

Morecambe Bay Foodbank - Covid-19 statistics report

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1 Introduction

This report outlines some of the key figures for Morecambe Bay Foodbank since 2019, with a particular focus on the period after the Foodbank's move to Salt Ayre Leisure Centre on 23/03/20 and its subsequent change in operations style. The figures are split into 4 main categories - summary statistics, spatial mapping, referrals, and stock. In this report, a voucher represents a single food parcel claimed by an individual, which can include food for any number of people. For example, an individual may require food for their family of four people, which would be recorded as one voucher (one claim of food) and four people fed (4 sets of 3 day emergency food supplies). All voucher data included in the analysis have been taken from the voucher entries on Morecambe Bay Foodbank's Trussell Trust database, downloaded on 14/09/20. Figures concerning the last week of August are subject to change in the future if more vouchers are uploaded to the Trussell Trust database. Any non-identifiable statistics used to construct the tables and plots are available on request.

2 Summary statistics

2.1 Vouchers and people fed

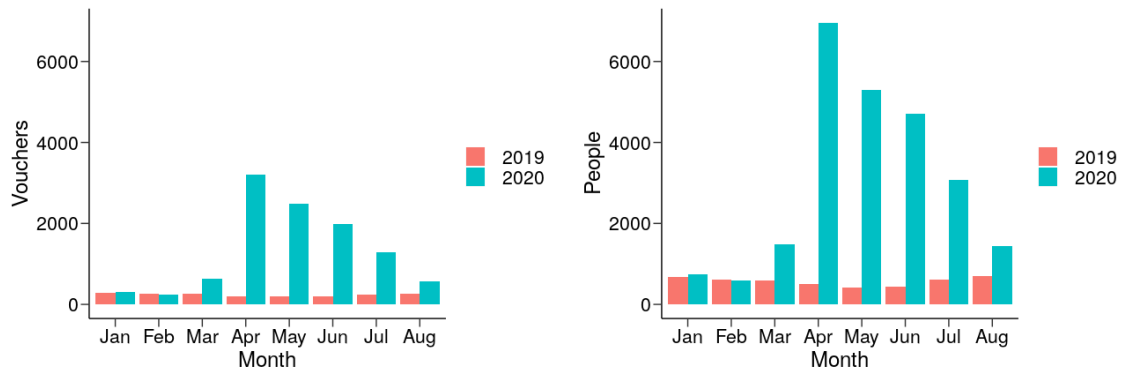


Figure 1: Plots of the number of vouchers processed (left) and people (including repeat clients) supplied with food (right) per month in 2019 compared to 2020.

Figure 1 shows the number of vouchers processed and 3 day emergency food supplies distributed per month by the Foodbank between the 1st January and the 31st August inclusive for 2019 and 2020. Voucher numbers were very similar to 2019 for the first two months of 2020, but from March onwards there has been a huge increase with a peak of 3210 vouchers in April 2020. Although voucher numbers are currently decreasing, the latest month's figures in August are still more than double what they were in 2019 (574 compared to 260). The number of 3 day emergency food supplies distributed by the Foodbank follows a very similar trend to the vouchers numbers, again with a peak in April of 6956 people. The weekly totals for both vouchers and food supplies can also be seen in Figure 2. The decrease in both totals is not as predictable as may be suggested from Figure 1, although there is still a clear overall trend of decreasing vouchers and people fed.

2.2 Over 65s

One demographic that has seen a particularly large increase since the start of the pandemic is those aged over 65. In 2019, the Foodbank rarely saw more than 10 people aged over 65 in a single month. In 2020 the numbers have escalated well into the 100s, reaching a peak of 1133 in April. This is especially concerning when considering the number of clients aged over 65 who also live alone. Figure 3 shows that over half of the clients aged over 65 seen by the Foodbank since 23/03/20 (1316 compared to 1268) were living alone when they visited the Foodbank. This is an age category that has previously been rarely seen by the Foodbank, and although the increase will undoubtedly be at least in part due to council referrals, it still represents a significant increase on the previous year's totals.

2.3 ID system and new clients

Although the Trussell Trust system can identify clients as unique, two vouchers are only attributed to the same person are if their name and address details exactly match in both vouchers. While in theory this seems sensible, in practice names can often be misspelled and handwriting

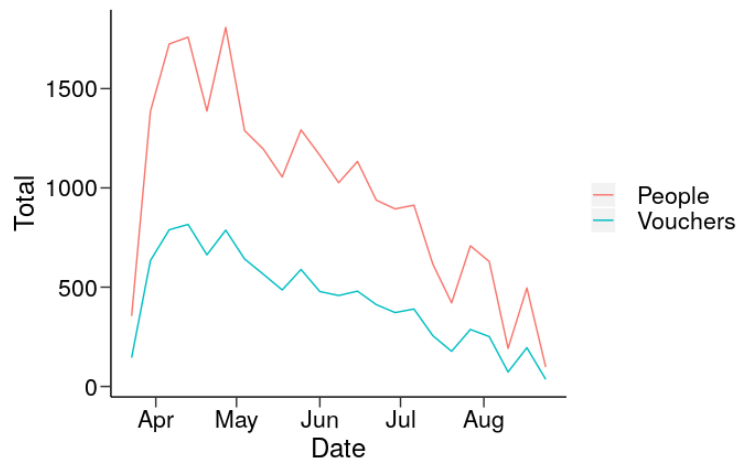


Figure 2: Weekly totals of vouchers processed and people fed (including repeat clients) in 2020.

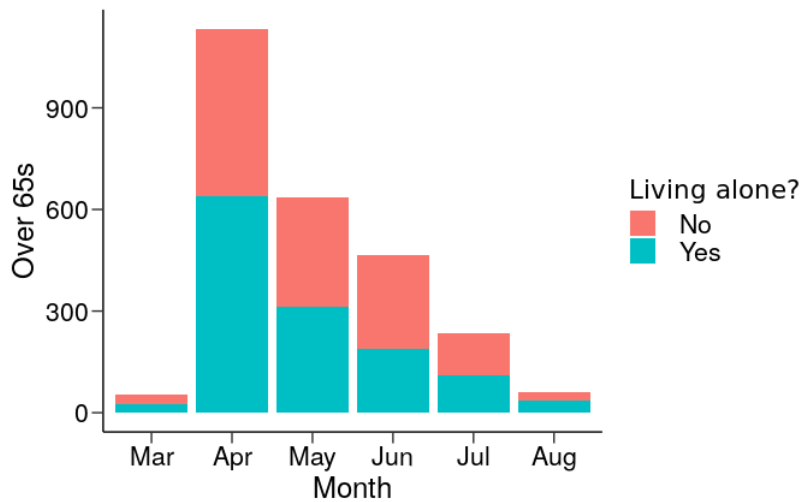


Figure 3: Monthly totals of the number of over 65s living alone or with others assisted by the Foodbank between 23/03/20 - 31/08/20.

can often be difficult to interpret when entering the data onto the system, leading to small differences between vouchers. Furthermore, for addresses - particularly those involving flats - there can be multiple ways of writing the address that would all clearly relate to the same property, but would not identically match each other and therefore wouldn't be identified as the same address. As a result, many vouchers that should be attributed to the same person are not.

To address this issue, a simple ID system has been added to the voucher dataset to identify new and unique clients. The current process for adding IDs to the voucher data is as follows:

- Identify whether the voucher relates to an individual or a group/organisation, such as Global Link.

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- For groups/organisations - apply the appropriate group/organisation ID
 - Compare each voucher relating to an individual to all previous vouchers
 - Identify any vouchers with names that are 3 or fewer characters different from the name of the current voucher
 - If the addresses of the vouchers are also 4 or fewer characters different OR the postcodes are identical, the vouchers are given the same ID
 - If no matches are found, a new ID is applied to the voucher

Using the ID system, we can identify clients who have not previously visited the Foodbank, and in before the change in operations due to the pandemic. Figure 4 shows the number of vouchers redeemed by clients who, before 23/03/20, had not redeemed a voucher at the Foodbank. This demonstrates the huge number of people who have either had to use a Foodbank for the first time during the pandemic, or have been referred to the Foodbank by a referral agent for the first time.

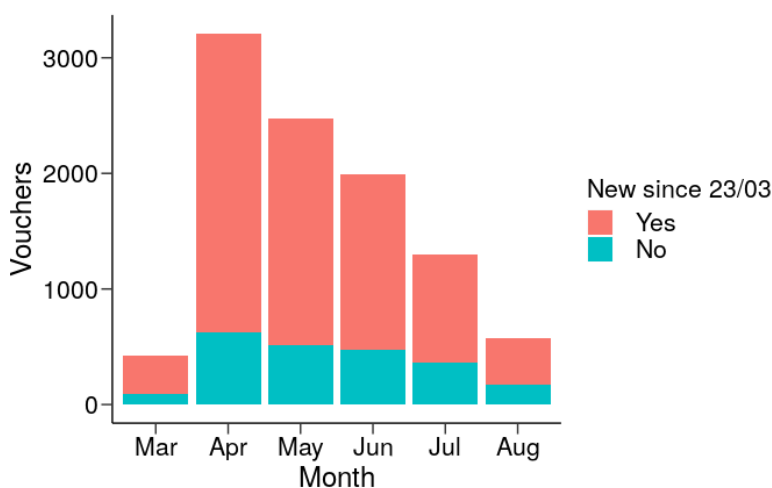


Figure 4: The number of vouchers redeemed by clients not seen before 23/03/20 from 23/03/20 - 31/08/20.

2.4 Number of visits per client

We can also use the ID system to examine the number of visits made by each client. Figure 5 shows that over half of the clients seen by the Foodbank since 23/03/20 only redeemed one food voucher since that date. The 3 voucher per person rule that was previously used by the Foodbank has not been applied during this time, resulting in some people claiming up to 20 food vouchers. Although this may appear that the majority of vouchers processed by the Foodbank are from one-off clients, vouchers from clients who only visit the Foodbank once only make up around 18.2% of all vouchers from individuals. This also suggests that, due to the number of times some people have needed emergency food supplies during the last few months, there is a significant risk of people relying on the Foodbank as one of their main sources of food. This could

cause issues in the future if the three voucher per person rule is re-instated and no alternative options are provided.

The key figures discussed in the above section can be found in full in Tables 1 and 2.

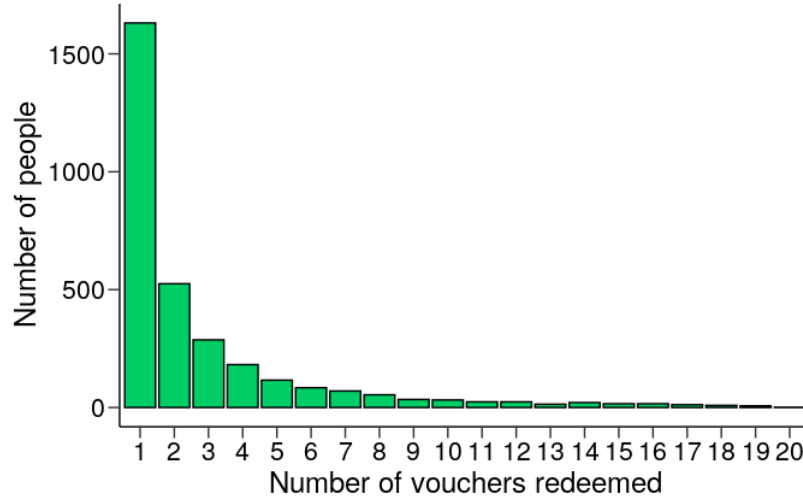


Figure 5: The number of vouchers redeemed by each individual client between 23/03/20 - 31/08/20.

Month	Year	People	Adults	Children	Over 65s	Vouchers	New clients	Unique clients
Jan	2019	674	404	270	14	289	81	232
Feb	2019	621	389	232	4	263	83	223
Mar	2019	596	396	200	2	258	71	231
Apr	2019	496	284	212	3	199	55	167
May	2019	427	296	131	9	206	66	174
Jun	2019	436	287	149	4	191	57	174
Jul	2019	622	348	274	5	235	56	194
Aug	2019	691	397	294	4	260	73	214

Table 1: Summary statistics from 01/01/19 - 31/08/19.

Month	Year	People	Adults	Children	Over 65s	Vouchers	New clients	Unique clients
Jan	2020	754	462	292	3	297	75	243
Feb	2020	588	373	215	5	238	63	199
Mar	2020	1476	978	498	54	631	259	467
Apr	2020	6956	5023	1933	1133	3210	1404	1864
May	2020	5304	3833	1471	636	2479	474	1280
Jun	2020	4705	3137	1568	466	1994	294	1065
Jul	2020	3076	2048	1028	236	1298	150	747
Aug	2020	1450	913	537	59	574	55	410

Table 2: Summary statistics from 01/01/20 - 31/08/20.

3 Spatial statistics

3.1 LSOA summary of people fed

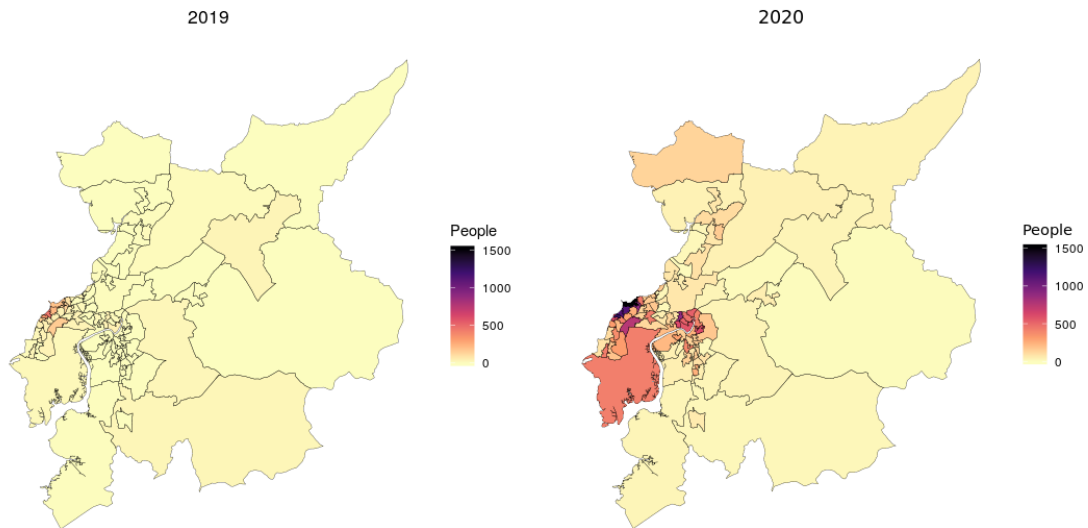


Figure 6: The number of 3 day emergency food supplies distributed by the Foodbank to people in each Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) from 23/03 - 31/08 in 2019 and 2020.

Using the postcodes from the voucher dataset, we can plot the number of people (including repeat clients) from each area of Morecambe and Lancaster. Figure 6 shows the increase in number and spread of people requiring assistance across the local area. In previous years, the vast majority of clients have been located close to the previous Foodbank location at West End Community Centre, largely because people had to visit the Foodbank in person to collect the food parcel. With the shift to a delivery model and increased demand due to Covid-19, every single Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in the local district has seen an increase in the number of vouchers claimed. The areas with the highest number of voucher claims are still broadly the same as in 2019, with the area between Bare and West End having the highest number of voucher claims for 2020.

3.2 Areas with increased Foodbank use

Since every LSOA has seen an increase in Foodbank use, to identify areas with the most significant increase in use, we can examine the locations of new clients who have started receiving food parcels since the change in operations of the Foodbank at the start of the pandemic (23/03/20). Figure 7 shows that people in many areas (White Lund and Skerton in particular) have used Morecambe Bay Foodbank for the first time during the pandemic. This is also true on the coast of Morecambe despite already being the most common area for Foodbank clients. The new clients in Lancaster - and those further away from the Foodbank around Carnforth - may be as a result of the switch to the delivery model. This may suggest that some of the areas identified have previously needed extra support but were unable to receive this because of the distance to a Foodbank.

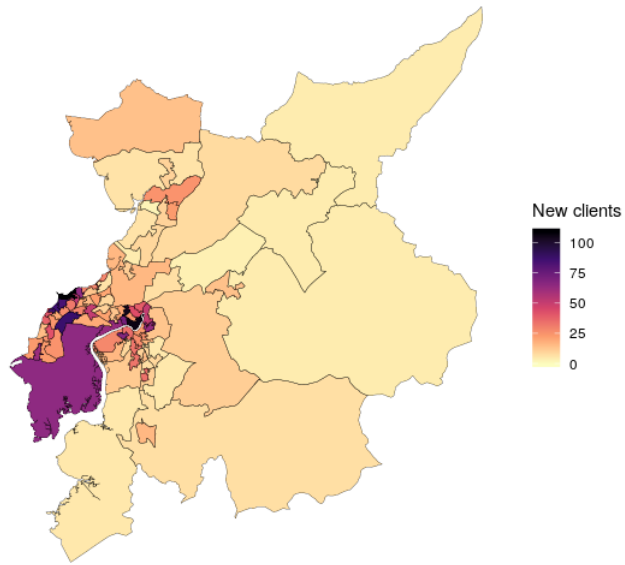


Figure 7: Numbers of new clients from 23/03/20 - 31/08/20 in each LSOA in the district.

4 Referrals

4.1 Most frequent referral agents

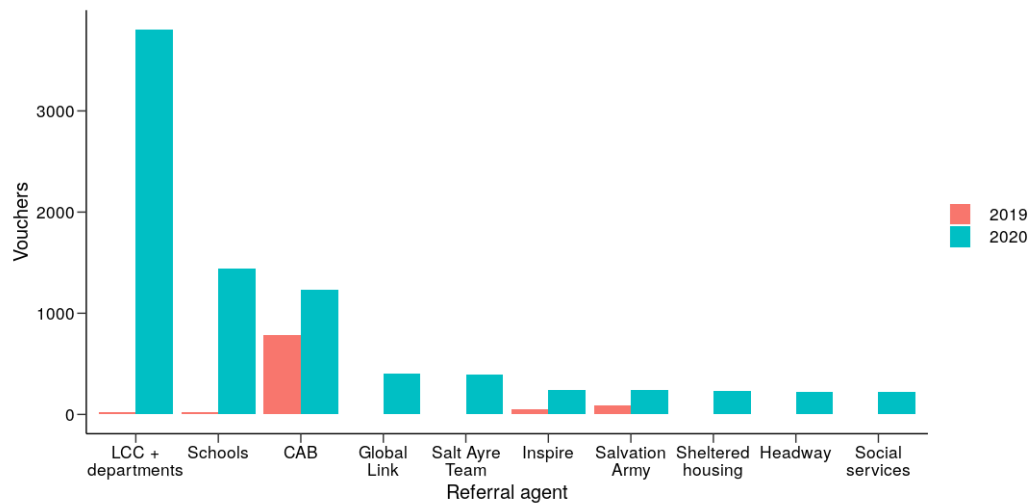


Figure 8: Voucher numbers from the ten most frequent referral agents from 23/03/20 - 31/08/20 compared to the same time period in 2019.

With the change in operations and referral process, the most frequent referral agents have shifted significantly towards Lancaster City Council (LCC) referrals. Figure 8 shows that in 2019 the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) was by far the biggest referral agent. Although their referrals have increased in 2020, their total referrals in 2020 were less than a third of those by LCC and its departments. In total, 38.1% of all referrals since 23/03/20 were made by LCC and its departments, as their referrals increased from 26 to 3805. The following categories have also had increased referrals:

- Circus
- Homeless
- Refugees

5 Stock

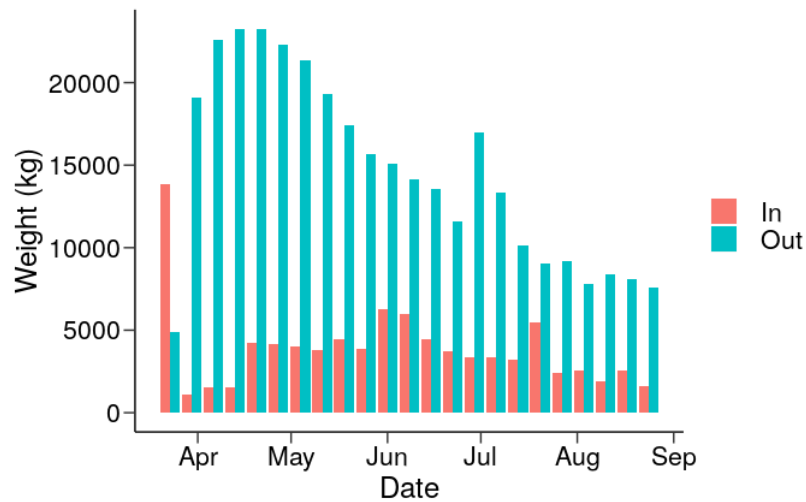


Figure 9: Stock received as donations and stock sent out in parcels each week since 23/03/20.

Figure 9 and Table 3 show the quantities of stock donated in, provided by LCC, and sent out in food parcels. The “Out” figures have been calculated using estimates of the weight of each type of food parcel: A = 15.5kg, B = 8.2kg, Veg = 9.4kg. The “In” figures are taken directly from the stock data on the Foodbank’s Trussell Trust database, and the Council figures have been calculated as the difference between the “In” and “Out” totals. The total stock “In” for the first four weeks (23/03/20 - 13/04/20) have been estimated as a 10% increase on 2019’s figures as conservative estimates due to no data being recorded for those weeks. Also, the total stock “In” for the week of 23/03/20 has an additional 12500kg which is the total weight of stock moved to Salt Ayre Leisure Centre from the Foodbank’s stock at the previous site. Overall, the amount of stock sent out is decreasing as would be expected with the decreasing number of vouchers. However, the amount of stock donated is also decreasing slightly after initially increasing towards June.

Week	A	B	Veg	Out (kg)	In (kg)	Council (kg)	Council %
2020-03-23	175	68	175	4915.1	13861	3604.1	73.33
2020-03-30	688	245	682	19083.8	1118	17965.8	94.14
2020-04-06	811	293	811	22596.5	1507	21089.5	93.33
2020-04-13	850	248	853	23226.8	1540	21686.8	93.37
2020-04-20	847	265	846	23253.9	4200.3	19053.6	81.94
2020-04-27	813	248	813	22277.3	4151.2	18126.1	81.37
2020-05-04	787	220	785	21381.5	4037.9	17343.6	81.11
2020-05-11	711	196	713	19329.9	3769.3	15560.6	80.5
2020-05-18	641	172	642	17380.7	4464.4	12916.3	74.31
2020-05-25	570	177	571	15653.8	3875.3	11778.5	75.24
2020-06-01	537	210	535	15074.5	6276.54	8797.96	58.36
2020-06-08	518	157	516	14166.8	5968.3	8198.5	57.87
2020-06-15	485	183	485	13577.1	4473.5	9103.6	67.05
2020-06-22	421	161	401	11615.1	3714.66	7900.44	68.02
2020-06-29	605	228	611	16990.5	3323	13667.5	80.44
2020-07-06	482	159	482	13305.6	3322.9	9982.7	75.03
2020-07-13	364	128	364	10113.2	3202.8	6910.4	68.33
2020-07-20	326	120	321	9054.4	5460.6	3593.8	39.69
2020-07-27	335	125	316	9187.9	2426.63	6761.27	73.59
2020-08-03	282	108	273	7822.8	2526.3	5296.5	67.71
2020-08-10	295	142	280	8368.9	1905.05	6463.85	77.24
2020-08-17	284	130	281	8109.4	2536.8	5572.6	68.72
2020-08-24	268	111	265	7555.2	1609.8	5945.4	78.69

Table 3: Weekly total kgs of stock in and out since 23/03/20, and the number of food parcels of each category. “In” represents the amount donated, “Council” represents the amount provided by the City Council, and “Council %” represents the percentage of council stock out of all stock received by the Foodbank. The week of 23/03/20 has an additional 12500kg of stock “In” due to previously held stock being moved to the new Foodbank location, and the percentage for that week does not include this stock.

