

MUNCH

# IMPACT REPORT 2022-2023



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# WELCOME FROM MARY & DENZIL



2022-2023 was a challenging time for the families and individuals we support; with the cost of living increasing, we have seen more people using food pantries and have received more referrals from people in need of extra food provision and the need to stretch their budgets on the food shop.

2022-2023 was a pivotal time for us as we saw the expansion of our Lunch Club project as well as the development of several short projects with community partners and commissions. We also launched our first school holiday Grub Club programme which helped families access good, nutritious hot food and an activity, throughout the long summer holiday period when a lot of families really struggle financially.

In the autumn we started to work on a series of cooking demonstrations, commissioned by Hampshire Libraries, which enabled us to get out and about across the county, reaching more people and generating increased awareness around healthy eating on a low budget and plant-based cooking.

Behind the scenes we developed our cookbook, Munch Lunch & Dinner, which was released in November and will form part of our Community Cooking toolkit for 2024 (watch this space)!

It was in 2023 that we decided, with a heavy heart, to close our Community Café. This however enabled us to place a stronger focus on the Catering side of our operation, which in turn generated more funds to help support our Community Cooking Programme.

This, along with the generous support of our funders, means we can reach more families and individuals and help them develop the skills and confidence they need to cook from scratch, while building happier, healthier lives.

***Mary & Denzil***

# THANK YOU

## A HUGE THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS:

Winnall Community Association, Unit 12 CIC, Home Start, Friends of the Family, Winchester College, Action Hampshire, Communities Against Cancer, Housing 21, Community First, A2 Dominion, Hampshire Libraries, Winchester Go LD and Scarf New Forest.



## WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE GENEROUS SUPPORT WE RECEIVED FROM:

Hampshire County Council  
Winchester City Council  
NHS England Wessex Cancer Alliance  
Hampshire Veg Box



# OUR MISSION

Our mission is to empower individuals to develop the skills and confidence they need to cook from scratch, make sustainable food choices, limit their intake of processed food and develop financial resilience.

Ours hands on cooking workshops help children and adults develop life skills, access nutritious food and build the confidence they need to cook from scratch. We work primarily with families on low incomes, individuals feeling social exclusion and adults with learning disabilities.

Our workshops provide a safe, fun and sociable environment where people come together to cook simple, low budget, eco-friendly meals. Participants learn about healthy eating, sustainable nutrition, batch cooking, food labelling, growing food and wasting less. They also warmly experience the mental health benefits of cooking and eating together.

All recipes are quick, easy to make, one pan recipes which involve limited amounts of ingredients/equipment, making them practical and financially viable. Participants receive recipe cards so they can repeat the meals at home.

**About the Munch Community Cooking Programme: We believe everyone should have access to good, healthy food.**

The aims of the project are to help parents, children, young adults and marginalised groups feel less isolated and more supported through cooking and friendship.

“Tell me and I will forget, show me and I may remember, involve me and I will understand.”



We aim to enable all people to build a confident and healthy relationship with food.

Our projects are highly successful, with proven increased intake of fruit, vegetables and fibre amongst participants, increased skill sets and improved levels of well-being.

**“It’s amazing how much new food my son will now try, both at Grub Club and at home, the Club has had such a positive effect on both the kids and our whole family.” Dawn.**

# MUNCH 2022 - 2023: IMPACT AT A GLANCE



## ACROSS ALL OUR CLUBS

**100%**  
Said they felt improved mental health as a direct result of attending our classes.

**92%**  
Are more likely to cook from scratch at home.



**67%**  
Said they feel more financially resilient as a result of attending our clubs.

**83%**  
Learnt more about healthy eating.

**87%** Ate more veg.

**92%**  
Thought more about making healthy changes.

**76%**  
Of children tried new foods.



**52%**  
Are more likely to cook at least one plant-based meal a week.

**87%**  
Ate more fibre.

**89%** Of adults tried new foods.

**92%**  
Learnt at least one new cooking skill/technique.

**100%** learnt new recipes or gathered new ideas to utilise at home.



[www.munchcic.co.uk](http://www.munchcic.co.uk)



# MUNCH LUNCH CLUBS

Our Lunch Clubs are six-week courses aimed at adults who feel socially isolated. Like all our clubs, the emphasis is on cooking from scratch and healthy eating. Participants prepare food together, cook at their own cooking stations, then come back to eat together at a large sharing table.



We helped 27 adults with type 2 diabetes or pre-diabetes learn about fibre, plant-based cooking and reversal eating.

The social aspects and subsequent benefits to well-being are most apparent at our Lunch Clubs. There is a lot of chat, sharing of ideas and mutual support.



"It's really difficult being a man of my age where I live; there's no community and nothing for people like me to meet people."

Bill - 66



Individuals attending the Lunch Club tried new foods, learnt new recipes, developed their skills in food preparation and built their confidence in their abilities to cook for themselves (from scratch). Participants also learnt, through discussion groups, about sustainable nutrition: seasonality, air freight vs sea freight, how to limit food waste and how to save energy (utilities) when cooking.

We welcomed 52 adults with learning disabilities/ additional needs to our cooking clubs, helping them develop independent living.

# MUNCH LUNCH CLUBS CONTINUED

"It's really made me feel motivated to cook."

"I've enjoyed meeting new people, yes. And making new friends"

Participants found the sessions welcoming, inclusive and they felt safe and secure. Several participants had type 2 diabetes. The recipes we cooked really helped them to learn new enjoyable recipes which were high in fibre, plant sterols and good nutrition. Being in a safe space with other people with type 2 diabetes helped them to talk about their condition and feel reassured that they were not alone. They were able to talk openly about their condition, without feeling any stigma and they were able to swap ideas regarding food, shopping and exercise.

## Case Study: Bill & Steve

Bill and Steve both have type two diabetes. Bill and Steve met at our first lunch club programme, Step Out, in October 2022. They both attended two subsequent Clubs in 2023 and have become good friends; Steve encouraged Bill to do walking with him which greatly improved Bill's physical and mental health. They also work on Bill's allotment together, growing and enjoying food. Steve was highly encouraged to cook with more plant-based ingredients after attending our Lunch Clubs.

Steve (68) said, "I learnt a lot about easy one pot cooking, I have been inspired to cook and bought some slow cooking cookbooks from charity shops."

People who attend our Lunch Clubs are sign posted via social prescribers, food pantries and community centred organisations.

"It's really helped me with menu planning – because I have lots of recipes now"



"I feel more confident chopping and cooking and using hot equipment."





# MUNCH GRUB CLUBS

We worked with 182 families with children, providing safe spaces where they can spend quality time together cooking and learning about food.

Grub Club is a once a week, after school cooking and healthy eating workshop for children and parents. It runs continuously through term times and is supported directly through donations from Munch Events Catering.

Grub Club looks at the whole experience of food, from food provenance to food culture – this is why at each session all families work together to prepare, cook and eat a meal, then tidy up afterwards.

Our workshops have a focus on the importance of sustainable nutrition and eating balanced, colourful meals. Each session starts with a short interactive food education session, where we cover topics such as food planning, shopping and storing, reading food labels, allergen awareness, seasonality, fat, salt, sugar, fibre, 5-a-day, processed food vs homemade food (nutritionally, financially and environmentally), air freight vs sea freight, how to limit food waste and how to save energy (utilities) when cooking.

Participants are encouraged to learn new cooking skills and build their confidence in cooking from scratch. We promote a whole family approach, highlighting the benefits of cooking and eating together.

Children are encouraged to play with the food, chopping, cutting and ripping ingredients however they choose (no rules)! This encourages an early acceptance of food stuffs and encourages children to make their own decisions about what they try.

Grub Club is an opportunity for parents and children to spend quality time together in a relaxed environment, away from the pressures of homelife. It is a safe space, where friendships are built and communities are developed.

As well as welcoming families from other areas of the city, we also work closely with Winnall Primary School to encourage and sign post the most at risk families to our Winnall Grub Club.

**“Thank you so very much for all your hard work and dedication with the Grub Club here at Winnall. It is seriously one of the most powerful models I have seen for children and their families in harnessing a positive attitude towards healthy eating habits and everything that surrounds eating well. But it's not just about healthy eating, it is everything that comes as a result of grub club - the community aspect of it, the support for families and the importance of so many values.” Nicky White, former Deputy Head at Winnall Primary School**



# CASE STUDIES

## CHARIS

Despite having no preconceptions, Charis was still nervous about coming to the Club, as her son has allergies and the family follow a plant-based diet, but they found the environment welcoming and accommodating. Charis said,

"Mary was very reassuring and everything has been great so we continued coming. My daughter loves playing with a girl at Grub Club, my kids have loved learning to cook and doing things for themselves and they have tried foods they never eat at home."

With regards to cooking at home, Charis said, "I've realised how easy it is to cook simple meals at home. And to involve the kids in the preparation. We cook from scratch at home and the kids are always asking to cook, or to go to Grub Club!" Charis said that her and the children have definitely changed the way that they eat since coming to Grub Club, they are eating more fruit, veg and fibre and the children have tried so many new foods. As a family they have gathered ideas and tips on eating well while following a vegan diet.

**"Grub Club is great fun for the kids, they try new things and we get dinner. We struggle to feed the family how we would like to, because of the cost. Coming to Grub Club has helped a lot because I've found it so much easier to make a meal using random items or leftover items. We use the Grub Club recipes at home and my kids help with the preparation."**



Jess says that Grub Club has benefited her and her family greatly – since coming to their first session almost a year ago the children eat a lot more different types of vegetables, commenting that they now eat spinach "all the time!" "Elliott used to eat nothing, but now he eats a lot more and tries a lot more." This is particularly important since Elliott was diagnosed as type 1 diabetic last autumn. With regards to cooking at home" Jess Said,

Jess said, "I am more confident at home, to try new things with the children, as they are much more likely to try new foods. We definitely cook from scratch more, are more adventurous. We never had herbs, spices etc in the cupboard before but now we have loads! The children like it because they like being able to pick what they want, getting the recipe and getting the ingredients and being in control."

## JESS

Jess and her two boys have also learnt new skills and ways of preparing food, such as making carrot ribbons, with a peeler, for a stir fry. Jess said that it's sometimes a struggle to cook and feed the family how she would like; for example, always using frozen veg, which sometimes makes her feel like she can't provide. She said that learning that frozen veg often has a higher nutritional value made her feel better, and there is less waste, which is good financially and from an environmental point of view. Grub Club has had other positive effects on the family, such as making friends and integrating more into the community.

**"We have made lots of friends, which has stretched to outside of the club as well. We love the community atmosphere in the room, with conversation stretching across the different tables."**

# MUNCH DEMOS

In 2023 we were commissioned by Hampshire Libraries to deliver a series of 12 cooking demonstrations across the county. These are informative and interactive, offering a towards plant-based approach, to help people learn how they can incorporate more fibre and veggies into their diets. They are a wonderful way to reach more people and generate further impact around healthy, low budget, eco-friendly cooking.

"I have been encouraged to eat more veg and less meat!"

"Very useful as I have just been diagnosed as type two diabetic."

Following our Munch mantra, "involve me and I will understand," we have designed our demonstrations to ensure, as much as possible, that attendees get involved in cooking the dish that we demonstrate.

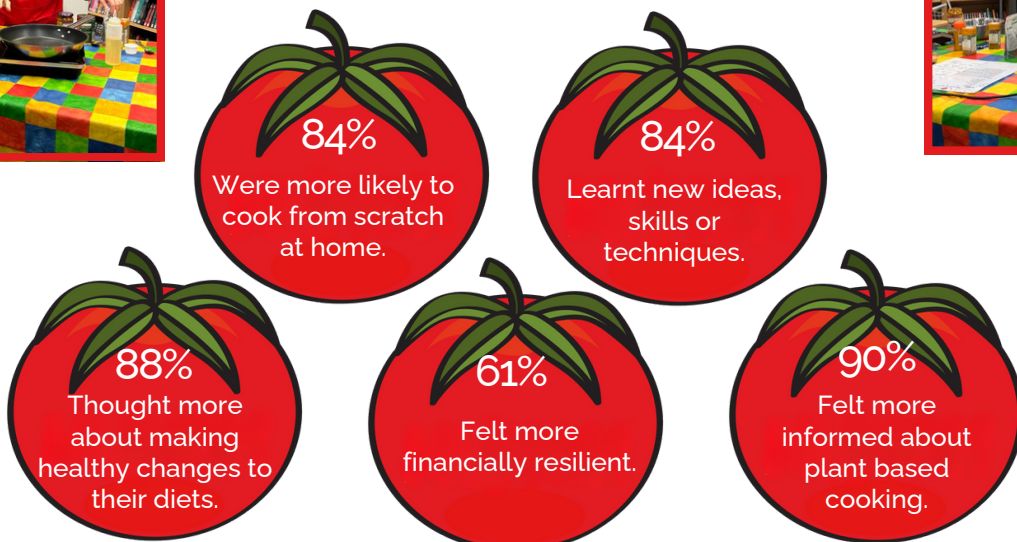
"I learnt about combining fibre to make a complete protein."

We do this by, demonstrating how to make a plant-based meal while talking about sustainable nutrition, healthy eating and the benefits of being more plant-based – health, planet and budget. We then give everyone the chance to taste the dish, then we give them a bag of ingredients and recipe card to take and make the dish later at home.

"Entertaining, interesting, informative and motivating."

Munch demos are relaxed and friendly and offer a lot of opportunity to ask questions and discuss nutrition and healthy eating.

"The demonstrator was very friendly, engaging and knowledgeable. I feel inspired!"



# OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

"This is the first time I've eaten borlotti beans, I like them." Katie

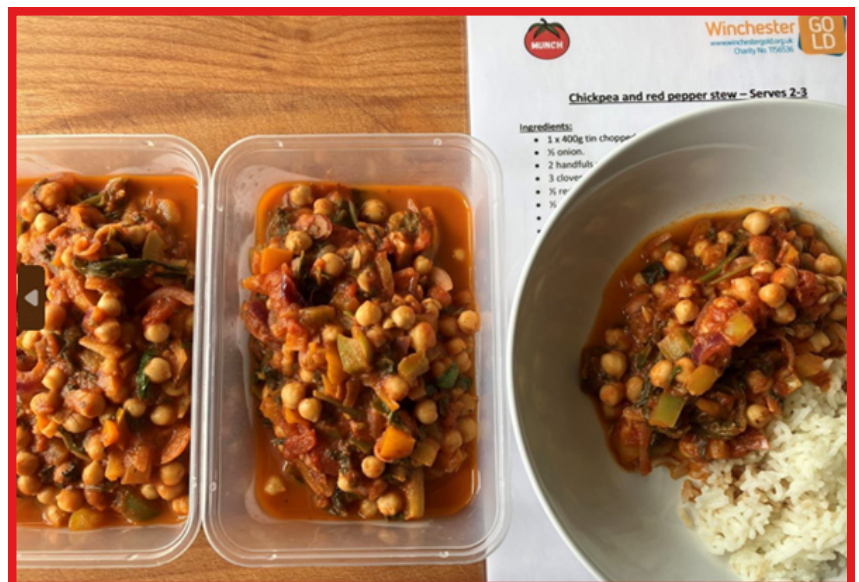
## Communities Against Cancer with Winchester Go LD (supported by NHS England Wessex Cancer Alliance).

Over a six-week series of workshops with Winchester Go LD, we helped participants learn about healthy eating and a towards plant-based approach to help with disease prevention. We also lead discussion group across the sessions around other health related habits such as staying active and the importance of screening.

Winchester Go LD is a frontline charity working with adults with learning disabilities; they offer a structured programme of life enhancing activities, which encourages and empowers their members to live healthy, independent lives.

"This is the first time I've cooked chickpeas." Lenny

In partnership with Go LD, Munch ran six weekly online cooking sessions via zoom, split into two groups. This encouraged participants to become orientated within their own kitchen and build confidence cooking at home on their own.



## Friends of the Family Cooking Clubs (supported by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Community Fund and Hampshire County Council Connect for Communities).

We enjoyed two six week after school cooking courses with Friends of the Family in 2022-2023. Friends of the Family (FotF) work with parents and children who are struggling to cope with family life. They offer families a range of support services and guidance to overcome the challenges they are facing and turn their lives around. In each course, we worked with 12 befrienders and their focus children, following our Grub Club format to encourage healthy behaviours and help children find joy in cooking. Children and befrienders experienced positive effects on their well-being; it was an enriching experience with several unintended outcomes, including strengthening of relationships between befriender and child. Children felt a deep sense of achievement and were proud to take extra portions home to share with their families.

"Thank you so much for letting us be part of your cookery lessons"

"We have really enjoyed the cooking and it has given us some good ideas to do together."



## Winchester Go LD Christmas parties

In 2022-23 we facilitated the Winchester Go LD Christmas Party for 50 people. Each year 12 members of Go LD made the food, a huge Christmas hot buffet and A LOT of mince pies! Members learn life skills, learn new recipes and enjoy a valuable social experience at Christmas, when many of them struggle with loneliness.



# HOLIDAY AND SCHOOL WORKSHOPS



In 2022-2023 we were commissioned to deliver food education sessions via the Holiday and Activity Fund, with Integr8 Dance, Personal Best Education, The Carroll Youth Centre, Home Start, Scarf New Forest and Hampshire Libraries.

These sessions included salad making, fajitas, pancakes, flatbread making, smoothie making, group picnics and stir fries.

We enjoyed six in curriculum schools visits at Oliver's Battery Primary School. We utilised produce from the school growing garden and eggs from the school chickens to delivering interactive salad sessions and omelettes, working with children from year 2 to year 6.



We worked with 738 individual children at holiday clubs and schools visits and 90 individual young people (aged 11-16).

As well as this, we launched our first Munch Grub Club Holiday Club (supported by Hampshire County Council Connect for Communities) – alleviating the financial pressures of the summer holiday and fighting holiday hunger amongst low-income families across Winchester. The provision of at least two hot, healthy meals a week is a lifeline for many of these families.





# MUNCH LUNCH & DINNER

## 2023 SAW THE LAUNCH OF OUR COOKBOOK MUNCH LUNCH & DINNER

This book was born out of our Community Cooking Programme and all the recipes were developed in our workshops. The book aims to help people break down any barriers they may have to cooking from scratch; there are tips on which oils to use, how to waste less and easy chopping guides. The book follows the Munch towards plant-based ethos, showcasing low budget, eco-friendly recipes, using minimal equipment and few ingredients. There are also several recipes in easy read format.

Munch Lunch & Dinner is a big achievement for the Munch team; it is a great tool to use across our communities at our cooking programmes as well as being available to purchase for the wider community. Munch Lunch & Dinner is the first part of our Community Cooking toolkit which will be released later in 2024.



# THANK YOU



We would like to say a massive thank you to everyone who supports our mission, from sharing our social media posts to buying our buffets! We would also like to thank our amazing team of staff and volunteers, without you, none of this is possible.

## MUNCH

Phone: 07395 020373  
Email: [info@munchcic.co.uk](mailto:info@munchcic.co.uk)  
Website: [www.munchcic.co.uk](http://www.munchcic.co.uk)  
Insta: [munchcic](https://www.instagram.com/munchcic)  
Facebook: [munchcic](https://www.facebook.com/munchcic)

