

# Press release: Free meals and activities for 50,000 children over 2019 summer holidays

Around 50,000 disadvantaged children will be offered free meals and activities over the upcoming summer holidays, funded by £9.1 million from the Department for Education.

The scheme follows a successful £2 million programme in the summer of 2018, which saw charities and community groups provide meals and activities such as football, play sessions and cooking classes for more than 18,000 children across the country.

To build on that, ministers have more than quadrupled the funding ahead of summer 2019 so that even more disadvantaged children can benefit.

Nadhim Zahawi, Minister for Children and Families, said:

School holidays should be a chance for children to have fun experiences and make lasting memories – and no child should miss out on that. That's why we have quadrupled funding for free summer holiday clubs this year, with the aim of reaching around 50,000 of the most disadvantaged children across the country.

Yes, these clubs will ensure children get a nutritious meal – but they will also offer the chance to socialise with friends and take part in activities such as sports and healthy cooking classes, to keep pupils active and involved in their communities throughout the six-week break from school.

The 2019 programme will help the Department for Education continue to research how it can best support children eligible for free school meals during the holidays, testing a new model in which local co-ordinators oversee and fund clubs in their areas.

The 11 co-ordinators receiving a share of the £9.1 million are:

- StreetGames (Newcastle, North East region)
- Edsential (Chester and Cheshire West, North West region)
- Transforming Lives for Good (Bradford, Yorkshire & the Humber region)
- Happy Healthy Holidays consortium (Birmingham, West Midlands region)
- Barnardo's (Leicestershire, East Midlands region)
- Suffolk County Council (East of England region)
- Family Action (Croydon, London region)
- The Romsey School (Hampshire, South East region)

- Plymouth County Council (South West region)
- Gateshead Council (North East region)
- Leeds Community Foundation (Yorkshire & the Humber region)

David White, StreetGames Fit and Fed Campaign Director, said:

Since 2016, StreetGames has led the Fit and Fed campaign to reclaim the holidays for those children and young people at risk of holiday hunger, inactivity, and loneliness. In 2018 we worked with the Department for Education to successfully establish 14 clusters of free-to-access holiday activity programmes across England, and we are delighted to be collaborating again, along with our partners at Newcastle City Council to develop a comprehensive programme across Newcastle-upon-Tyne. We have already engaged more than 100 schools, sports clubs, and community groups across the city.

Kate Hainsworth, Chief Executive of Leeds Community Foundation, said:

Leeds Community Foundation is delighted to build on the work we have been delivering in the city over the past year with our valued partners: Leeds City Council, StreetGames, FareShare, Rethinking Food and the amazing third sector groups here in Leeds.

This funding not only builds community capacity but also extends this valuable resource into schools and council one-stop hubs to ensure even more children and families access healthy activities and food in the long holidays. We have already seen the significant impact that investing in Healthy Holidays can make here in our city and are keen to grow that further.

Councillor Paul West, Cabinet Member for Ipswich and Communities at Suffolk County Council, said:

It's fantastic that we have been successful in our bid for a holiday activities project from the Department for Education. The summer can often be a challenging time for families as they try to find activities to keep children occupied, happy and healthy. Evidence suggests that attending out-of-school activities can have a positive impact on children's educational, health and well-being outcomes.

David Holmes CBE, Chief Executive of Family Action, said:

Family Action and our partner organisation, Croydon Council, are delighted to be part of this important new programme. Together we

have a clear and ambitious vision that this funding will provide a step-change in holiday provision in the borough. The programme will not only provide healthy food and activities to thousands of children over the summer holidays, but will also create a blueprint for local holiday activities and food provision for the future.

Steve Oversby, Barnardo's East Regional Director, said:

Barnardo's believes all children have a right to a happy and healthy life. We're proud to be working with the Department for Education, our innovation partners Leicestershire County Council and local providers to give Leicestershire children fantastic opportunities through the holiday activities and food programme.

The co-ordination role will be undertaken by a wide range of organisations, including a school, local authorities, community foundations and charities, all working with a range of local providers to ensure the clubs reach the children who need them most.

Activities on offer this year will include a range of sports, healthy cooking classes for children and their parents or carers, as well as targeted support for the most vulnerable families who may already be working with social services.

This announcement builds on a government investment of up to £26 million in the National School Breakfast Programme, delivered by the charity Family Action in partnership with Magic Breakfast. This is helping to set up or improve more than 1,700 breakfast clubs in schools in the most disadvantaged areas, ensuring thousands more pupils have a healthy start to their day.

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## **News story: Food Waste Fund: £4 million awarded to cut food waste**

The government has awarded more than £4 million to four redistribution organisations across England to help overcome barriers to getting food currently going to waste onto people's plates.

The successful bids – from Fareshare, Company Shop Group, The Felix Project and Food Works Sheffield – will receive funding through the first tranche of a [£15 million scheme](#) launched in January by Environment Secretary Michael Gove.

The projects will enable existing food redistribution companies to take more surplus food from manufacturers and retailers and stop it going to waste. As

part of the selection exercise, the projects had to put forward their proposals on how they would do this. Solutions include developing new supply routes from growers and local distributors, funding new lines and additional staff and increasing capacity for repackaging and labelling.

A further round of funding will focus on improving infrastructure for companies to redistribute even more of the estimated 100,000 tonnes of food – equating to 250 million meals a year – which is edible and readily available but goes uneaten. Instead, this food is currently sent away for generating energy from waste, anaerobic digestion or animal feed.

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

Food waste is unnecessary and morally unforgivable. We must end it, and our £15 million fund is a true game-changer in making that happen.

I am thrilled that this first round of funding will allow these terrific projects to redistribute even more perfectly good food, making sure it ends up where it belongs – on people's plates and stomachs.

Today's announcement comes in the run-up to [a major event 'Step up to the Plate'](#) at London's prestigious Victoria and Albert Museum, hosted by the Environment Secretary and the government's [Food Surplus and Waste Champion](#) Ben Elliot on Monday 13 May. The event will run alongside the V&A's [FOOD: Bigger than the Plate](#) exhibition, and bring together big players from the worlds of food retail, hospitality, chefs and social media influencers to promote awareness of food waste and help drive it down from all sources.

Earlier this week, [the government published the pledge](#) which attendees will be expected to sign up to during the event, committing them to measure and reduce their own food waste and inspire others to follow their lead.

Food Surplus and Waste Champion Ben Elliot said:

Following a competitive bidding process, I am delighted to announce that these four brilliant organisations have been awarded with funding from the £15 million scheme announced back in January.

These organisations are on the frontline, working diligently towards a waste-less future by ensuring that perfectly good food does not end up in the bin. It's only right that this vital work is recognised accordingly.

Justin Byam Shaw, Founder of The Felix Project, said:

Now, with the government behind us, The Felix Project can help lead

the way in getting this mountain of great, surplus food to those who really need it.

Jo Hercberg, founder of Food Works Sheffield, said:

At Food Works Sheffield we believe in building a fairer and more sustainable food system. A big part of this is reducing food waste so being awarded some of the Food Waste Fund will really help us achieve this goal in 2019. As a relatively small and new project we're delighted to have been considered alongside the large national organisations.

Company Shop Group Managing Director Jane Marren said:

We are delighted to have won Defra's backing to implement our Harnessing Harder to Reach Surplus project, which will enable Company Shop Group to deploy a specialist team of surplus intervention experts to work with food industry partners to find solutions to complex surplus challenges.

Company Shop Group – with five decades of experience in food redistribution – has the technical infrastructure, capabilities and expertise to unlock more surplus stock and reduce the amount of good food that goes to waste.

This project will achieve long-term environmental benefits; it will help the supply chain to maximise the value of their products, and it will deliver clear and tangible social impact.

The government's [£15 million scheme](#) to tackle food waste builds on its landmark [Resources and Waste Strategy](#), which sets out how the government will introduce annual reporting of food surplus and waste by food businesses. Should progress be insufficient, we will consult on seeking legal powers to introduce mandatory targets for food waste prevention.

The Resources and Waste Strategy also sets out how the government will ensure weekly collections of food waste, which is often smelly and unpleasant, for every household – restoring weekly collections in some local authorities, subject to consultation.

The government is committed to supporting the [United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 2 to end hunger by 2030](#).

## **Further information**

- A food redistribution organisation is one that collects surplus food from food businesses and delivers it to those who have a need.
- The redistribution organisations receiving funding are Fareshare,

Company Shop Group, The Felix Project and Food Works Sheffield, giving a combined award of £4.2 million.

- Applicants were required to demonstrate how they will help food businesses reduce their surplus in the long term.
- In 2017, [205,000 tonnes of surplus food in the retail and food manufacturing sectors was wasted](#). Some of the surplus is difficult to minimise, costly in that it would need to be reworked or repackaged, and some surplus would not be edible. It is estimated by WRAP that 100,000 tonnes of this is both accessible and edible with the remaining being more difficult to redistribute.
- Food waste in the UK totals 10.2 million tonnes per year, of which 1.8 million tonnes comes from food manufacture, 1 million from the hospitality sector, and 260,000 from retail, with the remainder from households.
- Food businesses interested in redistributing surplus food can contact their local redistribution organisation to see how they can help.
- The scheme is a pilot which will run in 2019/20, drawing on £15 million of additional funding the Treasury have allocated to Defra to tackle food waste. Any future funding would be subject to the Spending Review.
- [FOOD: Bigger than the Plate](#) [18 May – 20 October 2019] will explore how innovative individuals, communities and organisations are radically re-inventing how we grow, distribute and experience food. Taking visitors on a sensory journey through the food cycle, from compost to table, it poses questions about how the collective choices we make can lead to a more sustainable, just and delicious food future in unexpected and playful ways.

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## [Press release: Free meals and activities for 50,000 children over 2019 summer holidays](#)

Children and Families Minister Nadhim Zahawi announces local co-ordinators who will share £9.1m fund

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## [Press release: Syria: Foreign Secretary condemns recent violence in](#)

## Idlib province

The Foreign Secretary has released a statement following a significant surge in military action by Russia and Syria in Idlib, Syria.

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## Press release: Syria: Foreign Secretary condemns recent violence in Idlib province

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

I am deeply concerned by the escalation in military action by Russia and the Syrian regime in Idlib. This has included horrifying reports of attacks on schools, hospitals and first responders as well as the use of barrel bombs for the first time in seven months. Over 57 civilians have been killed and over 150,000 forced from their homes in recent days.

The latest offensive, a flagrant violation of the ceasefire agreement that Russia itself agreed with Turkey, is only compounding what was already a dire humanitarian situation in Idlib.

Russia and the Asad regime must respect their obligations under the Sochi agreement and international humanitarian law. They must also remember that any future use of chemical weapons in Syria would be met with a swift and appropriate response.