



The prevalence of food insecurity in an inner-city London borough between 2021 and 2023: evidence from cross-sectional surveys.

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Abstract

Background: The prevalence of food insecurity in the UK has risen; this is likely to continue given the increasing cost of living. Addressing food insecurity is a key focus for Lambeth Council (an inner-city London borough). This study aimed to estimate the prevalence of food insecurity among residents and identify sociodemographic risk factors.

Methods: Three convenience sampling cross-sectional surveys were conducted in 2021, 2022, and 2023. Prevalence by year and sociodemographic characteristics were calculated for food insecurity, receipt of food assistance, and perception of access to affordable, healthy, and culturally appropriate food. Risk factors were identified using multivariable logistic regression modelling.

Results: There were 1,679 respondents in total. Overall, 14.0% and 17.3% experienced low or very low food security, respectively, and 13.7% received food assistance. The prevalence of food insecurity remained approximately static by year. Prevalence of receipt of food assistance decreased from 16.7% in 2021 to 12.3% in 2022 and 12.5% in 2023. Whilst several characteristics were associated with food insecurity in univariable analyses (including age and ethnicity), disability (aOR 2.48, 95% CI 1.60–3.84), employment (unemployed versus full time work: aOR 5.31, 95% CI 3.05–9.42), housing (council/housing association versus homeowners: aOR 7.00, 95% CI 4.68–10.70), and living with children (aOR 1.56, 95% CI 1.15–2.11) had the largest effects following adjustment. The proportion who perceived food to be affordable, healthy, and culturally appropriate decreased (65.6% in 2021, 51.2% in 2022, 52.5% in 2023) and increased with increasing food insecurity (37.5% very low security, 48.1% low security, and 62.4% high security).

Conclusions: There is a high prevalence and unequal distribution of food insecurity in Lambeth. The most important risk factors reflect financial security. This analysis informed Lambeth's 'Food Justice Action Plan' by focusing on individuals more likely to experience food insecurity.

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Introduction

Food insecurity is a growing public health concern in the UK, with its prevalence rising notably since 2010¹. The COVID-19 pandemic, new trade relationships with the European Union, extreme weather events and conflict have contributed to the disruption of supply chains and the escalating cost of living². These challenges have affected both the availability and affordability of food, while also compounding financial hardship among households. This has further exacerbated the impact of food insecurity, particularly on vulnerable populations³.

Although many definitions exist⁴, Household food insecurity and poverty can be described as the 'limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways⁵. The causes of food insecurity are multifaceted, encompassing factors such as income and food prices, physical access to food, and the ability and resources to prepare food. From a UK policy point of view, food insecurity is recognised as one component of the wider food system. Alongside considerations of environmental sustainability, the wider food system encompasses global food availability, national food supplies, supply chain resilience, and consumer confidence and food safety.⁶

There are a wide range of health and well-being impacts of food insecurity. Consequently, there is growing recognition of the role that local government, including public health teams, play in addressing this problem⁷. Since 2021, Lambeth Council implemented a Food Poverty and Insecurity Action Plan. An important component of this work is monitoring the extent of food insecurity in the borough. To this end, the aim of this study was to estimate the prevalence of food insecurity among Lambeth residents and to identify associated sociodemographic risk factors.

Methods

Population

Lambeth is an inner-city borough in South East London with a resident population of approximately 317,600⁸, 70% of whom live in the 40% most deprived areas of England (2021 estimates). The median age is 35 years, younger than England's median of 40,

and it also has a higher proportion of working-age residents (42% aged 20 to 39 years compared to 26% in England)⁹. Lambeth is ethnically diverse: 43% of residents identify as Black, Asian, or Multi-Ethnic, and 57% identify as White (compared to 81.7% in England)¹⁰.

Survey

Lambeth Public Health commissioned Kaizen Partnership to conduct the surveys. Three cross-sectional surveys were conducted during September and October of 2021, 2022, and 2023, over 51, 46, and 48 days, respectively. The survey population were Lambeth residents, ascertained through verbal confirmation. No formal sampling frame was compiled. Convenience sampling was used; the age, gender and ethnicity distribution of completed surveys were summarised at the end of each day of data collection. Subsequent engagement was targeted to ensure that the characteristics of respondents were generally reflective of the borough's Census profile. Housing type was reviewed after data entry, and additional engagement was conducted to more closely reflect this characteristic with Lambeth's population.

The in-person surveys, lasting approximately 20 minutes each, were paper-based (Appendix 1) and completed by Kaizen-employed interviewers. Responses were later transcribed into an Excel database. The surveys took place in public areas, both residential and commercial high streets, in all wards of Lambeth. Surveys were conducted in working hours on both weekdays and weekends. There was an option for telephone or online completion which was advertised by handing out cards with the telephone number and web address. However, few chose these methods (2 online in 2021; 1 by telephone and 3 online in 2022; 2 online in 2023). No incentive was provided for participation via any method. Individuals aged 13 and older were eligible for inclusion. Surveys were conducted in English and there was no additional support provided to people requiring translation. Each participant provided verbal consent after being informed that their data would remain anonymous and be stored in accordance with Lambeth Council's data protection policy. Identical survey methods were used each



year (except there were a small number of additional questions which were specific to certain years).

Outcomes

The primary outcome was to estimate the prevalence of food insecurity. The secondary outcomes were to estimate the prevalence of receipt of food assistance and perception of ease of access to affordable, healthy, and culturally appropriate food in Lambeth.

The US Department of Agriculture's internationally adopted household food security survey questions were used (Appendices 1 and 2)¹¹. Based on the responses to these questions, the final classification of an individual's food security status was adapted from the US Department of Agriculture's method (Appendix 2). Food security was categorised as: high, low ('reduced quality, variety or desirability of food with little or no indication of reduced food intake'), and very low ('multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake')¹².

Receipt of food assistance was defined as any form of food support or assistance. Sociodemographic characteristics (age group, gender identity, ethnicity, disability, employment, housing and children living at home) were self-reported. Disability was defined as a limitation in day-to-day activities due to a physical or learning disability, or health problem. Ethnicity was collected as described by the participant (i.e., without pre-defined categories) and subsequently grouped according to the 2021 Census high-level classifications for the purpose of analysis¹³.

Statistical Analysis

Non-residents were excluded from the data analysis. Sample size was determined by the practicalities of the number of outreach days, without *a priori* power calculations. Frequencies by year and sociodemographic characteristics were calculated for the primary and secondary outcomes. Using pooled data from the three survey years, associations with sociodemographic characteristics were identified using uni- and multivariable logistic regression. *A priori*, variables were chosen for inclusion in the multivariable models based on existing evidence from the UK of associated sociodemographic characteristics¹⁴. P-values were Chi-squared or likelihood ratio tests (as indicated

within relevant results). Analyses were performed in R version 4.3.1.

Ethics

Ethics approval was not required. The work was carried out for the purpose of service evaluation of Lambeth Council's food poverty action plan

Results

A total of 1,679 Lambeth residents participated in the survey: 515 (30.7%) in 2021, 562 (33.5%) in 2022, and 602 (35.9%) in 2023 (Appendix 3). Notable differences between survey years included an increase in respondents aged 65 and over (7.8% in 2021, 11.6% in 2022, and 13.5% in 2023), an increase in White respondents (40.0%, 52.5% and 51.0%), a decrease in Black respondents (36.5%, 28.5% and 27.4%), a decrease in those in full time work (43.5%, 40.4% and 38.4%), and a decrease in respondents with children at home (46.6%, 41.3% and 40.7%).

Compared to Lambeth's 2021 Census data^{15,16}, there was a lower proportion of respondents aged 13–24 years (12.2% vs. 17.2%), a higher proportion of females (54.0% vs. 51.5%), a lower proportion of White respondents (48.1% vs. 55.0%), a higher proportion of Black respondents (30.6% vs. 24.0%), a lower proportion of respondents with a disability (11.9% vs. 17.1%), a lower proportion owning property (28.2% vs. 33.0%), and a lower proportion privately renting (26.0% vs. 31.4%).

Food security

Overall, 1,147/1,679 (68.3%) were food secure, while 235/1,679 (14.0%) experienced low food security and 291/1,679 (17.3%) experienced very low food security (with 6/1,679 missing outcomes). The prevalence of food insecurity (low or very low food security combined) remained similar over time: 31.1% in 2021, 32.7% in 2022, and 30.2% in 2023 (Figure 1a).

Univariable analyses revealed associations between food insecurity and age, ethnicity, disability, employment, housing and having children at home (Appendix 4). However, following multivariable adjustment, there was no longer evidence of an association between food security and age or ethnicity (Table 1).



Figure 1: Annual prevalence of: a) food insecurity, b) receipt of food assistance, and c) perception of access to healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food, in Lambeth residents by survey year



Individuals with a disability had twice the odds of experiencing food insecurity compared to those without (aOR 2.48, 95% CI 1.60–3.84, $p<0.001$). Those with children at home also had greater odds of being food insecure than those without (aOR 1.56, 95% CI 1.15–2.11, $p=0.004$). Employment was strongly associated with food security, for example, individuals looking for work had more than five times the odds of being food insecure than those in full time work (aOR 5.31, 95% CI 3.05–9.42, $p<0.001$). Housing was also strongly associated with food security, for example, individuals renting through the council or housing association had seven times the odds of being food insecure than homeowners (aOR 7.00, 95% CI 4.68–10.70, $p<0.001$).

Food assistance

Overall, 230/1,679 (13.7%) reported receipt of some form of food assistance. The prevalence decreased from 16.7% in 2021 to 12.3% in 2022, and 12.5% in 2023 (Fig 1b). Among 235 respondents with low food

security, 24.7% received food assistance, and of 291 with very low food security, 41.6% received food assistance (Appendix 5). Individuals experiencing low or very low food security were more likely to receive food assistance if they: were disabled (53.3% with a disability received assistance vs. 30.5% without a disability, $p<0.001$); were unable to work (68.4% received assistance vs. 41.3% looking for work and 20.0% with zero-hours contracts, $p<0.001$); were homeless or living in temporary housing (82.8% received assistance vs. 15.5% renting through a private landlord, $p<0.001$); and had children at home (40.3% received assistance vs. 29.7% without children, $p=0.017$, Appendix 6).

The adjusted associations between the socio-demographic characteristics and receipt of food assistance reflected what was observed for food security (Table 2 and Appendix 7).



Table 1: Food security by socio-demographic characteristics

		Food security		aOR (95% CI)	P-value
		High n = 1,147 (68.3%)*	Low to very low n = 526 (31.3%)*		
Age group (years)	13-24	137 (67.5)	66 (32.5)	-	0.476
	25-44	563 (71.0)	230 (29.0)	0.73 (0.45-1.21)	
	45-64	309 (63.8)	175 (36.2)	0.90 (0.53-1.56)	
	65 and over	133 (72.3)	51 (27.7)	0.84 (0.35-2.00)	
	Missing	5 (55.6)	4 (44.4)		
Gender	Female	628 (69.5)	275 (30.5)	-	0.783
	Male	503 (67.6)	241 (32.4)	1.00 (0.75-1.32)	
	Non-binary	3 (42.9)	4 (57.1)	1.90 (0.31-15.18)	
	Missing	13 (68.4)	6 (31.6)		
Ethnicity	White	615 (76.6)	188 (23.4)	-	0.065
	Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	286 (55.8)	227 (44.2)	1.58 (1.15-2.16)	
	Asian or Asian British	82 (74.5)	28 (25.5)	1.00 (0.56-1.75)	
	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	108 (71.5)	43 (28.5)	1.08 (0.67-1.72)	
	Other ethnic group	43 (58.1)	31 (41.9)	1.10 (0.58-2.03)	
	Missing	13 (59.1)	9 (40.9)		
Disability	No	909 (71.9)	356 (28.1)	-	<0.001
	Yes	91 (45.7)	108 (54.3)	2.48 (1.60-3.84)	
	Missing	147 (70.3)	62 (29.7)		
Employment	Full time work	524 (77.1)	156 (22.9)	-	<0.001
	Part time work	111 (66.1)	57 (33.9)	1.51 (0.96-2.36)	
	Zero hours contract work	13 (46.4)	15 (53.6)	3.60 (1.52-8.57)	
	Self-employed	125 (74.0)	44 (26.0)	1.18 (0.74-1.86)	
	Retired	119 (75.3)	39 (24.7)	0.80 (0.35-1.79)	
	Full time student	89 (72.4)	34 (27.6)	0.94 (0.51-1.71)	
	Looking after children/the home	74 (62.7)	44 (37.3)	1.89 (1.08-3.27)	
	Looking for work	36 (36.0)	64 (64.0)	5.31 (3.05-9.42)	
	Unable to work	27 (32.1)	57 (67.9)	2.02 (1.04-3.98)	
	Missing	29 (64.4)	16 (35.6)		
Housing	Own property	423 (90.0)	47 (10.0)	-	<0.001
	Rent (private landlord)	320 (73.4)	116 (26.6)	3.61 (2.32-5.70)	
	Rent (housing association or council)	296 (51.8)	275 (48.2)	7.00 (4.68-10.70)	
	Staying with friends/family	52 (64.2)	29 (35.8)	5.13 (2.52-10.40)	
	Homeless, hostel, sheltered or, temporary	6 (16.7)	30 (83.3)	13.39 (4.88-41.22)	
	Other	29 (60.4)	19 (39.6)	3.64 (1.59-7.95)	
	Missing	21 (67.7)	10 (32.3)		
Children at home	No	643 (70.8)	265 (29.2)	-	0.004
	Yes	470 (65.7)	245 (34.3)	1.56 (1.15-2.11)	
	Missing	34 (68.0)	16 (32.0)		

*6 missing outcome values (0.4%). Likelihood ratio test p-values. Adjusted models based on 1,347 complete observations. Crude odds ratios are included in Appendix 4. aOR = adjusted odds ratio.

Individuals with a disability had more than twice the odds of receiving food assistance compared to those without (aOR 2.42, 95% CI 1.45–4.04, $p<0.001$), and those with children at home had 1.5 times greater odds of receiving food assistance than those without (aOR 1.64, 95% CI 1.10–2.46, $p=0.015$). Employment and housing were also strongly associated with food assistance, with the greatest odds observed in individuals looking for work (aOR

4.65, 95% CI 2.39–8.96, $p<0.001$) and individuals who were homeless or living in a hostel, sheltered or temporary accommodation (aOR 11.99, 95% CI 4.48–33.39, $p<0.001$).

Food accessibility

Overall, 407/1,679 respondents (24.2%) perceived access to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food as 'very easy', while 535/1,679 (31.9%) found it 'quite easy'.



Table 2: Receipt of any form of food assistance by sociodemographic characteristics

		Received food assistance			
		No n = 1,406 (83.7%)*	Yes n = 230 (13.7%)*	aOR (95% CI)	P-value
Age group (years)	13-24	179 (91.8)	16 (8.2)	-	0.638
	25-44	668 (86.5)	104 (13.5)	1.52 (0.72-3.47)	
	45-64	394 (82.3)	85 (17.7)	1.28 (0.57-3.09)	
	65 and over	160 (88.4)	21 (11.6)	1.10 (0.32-3.72)	
	Missing	5 (55.6)	4 (44.4)		
Gender	Female	761 (86.1)	123 (13.9)	-	0.294
	Male	625 (85.9)	103 (14.1)	1.07 (0.73-1.58)	
	Non-binary	7 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	NA	
	Missing	13 (76.5)	4 (23.5)		
Ethnicity	White	704 (89.9)	79 (10.1)	-	0.914
	Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	404 (80.3)	99 (19.7)	1.13 (0.74-1.73)	
	Asian or Asian British	93 (87.7)	13 (12.3)	0.96 (0.42-2.02)	
	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	127 (85.2)	22 (14.8)	1.29 (0.68-2.38)	
	Other ethnic group	61 (82.4)	13 (17.6)	1.25 (0.53-2.74)	
	Missing	17 (81.0)	4 (19.0)		
Disability	No	1098 (88.8)	139 (11.2)	-	<0.001
	Yes	133 (67.2)	65 (32.8)	2.42 (1.45-4.04)	
	Missing	175 (87.1)	26 (12.9)		
Employment	Full time work	614 (92.5)	50 (7.5)	-	<0.001
	Part time work	146 (88.0)	20 (12.0)	1.52 (0.79-2.85)	
	Zero hours contract work	23 (85.2)	4 (14.8)	2.10 (0.53-6.57)	
	Self-employed	147 (89.1)	18 (10.9)	1.56 (0.79-2.96)	
	Retired	138 (88.5)	18 (11.5)	1.25 (0.44-3.52)	
	Full time student	107 (91.5)	10 (8.5)	1.20 (0.46-2.98)	
	Looking after children/the home	83 (72.8)	31 (27.2)	3.40 (1.76-6.52)	
	Looking for work	69 (69.7)	30 (30.3)	4.65 (2.39-8.96)	
	Unable to work	42 (50.0)	42 (50.0)	3.16 (1.52-6.57)	
	Missing	37 (84.1)	7 (15.9)		
Housing	Own property	435 (94.2)	27 (5.8)	-	<0.001
	Rent (private landlord)	400 (94.8)	22 (5.2)	1.02 (0.52-1.99)	
	Rent (housing association or council)	424 (75.7)	136 (24.3)	4.18 (2.50-7.24)	
	Staying with friends/family	71 (89.9)	8 (10.1)	1.83 (0.62-4.88)	
	Homeless, hostel, sheltered or temporary	10 (28.6)	25 (71.4)	11.99 (4.48-33.39)	
	Other	41 (85.4)	7 (14.6)	1.95 (0.52-5.76)	
	Missing	25 (83.3)	5 (16.7)		
Children at home	No	793 (89.5)	93 (10.5)	-	0.015
	Yes	572 (81.6)	129 (18.4)	1.64 (1.10-2.46)	
	Missing	41 (83.7)	8 (16.3)		

*43 missing outcome values (2.6%). Likelihood ratio test p-values. Adjusted models based on 1,320 complete observations. Crude odds ratios are included in Appendix 7. aOR = adjusted odds ratio.



Conversely, 399/1,679 (23.8%) reported it was 'not very easy', 242/1,679 (14.4%) said it was 'not at all easy', and 57/1,679 (3.4%) were unsure. The prevalence of individuals who found access 'very easy' or 'quite easy' decreased from 65.5% (2021) to 51.2% (2022) and 52.5% (2023); Fig 1c. Among those with high food security, 35.7% found access difficult compared to 49.8% with low food security and 58.4% with very low food security (Appendix 8).

Following multivariable adjustment, the strongest associations were with housing, children at home and disability (Table 3 and Appendix 9). Individuals renting through the housing association or council had less than half the odds of perceiving food as accessible compared to homeowners (aOR 0.45, 95% CI 0.32–0.61, $p < 0.001$). Individuals with children at home had a greater odds of perceiving food as accessible (aOR 1.36, 95% CI 1.04–1.78, $p = 0.023$), whereas the odds for individuals with a disability were decreased (aOR 0.66, 95% CI 0.44–0.98).

Discussion

The prevalence of food insecurity in Lambeth is high, with 14.0% experiencing low and 17.3% experiencing very low food security during 2021–2023. Only 24.7% and 41.6% of individuals with low or very low food security, respectively, received food support, indicating significant unmet need. The sociodemographic risk factors with the largest independent effect on food insecurity were disability, having children at home, employment and housing.

The prevalence of people who found access to healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food to be easy or very easy decreased from 65.6% in 2021 to 52.5% in 2023. Compared to those with high food security, a greater proportion of individuals who were food insecure reported accessibility difficulties.

Although there is no long-term consistent data source¹⁷, food insecurity has been rising in the UK, particularly since 2010¹. The Trussell Trust, which operates approximately 60% of the UK's food banks, reported distributing 1.5 million food parcels between April and September 2023, a 16% increase from the same period in 2022¹⁸.

Since 2019, the Department for Work and Pensions has included food insecurity questions in its Family Resources Survey of 20,000 households in the UK. The 2022–2023 data revealed that 7.2 million

households (11%) faced food insecurity, up from 4.7 million (7%) in 2021–2022¹⁴. Those most effected were children, individuals with a disability, households with someone with a disability, unemployed households, households from a Black ethnic group, and social housing residents. In London, 5% had low food security and 4% very low, while the North East of England had the highest prevalence with 5% low and 7% very low food security. The Food Standards Agency's 'Food and You' survey, last conducted between October 2022 and January 2023, found that 1 in 4 adults in England were food insecure¹⁹.

This study provides estimates of the prevalence of food insecurity and receipt of food support over a three-year period, identifying the characteristics of individuals most likely to experience food insecurity, at a borough level. It also includes resident's experience of the wider food system in Lambeth, by describing the perception of access to affordable, healthy and culturally appropriate food. The 2021 survey occurred during the early period of the COVID-19 pandemic recovery, and subsequent surveys in 2022 and 2023 took place as the cost of living, including food and drink prices, were increasing. These periods saw significant economic changes for local and national governments.

This study reaffirms that the sociodemographic characteristics which have the largest impact on food security are those which reflect financial status, i.e. housing and employment, as well as having children living at home and living with a disability. To achieve a sustainable long-term reduction in food insecurity, both local and national policies must urgently address the root causes of food insecurity, one of which is poverty. At a local government level, these findings are informing updates to Lambeth's Food Justice Action Plan. This focuses not only on the acute response to individuals who are food insecure, but also the provision of 'wrap-around' services to individuals either at risk of or experiencing food insecurity. It also considers the wider food system by improving access to healthy, environmentally sustainable food systems.

The UK government recently published a food strategy adopting a whole-system approach⁶.



Table 3: Perceived ease of access to affordable, healthy and culturally appropriate food in Lambeth, by sociodemographic characteristics

		Difficult, not very easy, not sure n = 698 (41.6%)*	Quite easy, very easy n = 942 (56.1%)*	aOR (95% CI)	P- value
Age group (years)	13-24	118 (58.1)	85 (41.9)	-	0.186
	25-44	330 (42.7)	443 (57.3)	1.02 (0.65-1.59)	
	45-64	193 (40.5)	283 (59.5)	1.09 (0.66-1.78)	
	65 and over	55 (30.7)	124 (69.3)	2.15 (0.98-4.85)	
	Missing	2 (22.2)	7 (77.8)		
Gender	Female	358 (40.3)	530 (59.7)	-	0.073
	Male	332 (45.7)	395 (54.3)	0.76 (0.60-0.98)	
	Non-binary	4 (57.1)	3 (42.9)	0.44 (0.06-2.44)	
	Missing	4 (22.2)	14 (77.8)		
Ethnicity	White	307 (39.0)	481 (61.0)	-	0.095
	Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	228 (45.7)	271 (54.3)	1.04 (0.78-1.39)	
	Asian or Asian British	43 (39.4)	66 (60.6)	1.39 (0.86-2.30)	
	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	79 (52.7)	71 (47.3)	0.63 (0.42-0.95)	
	Other ethnic group	31 (42.5)	42 (57.5)	1.03 (0.57-1.84)	
	Missing	10 (47.6)	11 (52.4)		
Disability	No	510 (41.1)	731 (58.9)	-	0.040
	Yes	93 (48.7)	98 (51.3)	0.66 (0.44-0.98)	
	Missing	95 (45.7)	113 (54.3)		
Employment	Full time work	259 (38.9)	406 (61.1)	-	0.134
	Part time work	73 (44.0)	93 (56.0)	0.94 (0.63-1.41)	
	Zero hours contract work	13 (48.1)	14 (51.9)	0.76 (0.33-1.75)	
	Self-employed	69 (41.8)	96 (58.2)	0.94 (0.63-1.41)	
	Retired	52 (32.9)	106 (67.1)	0.89 (0.44-1.79)	
	Full time student	79 (65.3)	42 (34.7)	0.47 (0.26-0.82)	
	Looking after children/the home	50 (43.9)	64 (56.1)	0.63 (0.39-1.04)	
	Looking for work	52 (53.1)	46 (46.9)	0.76 (0.45-1.27)	
	Unable to work	40 (49.4)	41 (50.6)	1.35 (0.72-2.54)	
	Missing	11 (24.4)	34 (75.6)		
Housing	Own property	135 (29.3)	325 (70.7)	-	<0.001
	Rent (private landlord)	169 (39.4)	260 (60.6)	0.97 (0.69-1.36)	
	Rent (housing association or council)	294 (52.6)	265 (47.4)	0.45 (0.32-0.61)	
	Staying with friends/family	52 (65.0)	28 (35.0)	0.48 (0.25-0.90)	
	Homeless, hostel, sheltered or temporary	16 (48.5)	17 (51.5)	0.49 (0.19-1.23)	
	Other	21 (43.8)	27 (56.2)	0.65 (0.33-1.30)	
	Missing	11 (35.5)	20 (64.5)		
Children at home	No	416 (46.7)	474 (53.3)	-	0.023
	Yes	268 (38.3)	432 (61.7)	1.36 (1.04-1.78)	
	Missing	14 (28.0)	36 (72.0)		

*39 missing outcome values (2.3%). Likelihood ratio test p-values. Adjusted models based on 1,316 complete observations. Crude odds ratios are included in Appendix 9. aOR = adjusted odds ratio



It sets a vision for a food system that is “healthier, more affordable, sustainable and resilient” and “grows the economy, feeds the nation, nourishes people, and protects the environment”. The overarching priority areas are: resilience and food security (which includes household food security), health (including obesity), and environmental sustainability (including greenhouse gas emissions and nature and biodiversity loss). Looking ahead, timely publication of a comprehensive implementation strategy is essential, outlining the specific responsibilities of local authorities and the corresponding funding mechanisms.

The survey used convenience sampling, with no records of those who declined participation, introducing potential selection bias. Respondents were somewhat older, with more Black individuals and fewer White individuals, fewer with disabilities, and fewer owning property and privately renting. This could bias prevalence estimates, especially since disability and housing were independently associated with food insecurity.

Questionnaires were conducted face-to-face with participants aware of the survey's purpose. This could introduce response bias, for example, stigma might lead to underreporting of food insecurity or receipt of food assistance, potentially underestimating their prevalence. However, response bias is likely to affect individuals variably, making it challenging to determine its overall direction.

While the regression analysis adjusted for multiple confounders, residual confounding is likely. Housing and employment are proxy measures of income, but they do not fully reflect household financial status. Food insecurity is also associated with physical access to food, such as the proximity of shops to housing or work and transportation. Although this is less likely to be a problem in an inner-city London borough, the models did not incorporate an objective measure of physical access to food. Additionally, certain sociodemographic groups such as non-binary individuals and those experiencing homelessness had small sample sizes, resulting in imprecise or incalculable estimates. Finally, although the food insecurity questionnaire followed the US Department of Agriculture method, the method used

to categorise responses into food security status differed, which likely resulted in a lower threshold for food insecurity classification.

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