

# IMPACT REPORT SUMMARY



This report summarises the key findings from a survey of Pantry members carried out in November 2023 – around 18 months after it opened. All members visiting the Pantry during a four-week period were invited to complete a paper survey about their experience of using the Pantry.

A majority of members say they are finding it “very difficult” (30%) or “difficult” (29%) to manage financially. Only 2% say they are living comfortably. A high proportion of Pantry members are also experiencing varying degrees of food insecurity:

- More than three-quarters of respondents say they have worried about running out of food and have not been able to afford to eat a balanced diet.

- Nearly two-thirds have skipped meals or reduced meal size and 23% have gone without food for a whole day within the past 3 months.

This shows that the Pantry is effective in reaching families who are struggling financially and experiencing high levels of food insecurity. However, it is encouraging that members who joined the Pantry more than a year ago are much less likely to be finding it very difficult to manage financially than newer members (9% vs 50%).



Our theory of change for the Pantry is based around six outcomes:

1.

Members are able to save and redirect money, reducing the need to visit the Foodbank.

2.

Members have access to affordable and healthy food, improving their family's diet.

3.

Members have dignity and choice in their food shopping, giving them greater agency.

4.

Members are welcomed and valued at the Pantry, reducing social isolation.

5.

Members are actively involved in running the Pantry, enhancing their self worth.

6.

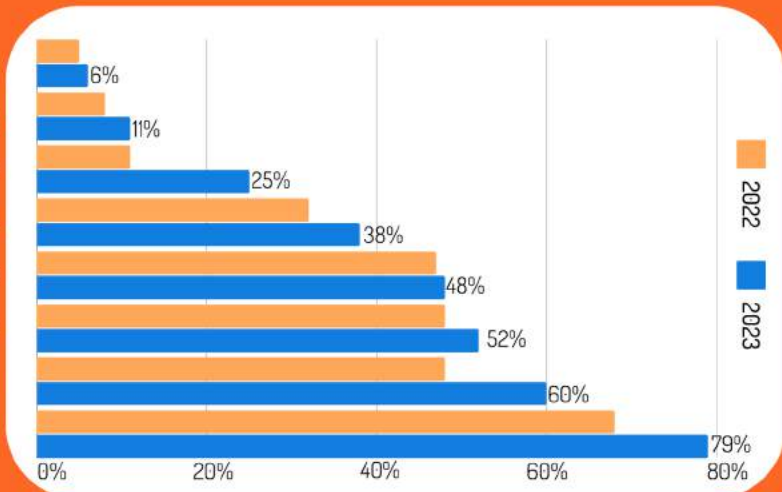
Members learn and share new skills, increasing their financial resilience.

Chart 2: How has the money saved from coming to Epsom Pantry helped you?

1.

Members are able to save and redirect money, reducing the need to visit the Foodbank.

- ... pay for training or education
- ... pay for a fun trip or holiday
- ... save money for the future
- ... pay for children's activities
- ... stop getting into debt/pay off debt
- ... buy greater variety of food
- ... buy healthier food
- ... able to afford the basic essentials



2.

Members have access to affordable and healthy food, improving their family's diet.

**98%** of members agree that the Pantry offers good value for money and a good supply of affordable, healthy food.

**93%** of members say that being a Pantry member means they are now less anxious about feeding their family.

*"I honestly wouldn't be able to achieve a balanced week of meals for my daughter and I. Shopping at the Pantry allows me to be able to meet our bills more regularly and on time. It also affords me to pay for fuel to get me to work. Thank you."*

3.

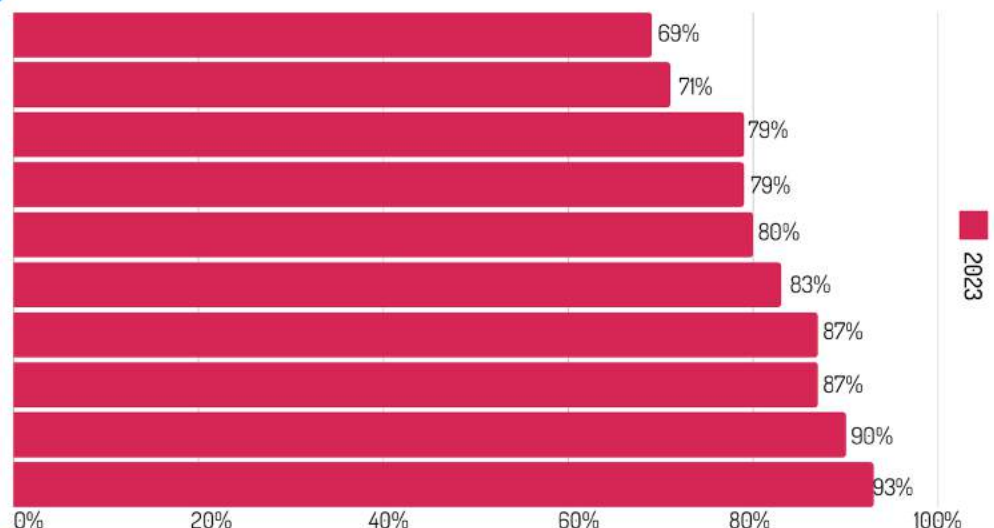
Members have dignity and choice in their food shopping, giving them greater agency.

One of the key differences between the Pantry and the Foodbank is that members contribute to the cost and are allowed to choose which items they want.

**87%** of members agree that the Pantry gives them more choice over the food they buy (up from 79% in 2022) – see Chart 3 below.

Chart 3: Impact of Pantry on core outcomes (% agreeing with each of the following statements)

- I have learnt new skills or knowledge
- I feel more confident since joining the Pantry
- I have met new people and feel less isolated
- I feel more in control of my finances than before
- I am better informed about where to get help
- I am cooking more and trying new recipes
- I feel more connected to the local community
- I have more choice over the food I buy
- I feel like my views about the Pantry are listened to
- I am less anxious about feeding my family



4.

Members are welcomed and valued at the Pantry, reducing social isolation.

100% of members agree that the Pantry is a warm and welcoming environment and that staff and volunteers are helpful and supportive.

87% of members say they feel more connected to the community as a result of joining the Pantry (up from 78% in 2022).

79% say they have met new people and feel less isolated (up from 71%).

*The non-judgmental and welcoming environment. It's a stressful time financially, having a supportive community makes it that much easier.*

*Being a part of the lovely community. If I have any worries, I can always come and talk to somebody.*

5.

Members are actively involved in running the Pantry, enhancing their self worth.

73%

of members agree that there are opportunities to get involved in running the Pantry.

90%

say they feel their views about the Pantry are listened to.

6.

Members learn and share new skills, increasing their financial resilience.

69% of members say that membership of the Pantry has helped them to learn new skills and knowledge (up from 55% in 2022).

Whilst 80% say they were now better informed about where to get help if they need it.

*I thought the energy workshop was very informative. I am more aware of general energy usage at home. Thank you!*

*I attended an air fryer course with chef Renu B. It was so fine to meet other pantry members and parents. It really inspired me to cook more.*



The impact survey shows that the Pantry is achieving very positive outcomes for its members, and nearly all these indicators have improved in the last year:



9/10

members feel more connected to their community, 8 in 10 feel less isolated, and 7 in 10 have learnt new skills and knowledge.

8/10

members are cooking more, trying different recipes and eating more fresh fruit and vegetables.

8/10

members say that their membership has helped them to afford the basic essentials and that they now feel more in control of their finances. Nearly half say it has helped them to manage debts and a quarter are saving more.

4/10

members continue to use the Foodbank alongside the Pantry, but most members are using it less frequently than before.



In summary, members overwhelmingly agree that the Pantry provides a good supply of affordable and healthy food, leading to improvements in their financial resilience and their family's diet, as well as giving them greater choice over the food they buy.

Thanks to the friendly staff and volunteers and the range of community activities on offer, members feel valued and part of a community, with opportunities to get involved and learn new skills.

Encouragingly, those who have been members for longer than a year are coping significantly better and are much less likely to be food insecure than those who have joined more recently.

Get in touch! To find out more about Epsom Pantry and how you can get involved please contact:

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