



**COVID-19**

Supporting Greater Manchester during lockdown



## The coronavirus pandemic hit our most vulnerable communities the hardest.

**As a leading member of the UK's largest food charity, our job is to react to surplus from the food industry and redirect it to frontline organisations such as breakfast clubs, pantries and community kitchens. But during lockdown we had to become so much more.**

The number of families relying on us for food nearly doubled overnight. At the same time, social distancing restrictions meant some of our frontline Community Food Members had to close their doors, and many of our regular volunteers had to shield at home.

Becoming essential to thousands more people stretched our capacity to the limit. Working safely, securing enough food, finding the space to store it, rapidly training up dozens of new volunteers, reaching new members and getting the resources we needed to keep going were constant challenges.



“Nearly half of our dedicated volunteering team had to shield, which left a considerable capacity gap. Thankfully, we were inundated with registrations from kind and concerned people offering to volunteer with us. We were able to welcome, induct and train 65 volunteers into the team, all prepared and able to support 12-hour working days.”

Elizabeth Lauder, Volunteer & Employability Programmes Manager

# Lockdown in numbers

23 March – 1 August 2020

## People accessing FareShare food in Greater Manchester

People accessing food at the height of lockdown:

50,000

A  
92%  
increase compared  
to pre-lockdown

## Food dispatched

Total food dispatched:



971  
TONNES



2.3  
MILLION MEALS



Top 3 food categories:



174  
TONNES OF  
VEGETABLES

128  
TONNES OF  
FRUIT

114  
TONNES OF  
TINNED FOOD

All made possible  
with the help of:

257  
DONORS &  
SUPPLIERS

## Frontline support

We supported

224

Frontline  
Community  
Food Members

100

KITCHENS &  
PANTRIES

81

FOOD BANKS  
& PARCELS

43

SCHOOLS &  
HOLIDAY CLUBS

Members by focus area:

76%

CHILDREN &  
FAMILIES

7%

HOMELESS &  
VULNERABLE

5%

ETHNIC  
GROUPS

3%

ELDERLY  
PEOPLE

9%

OTHER\*

\*domestic violence, life-limiting conditions, ex-service personnel, socially excluded, long-term unemployed, chronic addictions

## Volunteers

Veteran volunteers having to  
self-isolate during lockdown:

47%

Hours worked by volunteers:

9,894

That's

£92,014

worth of work  
if our volunteers  
were paid the  
Real Living Wage



New volunteers gained:

65

Which is a

72%

increase compared  
to the same  
period in 2019



People from all walks of life, from bus drivers to journalists and marooned students, stepped forward to help. We moved to a 12-hour working day. Our remaining members adapted to new ways of working – borrowing kitchens, collecting from us direct and getting parcels moving across the region. New members sprang up to fill gaps in the network. We even expanded into East Cheshire to provide help beyond our own borders.

Against the odds, we succeeded in redistributing nearly one thousand tonnes of food to those in need. And the story isn't over yet.

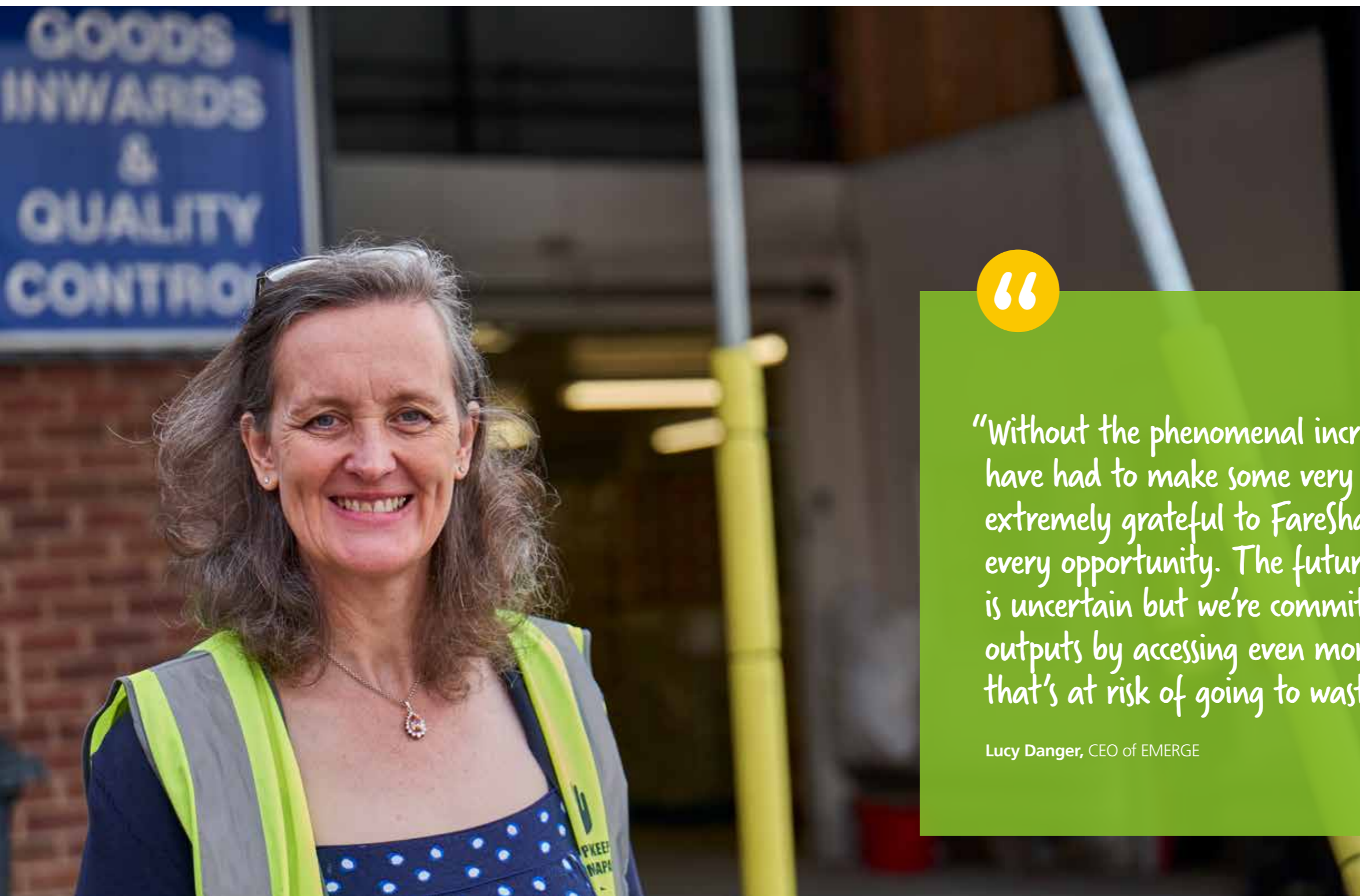


*“Demand went through the roof. We knew we couldn't cope in our small cramped warehouse. Manchester Markets gave us access to a bigger space and that made all the difference. We doubled our output, and we need to keep it that way.”*

Derek Shelton, Head of Operations

# Food in.

**An incredible 257 food sector companies provided food for us to distribute during lockdown.**



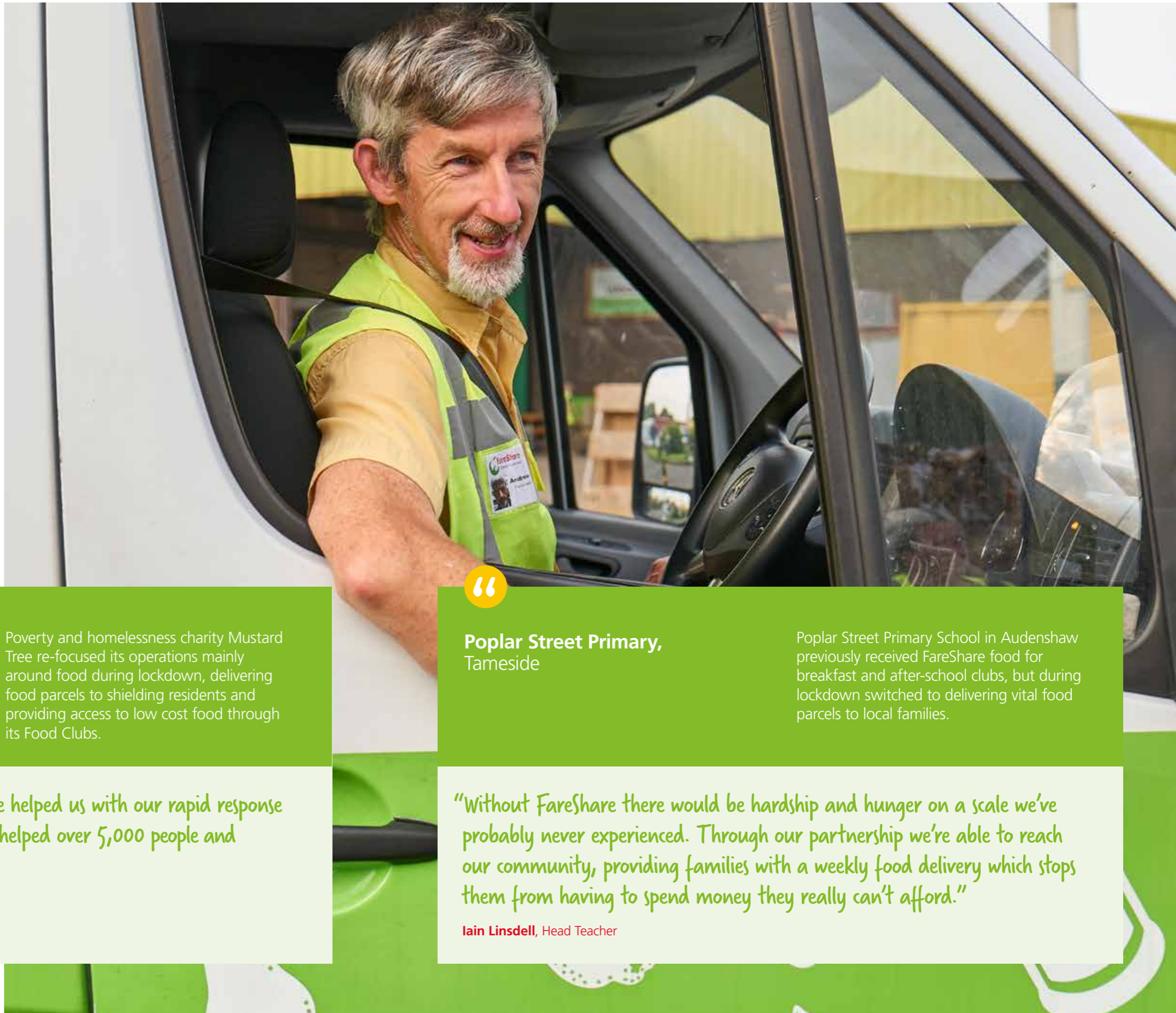
Suppliers ranged from farm right through to fork, with major national retailers and small independent growers alike diverting good food to ensure it got onto the plates of those who needed it most.

A significant proportion of our long-life supplies were provided through nationally funded purchases, supported by great logistics companies. Local donations included surplus fresh produce from our neighbours on New Smithfield Market.

“

“Without the phenomenal increase in supply, we would have had to make some very difficult choices. We are extremely grateful to FareShare UK for maximising every opportunity. The future demand for food is uncertain but we’re committed to increasing our outputs by accessing even more of the good food that’s at risk of going to waste in the UK.”

Lucy Danger, CEO of EMERGE



# Food out.

**Over 200 amazing charities, community organisations, schools and local authority teams received food and got it to where it was needed.**

As well as reaching isolated individuals and families, meals were cooked and delivered to homeless people in hotels, meals and treats reached NHS staff and patients, and thousands of people stayed connected through decent food and community support.



**Mustard Tree,**  
Manchester and Salford

Poverty and homelessness charity Mustard Tree re-focused its operations mainly around food during lockdown, delivering food parcels to shielding residents and providing access to low cost food through its Food Clubs.

*"The support we received from FareShare helped us with our rapid response in tackling unprecedented demand. We helped over 5,000 people and families during this time."*

**Chris Davies,** Food Manager



**Poplar Street Primary,**  
Tameside

Poplar Street Primary School in Audenshaw previously received FareShare food for breakfast and after-school clubs, but during lockdown switched to delivering vital food parcels to local families.

*"Without FareShare there would be hardship and hunger on a scale we've probably never experienced. Through our partnership we're able to reach our community, providing families with a weekly food delivery which stops them from having to spend money they really can't afford."*

**Iain Linsdell,** Head Teacher

# Amazing, unexpected support

We were blown away by the outpouring of local support we received during lockdown. From furloughed volunteers to unexpected fundraisers, the people of Greater Manchester really stepped up.



Alice Murfitt

“

Many of our lockdown volunteers were furloughed or jobless due to Covid-19. Among them was Alice, who not only assisted in the warehouse but ran 7 half marathons in 7 days for FareShare GM and Rainbows Children’s Hospice, raising over £4,400.

“This is the first time I’ve volunteered for FareShare. I’m so proud to know that I’m playing a key part in helping to tackle food poverty in and around Greater Manchester.”



“

James was another of our outstanding furlough volunteers. Even after his furlough came to an end earlier than expected, he used his annual leave and reduced his hours so that he could continue volunteering with us.

“Volunteering became my life during the period I was furloughed. Without it I don’t think I would have coped very well. It’s been so rewarding and enjoyable; I hope to continue volunteering in the future.”

James Ward

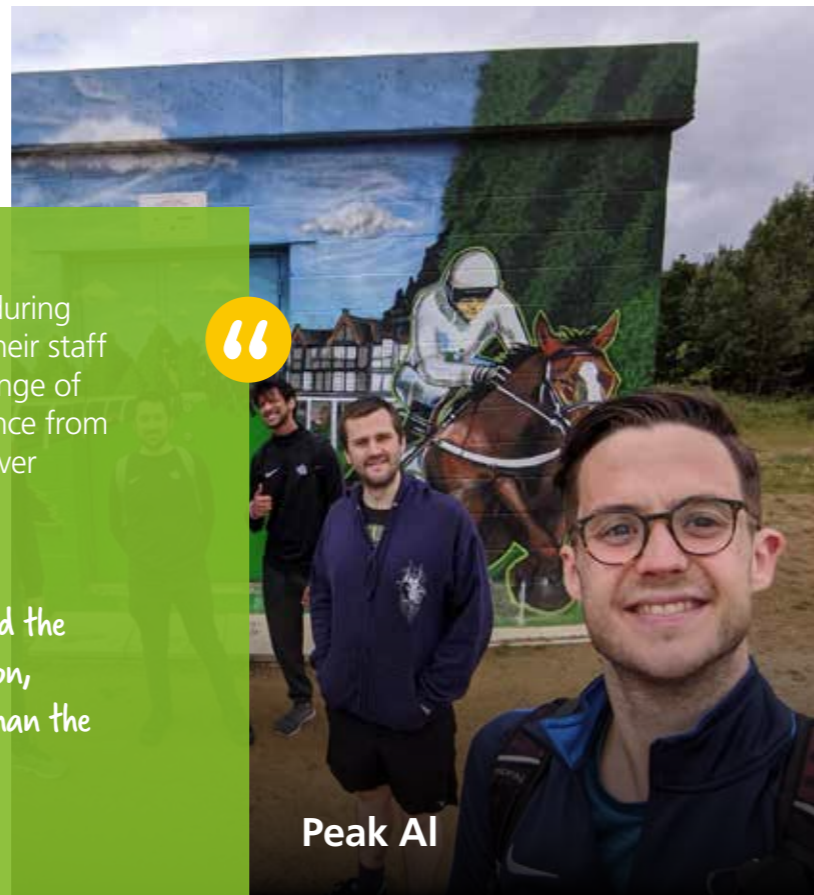


Glynis Platt



Glynis, one of our longest-serving volunteers, is approaching 70. We expected her to step back during lockdown but she refused. She came in every day like clockwork and kept the office going when many of our team were having to self-isolate.

“It was heart-warming to see first-hand the way new groups sprang up during lockdown, entirely community-led with virtually no official input, to provide food for people in need.”



Peak AI contacted us out of the blue during lockdown to fundraise for us. In July their staff from across the UK took on the challenge of collectively walking the 813-mile distance from Land’s End to John O’Groats, raising over 6,500 in the process.

“In light of the current circumstances and the hardship faced by many across the region, we thought there was no better time than the present to help FareShare.”

Peak AI

# This isn't over

Many of us feel differently about food insecurity and food waste since lockdown. We now face a long recovery, with many more people facing an uncertain future.



“At times people think they’re being looked down on if they ask somebody for help. That’s one thing that should change. Hold your head up high and if you need help, go and get help.”

Marcus Rashford, MUFC

“

“It’s not okay for children to be going to bed hungry, or for a parent to be missing meals so others can eat. We can’t fix this on our own, but we’re part of the solution and we’re going to continue to do as much as we can to help.”

Miranda Kaunang, Head of Development

From a food distribution perspective, it doesn’t feel like lockdown ever ended. Demand for FareShare food remains high and shows no signs of dropping.

There were 620,000 people struggling to get by in Greater Manchester before lockdown, including 200,000 children. These numbers are set to rise to unprecedented levels as the crisis continues.

The need is already greater than our own numbers suggest. More than half of the 5 million people experiencing food insecurity in the UK have not yet tried to get help, either because they don’t know who to ask or because they feel ashamed to.

As we enter economic recession, our role will inevitably begin to shift from access to food to hardship relief. Thankfully, lockdown showed us how individuals, companies and supporters can unite to help us at a scale we didn’t think was possible. We are now raising funds for a new warehouse that will enable us to double our outputs to 7 million meals a year. Struggling families will need our support more than ever.



# Thank you!

We've never felt more needed or supported than we did during lockdown. We send our heartfelt thanks to everyone who chose to support us, from the food industry to all our volunteers, donors and of course our wonderful Community Food Members on the frontline. We've mentioned as many of our supporters as we can here. To everyone, thank you.



2 Sisters • A J Bell • AB World Foods • Abbey Collins • ABP foods • AC Goatham • AD Harvey • Aileen Edmonson • Aimee Packwood  
AJ Warehousing • Aleya Yilmaz • Alice Murfitt • Alison Jones • Alison Page • Allied Bakeries • Alpro • Amazon • American Airlines • Ammar Bhatti  
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# You can help!



## Donate

Support our Better Building Capital Fundraising Appeal

[www.faresharegm.org.uk/get-involved](http://www.faresharegm.org.uk/get-involved)



## Volunteer

As an individual or as an organisation

[www.faresharegm.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.faresharegm.org.uk/volunteer)



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