

## A study exploring food support from [Name of Food Bank]

### *Participant Information Sheet*

You are being invited to participate in a research study being run at [Name of Food Bank]. Before you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why this study is being done and what it will involve.

Take time to read this information and feel free to ask if you would like more information or if there is anything that you do not understand. You can also discuss taking part with your friends or family.

Importantly, **you do not have to take part in this study** and should only agree to take part if you want to. Choosing not to take part will not affect the services you receive from [Name of Food Bank] in any way.

Thank you for reading this.

### **First, who is doing this study? And who can you contact if you have questions?**

This study is being done by researchers at the University of Liverpool and other universities in England, in partnership with [Name of Food Bank]. This means [Name of Food Bank] has helped the researchers design the study and is helping to make it happen in their food bank. But all of the data collected and analysed will be done by the university researchers. We explain below how none of the data you provide will be viewed by [Name of Food Bank].

You can contact any of the following people if you have questions about taking part:

#### **Dr Natasha Bayes, who is running the study.**

Email: [natasha.bayes@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:natasha.bayes@liverpool.ac.uk)

Study phone number/WhatsApp: 07467 457688

#### **Dr Suruchi Ganbavale, who is helping run the study.**

Email: [s.ganbavale@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:s.ganbavale@liverpool.ac.uk)

#### **Dr Rachel Loopstra, who has overall responsibility for the study.**

Email: [rachel.loopstra@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:rachel.loopstra@liverpool.ac.uk)

#### **[Name of Food Bank] staff members helping with study.**

[Redacted]

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### **What is the purpose of the study?**

We want to learn about if the food support provided from [Name of Food Bank]'s Food Bank makes things better for the people referred to [Name of Food Bank]. We will be looking at how things do or don't change over a six-week period after people are referred to [Name of Food Bank]. We also want to find out: if there is a better way to help people referred to [Name of Food Bank]'s Food Bank to get food than providing food parcels.

### **Why have you been invited to take part?**

You have been chosen to take part because you've been referred to [Name of Food Bank]'s Food Bank. Everyone who is referred to [Name of Food Bank]'s Food Bank and eligible to receive six food parcels from [Name of Food Bank] over September 2024 to May 2025 is being invited to take part in this study.

### **Do you have to take part?**

No, you do not have to take part in this study. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide not to take part, it won't impact the support you receive from [Name of Food Bank] in any way.

### **Can anyone take part?**

Unfortunately, no. In order to take part in this study, you must have been referred to [Name of Food Bank]'s Food Bank and qualify for six food parcels from the food bank. In addition, we can't include people who are making an application for Section 95 support to the Home Office or who are already in receipt of Section 95 support. This is because their rules suggest you would have to declare the help you're being provided to them, and we don't want this declaration to affect your entitlement to Section 95 support.

### **What will happen if you take part?**

If you decide to take part, we will ask you to **complete a questionnaire**. The first part of this questionnaire will be a **Consent Form**. This is to check you've read this information and understand what the study is about.

The rest of the questionnaire will ask questions about you and the people you live with (unless you live alone), any worries or experiences you've had not being able to get food, any money-related worries you have, what you normally eat, and how you normally feel. Most of these are tick-box questions, so it shouldn't take up too much of your time. You can fill the questionnaire in yourself **online** or one of the research team can fill it out for you over

the phone or in person when you come to [Name of Food Bank] Food Bank– so you won't have to go online. It is completely up to you. If you need to complete the questionnaire in [insert languages], then just let us know.

When you come to collect your first food parcel from [Name of Food Bank] Food Bank, you'll visit the research team, where you'll be randomly allocated to one of two groups, **Red Group** or **Blue Group**. It is **completely random** which one you'll be put in, in fact, we'll ask you to reach into a bag and select a ball – if it's red, you'll be in the Red Group. If it's blue, you'll be in Blue Group. We can't tell you which group you will end up in, and **we can't change the group either**. That is really important for making sure the study is fair. **If you agree to take part then you have a 50 - 50 chance of ending up in either group.**

If you're in **the Red Group**, you will get food parcels from [Name of Food Bank] Food Bank, just like all people who are referred to [Name of Food Bank] get, whether they are in the study or not. As you should have already been told, a referral to [Name of Food Bank] Food Bank means you can come and pick up a weekly food parcel for a total of six times, or, if you are eligible for home delivery, your food parcel will be delivered to you. So, after you've collected your first food parcel, you can come once a week to pick up five more food parcels.

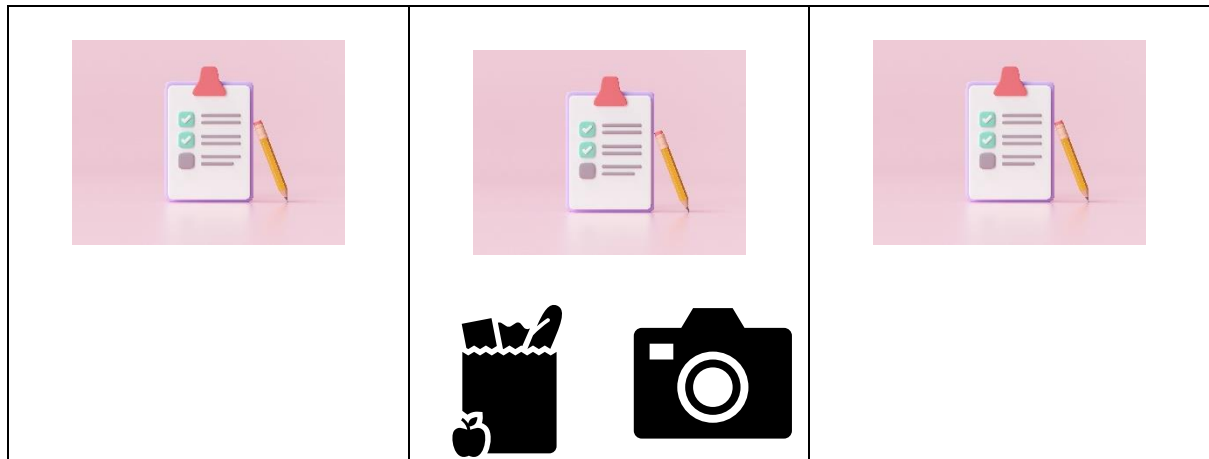
If you're in **the Blue Group**, you will be given a choice: either to get five more food parcels from [Name of Food Bank] Food Bank like everyone else, or instead, to get food another way for the remaining five weeks. You will still be supported to get food, just in a different way.

This study will run for a total of six weeks starting from when you receive your first food parcel. If you are receiving the food parcels, you can collect these each week during study but if you don't collect a total of six, you can come and collect the remaining food parcels after the study ends. If you've chosen to get food another way during the study but don't come every week to get this during the study, you can get your remaining support from [Name of Food Bank] for the weeks you did not receive support.

Once during the study, you'll be asked to **take photos and keep receipts of food and non-food items you got from [Name of Food Bank] food bank or another way** over one week. Instructions on how to do this will be provided in a separate document.

During the study and at the end of it, you will be asked to **complete two more questionnaires**, similar to the first one, but shorter in length.

Beginning of the study	Once during the study	At the end of the study
You will complete the <b>first</b> questionnaire.	You will complete the <b>second</b> questionnaire and keep track of the food you got.	You will complete the <b>third</b> questionnaire.  You can participate in an at the end of the study.



Over the study, the study team will check in with you, by phone, email, SMS, or WhatsApp – whatever way you prefer.

As part of participating in this study, you might also be asked if you want to participate in an interview at the end of the study. Only some people will be asked this. On the Consent Form, you can indicate whether or not you're happy to be asked about this and then you'll have a chance to decide whether or not you want to do this at the end of the study.

To help us understand the circumstances that led you to receive a referral to [Name of Food Bank]'s Food Bank, we're also hoping it will be OK with you if [Name of Food Bank] shares information from your referral form with us (things like how many adults and children live with you and why you were referred). We'll also look at information about how often and how much food support you receive from [Name of Food Bank], during the study and up to 6 months after that. You don't need to do anything to enable us to look at this information, we just wanted to let you know about it and will check in the Consent Form that you're happy for [Name of Food Bank] to share this with the research team. As outlined below, all information will be held confidentially and securely, and only viewed by the research team.

### **Are there any risks in taking part?**

There are very few risks involved in taking part. Answering questions about your experiences around food and money problems might be upsetting to talk about. We understand that, and it is okay if you choose not to answer some of the questions in the questionnaires. You only need to answer what you are comfortable with. [Name of Food Bank] also has an Advice Team that can provide you with additional support should you need this. Information about this team is provided at the end of this document.

### **Are there any benefits in taking part?**

The findings of this study are going to be really important for understanding the best ways to support people who need help from food banks. The findings will likely not benefit you

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personally, but if you decide to take part, it will help us learn more about the challenges people face around food and money and how they would like to be supported.

Additionally, as a thank you for participating in this study, for example, for completing questionnaires and tracking what food your household gets, you will get reward points. These can be redeemed for Love2shop vouchers **at the end of the study**. We've outlined how much you can get in the Additional Information bit of this document.

### **Expenses**

If you don't have sufficient allowance to use your mobile to keep in touch with us or to send photos of food items, then let us know. We can get you a SIM card to do this.

### **How will your data be used?**

Although this study is being conducted in partnership with [Name of Food Bank], the answers you give to us directly will only be seen by the research team and not shared with [Name of Food Bank] staff, or volunteers, or whoever referred you; or anyone else. Your answers will be anonymised: this means what you say won't get traced back to you; your name will be removed, and no one will know that you took part. Your answers will be combined with answers from everyone else who completes the study. The results will then be reported for everyone, all together. You will not be able to be identified when the results from the study are reported. To find out more about the steps we take to collect, protect, and store the data you provide as part of participating in this study, please see Additional Information bit of this document.

### **What will happen to the results of the study?**

The results of this study will provide important insights into how different forms of support impact individuals receiving help from food banks. We'll publish the results in research reports, academic journals and make presentations. We'll share the results with the public, policymakers, local authorities, food banks and other stakeholders.

### **What will happen if you want to stop taking part?**

If, for any reason, you decide that being part of the study is no longer right for you, please tell one of the research team that you no longer want to take part. You are free to stop participating at any time, and your decision won't lead to any negative consequences. You don't have to give us a reason for no longer taking part, but if you're happy to share why, we would like to learn this. We might get in touch to ask you about this but you can choose not to answer this.

We would like to keep any data you've shared with us up to that point in the study. However, if you don't want us to keep any of your data, you can provide your unique study ID number and we can remove your data from our study. You can do this up to 28 days after you stop participating.

Importantly, if you stop participating, you will still be able to get your remaining allocation of food parcels from [Name of Food Bank]'s Food Bank.



### **What if you are unhappy or if there is a problem?**

If at any point you feel unhappy with the study or encounter any issues during the study, please let us know. You can get in touch with anyone from the research team. We are here to help address any concerns you may have and ensure that your experience in the study is positive.

### **Who can you contact if you have further questions?**

If you have any additional questions about this study or need further clarification, you can contact the research team.

#### **Dr Natasha Bayes, who is running the study.**

Email: [natasha.bayes@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:natasha.bayes@liverpool.ac.uk)

Study phone number/WhatsApp: 07467 457688

#### **Dr Suruchi Ganbavale, who is helping run the study.**

Email: [s.ganbavale@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:s.ganbavale@liverpool.ac.uk)

#### **Dr Rachel Loopstra, who has overall responsibility for the study.**

Email: [rachel.loopstra@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:rachel.loopstra@liverpool.ac.uk)

#### **[Name of Food Bank] staff members helping with study.**

{Redacted}

If you are still unhappy or have a complaint that cannot come to us, please contact the Research Ethics and Integrity office at [ethics@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:ethics@liverpool.ac.uk). When contacting the Research Ethics and Integrity office please provide details of the name or description of the study, the researcher(s) involved and the details of your complaint.

The University strives to maintain the highest standards of rigour in the processing of your data. However, if you have any concerns about the way in which the University processes your personal data, it is important that you are aware of your right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office by calling 0303 123 1113.

### **Additional Information**

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### Rewards for taking part

Over the course of the study, you'll get reward points for completing questionnaires (up to three) and for sharing information about the food and non-food items you brought home from the food bank or got from anywhere else during some weeks of the study. All of these points will add up, especially if you complete all the tasks. At the end of the study, you will be able to redeem the accumulated reward points for shopping vouchers, which can be used at over 150 UK shops.

For every questionnaire you complete (up to 3 in total), you get 10 points. If you complete all three, you get 10 bonus points.

For the photos or information on all the foods and other items you brought home during one week of the study, you get 15 points once during the study.

This means you can get up to a total of 55 points if you do all of the tasks over the study, which means you'll get £55 worth of Love2Shop shopping vouchers.

For example, if you only complete one questionnaire, you'll get £10 worth of shopping vouchers. If you only complete two questionnaires, you'll get £20 worth of shopping vouchers, and so on.

**Important: All shopping vouchers will be provided at the end of the study, 6 weeks after you were enrolled.**

### What happens to your data

The University of Liverpool processes personal data as part of its research and teaching activities in accordance with the lawful basis of 'public task', and in accordance with the University's purpose of "advancing education, learning and research for the public benefit.

Under UK data protection legislation, the University acts as the Data Controller for personal data collected as part of the University's research. The Principal Investigator, Rachel Loopstra, acts as the Data Processor for this study, and any queries relating to the handling of your personal data can be sent to Rachel Loopstra at [rachel.loopstra@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:rachel.loopstra@liverpool.ac.uk).

Further information on how your data will be used can be found in the table below.

How will my data be collected?	If you give permission to do so, we will obtain your name and contact details, including email address, home address, and phone number to keep in contact with you
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	<p>over the course of the study. You will also be provided with a study ID number.</p> <p>When you complete the online questionnaires, we will ask you to input your study ID number.</p> <p>We'll ask that you collect information about foods you got from the food bank or other places by writing them down or taking photos. You'll then send us this information by WhatsApp or email or bring it to the study team in person.</p>
How will my data be stored?	<p>Your data will be kept safe and secure. Data will be immediately transferred to and stored on a secure password-protected University of Liverpool server. It will be deleted from the data collection platform (e.g. questionnaire website, WhatsApp) as soon as this done.</p> <p>Your contact details will be stored separately from the data collected through questionnaires, photos or in interviews.</p> <p>Only authorised research team members will have access to the data.</p>
How long will my data be stored for?	<p>Once the study has finished, we will keep your personal details for one year. This will allow us to send you a copy of the study report. If you don't want to receive this, after the study concludes, we will retain your information for a reasonable period necessary to fulfil any legal or regulatory requirements. Once this retention period expires, your personal data will be securely deleted.</p> <p>The questionnaire data, photos and interview data will not contain your contact details. It will be checked to ensure it does not contain any identifying information. If it does, this information will be deleted or redacted. The research data collected for this study will then be stored for at least 10 years, as is University of Liverpool policy.</p>
What measures are in place to protect the security and confidentiality of my data?	<p>Your data will be stored securely in encrypted databases, accessible only to authorised team members. Your personal contact details will be stored separately from your study data.</p>
Will my data be anonymised?	<p>Your study data will be anonymised, removing all personally identifiable details such as your name. Any reports or publications resulting from the study will use aggregated and summarised data, ensuring you cannot be identified when results are reported.</p>



How will my data be used?	Your information will only be used for research. The findings will be shared in academic journals, reports and presentations. Your data won't be used for commercial purposes or shared for profit.
Who will have access to my data?	Only authorised members of the research team will have access to your data, and they are committed to strict confidentiality agreements. Data management is carefully handled by designated team members who ensure the secure storage, management, and protection of participant data.
Will my data be archived for use in other research projects in the future?	Anonymised research data may be archived for use in other research projects in the future.
How will my data be destroyed?	At the end of the data storage periods outlined above, we will make sure to permanently delete all your data. All digital files and paper documents will be deleted or shredded, as relevant.