

FreshStreet Community Scheme: Household vouchers for fresh fruit and vegetables

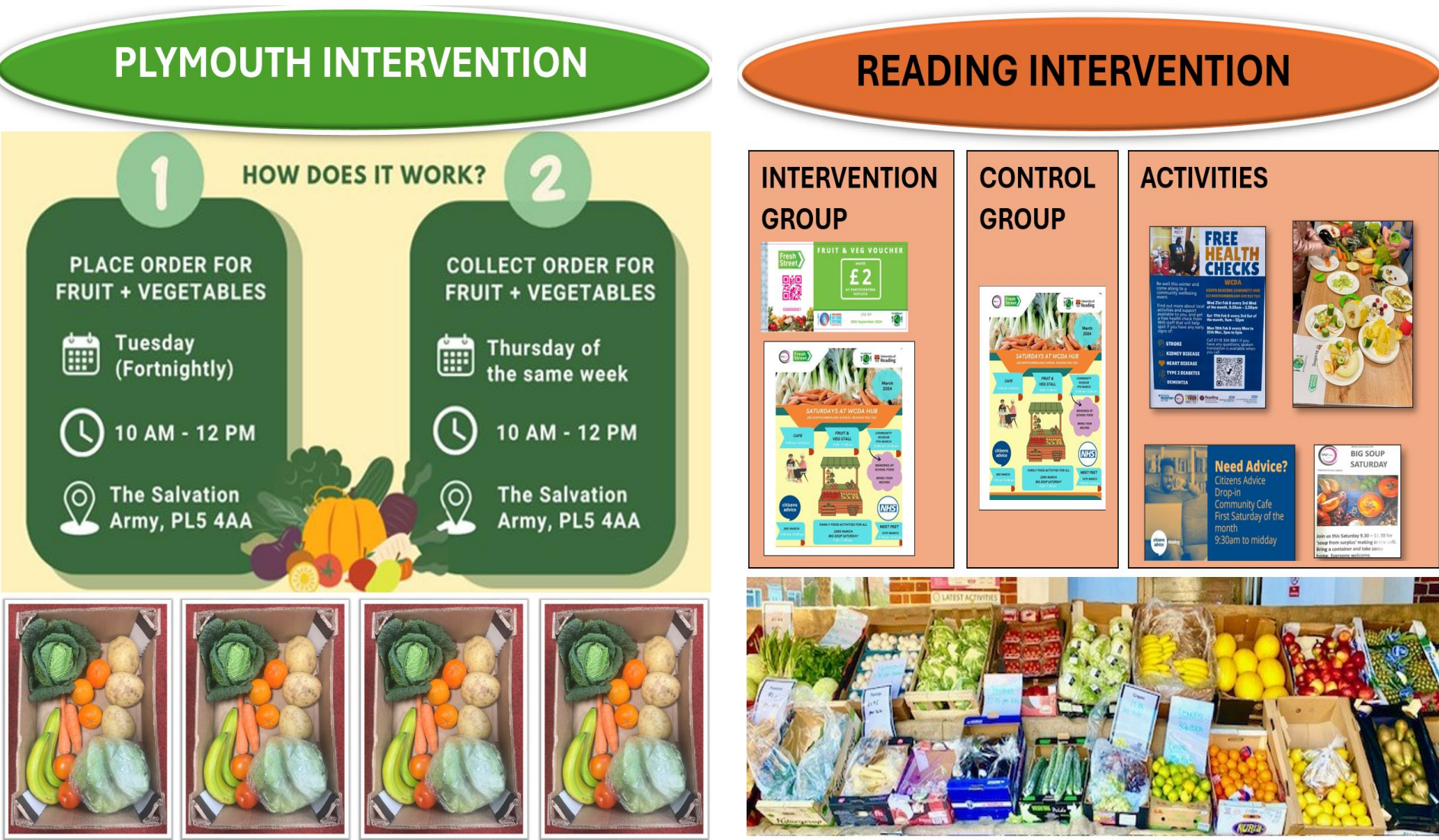


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Background and aim

Increased consumption of fruit and vegetables (FV) has been recommended by the ‘Eat Well Guide’ for healthy living. However, FV is generally unaffordable, inaccessible or unavailable in disadvantaged communities leading to a higher intake of cheap high-fat, high-sugar low-fibre foods resulting in poorer health¹. A couple of FV schemes currently exist in the UK, however, households need to prove eligibility criteria which can be a barrier and create stigma. The study aims to test the feasibility of ways to enable local suppliers to sell fresh FV at the community centres.

Study design



Progress so far...

BASELINE FRUIT & VEG CONSUMPTION				
	No. of households	(%) respondents	Baseline fruit consumption (portions/day)	Baseline veg consumption (portions/day)
PLYMOUTH (n=303)				
Intervention	159	59	1.26	1.23
Control	144	43	0.74	0.78
READING (n=298)				
Intervention	153	49	1.09	1.37
Control	145	39	1.03	1.44

VOUCHER USAGE				
Locations/ no. of intervention households	Value of vouchers (£) delivered fortnightly	Households drop out (%)	Households redeeming vouchers (%)	Weekly average intervention group footfall
Plymouth (159)	10	13	4	5
Reading (153)	10	4	39	50

Conclusion

The baseline FV consumption was low in both the geographic areas in the intervention and control group (n = 601 households, mean FV consumption reported = 2.5 portions/person/day for fruit and vegetables) compared to the Government recommendation of 5 portions/person/day. The initial qualitative data in the Reading area demonstrates that the voucher scheme has increased access and that people are sharing vouchers. This scheme aims to enable households to choose their FV and makes FV more affordable and available for everyone in the community.

References

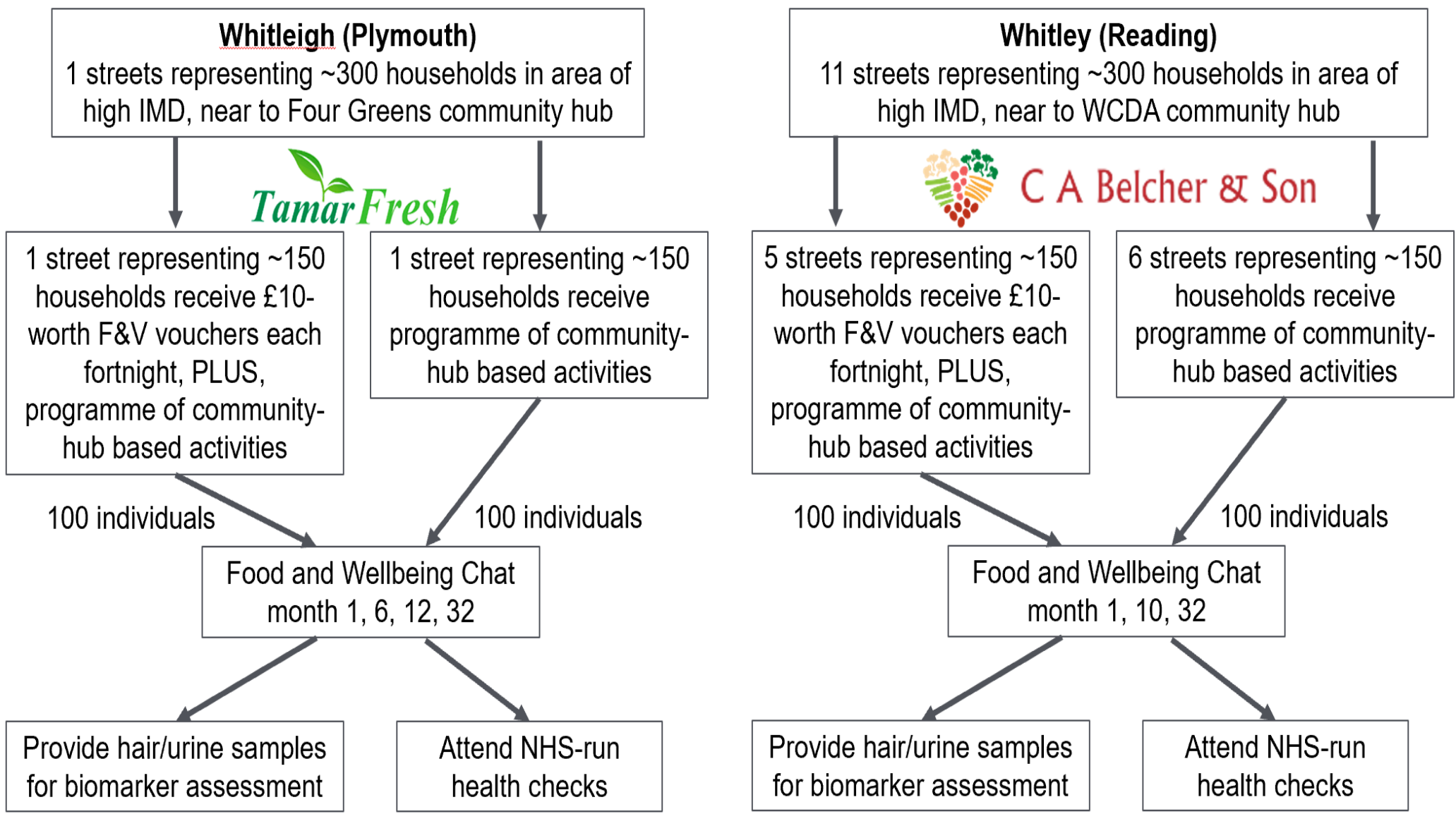
1. Woodside, J., Nugent, A., Moore, R. and McKinley, M. (2023) 'Fruit and vegetable consumption as a preventative strategy for non-communicable diseases', *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, 82(2), pp. 186-199

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Methodology



Observations/feedback

"this is great and it's on my doorstep, really enjoy the atmosphere"

"I struggle to get enough fruit and veg in me - it comes down to cost and time"

"I will definitely be there every Saturday"

"I want to get to a point where price comes after my nutrition needs"

Greater diversity of ethnicities attending the Community Centre

People who initially handed back vouchers are now using them

More exotic veg (mooli, ginger) being requested

Trouble carrying bags home

Acknowledgements

