

FEAST OF FUN
at home



**Feast of Fun at Home
COVID Report
TRANSFORMING
PLYMOUTH
TOGETHER[⊕]**

Food Poverty During COVID

Child Poverty in Plymouth During COVID

Before 2020, research in Plymouth observed astonishingly high numbers of child poverty across the city. Research showed that 11,500 children lived in poverty with 42,828 individuals making up 27 LSOAs that are in the most deprived 10% in England. Whilst COVID has not yet passed, and it is certain that many will experience considerable long term affects upon their lives, the expectation is that those who are already living on the breadline or live in more deprived areas will be the hardest hit. Prior to COVID, concerns for families across Plymouth were significant, however the impact of the global epidemic will cause lasting problems for even more families.

With many children not attending school for months, there has been a growing concern for the families where the free school meals have been a key factor in their survival.

The Poverty in the Pandemic report found the 8 in 10 respondents of their online survey observed that their living standards had declined. Many of the families they spoke with were close to the poverty line and found that even the smallest reduction of income and expenses increasing, the cost of living was a challenge for many.

11,500

Children living in poverty in Plymouth prior to 2020

26.5%

Pupils on average in primary and secondary schools are eligible for free school meals

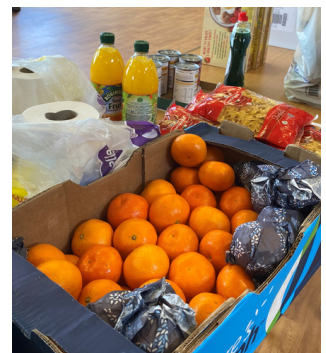
164 Days

Of schools being shut since beginning of lockdown to starting school in September

Challenges Faced By TPT During COVID

After the growth of the Feast of Fun project over the last few years, Transforming Plymouth Together had expected to run the summer 2020 programme with increased numbers of churches, teams and families reached. However due to lockdown, the planned programme was unable to happen and a revaluation of the model was required. Working with St Pancras Church early into lockdown to support a project ran parallel to Feast of Fun, TPT was able to use their model of connecting with families and the logistical elements of delivery to use this for Feast of Fun. It was renamed 'Feast of Fun at Home'.

Bringing in new partners such as Provide Devon, Fareshare, Love Your Neighbour (St Matthias) and sourcing funding from various grants, a COVID safe offering was able to be provided to families. This gave them the chance to stand on their own feet by adding the food items to their cupboards, feeding the whole family for more than one meal and offering a point of contact and friendship many have missed during these difficult times.



Feast of Fun at Home 2020

A church response to COVID holiday hunger in Plymouth

Whilst schools were shut, many more families experienced holiday hunger not only during the summer holidays but long before. With a number of churches getting involved for the Easter holidays, many continued throughout the following months to come together for the summer. For the summer, 19 churches were involved, many of whom worked as church collectives allowing teams of volunteers to support numerous churches and reach more families through their work.

A challenge faced by the churches was how to identify the families. Previously, all were welcomed to a Feast of Fun event and whilst the Church has a heart for supporting all, the feasibility of that would not be possible. Churches worked with family workers, social workers and in particular their local schools to identify the families in need. The churches then worked on a relational approach to connect with the families, not only offering the food parcels but a point of contact for support, having time to speak to the families as they collected or during deliveries.



The new model offered food hampers that would be similar to a typical family food shop: a selection of dried and tinned items, fresh fruit and veg, dairy and even a few treats. To incorporate 'fun', craft kits were given during Easter holidays and over the summer holidays outdoor games were given (football, quoits tennis, badminton and boules) with a craft bag sourced from Plymouth Scrapstore.

Churches were also encouraged to offer additional items where they were able to. This included summer programme of guided crafts with a children friendly bible study, additional food items and some gave refreshments to the families as they collected.



250

Families supported every week during the summer

9,600

Total recipients during the project

163,200

Total meals (minimum) able to be made from the food hampers

Feedback from Churches

One family spoke of how they literally had nothing left in cupboards until they came to the Feast of Fun and the parent had gone without eating.

Another spoke of how they had been worried about the choice between bills and food shopping and that Feast of Fun at Home provision meant they were able to stock their cupboards and then afford to pay what needed to be paid.

We were able to provide drinks and cake at collection outside and socially distanced but it meant that we were able to talk to families and build relationships.

Feedback From Families

Thankyou so much we really needed that little bit of food it made a massive difference

Thankyou so much I really appreciate what you are doing for me and my family

We always look forward to seeing what in the hampers and the boys love working out what we can all can cook with it

I'm always grateful for the food package. The fresh veggies are so good as we peel and chop as a family and we all get to eat the same thing at the same time. I know how much my children like it when I'm eating with them. I have only been able to do with your help. I never thought how someone could make such joy to my family.

Hampers are a fantastic help and very much appreciated. Especially the special diet items and often resources to occupy the kids!!! I also look forward to getting out of the house for 10 minutes and having a chat with some friendly faces!



What's Next?

With such national uncertainty, it is difficult for plans to be made for future projects. However with the achievements and impact made during the summer with Feast of Fun at Home, it has proved that the adjusted model works for both families and church teams.

Many of the families found the range of items exciting and offering potential for both substantial and healthy family meals to be made. The offering of quality, fresh and longer life items, gave families the dignity of being able to cook with their children and eat together, having received from a welcoming and supportive environment. Showing that the churches care for their local communities by not only food, but a bit of fun as well, improved relationships during a difficult time and was also extremely rewarding for many volunteers involved.

Many have found the pandemic to be a time of isolation and even churches found it difficult to grasp the opportunity to engage with missional outreach with limited teams and resources whilst also being safe.

Working with not only churches but organisations such as Provide Devon, Scrapstore and FareShare has allowed for deeper relationships across the city to be established. This has resulted in future projects already starting to take place. With the winter season approaching and a second lockdown likely, the need for a similar model will be required again. Transforming Plymouth Together will continue to work with the local churches to engage with holiday hunger projects. Plans for October and Christmas holidays Feast of Fun at Home are already underway and we look to 2021 for what might be possible.



A huge thank you and well done to all the churches involved :



- Derriford United Reform Church
- Hooe Baptist Church Plymouth
- Hope Baptist Church
- New Life Fellowship Plymouth
- Plymouth Christian Centre
- Plymstock United Reform Church
- Plymstock Chapel
- Plymstock St Marys
- St Boniface Church of England
- St Budeaux Baptist Church
- St Budeaux Church of England
- St Budeaux Methodist
- St Edwards Church
- St Francis of Assisi
- St Jude's Church
- St Pancras Church
- St Peter and The Holy Apostle
- St Marks Church
- The Rock Community

Thank you to our supporters and funders:



Church and Personal Donations
Plymouth Scrapstore

This document is a summary of the Feast of Fun at Home summer 2020 report which alongside further information on the project can be found at transformingplymouthtogether.org.uk/initiatives/feast-of-fun

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