



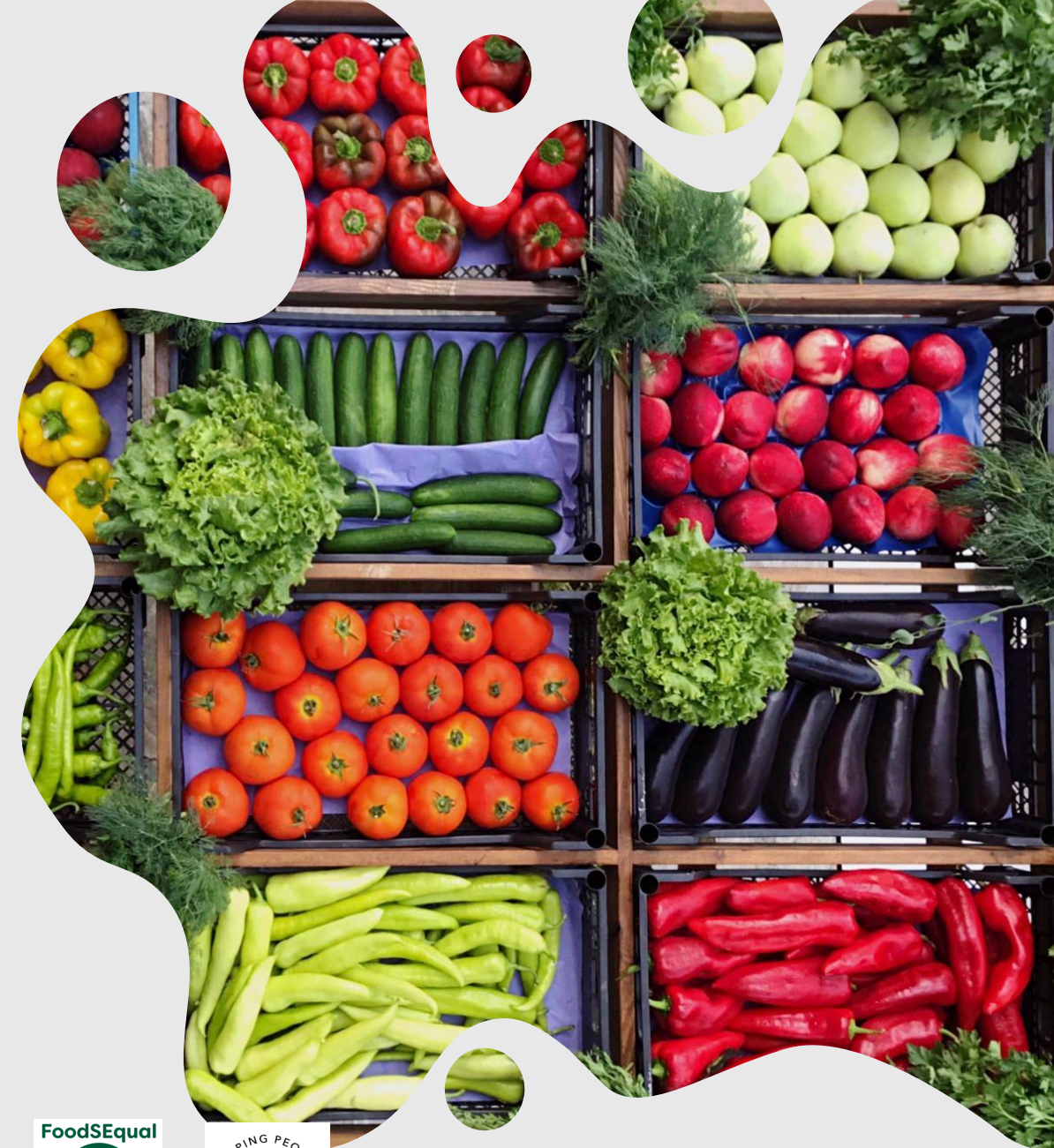
# Fresh Street Community: feasibility testing a community centre-based voucher scheme for fresh fruit and vegetables.

Michelle Thomas<sup>1</sup>, Clare Relton<sup>2</sup>, Manik Puranik<sup>1</sup>, Lisa Methven<sup>1</sup>, Clare Pettinger<sup>3</sup>, Jiang Pan<sup>3</sup>, Lisa Howard<sup>3</sup>, Paridhi Garg<sup>3</sup>, Trisha Bennett<sup>1</sup>, Carol Wagstaff<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> School of Chemistry, Food and Pharmacy, University of Reading, Harry Nursten Building, Whiteknights, Reading, RG6 6DZ, UK.

<sup>2</sup> Wolfson Institute of Public Health, Queen Mary University of London, 58 Turner Street, London, E1 2AB, UK

<sup>3</sup> School of Health Professions, University of Plymouth, Derriford Road, Plymouth, PL6 8BH, UK







# Fresh Street Community

- Fresh Street Community is a new study testing ways to help communities access good quality fresh fruit and vegetables via community centres in Reading and Plymouth.
- Fresh Street Community focuses on the role of community hubs as centres for social connectivity and support, providing a point to buy fresh vegetables and fruit, but also to access wellbeing, healthcare and social activities that provide more wide-ranging support for local communities

Website: <https://www.freshstreet.uk/>







# Research Questions

## Primary Research Question

- What is the most effective way to embed the Fresh Street Community Scheme within local food systems in areas of high deprivation?

## Secondary research question

- What is the acceptability of Fresh Street Community by local households
- What is the preliminary evidence of the impact of the Fresh Street Community on
  - a) social connection
  - b) health inequality
  - c) self-reported dietary behaviours and wellbeing status and
  - d) the availability and affordability of fresh produce?



# Overall Intervention design



Complex intervention with many parts

Key to the intervention is Community Participatory Action Research principles of equal partnership, collaboration and community action

Locations

Fruit and vegetable  
suppliers

Treatment

Food and wellbeing  
chats

Biomarkers  
& health checks

**Whitleigh  
(Plymouth)**



Four Greens Community  
Hub

**Whitley  
(Reading)**



Whitley Community  
Development Association



**Intervention streets**

~150 households in each  
location receive £10-worth  
F&V vouchers each fortnight,  
PLUS, programme of  
community-hub based  
activities

**Control streets**

~150 households in each  
location receive  
programme of community-  
hub based activities

100 individuals  
recruited from  
intervention and  
control streets (each)  
in both locations  
(~400 individuals in  
total )

Option to provide  
hair/urine samples for  
biomarker assessment

Option to attend NHS-  
run health checks







# Reading: Intervention design



WEEKLY FRUIT AND  
VEGETABLE STALL  
RUN BY WCDA STAFF,  
AND A TEAM OF  
VOLUNTEERS  
STARTED 11/11 2023



PRODUCE IS SOLD  
LOOSE CUSTOMERS  
CAN CHOOSE WHAT  
AND HOW MUCH THEY  
BUY.



OPEN TO ALL,  
VOUCHER, CASH AND  
CARD PAYMENT  
ACCEPTED



COMMUNITY  
RESEARCHERS  
CONNECT WITH  
CITIZENS FACILITATE  
INTERACTIONS,  
INFORMAL CHATS  
AND DATA  
COLLECTION .





## FRESH STREET COMMUNITY

The FoodSEqual-Health project is bringing fresh fruit and vegetables to Whittleigh along with fun events and activities to share ideas about shopping, cooking and eating.



1

HOW DOES IT WORK?

2

PLACE ORDER FOR  
FRUIT + VEGETABLES



Tuesday  
(Fortnightly)



10 AM - 12 PM



The Salvation  
Army, PL5 4AA



Thursday of  
the same week



10 AM - 12 PM



The Salvation  
Army, PL5 4AA

Please make sure to bring your payment card/voucher on both your visits

Interested? Contact us on the details below.

<https://foodplymouth.org/project/foodsequal-health/>

[foodsequalhealth@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:foodsequalhealth@plymouth.ac.uk)

07908729344



# Plymouth: Intervention Design



FORTNIGHTLY  
ORDER/ COLLECT  
APPROACH



£5 PRE-SORTED  
SEASONAL BAGS



ORDER IN PERSON  
ON A TUESDAY,  
COLLECT IN  
PERSON ON A  
THURSDAY



INTERVENTION  
STARTED 16<sup>TH</sup>  
JANUARY 2024



COMMUNITY  
RESEARCHERS  
FACILITATE  
DISCUSSION, DATA  
COLLECTION AND  
ACTIVITIES



# Differences and similarities between the Reading and Plymouth



## Similarities

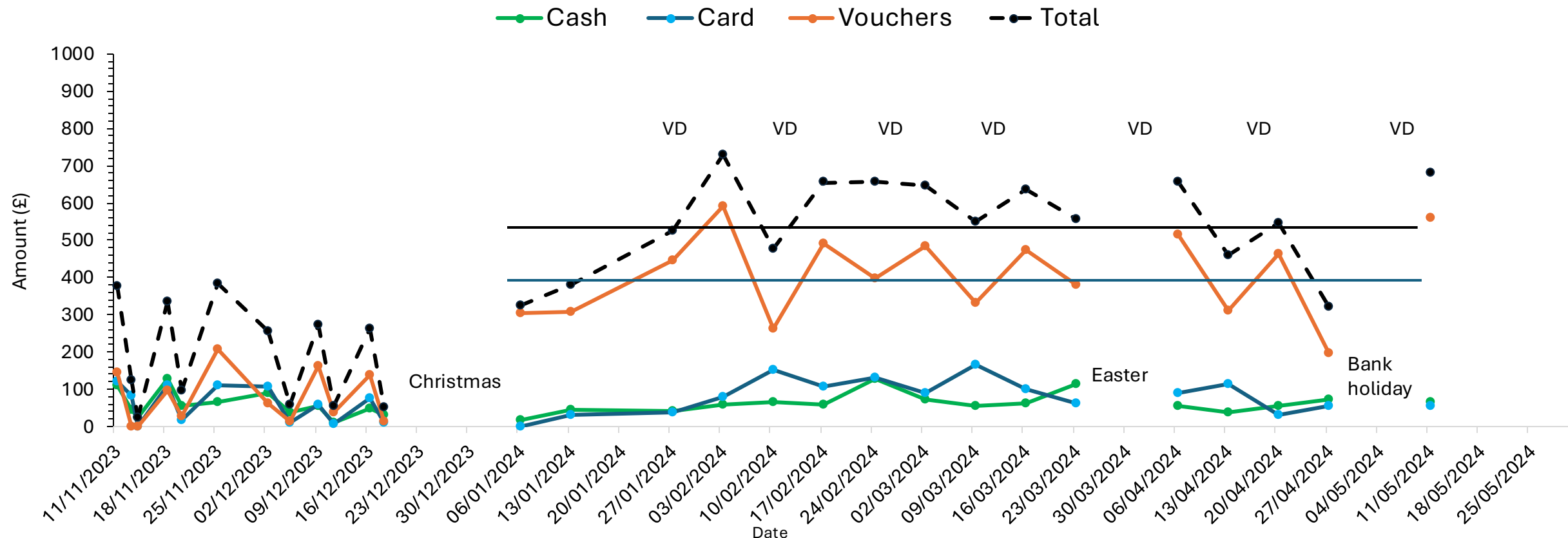
- Schemes are operating in locations with relative high levels of deprivation
- Voucher value £5 per week, delivered fortnightly
- Community researcher have a key role in liaising with citizens and collecting data
- Operate from community hubs

## Differences

- Reading= weekly fruit and vegetable stall
- Plymouth = fortnightly order and collection of predefined bags
- Reading = Stall run by Whitley Community Development Association
- Plymouth= Scheme run by research group



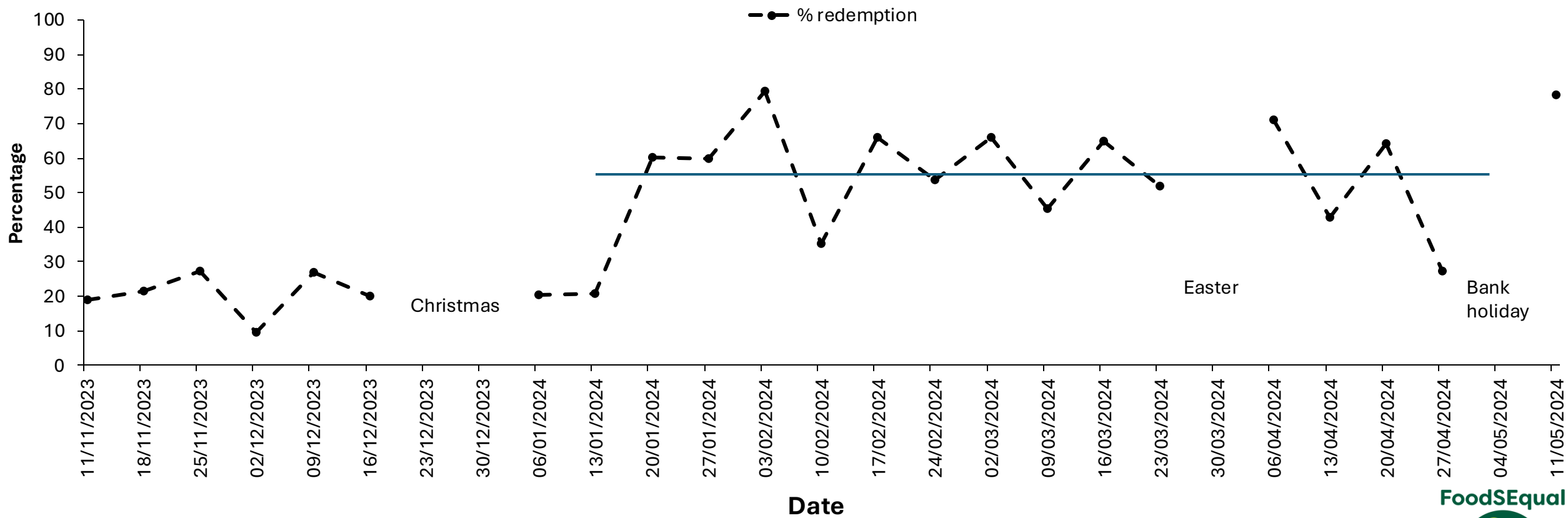
# Results: Total sales, voucher, cash and card sales, Reading



— Average **total sales** since Christmas **£551.00** per week.  
— Average **voucher** redemption **£409.82** per week , Voucher driving sales.  
VD= voucher delivery week.

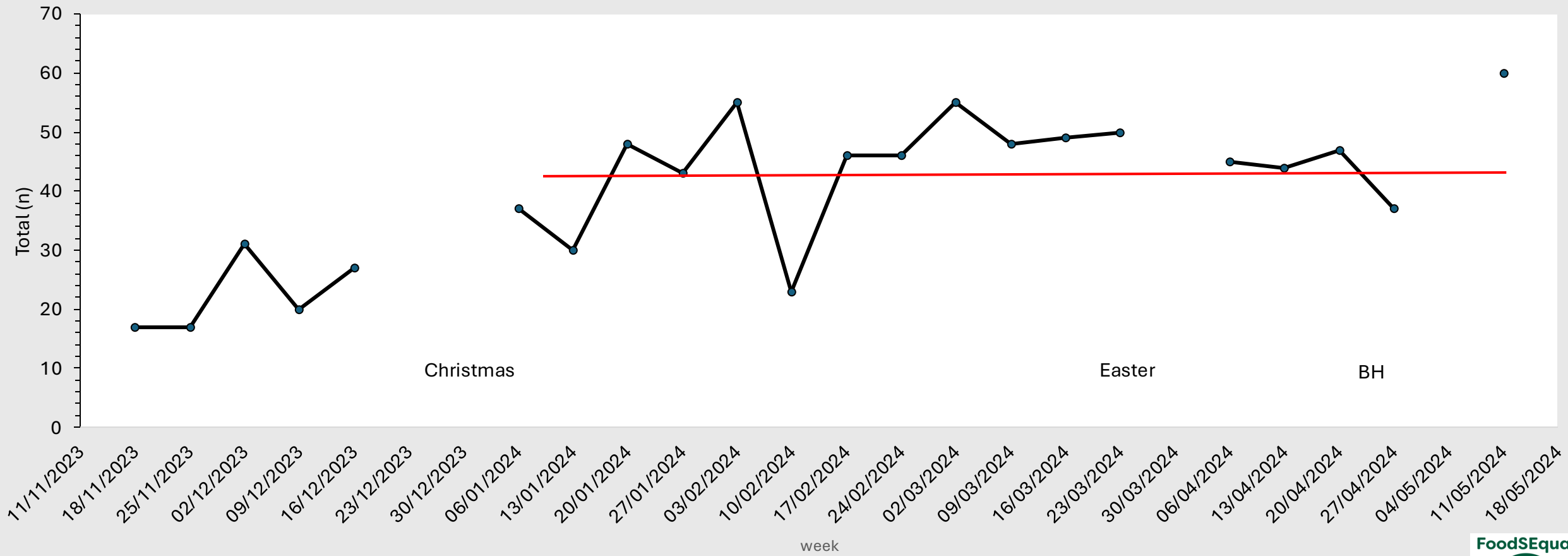


# Results: Voucher redemption rate, by week, Reading.



— Average percentage redemption since Christmas per week = 53.4%

# Weekly footfall, Reading



Average footfall since Christmas 45 citizens per week.  
BH= Bank holiday





## The Fruit and Vegetable stall, Reading





## Citizens' Purchases, Reading.

- Fruit is popular, banana grapes and strawberries.
- Special requests for mooli and bitter melon .
- WCDA purchase items that are not always available in mainstream retailers such as dragon fruit, pineberries and kumquats.







# The team making Fresh Street Community possible each week

- Dr Trisha Bennett- Community Development Officer
- Barbara Diouri- Community Researcher
- Rachel Sutton- Administrator
- Jane Bradbeer – Project manager
- Whitley Community development Association Team
  - Maria,
  - Pat
  - Annie,
  - Kelly
  - Bob
- And many others who work behind the scenes ordering produce, delivering vouchers, leaflets and setting up the stall each week.
- A huge thank you to the citizens of Whitley who come each week and support the stall.



# Conclusion

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- Area based (non-means tested) voucher schemes have the potential to address dietary inequity and create change in the local food environment by increasing access to affordable FV and stimulating the local supply of fresh FV.
- Linking with local community assets and support services enhances social cohesion and enables people to more easily take action to improve their own lives.



# FoodSEqual



C A Belcher & Son  
Quality is our first priority