

Household vouchers for locally supplied fruit and vegetables: A Pilot Cluster Randomised Trial

Clare Relton¹, Dr Megan Blake², Dr
Gemma Bridge¹, Dr Kevin Williamson³,
Louis Palmer³, Dr Jean Adams⁴

¹Queen Mary University of London, UK.

²University of Sheffield, UK. ³RDaSH NHS
Foundation Trust, Doncaster, UK. ⁴University of
Cambridge, UK.

No COI



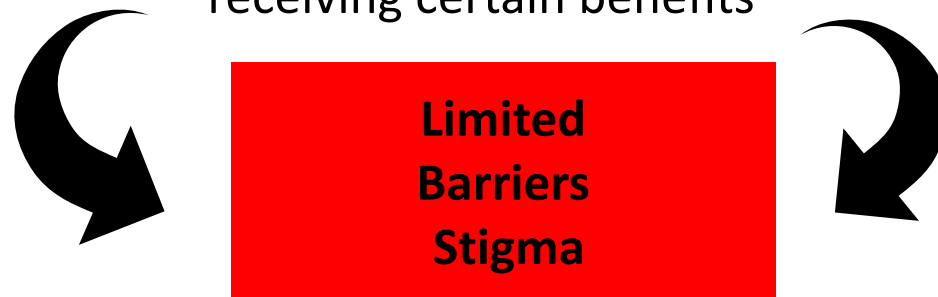
- Food is medicine
- One in four eat recommended 5-a-day
- Everyone knows, but lack of access and means
- All drowned in UPF marketing
- Cash transfer/ voucher programmes *can* support healthier diets





NHS Healthy Start scheme for young families on low incomes for fruit, vegetables, pulses, cow's milk, infant formula (£4.25 - £8.50)

Must be 10 weeks pregnant or children under 4 years and receiving certain benefits



UK fruit and vegetable consumption continues to be well **below minimum** needed for health

Many areas households unable to access or afford fruit & vegetables

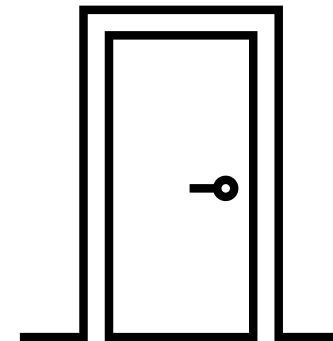


Area-based approach

- Increase access to and consumption of fruit and vegetable
- Help build healthier, fairer, local food systems.



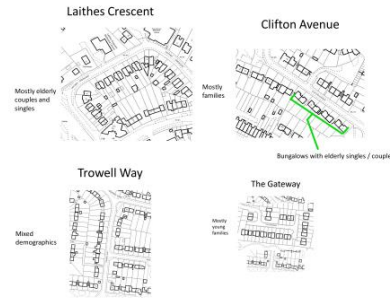
- Regular vouchers to households
- Vouchers redeemed with independent local fruit & vegetable vendors (not supermarkets)
- All households eligible
- No requirement to prove need
- Paper vouchers – shareable





Is it feasible?

(in areas of high deprivation)



Local fruit & vegetable shop plus two market stalls (2.5 miles away)

- Barnsley: 5 x£1 vouchers delivered weekly to all 97 households for one year
 - ✓ 4 out of 5 households used vouchers
 - ✓ 9 out of 10 vouchers redeemed



Prepacked bags of fruit & vegetables delivered to flats or market stall (2.5 miles away)

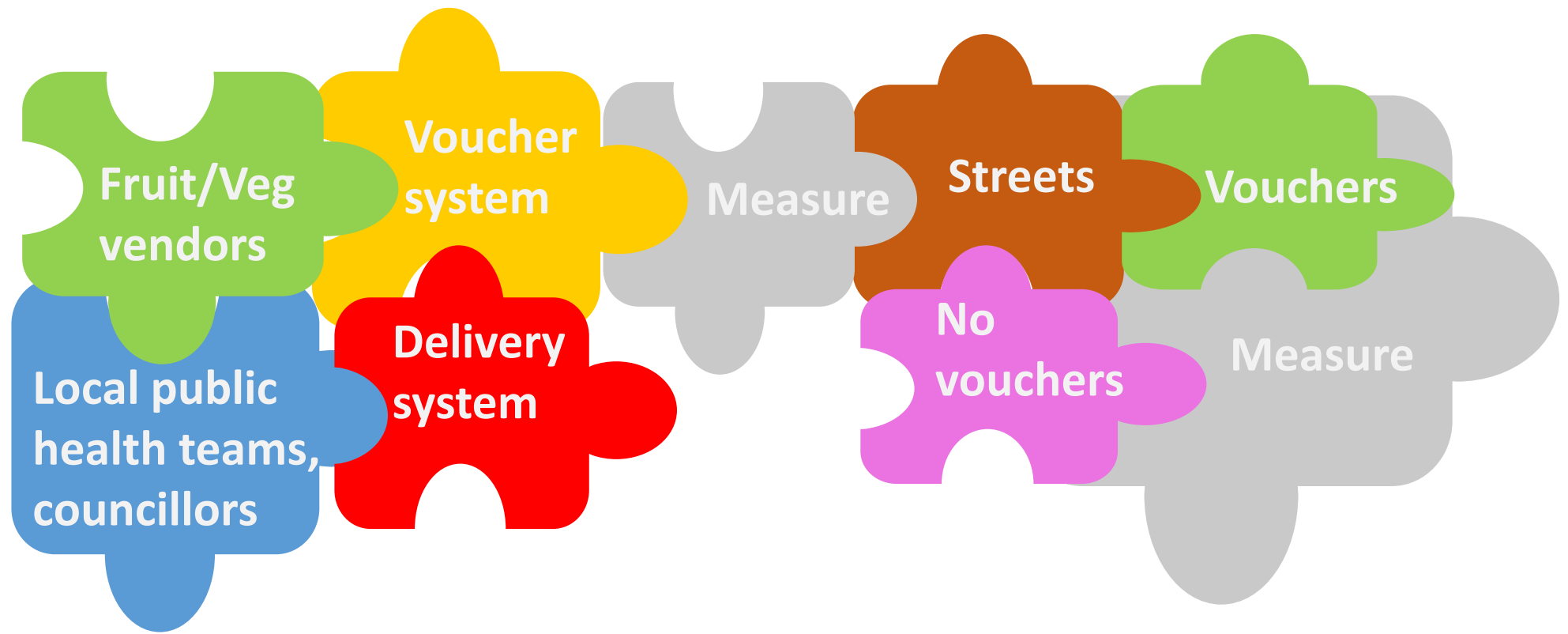
- Sheffield: 5 x£1 vouchers delivered weekly to all 54 flats for one year
 - ✓ Similar uptake
 - ✓ Importance of choice

Does it work?

Study design: Pilot cluster randomised controlled trial

Aim: To inform a larger trial to assess impact of Fresh Street on local food choices, diet, health, and wider environment.

Setting: Three deprived UK areas: Tower Hamlets, Doncaster, Bradford.

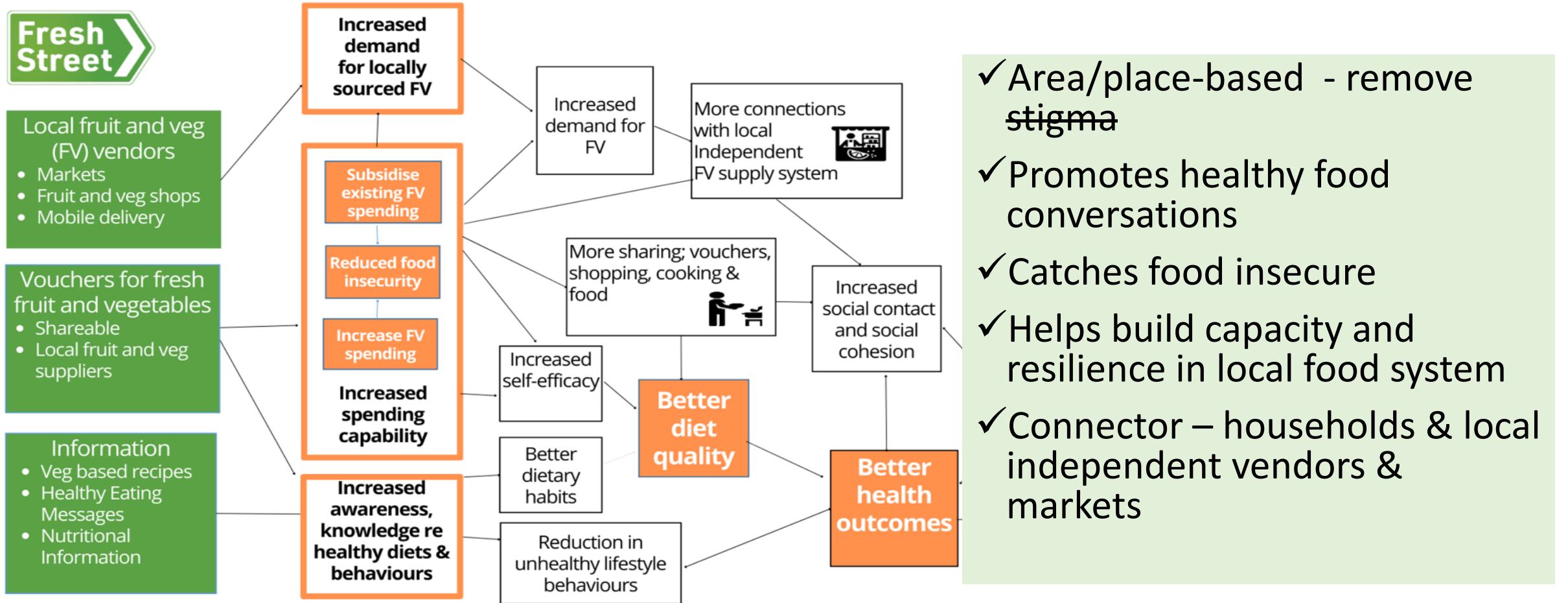


What happened?

- Jigsaw completed, approved, multiple delays
- Scheme delivered for an average of 34 weeks (Oct 2021- Oct 2022)
- Vendors accepted vouchers
- New voucher system (app) efficient and potentially scalable
- Delivery costs high
- Household positive
- Uptake varied by area (75%, 83%, 95%)
- Recipes used
- Vouchers shared
- New purchasing patterns

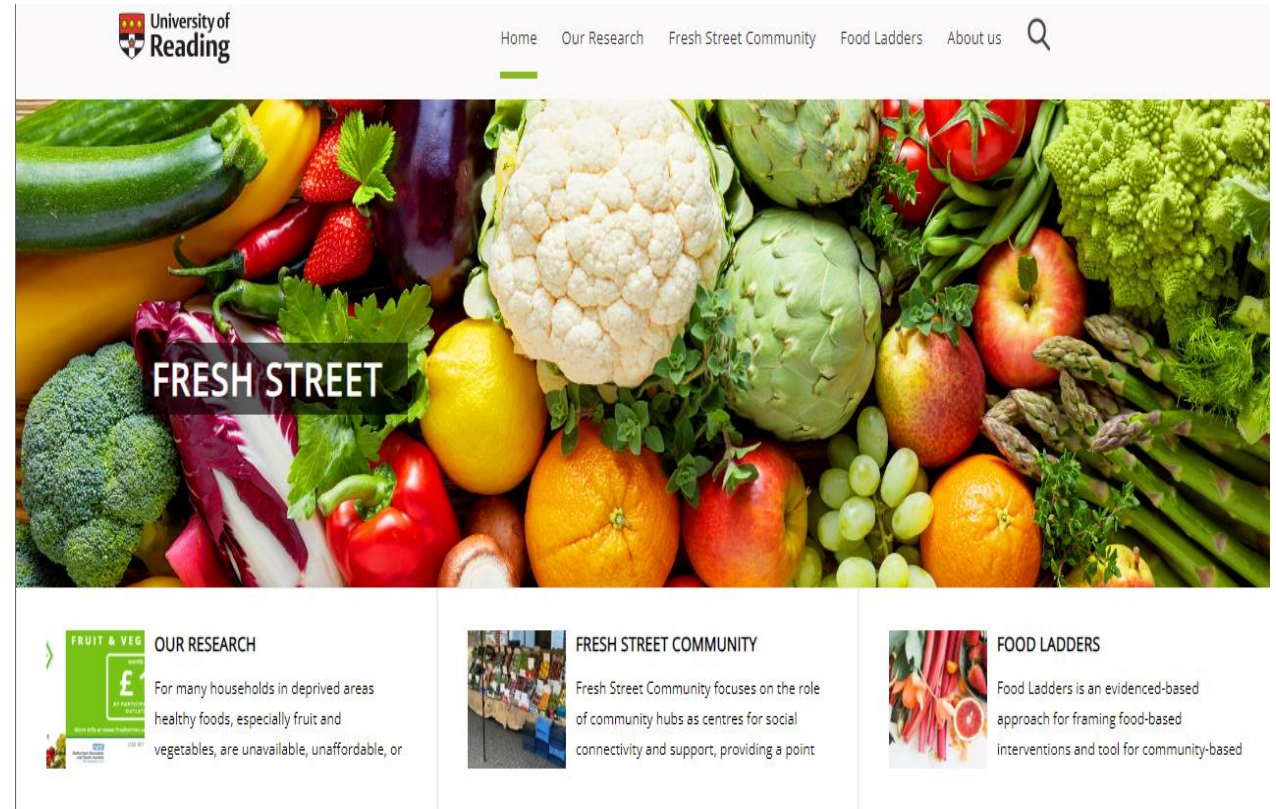


How does it work?



Final thoughts

- ✓ Regular shareable vouchers combined with recipes and dietary information to increase exposure to healthy food prompts, reduce food insecurity, increase consumption of fruit and vegetables, and support healthy dietary habits
- ✓ Pilot trial provided further evidence of acceptability from three diverse areas of high deprivation PLUS a secure voucher system that is potentially scalable.
- ✓ *Connector* for healthier, resilient local food systems *and communities*
- ✓ Ongoing research exploring different ways to integrate Fresh Street into local communities and connect with local assets





Thank you!

www.freshstreet.uk
 #FreshStreetUK
 c.relton@qmul.ac.uk

