



# THE FELIX PROJECT

GOOD FOOD FOR GOOD CAUSES

## LetterOne Impact Report



### INTRODUCTION

We are extremely grateful for the support from LetterOne to The Felix Project over the last two years. Like everyone, 2020 has been an extremely difficult challenge for charity, however what has been achieved by the Felix Project this year is nothing short of phenomenal.

As of the end of September, we have delivered over 14 million meals to hundreds of thousands of vulnerable Londoners – more than in the whole of 2019 (6.4 million meals last year). From Park Royal alone, 6.3 million meals have been delivered during this time.

We hope that this impact report from January to September 2020 demonstrates how, with support of companies like LetterOne we have been able to deliver immediate benefit to so many people at such a critical time.

## THE FELIX PROJECT: PRE COVID-19 CONTEXT

In 2019 we rescued 2,700 metric tonnes of surplus food from over 300 food industry organisations. We did this with 22 vans, 22 FTE staff and an average of 350 active volunteers from a registered pool of about 1,000 people. We sorted and redistributed this rescued food to over 600 charities, schools and holiday programmes which is the equivalent of 6.4m meals.

We already knew there was a hunger problem in London. Last summer, with the pro bono support of leading global management consultants, McKinsey & Company, we undertook research to identify the scale of need and demand for our services. Their findings confirmed that need and demand were huge – they indicated that 109 million meals a year were needed to support adults and children in London experiencing food insecurity.

In early 2020 we began work on a large number of developments to scale and grow the charity over the next 3-5 years with the ambition to be able to achieve the equivalent of around 70 million meals rescued and redistributed by 2023. It was a progressive, strategic approach that required a fundraising first approach. This would enable us to invest in assets, technology, processes and resources to have the capability to sustainably grow the charity to meet demand.

**Then Covid-19 hit and everything changed.**

## THE FELIX PROJECT: COVID-19 CONTEXT

In the face of coronavirus, The Felix Project immediately scaled up an impressive emergency response. We have rapidly grown to over three times our usual food output and provided instrumental support to the most vulnerable as London faces its worst hunger crisis in decades.

Initially, we experienced huge disruption. Fundraising revenue was hit hard. We completely adapted our operational model to accommodate sickness, social distancing and a huge increase in demand.

However, as a result of our agile approach, we were able to adapt our operating model and act immediately as an emergency response organisation:

- An urgent action plan was put in place within days. We quickly adapted our processes and operating model. We assessed health and safety implications, operating impacts and risk to fundraising revenue as well as any other risks and impacts across the charity.
- We set up a completely new way of working, forming the London Food Alliance with City Harvest and FareShare to deliver emergency food into 33 London Boroughs. As the largest food redistribution charity in London, we took on responsibility for coordinating food to 14 Boroughs, as well as delivering food into more than 20 of those Boroughs.

- Our fresh and ambient food immediately reached more people than ever before as we delivered our rescued food to London’s most vulnerable communities via food banks, emergency foodhubs, schools, social kitchens and other community organisations.
- Our food has reached families struggling below the breadline, those at risk due to ill-health, or have lost their jobs, NHS workers, the homeless and the elderly. These meals or food parcels have made a significant difference to those who are unable to afford or access to nutritious food.



*“We’d never known food poverty until the coronavirus hit. When we got the first food donation from The Felix Project, I was crying as I unpacked all the fresh food.”* Zoe Green and her husband have four children.

### ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020

From January to the end of September we have rescued more than 5,882 metric tonnes of surplus food from over 170 food industry organisations.

We estimate that for every £1 we have spent during the Covid-19 crisis, we have rescued and redistributed around £12 of food at retail value.



COVID-19 meant a  
300% increase in  
productivity to  
meet the demand  
of London's most  
vulnerable

Pre Covid-19, our daily output averaged 11 tonnes per day (26,000 meals). In the last five months we have averaged 30 tonnes a day with a record high of 47 tonnes at the height of lockdown (the equivalent of over 100,000 meals). **We are now the largest last-mile food redistribution charity in the UK through our redistribution of surplus food across London.**

#### Operationally we have done this by:

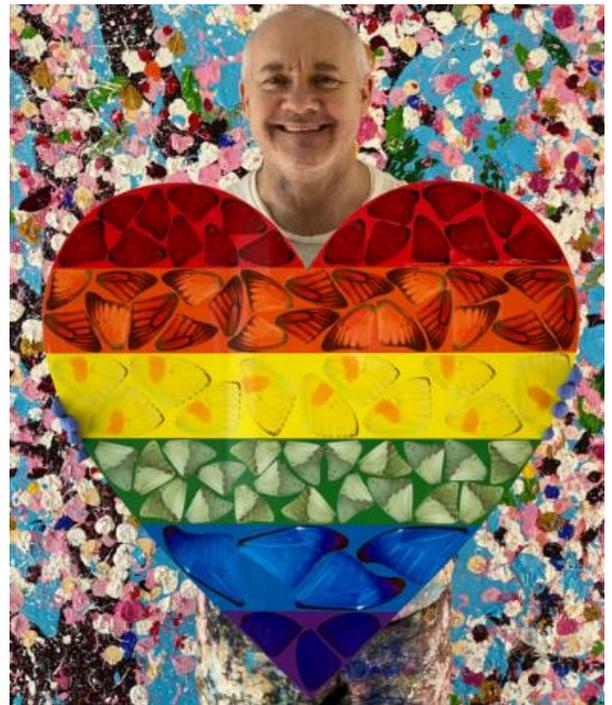
- continuing to support our existing charities, schools and holiday programmes that stayed open during lockdown. Many operated as foodbanks to support the local community and received more deliveries each week from us to cope with the overwhelming surge of people requiring help. Over 480 of our 600 charities are back up and running.
- securing additional depot space, initially free of charge, in order to dramatically increase capacity from which we could sort, store and distribute food; securing funding for additional equipment including hiring a large chiller and installing racking for storage.
- using hauliers to transport large volumes of food on a regular basis, directly to 18 emergency large scale food hubs in 14 London Boroughs. The hauliers have also stored large volumes of food for us.
- operating 6 loaned vans, with huge thanks to Renault for the donation, along with our current fleet of 22, whilst we invested in additional transport.
- securing emergency funding applications for four temporary depot staff.
- working with a fantastic influx of new volunteers (over 800 registered in the first few weeks of lockdown).

- securing sustainable volumes of food at 3-4 times pre Covid-19 levels, despite the sector being in turmoil following lockdown. We have seen increased donations from all our suppliers, particularly Hello Fresh, Innocent, Ocado, Waitrose, Amazon Food, food from the Caring Foundation and its group of partner restaurants, Muller, Mindful Chef, Kuehne and Nagel, Mindful Chef and Pasta Evangelists. Notable new suppliers include Noons ready meals, Reach Foods and Tyrells. With government funding we have introduced frozen food into our Park Royal depot.
- delivering large volumes of food to professional/commercial businesses to make hundreds of thousands of nutritious ready meals for us to then collect back and distribute to local communities. We also took teams of volunteers to a farm in Kent to glean 13 tonnes of cauliflowers that were at risk of being left to rot in fields if not rescued by us.



#### Financially we have done this by:

- launching a £10m appeal as the Food Partner for the Evening Standard and Independent's 'Food for London Now' campaign.
- raising, to date, £7.5m towards our £10m target to ensure that we can cope with demand now and scale up significantly and sustainably to meet demand over the next three years:
  - £3.3 million has come from businesses
  - £1.2 million from trusts and foundations
  - £1.6 million from artists such as Damien Hirst and Sir Peter Blake
  - £1.25 million from more than 1,000 major donors and individual members of the public
  - £150,000 from the Government.



*“The Felix Project is the most brilliant organisation working tirelessly with charities and community groups across London to ensure good healthy meals are delivered to the people who need them the most. I’m so happy to launch this limited-edition print, ‘Butterfly Heart’, to help raise money to support their vital work during this difficult Covid-19 crisis.”*

**Damien Hirst, artist**

## THE PEOPLE WE HELP

### What have people said about us recently?

#### Victoria, 46, mum of 2, receives food from Cooking Champions, Enfield

*"The pandemic came and everything in my world crashed. I was a full-time student, a mum, and I worked part-time. I had very little money and two children to look after. My son and I both caught the virus and were poorly for months. I couldn't hold a conversation without gasping for air or get out of bed to prepare food. These Felix food parcels through Cooking Champions were the only thing to keep me and my family going."*

#### Allison Pettit, 42, single mum of 4, receives food via North Primary School, Ealing

*"We've been shielding as two of my children and I have chronic asthma. I have a medical condition that also means I must stay home and rest as much as possible. A little while ago, I was embarrassed to admit I needed help and worried about healthy food for my children. The Felix Project delivers a lot of fresh fruit and veggies, and lots of things that I can make healthy and creative meals for my kids. It's an amazing charity, and I'm so grateful for all they're doing for me and for other parents. It means I don't have to go out and put myself at risk when I'm the only person my kids have."*

#### Gemma Hunt, 26, previously homeless. YMCA West London, Ealing

*"The food parcels from The Felix Project are something we can rely on, and they are always good quality with a good variety. They are delivered regularly and, on days when people are struggling with money, they can take advantage of the sandwiches The Felix Project also deliver. It's nice because no one ever loses out."*

#### Hilary Nightingale, Head of Families, Cardinal Hume Centre, Westminster

This charity has over 30 years' experience working with vulnerable young people and families at risk of homelessness. They opened a food hub in March. "Some families we've been helping are in extreme poverty," said Hilary Nightingale. "In some cases, because of their immigration status, they have no recourse to public funds. We are able to refer clients to the local foodbank for parcels of tinned and dried goods but the centre also gets eight crates of food from The Felix Project a week, allowing them to help 40 families, making a great difference to the meals they are able to produce."

#### Laura, mum of 3, receives food from Hackney Quest

*"Getting necessities have been so difficult, and shops don't always have what you need when you have enough money. I fall above the threshold for free school meals, and sometimes I really struggle during the holidays to feed them. Getting that extra support is so helpful. It's peace of mind I've got a bit extra to carry through to the next week."*

### Food For London Now: Even at half term, families queue for food in school playground EVGENY LEBEDEV



It is half term at Willow Primary School on the Broadwater Farm estate in Tottenham, one of the most deprived areas of the capital where almost half of the children live in poverty. Families queue outside for food. Some surviving day to day on as little as £1.42 per child.

Dawn Ferdinand, headmistress, says: "At one point we had families and members of the community calling every day to say they've lost their jobs and need help." The Willow is proactive in its community support. Each week they are alerted by text to the weekly Felix Project deliveries. Photographer: Lucy Young

**Tracy Havas, Refugee Support Worker,  
Solace Woman's Aid, Enfield**

*"Every Monday when I bring the food back, the women are absolutely delighted. Everyone comes down and chooses what they'd like. We then discuss recipes and how to cook with the food we have been given by The Felix Project. The food really does make a difference."*

**Tam Carrigan,  
Haringey Play Association**

Haringey Play usually runs after-school projects for children but offered cooked meals and bags of groceries to parents struggling to afford food. "We have had queues of people right around the corner," said Tam. "We'll have to carry on with the work because families are still struggling with bills." The charity is providing food donations to between 50 and 60 families, thanks to a supply of a dozen crates of fresh produce from The Felix Project.

**Magda Bozek, mother of two & part-time administrator at Southgate College, Enfield**

Magda struggles to make ends meet and has claimed universal credit since her husband died suddenly from lung cancer five months ago. She said: "I collect food parcels from my children's school once a week. We are in a very hard situation. My life has been turned upside down. I am alone and look after my 11-year-old son David and six-year-old daughter Ola. I work so I'm lucky, but life is expensive. Felix is a huge help and — now that we are in isolation — so important. We leave the house once a week to collect our parcel so it's the best part of our week."

**Food For London Now: The human cost of the crisis – 400,000 go hungry in the capital** ADAM FORREST | APRIL ROACH |



**Vicki Williams,  
BreadnButter, Barnet**

The charity teaches cooking to community groups and adapted to the pandemic by supplying up to 600 food parcels daily and meals from The Felix Project to people struggling across the borough. "Demand isn't going away. We're still getting new people in need because of money problems."

**Fuzz Dix,  
St Luke's Millwall Church, Isle of Dogs**

Fuzz Dix helped set up a food bank at the Anglican church on the Isle of Dogs, after lockdown began, making weekly food deliveries to about 100 homes in the area. "Even in the last few weeks we've seen an increase in people who say they've lost their job," said the pastor. She said they get up to 10 crates of food from The Felix Project each week. "We're not going anywhere, because it doesn't look like the need for support is going anywhere."

**Domestic abuse survivor Justine, 38,  
is a mother-of-four**

Justine escaped an abusive relationship and lives in temporary housing, claiming universal credit. "I first heard about The Felix Project through my six-year-old son's school and picked up weekly packages since the end of last year. In isolation, things are tough, but Felix is a lifeline. I have used food banks in the past but they do not provide fresh food. There are luxury items in my Felix boxes that I could never afford, like Innocent Smoothies and mozzarella cheese. Picking up our box from the school is a weekly highlight. I don't know what we would do without it."

Nemar, 24, lives in temporary hostel accommodation and is one of the many that has told the Evening Standard of their desperation.

He said: "We come to the soup kitchen tired and hungry. Sometimes I think I'm going to die. This virus is going to destroy people mentally. The food we get here from The Felix Project at Rhythms of Life in Westminster, at least we know we can rely on it. We really appreciate it, and it's not just the food, it's the human touch that comes with it."

Photographer: Daniel Hambury

## OUR THREE-YEAR AMBITION IN LONDON

### The Felix Project’s Strategy to support those at risk of hunger and malnutrition

As hunger in London will inevitably rise as a result of job losses and severe economic recession, we plan to redistribute significantly more meals for Londoners in need – including children, families, the homeless, the elderly, survivors of domestic violence and refugees. Latest reports suggest that in London an alarming 1.8 million people are estimated to be at risk of food insecurity.

Our Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees met in July to discuss an ambitious three-year plan for The Felix Project to rescue and redistribute the equivalent of 100 million meals a year by the end of 2023.

The main objectives of the strategy are:

### STRATEGIC KPIs

| OBJECTIVE  | KPI   | 2020 TARGET  | 2021 TARGET   | 2022 TARGET   | 2023 TARGET   |
|--|---|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Reduce the negative impact on the environment caused by food waste                     | Rescue 42,000 tonnes of surplus food from the commercial food industry annually by 2023 | 6,000 tonnes | 12,000 tonnes | 28,000 tonnes | 42,000 tonnes |
| Tackle hunger and malnutrition in London   | Redistribute the equivalent of 100m meals to vulnerable people annually from 2023       | 14.2 m meals | 28.5 m meals  | 66.6 m meals  | 100 m meals   |
| Add value to the community by reducing the costs of purchasing quality nutritious food | Redistribute £159.6m of surplus food at retail value annually by 2023                   | £22.8 m      | £45.6 m       | £106.4 m      | £159.6 m      |

This means that the growth of our food output, calculated in equivalent meals from 2020 to 2023 will look like this:

**Growth of food redistribution 2020-2023 across London expressed as equivalent meals**

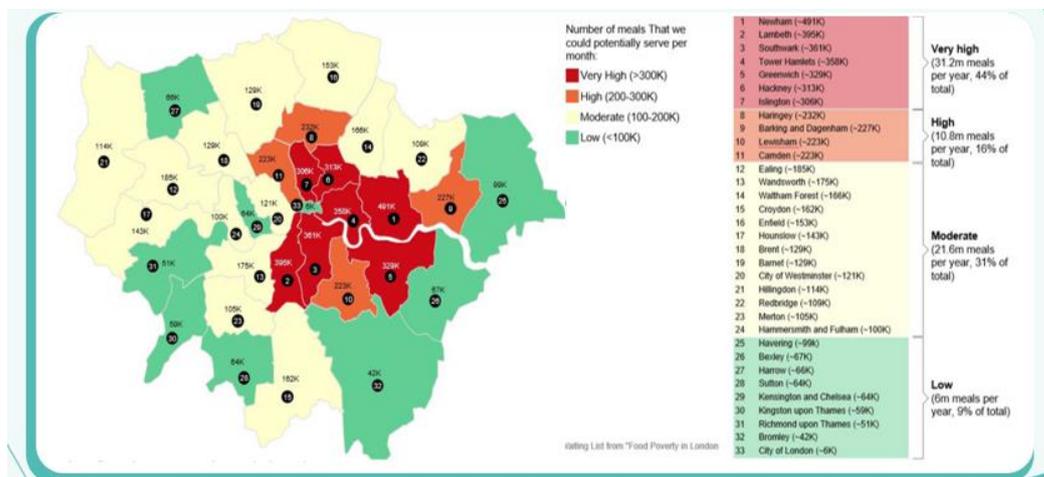


Our plan, with three-year financial projections, will be finalised and agreed with the Board in October. However, at the July Board meeting the Trustees agreed to additional investment into key strategic developments that will be critical to growth:

- As part of our scale up plans, we are excited to announce that we expect to have in place a partnership with our friends at FareShare by the end of 2020. Key aspects of this partnership are:
  - We will take over the running of FareShare's London operation in Deptford and join the FareShare Food Network.
  - This will add a third depot, in South London, to our existing operations in West and North London and will enable the charity to redistribute food to all London boroughs.
  - The Felix Project and FareShare have been determined to do what is best for London, having successfully worked closely together in response to the Covid-19 crisis in the capital. This response has been widely praised by the public, the media and political, business and cultural leaders.
  - For those charities transferring over to The Felix Project, it will also bring them cost-savings (some charities usually pay a monthly fee to receive food from FareShare). A core principle of The Felix Project is that we deliver food to charities and community partners for free and we will remain committed to this, including ones that have been transferred from FareShare. We project this will save London charities approximately £300k a year, enabling them to spend more money on the essential services they deliver.
- Investment in technology improvements to provide digital maturity, enabling us to carry out the escalation of our operations in the most efficient and effective way:
  - A six-month technology review has been completed and plans submitted to the Board to invest in infrastructure and innovation. We will invest in a Technology Transformation Steering Group to ensure the project is successfully implemented throughout the organisation.
  - 2020 improvements are already underway, focusing on developing technology with BP to manage our fleet, and Accenture and their partners at Avanade have developed an app for volunteer drivers to automate reporting, increasing efficiency. We have switched to a more powerful database system and are engaging with the FareShare technology team to adopt advanced food tracking and safety technology to enhance all our operations.

The revised and updated strategic plan, to be approved at the October Board meeting, will include plans for:

- unlocking greater volumes of surplus food. We have developed a model to forecast our food supply by food categories and the food by EatWell nutritional guidelines and food industry sectors.
- a blended distribution network to reach those in areas of high demand where there is a concentration of adults and children at risk of hunger and malnutrition (identified on the map below). These groups will be reached via a wide range of partnerships and from three depots, well-placed to critically reach the London Boroughs with the highest levels of deprivation.



## THANK YOU

*“We are so grateful for the phenomenal support and overwhelming number of donations made by so many people, businesses and other organisations.*

*The Felix Project is so much more than a charity...it is the epitome of an inspiring, determined and driven movement of people and organisations, coming together as one to fight the devastating dual issues of food waste and hunger and malnutrition that so many people face.*

*Together, with our Trustees, staff and amazing team of volunteers, as well as the huge number of food donors, community partners, charities and schools, we are all determined to win this fight.*

*I am personally truly inspired and humbled to be part of such an incredible collaboration.*

*Thank You to everyone involved. You are all highly valued members of what we like to call our Felix Family.”*

**Mark Curtin, Chief Executive, The Felix Project**

