



WASTE BRITAIN

An evaluation of the economic & social impact of FareShare's contribution to fighting hunger and tackling food waste



University of Hertfordshire **UH**

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This report was carried out by the University of Hertfordshire on behalf of and in collaboration with FareShare.

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Foreword

I am proud to present this report on FareShare's social return on investment. FareShare is a great organisation working tirelessly to fight hunger, reduce food waste, and strengthen communities across the UK.

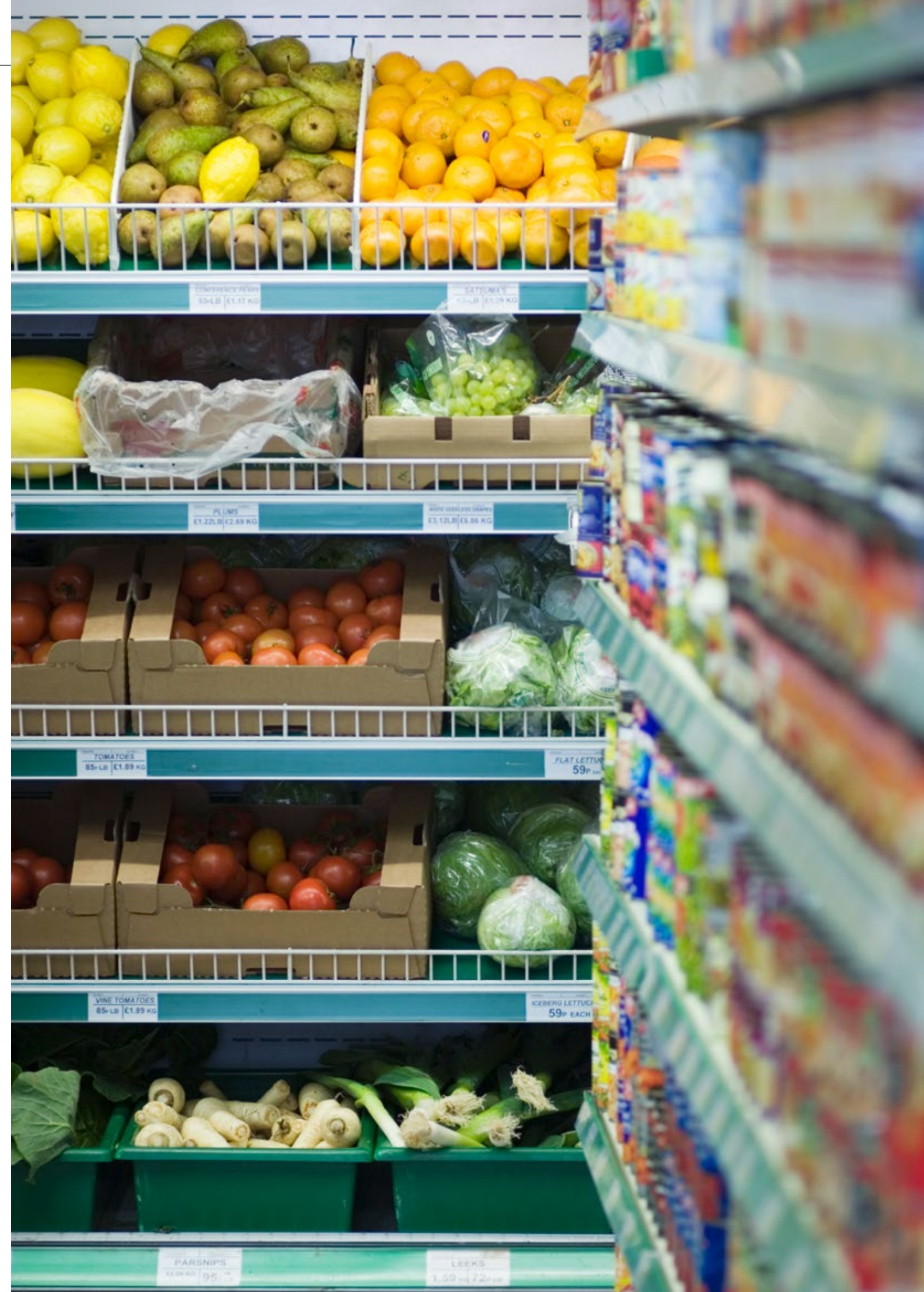
Thanks to the in-depth research by the University of Hertfordshire, this report showcases the significance FareShare has on society economically and socially.

We all agree that tackling the problem of food waste and getting surplus food to the communities that turn it into good is the right thing to do. What this report lays bare is that not only is FareShare's work socially impactful, but it is hugely cost-effective. By redistributing surplus food to charities spanning the length and breadth of the UK, FareShare saves the economy millions of pounds in avoided costs that alleviate the strain on public services, such as the NHS, by providing access to nutritious food to vulnerable people.

This report also highlights that FareShare's work has become even more critical during the current cost of living crisis. Every day the charities we support tell us about people struggling to access healthy and nutritious food, putting their health and wellbeing at risk. FareShare is providing a vital lifeline for those most in need, providing an essential hand-up, not a hand-out, when the help is needed most.

These findings demonstrate that FareShare's social return on investment is not only high but also crucial to addressing some of the most pressing challenges facing our communities today. Through our continued efforts, we are helping to build a more equitable, resilient, and sustainable society for all. From reducing food waste and combating food insecurity to enabling local communities to thrive and supporting the economy, our work is making a tangible and positive impact on the lives of countless individuals and families across the country.

Lindsay Boswell CBE
CEO of FareShare



Executive Summary

FareShare is the single largest food redistribution charity in the UK with 53,894 tonnes of food redirected to a network of 9462 charities and communities in 2021/22. The food that is saved translates into 128.3 million meals to over 1 million beneficiaries. Since 2021, the UK economy has been in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis which has acutely brought into context the work of food charities. Consequently, this study attempts to measure the wider impact of FareShare's contribution by employing a Social Return on Investment (SROI) approach to estimate the social and economic value for the primary stakeholders: the beneficiaries. The study also identifies the cost savings to the State as well as to the beneficiaries.

The analysis starts by building on the extensive data collected from the annual impact survey run by FareShare to eventually monetise the impact of each of the key outcomes for both organisations and end-beneficiaries that are actively supported by FareShare. These outcomes range from food-centric ones such as nutrition, food affordability and food waste reduction to enabling wider wellbeing services such as improved mental and physical health and promoting a sense of belonging within the community.

The findings reveal that FareShare's work creates a **net economic and social value of £225 million**.

Of this total, **£107,661,372 (48%) is attributed to savings for beneficiaries** and **£117,568,637 (52%) is savings directly to the state**.

The findings reveal that FareShare's work creates an outstanding net economic and social impact of over **£225 million annually**



Overall, for every £1 spent on redistributing surplus food, FareShare has enabled **£5.72 of socio-economic value**. This is split into **£2.97 of savings to the State** and **£2.75 of savings to beneficiaries**.



The cost savings attributed to the State are a result of beneficiaries getting access to better nutritional food, and access to wider services such as mental health support, amongst others. The bulk of the savings attributed to beneficiaries are derived from a reduction in their food affordability burden, which may in turn lead to further indirect savings to the state. This finding underlines the current financial pressures faced by people turning to food services.

The study also shows that the largest proportion of the social and economic value is delivered through the Community Services Group (38%) followed by Foodbanks (35%) in helping mostly families (74% of total beneficiaries).

The average net value generated stands at **£209 per beneficiary**.

Introduction: The Economic backdrop to the SROI report

The start of 2023 saw the British economy still deeply mired in a cost-of-living crisis that emerged in 2021. The sharp rise in global energy prices coupled with the hike in wholesale agricultural prices between 2021 to 2022 resulted in UK's inflation rate running into double digits during this period - something the country had not experienced since 1982¹.

In December 2022, annual CPI inflation rate shot to 10.5% from 5.4% in December 2021. One of the largest contributions came from the food and non-alcoholic drinks category. In the 12-month period to February 2023, food prices have maintained their upward trajectory and reached a 45-year high of 18.2%. At the same time, gas prices rose by 129.4% and electricity prices by 66.7% (see Figure 1).

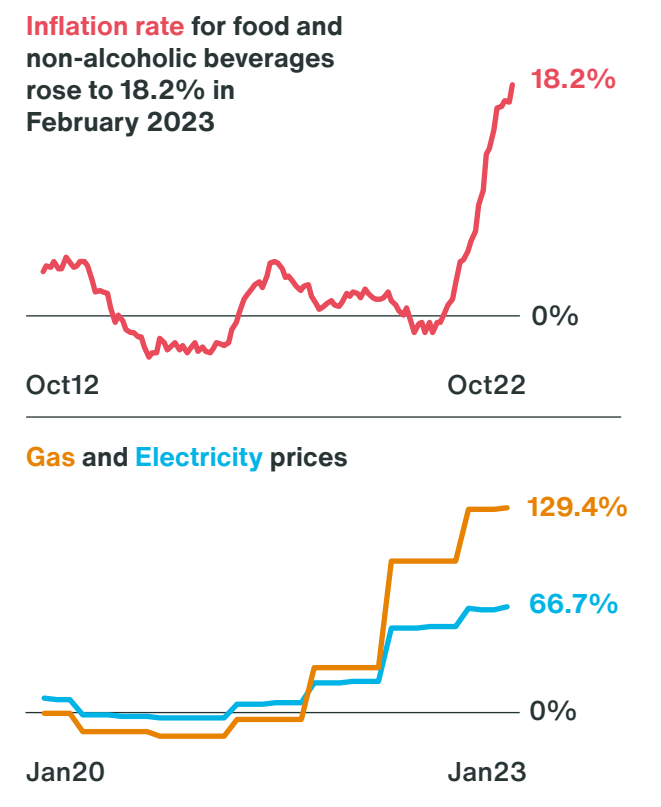
Predictions by the Bank of England and the Office of Budget Responsibility in March 2023 point to CPI inflation gradually falling in 2023 but food prices are likely to remain high².

In the annual Impact survey 2022, organisations said:

“ More and more families are struggling who are not entitled to free school meals ”

“ Energy costs mean we have no heating nor hot water ”

Figure 1: Food and energy prices



Source: compiled from ONS Data

In the annual Impact survey 2022, organisations said:

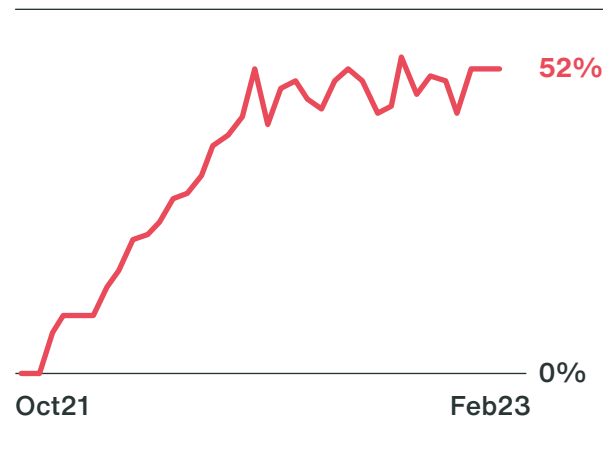
“ The cost of food means we are unable to purchase as much as we need ”

Impact on households

Higher food and energy prices tend to weigh more heavily on the inflation rate experienced by low-income households given the greater proportion of income they spend on these items compared to high-income families. As reported by the Office of National Statistics (ONS), in 2022, CPI inflation stood at 12.2% for subsidised renters, 11.5% for owner-occupiers and 9.1% for private renters. It is therefore not surprising that over the 2021-22 period, sales of supermarkets' cheapest own brands increased by 47% amidst conditions where the costs of not switching would have seen households face an increase of £788 to their annual grocery costs³.

At the same time, prices of the lowest-priced items rose by 17%⁴ with some items rising by more than 40% (vegetable oil: 65%, pasta: 60%, tea: 46%). As shown in Figures 2, 52% of adults surveyed in February 2023 by the ONS⁵ revealed that they are buying less food.

Figure 2: Around half of adults are buying less food when food shopping



Source: compiled from ONS Data

The cost-of-living crisis has hit at a time when the impact of the pandemic is still coursing through the country, thereby compounding the problem of food vulnerability and poverty

In the annual Impact survey 2022, organisations said:

“ A number of our families are desperate. They are really struggling to manage day to day living expenses and feel pressured to move out of London. Mental health and alcohol misuse issues are quite common as well as relationship pressure and domestic abuse ”

Data on income levels show that in 2020-21, a fall of 1.7% was registered in median disposable incomes, a fall which would have been significantly higher had it not been cushioned by the furlough scheme (£60bn) and additional benefits disbursed (£11bn). In addition, the surge in energy prices has seriously been jeopardising lower-income families' ability to heat homes and this, among other factors, is amplifying the level of material deprivation experienced⁶. As surveyed by the Resolution Foundation⁷, 48% of social renters reported that they could not put their heating on when needed. This is a clear sign of material deprivation.

Overall, the Office of Budget Responsibility is predicting real disposable household income per person, which measures living standards, to fall by 5.7% over the 2 years 2022-23 and 2023-24 - the largest 2-year fall since records began in 1956-57⁸.

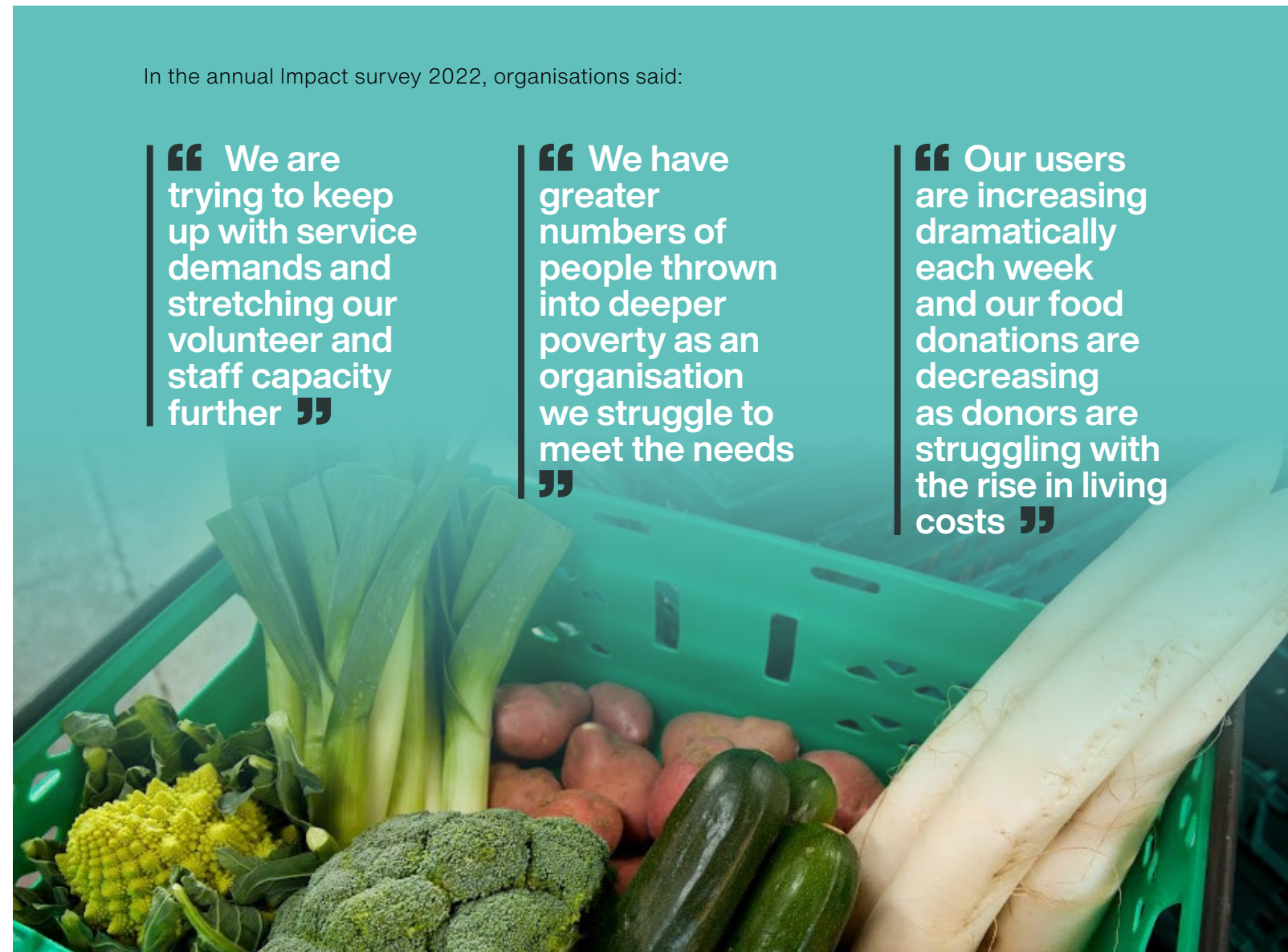
As matters stand, the spectre of the cost-of-living crisis and its knock-on effects are not showing signs of abating and poverty levels and inequality look set to keep rising as the economic pressures faced by people snowball into a health and well-being crisis.

In the annual Impact survey 2022, organisations said:

“ We are trying to keep up with service demands and stretching our volunteer and staff capacity further ”

“ We have greater numbers of people thrown into deeper poverty as an organisation we struggle to meet the needs ”

“ Our users are increasing dramatically each week and our food donations are decreasing as donors are struggling with the rise in living costs ”



The role of FareShare

FareShare is the biggest food redistribution charity in the UK. It provides surplus food (that would otherwise go to waste) to several thousands of frontline charities and community groups. FareShare's latest annual statement reports that in 2021/22 alone FareShare supported 9,462 charities and redistributed an estimated 53,894 tonnes of food. This volume of operation was equivalent to 128.3 million meals that helped feed 1 million vulnerable individuals⁹.

The Covid-19 pandemic in the beginning of 2020 resulted in a significant expansion of FareShare's operations. In October 2020, FareShare reported a "mammoth Covid-19 response" that allowed it to redistribute an additional 6,732 tonnes of food (in comparison to the same time frame in 2019)¹⁰. The 2021-22 statement points out that demand for food from FareShare has skyrocketed since the pandemic started, and that FareShare has emerged from the pandemic working at a much larger scale – with five times the food volumes of 2019. More specifically, in 2021, FareShare redistributed 2,554 tonnes of purchased food (525 tonnes in 2019), while the overall volume of redistributed food in 2019 was 23,543 tonnes – less than half of what it was in 2021¹¹.

A core principle of FareShare has always been to prioritise collaborations that promote the social impact of the redistributed food. In practical terms, this means that frontline charities and organisations that deliver wrap around care and support services that help tackle the root cause of poverty are prioritised over charities that only give away food parcels. Following this principle ensures that FareShare is instrumental in addressing the cause of the problems faced by individuals turning to charities – rather than providing temporary relief for these problems' symptoms.

In the annual Impact survey 2022, on the benefits of working with FareShare, organisations said:

“ Saves time and money and reduces food waste all while helping some of the most vulnerable ”

“ We couldn't exist without you! Financially you make a massive saving to our charity ”

“ We are grateful to be able to provide fresh produce to individuals and families - without Fareshare we would struggle to do this. In addition, we pass on any fruit or veg which is past its best to a local composting charity thus alleviating food waste ”

“ It's helped people's mental health, it's made it easier to afford electricity, it's saved on more cars on the road going to supermarkets, and the strong community links we have forged are invaluable ”

“ Being able to help our service-users and others in the community ”

“ Receiving Fareshare food is fantastic. We are able to give people a hot lunch for £1.50. We are able to help unemployed adults to progress into employment, Volunteering or further education by sitting down and talking to them over tea and toast/ biscuits/cake. Our organisation has increased its footfall by over 250% since working with FareShare. Thank you. ”

“ Socialisation for the residents. If it were not for us some people wouldn't see anyone for weeks on end ”

“ Delivery service that is tailored to our system and can be changed if we need it to ”



Theory of Change

Prioritising charities and organisations that use the redistributed food in the most impactful way leads to an increase in FareShare's own social impact. In order to articulate this impact and inform its impact evaluation, FareShare has developed a "theory of change" in partnership with NCVO Charities Evaluation Services¹². This framework details the main activities and the outcomes achieved by FareShare relating to its dual aim of maximising the social value of redistributed food and at reducing the negative environmental impact of surplus food.

The theory of change framework helps determine the activities that enable FareShare's desired outcomes, which can be short, medium or long term. Ultimately, the framework includes two dimensions of impact statement, tying in with FareShare's mission. These are: a) social value of surplus food is maximised to better support individuals to improve physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, social inclusion and food security and b) reduced negative environmental impact of surplus food.

FareShare has been working on evaluating its impact for both dimensions. Regarding the environmental impact, FareShare has been working with the Carbon Trust in estimating FareShare's carbon footprint. One of the results of this body of research related directly to one of the environmental outcomes identified in the theory of change ("preventing the wastage of CO2 emissions and water embedded in surplus food"), as it was estimated that the overall carbon footprint of the food waste that was avoided thanks to FareShare in 2019-20 amounted to 10,698 tCO2e (for reference, FareShare's carbon footprint for operating in 2019-20 was 1,247 tCO2e)¹³. The social value impact relates to the majority of outcomes in the theory of change framework, and because of this it could be argued that its evaluation is more layered and complex.

FareShare assesses its social value impact regularly, and one useful tool for this assessment is an annual survey that has been running since 2020, and whose aim is to track FareShare's progress linked to the theory of change. Prior to this survey, one major impact assessment was prepared by New Economics Foundation (NEF) Consulting, which was commissioned to conduct a Social Return on Investment (SROI) study and establish a financial value for the socio-economic impact of FareShare. NEF Consulting results were "hugely inspiring", as it was estimated that FareShare creates approximately £50.9 million of socio-economic impact every year – broken down to £6.9 million to the beneficiaries directly and £44 million in savings to the State (NEF Consulting, 2018)¹⁴.

Given the anomaly of the pandemic that started in 2020 as well as the current cost-of-living crisis, a newer assessment of FareShare's social and economic impact is unarguably a necessity. The present study by the University of Hertfordshire is a SROI analysis that uses the latest data from FareShare's annual survey (2021-22) in order to estimate its socio-economic impact. Although there are some differences in the methodology, the main approach to the calculation remains the same at NEF's, allowing for a reliable comparison of the results (see Table 5).



The SROI methodology

In accordance with the Theory of Change, FareShare had already developed a series of outcomes to measure the benefit to charities and their beneficiaries. Based off this, the following outcomes were measured in the SROI report.

- Access to increased variety, quantity and quality of food
- Access to better nutritional food and a more balanced diet
- Save time sourcing food
- Reduce food waste
- Reach More People and Run More Services
- Increased sense of belonging
- Increased sense of community
- Improved mental health outcomes
- Improved physical health outcomes
- Reduction in the food affordability burden

Following the example provided by NEF Consulting's SROI report on FareShare, all charities receiving food from FareShare were aggregated into five groups:

- Community Services Group representing *Community Centres, Local Authorities, Faith Organisations and Growing/ Gardening charities.*
- Drop-in Services Group representing *Training Centres, Medical Facilities, Advice Centres, Alcohol and Substance Misuse charities.*
- Foodbanks representing *Food Banks, Pantries and Social Supermarkets.*
- Housing Group representing *Homeless Centres, Care Homes, Women's Refuges and Prisons.*
- Youth and Children Services Group representing *Schools, Out of School Clubs, Nursery and Playgroups, Childcare, Daycare.*

The primary sources of information include the FareShare 2021/2022 Annual report and the Annual Impact Survey undertaken by FareShare in February and March 2022¹⁵. The purpose of the survey was to understand the impact of FareShare's food redistribution to the charities and community organisations that use their services. 1,525 charities completed the survey, generating a response rate of 17% with all 22 regional centres represented. There were 153,702 beneficiaries represented in the survey with the main beneficiary types identified as families and/or people with low or no income, members of the local community, older people, people with mental health problems, homeless people and rough sleepers, families with children, and children (under 18).

The overall aim of this SROI analysis is to estimate the monetary value of the social and the economic impact of FareShare's theory of change outcomes. For some of these outcomes, the monetisation of the socio-economic impact can be relatively straightforward such as the ones assessing the cost of a balanced meal, or the savings generated from reducing food waste. For those outcomes that are not typically monetised, a financial proxy is attributed to measure their impact. For example, this was the approach followed to estimate the sense of belonging outcome and the increased sense of community one. The monetary values measure the social benefits to society and to the individual from these outcomes. Ultimately, the sum of the social and economic monetary value from all the outcomes is the resulting value created from the work undertaken by FareShare in redistributing surplus food. This overall value translates into savings to the state and to the beneficiaries.

The estimation of the social and economic value of an outcome

The SROI approach is a step-by-step approach¹⁶ that has been applied to each of the ten outcomes from FareShare’s impact survey under each beneficiary type and across all charity groups. The technical report detailing the full methodology used by the authors accompanies this shorter report. To demonstrate an example, below is an application of the social economic model to the outcome ‘People Experience Improved Physical Health’ for the beneficiary type ‘Families and/or people with low-or-no income’ under the ‘Community Services’ charity group which includes Community Centres, Local Authorities, Faith Organisations, Growing Food/ Gardening clubs.

Step 1

Identification of the number of beneficiaries (families and/or people with low-or-no income) being serviced by Community services and impacted by FareShare’s work.

Calculations: 1 According to the FareShare impact survey 2022, there were 42,028 beneficiaries using the charities within the Community Services Group, which represents around 27% of the total 153,702 beneficiaries in the sample. **2** 94% of charities within this group reported servicing ‘families and/or people with low-or-no income’. The estimated number of beneficiaries is thus 39,506 [42,028×0.94]. **3** To ringfence FareShare’s impact, the number of beneficiaries in the sample is weighted by the proportion of FareShare food received (60%) so sample group =23,704 [39,506×0.6]

Step 2

Application of the outcome incidence which is 62.2944% as per the Impact Survey 2022. This represents the frequency for the outcome ‘People Experience Improved Physical Health’ by beneficiary type ‘families and/or people with low-or-no income’ within the ‘Community services’ specific charity group.

Calculation: Sample =14,766 people [62.2944%×23,704]

Step 3

A deadweight is subtracted to account for the outcome still being achieved irrespective of the charities/FareShare’s intervention. According to BHF (2022)¹⁷, being active can reduce a person’s risk of developing some heart and circulatory diseases by as much as 35%. This is considered to be the deadweight on the assumption that 35% of the beneficiaries would still experience an increase in their physical health regardless of the charities/FareShare’s impact.

Calculation: 6,470 people [14,766 – [23,704×0.35]]

Step 4

Application of the first attribution¹⁸ [impact of charity] which is estimated at 32%. This is derived from the proportion of community services charities out of all charities [168/517] which answered, ‘Physical health issues’ to the question in the FareShare survey: ‘What do people tell you are the reasons they are accessing your services?’

Calculation: 2,070 people [6,470×0.32]

Step 5

Application of the second attribution [impact of FareShare] which is estimated at 21%. This is derived from the proportion of community services charities out of all charities [110 out of 517] that responded, ‘We would have to stop operating our food service’ to the question from the impact survey: ‘Please choose the top 3 consequences which would be most detrimental to your organisation if you were to stop receiving food from FareShare.’

Calculation: 435 people [2,070×0.21]

This means that 435 people from the sample of 42,028 beneficiaries categorised as families and/or people with low-or-no income accessing community services experienced an improvement in their physical health from directly accessing food and services from a charity dependent on FareShare’s food

redistribution. This is the net impact of FareShare’s contribution in terms of number of people impacted.

Step 6

Monetisation of FareShare’s impact. This is obtained by applying a financial proxy of £10.20 per person to the 435 number of beneficiaries, which equals £4435. The financial proxy is obtained based on the following reasoning. 1) The average cost of an emergency admission is £4,085 which is the estimation from Downing et al. (2020)¹⁹ and adjusted at 2022 prices. 2) In order not to overstate the savings to the state associated with ‘increased physical activity’ being delivered by the charities/FareShare, the proportion of beneficiaries that would require a hospital admission is estimated at 0.25%. This is inferred from data reported by BHF (2023)^{20 21}.

Calculations: The cost saving per beneficiary by visiting the charity = 0.25% ×£4,085=£10.20. The impact for the estimated 435 beneficiaries (families and people with low or no income) likely to experience an improvement in their physical health is 435×£10.20 = £4,435.

Step 7

Extrapolation of the impact per beneficiary for the improved physical health outcome to FareShare’s total beneficiary population of 1,076,669, which gives a net impact of £163,093 for this outcome for all beneficiary types across all charity groups. The extrapolated final value is weighted by the contribution of this outcome to total net impact. A visualisation of the process is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Illustration of the social and economic value of an outcome

Charity type	Beneficiary type	Social and economic impact for the outcome 'People Experience Improved Physical Health'
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community services Drop-in Services Food bank services Housing Youth and children services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families and people with-low-or-no income Local community Older people People with mental health problems Older people Homeless people and rough sleepers Families with children Children under 18 (different financial proxy used) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £23,283 for a net number of 1284 beneficiaries directly impacted from the 153,702 in the sample for all charity groups £163,093 for the extrapolated population of 1,076,669 beneficiaries serviced by FareShare



Results of the SROI analysis

The SROI sample model estimates the economic and social value generated by FareShare in 2021-22 at £32,153,362 using the 153,702 beneficiaries from the 2022 FareShare Impact Survey. This indicates that FareShare creates an average impact of £209 per beneficiary using their services. In 2021-22, FareShare serviced just over 1 million beneficiaries. Using the £ per beneficiary generated in the sample model and applying it to the total beneficiaries serviced annually by FareShare results in a total economic and social value of £225,230,009, as presented in Table 1 below.



For every £1 spent on surplus food, FareShare has created £5.72 of socio-economic value. This is broken down into £2.97 of savings for the state and £2.75 of savings to beneficiaries

Table 1: Sample and Extrapolated Net Value of FareShare

Number of beneficiaries used in the sample	153,702
Overall net value of sample	£32,153,362
Average net value per beneficiary	£209
Total number of beneficiaries serviced by FareShare	1,076,669
Extrapolated net value of FareShare	£225,230,009
Extrapolated saving to beneficiaries	£107,661,372
Extrapolated saving to the state	£117,568,637
SROI Ratio ²²	5.72:1

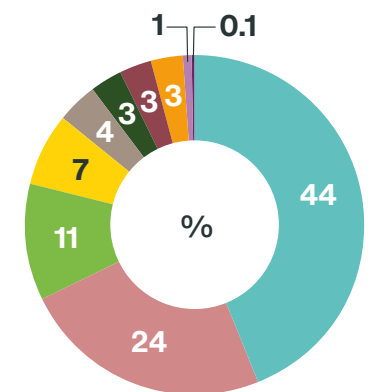
The economic and social value created by FareShare through each of its Theory of Change outcomes is illustrated below. Table 2 shows value contributions of each of the outcomes and Diagram 1 shows the percentage contributions.

From an outcome perspective, the biggest contribution to total net socio-economic impact comes from the reduction in the food affordability burden outcome at £99,746,833 (44% of total)

Table 2: Contribution of each outcome to total net impact

	Sample Value	Extrapolated Value
Reduction in Food Affordability Burden	£14,239,648	£99,746,833
Access to Better Nutritional Food and a More Balanced Healthy Diet	£7,694,171	£53,896,644
Reach More People and Run More Services	£3,664,343	£25,668,234
People Experience Improved Mental Health Outcomes	£2,407,859	£16,866,728
Increased Sense of Community	£1,184,245	£8,295,475
Save Time Sourcing Food	£937,560	£6,567,486
Reduce Food Waste	£900,506	£6,307,927
Increased Sense of Belonging	£909,444	£6,370,537
Access to Increased Variety, Quality and Quantity of Food	£192,303	£1,347,053
People Experience Improved Physical Health Outcomes	£23,283	£163,093

Diagram 1: Contribution of each outcome to total net impact



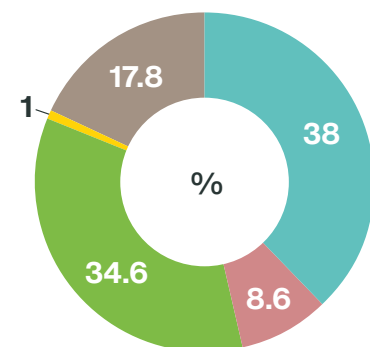
The economic and social value generated by FareShare can be broken down into five charity groups, as shown below. Table 3 shows value contributions of each of the charity groups and Diagram 2 shows the percentage contributions.



Table 3: Contribution of each charity group to total net impact

	Sample Value	Extrapolated Value
Community Services	£12,214,169	£85,558,623
Drop-in Services	£2,778,885	£19,465,717
Foodbanks	£11,117,301	£77,875,207
Housing	£320,184	£2,242,846
Youth and Children Services	£5,722,824	£40,087,617

Diagram 2: Contribution of each charity type group to total net impact



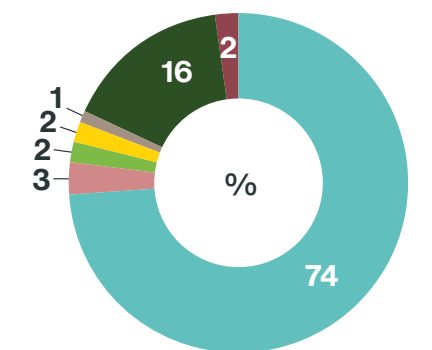
The economic and social value generated by FareShare can be broken down into beneficiary types as shown below. Table 4 shows value contributions of each of the beneficiary types and Diagram 3 shows the percentage contributions.



Table 4: Contribution of each beneficiary types to total net impact

	Sample Value	Extrapolated Value
Families and/or people on low or no income	£23,838,005	£166,982,040
Local community	£1,015,186	£7,111,240
Older people	£608,097	£4,259,640
People with mental health problems	£676,117	£4,736,112
Homeless people and rough sleepers	£293,133	£2,053,359
Families with children	£5,192,563	£36,373,209
Children (under 18)	£530,261	£3,714,408

Diagram 3: Contribution of each beneficiary types to total net impact



Comparison with previous impact evaluation

Table 5 juxtaposes the main results of FareShare’s impact evaluation with those of the previous major evaluation conducted by NEF Consulting in 2018. The comparison reveals a striking increase in FareShare’s impact in the last five years, as FareShare was able to increase its net value from approximately **£50 million to an impressive £225 million**.

A part of this increase is due to FareShare reaching out to more beneficiaries, but this is not the only reason. Although there are now almost three times as many beneficiaries than 2018, the net value has actually increased approximately 4.4 times, which is indicative of FareShare’s increased efficiency in allocating its resources. This demonstrates that since 2018, FareShare has been able to redirect the surplus food to charities that create more social impact, thereby reinforcing its core principle of maximising the social impact of the redistributed food.

FareShare’s social-economic impact can be broken down to approximately £108 million for the beneficiaries and approximately £118 million for the government. The latter finding means that in the absence of FareShare, the government would be expected to spend an additional £118 million per year (for example, in order to fund additional NHS resources that would be needed if beneficiaries did not have access to the surplus food redistributed by FareShare). Overall, the government is estimated to save almost three times as much as it did in 2018, which is suggestive of FareShare’s outstanding impact.

Moreover, the saving to the state is conceivably bigger in reality, as there may also be a level of indirect saving. This is because the beneficiaries themselves save directly an estimated £209 each annually, which in turns means that they potentially need less support from the government.

The SROI ratio for 2022 is slightly greater than the ratio for 2018. This is a remarkable achievement, as the costs assumed for 2022 are 24% greater than what they were in 2018. In other words, despite the adverse economic climate and the increased costs, FareShare has managed to improve its SROI ratio, which is another indication of its increasing efficiency and impact.

Table 5: Comparison with the results of the SROI analysis conducted in 2018

	2018 evaluation (NEF Consulting)	2023 evaluation (University of Hertfordshire)
Number of beneficiaries used in the sample	174,024	153,702
Overall net value of sample	£28,272,419	£32,153,362
Average net value per beneficiary	£162	£209
Total number of beneficiaries serviced by FareShare	313,388	1,076,669
Extrapolated net value of FareShare	£50,913,878	£225,230,009
Extrapolated saving to beneficiaries	£6,883,556	£107,661,372
Extrapolated saving to the state	£44,030,322	£117,568,637
SROI Ratio²³	5.6:1	5.72:1

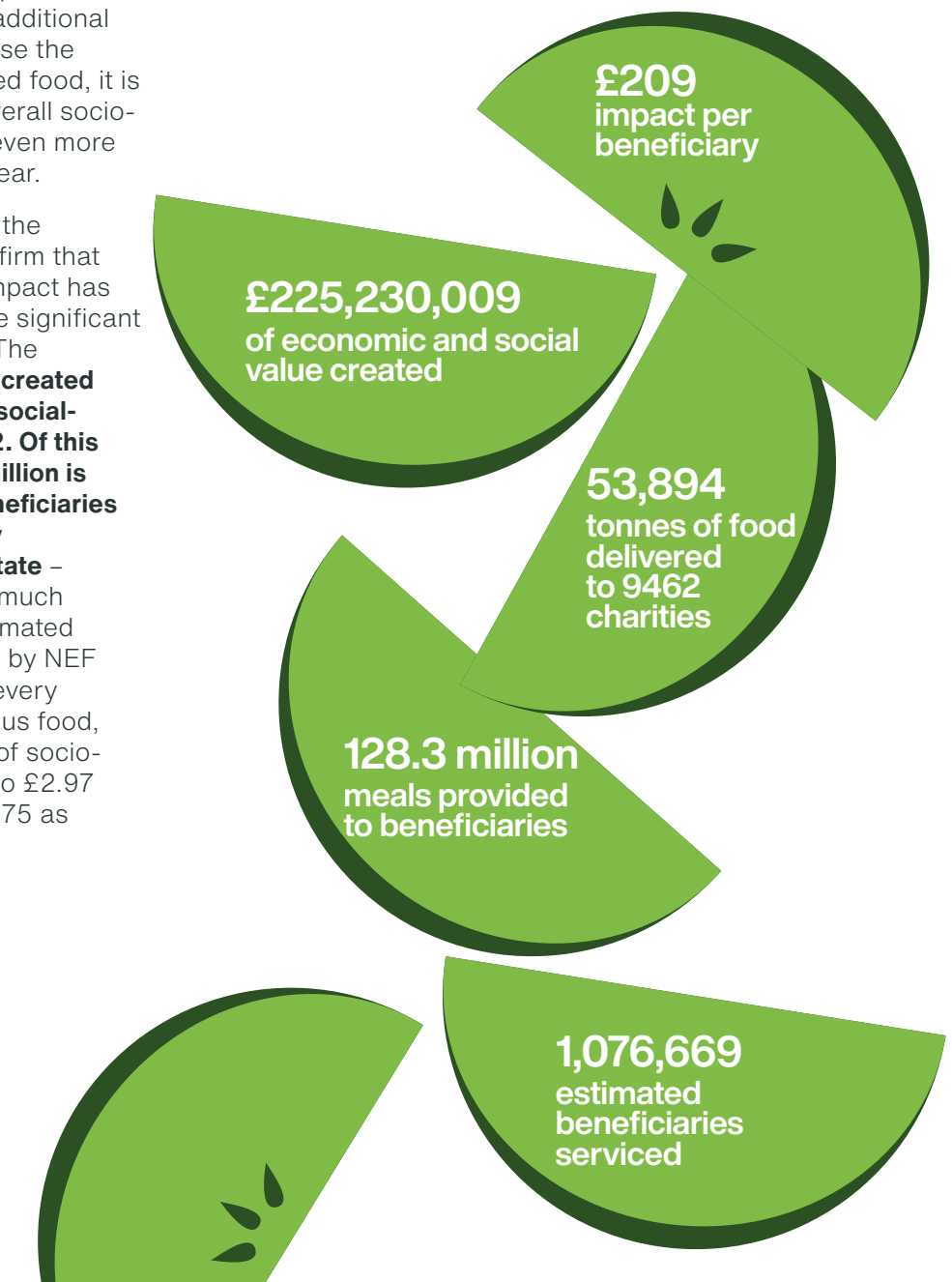
Conclusion

Since the previous major evaluation of its socio-economic impact, FareShare has had to face two important challenges: the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. Both meant that FareShare has had to expand its operation and reach, as demand for the services provided by food charities soared. Amidst this difficult climate, FareShare has achieved an impressive increase in the volume of food redistributed and the number of meals provided to vulnerable individuals. Any external challenges aside, with FareShare increasingly acting on its principle to prioritise charities that deliver additional services and striving to maximise the social impact of the redistributed food, it is anticipated that FareShare’s overall socio-economic impact will become even more significant with each passing year.

The findings from the study by the University of Hertfordshire confirm that FareShare’s socio-economic impact has been enormous, and even more significant since the previous evaluation. The analysis shows that **FareShare created approximately £225 million of social-economic impact in 2021-2022. Of this amount, approximately £108 million is social value created for the beneficiaries themselves, and approximately £118 million is savings to the State** – which is almost three times as much as the savings to the State estimated in the pre-pandemic evaluation by NEF Consulting. Consequently, for every **£1** spent on redistributing surplus food, FareShare has enabled **£5.72** of socio-economic value. This is split into £2.97 as savings to the State and £2.75 as savings to beneficiaries.

These outstanding results underpin that, in times of multiple crises, not only is FareShare’s work not adversely affected, but also its impact and reach are magnified and living up to the increased demand for food that such crises create. At the same time, the findings reinforce FareShare’s strategic vision to support charities offering additional services, as a significant part of the created value is not directly associated to the food itself but can be linked to the auxiliary services that the beneficiaries can receive thanks to FareShare.

SROI ratio
£1 : £5.72



Endnotes

- 1 ONS (2023). Inflation and price indices. Available at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices>
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- 14 NEF Consulting (2018). The socio-economic impact of the work of FareShare. Available at: <https://www.nefconsulting.com/our-work/clients/fareshare-the-socio-economic-impact-of-the-work-of-fareshare/>
- 15 At the time of writing, these were the latest available information.
- 16 The SROI Network (2012). A guide to Social Return on Investment. Available at <http://www.socialvaluelab.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/SROI-a-guide-to-social-return-on-investment.pdf>
- 17 BHF (2022). Physical inactivity. Available at <https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/risk-factors/physical-inactivity>
- 18 Note: we follow the approach in NEF (2018) and split the attribution stage in two steps, one for the charities and one for FareShare.
- 19 Downing J, Rose TC, Saini P, et al (2020). Impact of a community-based cardiovascular disease service intervention in a highly deprived area. *Heart*.106:374-379. Available at <https://heart.bmj.com/content/106/5/374>.
- 20 BHF (2023). UK Factsheet. Available at <https://www.bhf.org.uk/-/media/files/for-professionals/research/heart-statistics/bhf-cvd-statistics-uk-factsheet.pdf?rev=e771367bf0654a4dae85cbc9dbefae17&hash=76C0182379BB6EE118EC6F76FA35A158>
- 21 ONS (2021). Overview of the UK population: January 2021. Available at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/articles/overviewoftheukpopulation/january2021>
- 22 Based on the 2021/22 cost of food sourced to FareShare's regional centres and out to charities (£730 per tonne).
- 23 The ratio for 2018 is based on the pre-pandemic cost of food sourced to FareShare's regional centres and out to charities (£590 per tonne).

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