joy of healthy eating, putting them on a better course for a brighter future.



2.7m

children in the UK are growing up experiencing food insecurity

“When other families are looking forward to the sun or going away somewhere nice, my stomach sinks with this awful knot in it, knowing we are going to struggle. But this year, I knew that support was there, and it was such a relief.”

Niamh*, whose children attended a holiday club funded by Nourish the Nation

Impact

150,000

additional holiday club places created

20

school-based food clubs launched, with over 5,000 families joining so far

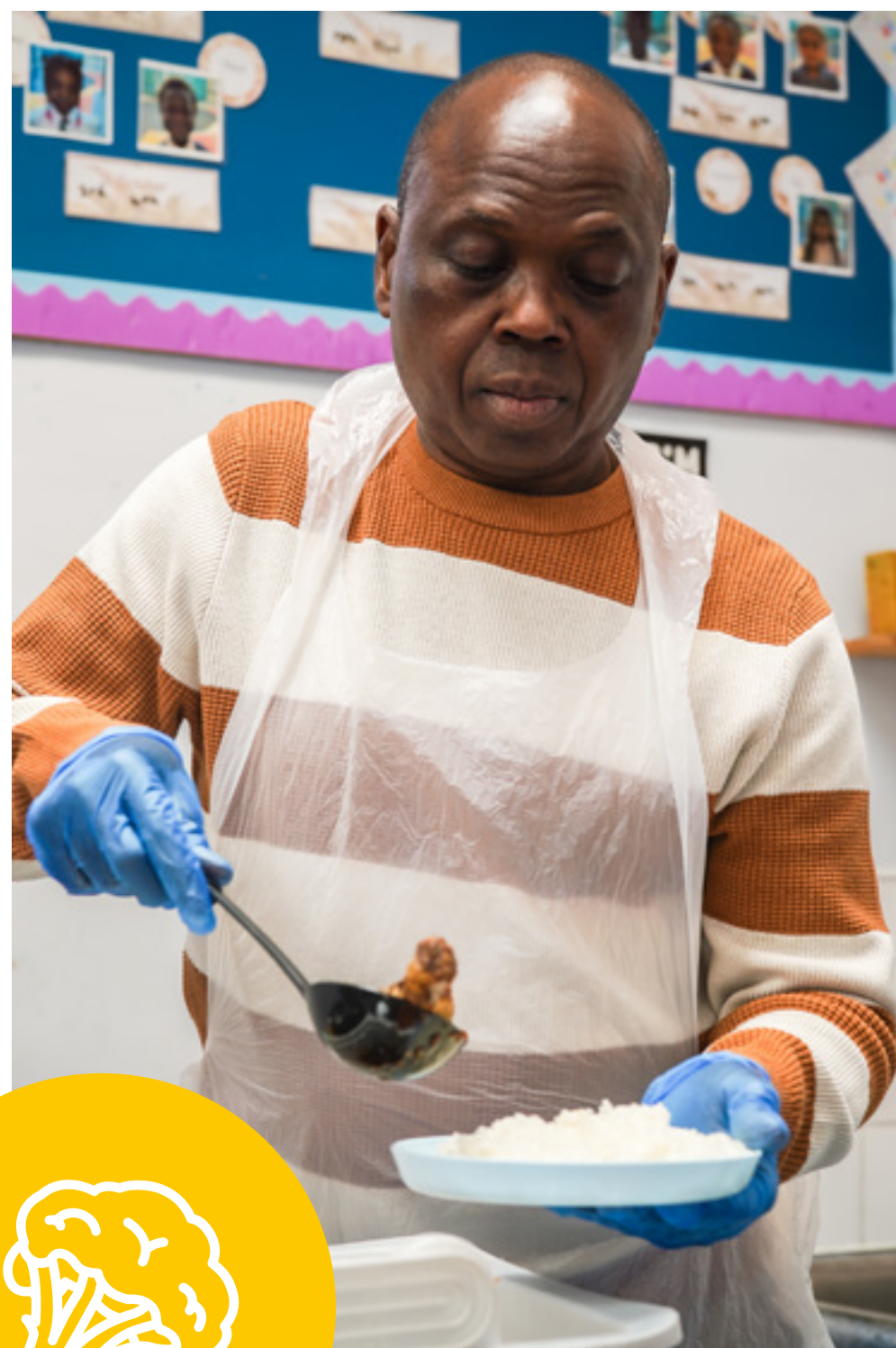
1 million

meals distributed across school holidays to children and families



School-based food clubs

Building on the successful food club model, where people who are struggling come together to buy discounted food, we have supported the launch of school-based food clubs. Operating all year round, the clubs run either inside or near schools to ensure that school children and their families can easily access affordable and nutritious food to take home and cook.



“ We know that for many of the children, ‘holiday hunger’ is not just a catchphrase, it’s a reality. But our holiday club isn’t just about nutrition. The food brings rhythm and warmth. It gives young people the chance to sit together. We see children learning to slow down, to take small social risks. They open up to mentors around the campfire or quietly share something during hot chocolate and wind-down time. ”

Denise*, a worker at a holiday club funded by Nourish the Nation

Meals after school

Along with breakfast clubs, after-school meals are a critical way that schools can reach children who might otherwise go hungry. However, because after-school food programmes are less common, it can be harder for parents to access this support.

We have funded the expansion of an after-school dining programme, helping children and their families enjoy a free weekly two-course, hot meal together at the end of the day. The meals take place at school and are also provided during the school holidays – typically a difficult time for families on low incomes.

For children, after-school meals are also opportunities to see friends and build healthy eating habits, while parents get the chance to eat good food with their child and socialise with other families too.

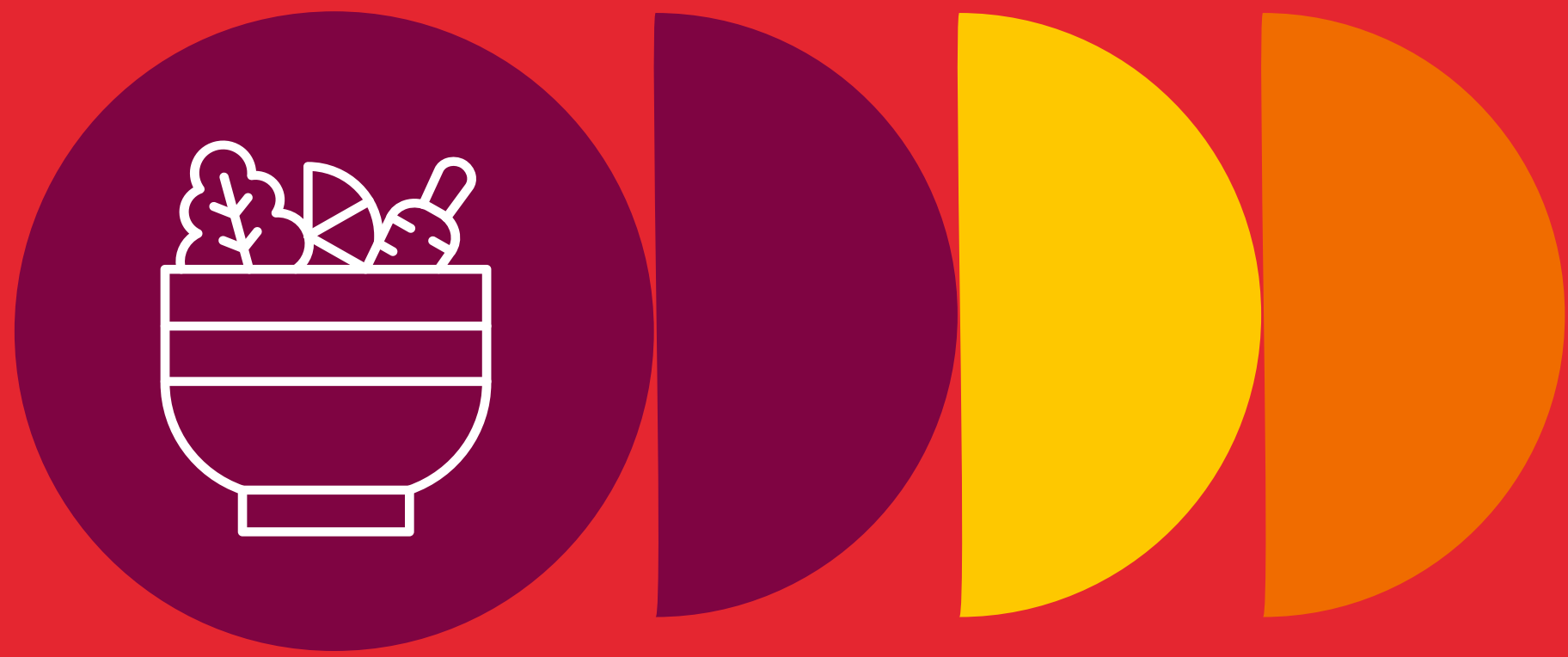
Inge’s story

For Inge*, aged 16, joining a holiday club changed everything. Inge had been out of school, struggling with his health and often had to skip meals at home. But the club gave him daily healthy meals and a chance to make friends and participate in creative activities in a supportive space. Inge learned about nutrition and how to cook so that he could help with meals at home. Gradually, he began to feel better – physically and mentally – and by the end of the summer, he asked for a mentor to help him return to education. He had started to believe in himself again.

Inge, a child who attended a holiday club funded by Nourish the Nation



*Names have been changed



Support for people in urgent need





Support for people in urgent need

We believe that everyone – whoever they are and whatever challenges they are facing – should have access to nutritious food. Every day, many people are at crisis point and simply cannot afford to put food on the table at home. To meet this urgent need, we support organisations such as [FareShare](#), [The Felix Project](#), [Trussell](#), [City Harvest](#), [Community Shop](#) and [His Church](#) to provide people with essential and immediate support in their hardest moments.

The organisations we support donate food to a range of community groups including food banks, soup kitchens, youth groups and community fridges. Through these services, we are helping to provide free food and essential supplies to communities throughout the UK.

During the winter, budgets are even more squeezed than usual. Christmas shines a light on so many issues for people struggling to make ends meet – from affording enough food to social isolation, higher household bills, and the loss of school-based support. We provide donations all year round, but they are especially important for ensuring people don't have to go hungry in winter.

“When it's cold outside, our community come in, feel the warmth and have a nutritious meal. It can be life changing. Demand is really high around Christmas time. On Christmas Day, we provided 130 sit-down three-course meals. We offer everyone a gift to unwrap, have music on, crackers, Christmas hats and pudding – the full works! There's something phenomenally humbling about everyone communally coming together and sharing food.”

Andrew*, a project worker, whose charity has received support from Nourish the Nation

“When I was first introduced to the project, I received a couple of emergency food packages, which included veggies, tinned food like baked beans, pasta and cornflakes. It was a bit of everything and enough to support my kids' daily meals at a really tough time in our lives. I was at the point where I'd lost hope. They literally saved our lives. They saw my struggles even when I wasn't forthcoming at first about how much I was struggling.”

Ngozi*, who attends a food project supported by Nourish the Nation



Impact

Over
2m
people provided
with food

More than
13.5m
meals worth of food
redistributed

Shelaine's story

When Shelaine was 13, her parents separated and her family's circumstances changed suddenly. "We went from being comfortable to having almost nothing," she says. Her mum did everything she could, often putting her children first even when food was scarce.

Years later, in her early twenties, Shelaine faced hardship again after losing her job while supporting her mum and younger brother. "I made sure my brother never went without, even if that meant skipping meals myself," she says.

Now 40, Shelaine works as a driver for City Harvest, delivering donated food to charities and community organisations across London. For the past five years, she has helped ensure good, nutritious food reaches families who need it most.

"I know what it's like to go hungry," she says. "Now I help make sure others don't have to."

More than relieving hunger, Shelaine also sees how food can restore dignity and hope. "It's not just about food," she says. "It's about people feeling seen and supported."

“ I know what it's like to go hungry, now I help make sure others don't have to. ”

Shelaine, a driver for a food redistribution organisation that is funded by Nourish the Nation





Thank you

Every day, the organisations we fund go the extra mile to ensure fewer people go hungry. Their commitment and tireless dedication are what make this incredible impact possible. Thanks to their efforts, millions more people can access and experience the joy of good food and plan with hope for the future.

We're incredibly proud of the positive impact our collective work has had on our communities – helping to support nearly 600 food clubs across the UK, creating over 150,000 additional holiday club places for children, and distributing millions of meals during the winter months and beyond.

However, much more is needed to tackle the ongoing challenge of food insecurity. We cannot solve this critical issue alone. Only by coming together, strengthening community networks and working collaboratively, will we create lasting change and build a future where no child or family goes hungry.

Through Nourish the Nation, we've made significant progress so far. But this is just the beginning.

