



Waste: making a meal of it

End of Year Report 2015

A collaboration between



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What is EighthPlate?

EighthPlate is a food salvage service that collects surplus edible food from events and distributes it to organisations supporting vulnerable people.

The initiative was born out of the Surplus Supper Club – a catering arm of FareShare South West – visiting festivals as a trader and carrying out informal food collections. After identifying a need for a dedicated collection service, FareShare South West teamed up with the Nationwide Caterers Association (NCASS) and A Greener Festival to form EighthPlate.

Once EighthPlate was up and running in 2015, surplus food collections jumped from 8 tonnes a year to over 23 tonnes.

The Process **In Stats**

7 festivals

23.013t

food collected

meals
distributed **53,460**

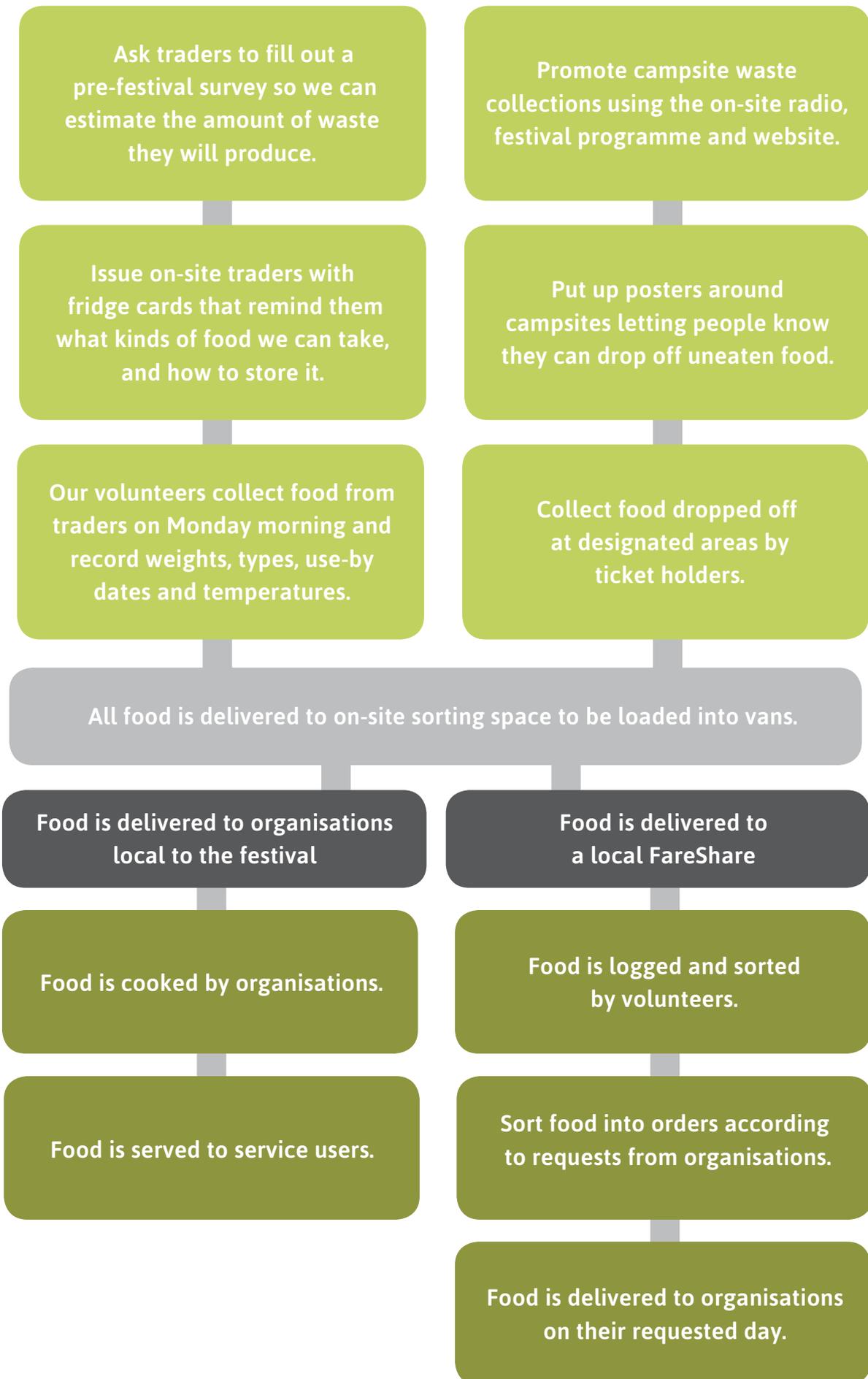
96.54t CO₂e
saved

waste per
ticket holder **13.6 kg**

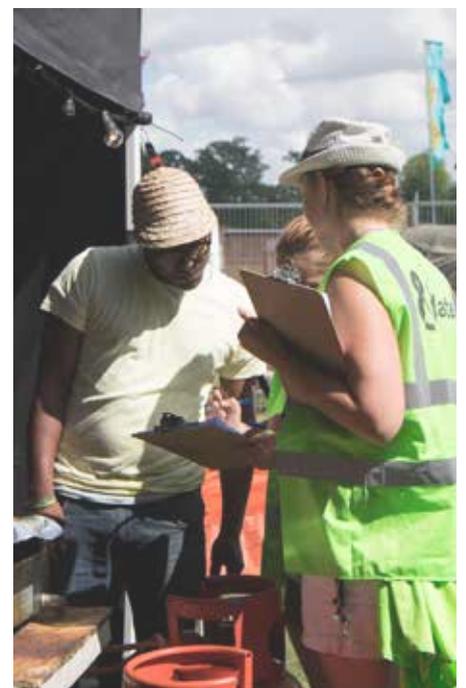
108kg collected
per trader

delivered to **357** organisations

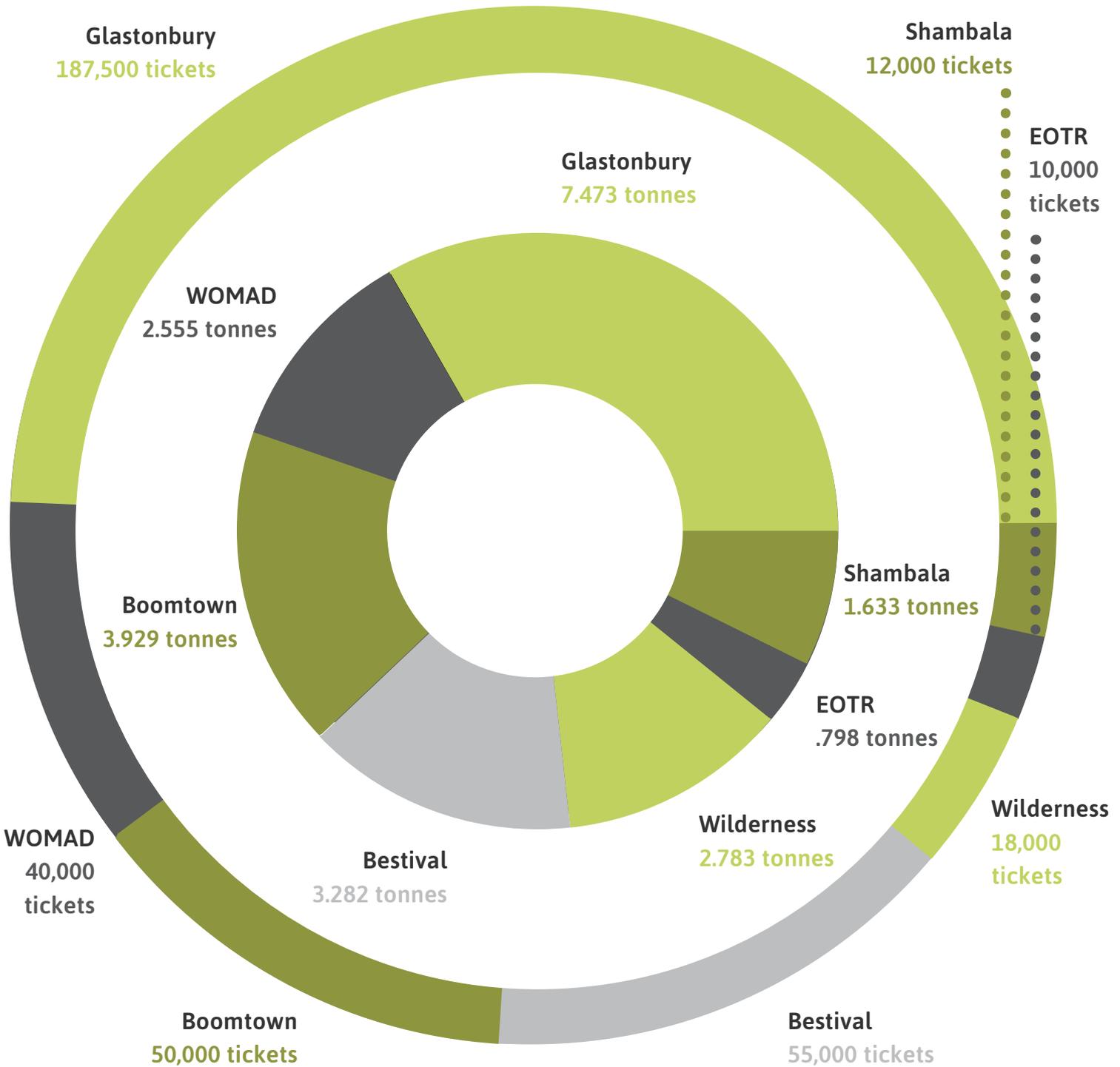
The Process In Words



The Process In Pictures



The Festivals In Stats



The Festivals In Words

Over the summer of 2015 EighthPlate visited seven festivals: Glastonbury, WOMAD, Wilderness, Boomtown, Shambala, End of the Road and Bestival.

As this was our pilot year we chose these festivals carefully and looked for a good variety so that we could thoroughly road test our process. We chose Glastonbury for its sheer size, and picked WOMAD as it's the only festival where all of its traders are signed up to Nationwide Caterers Association (NCASS). Layout and vehicle restrictions made Boomtown a good logistical challenge, whereas the amounts of fresh and perishable foods tested our distribution networks at Wilderness. Shambala was great to work with as we contributed to one of the first comprehensive studies of waste conducted at a festival. End of the Road was a chance to work at a small festival where many traders had already donated to us, allowing us to test a streamlined service. And finally Bestival presented the challenge of distributing food on an island gridlocked with traffic.

Overcoming these challenges enabled us to design a flexible service that can adapt and respond to any variable a festival could produce. We have created a large delivery network, a streamlined on-site hotline and response system for traders, and a proven food safety procedure designed in conjunction with NCASS.

We worked with 75 volunteers at seven festivals over the summer to collect 23 tonnes of food. In previous years, only eight tonnes of food was collected from four festivals.

We're confident that due to our increased resources this year we collected all of the food possible from each festival, with the exception of Glastonbury. Due to its size, and our limited numbers of on-site vehicles and volunteers, we were unable to collect the full amount of food on offer there. Based on our calculations from other festivals we predict there would be a total of 11 tonnes of waste available from Glastonbury's traders and a further 6 tonnes available from campsite collections. We hope to return in 2016 and collect the full amount of food.

Ultimately, our research has helped us develop a set of calculations that allow us to estimate the amount, and type, of food waste a festival is likely to produce:

**1/3 of all traders are likely to create 108kg of waste each
&
Over a three day festival one ticket holder will create 0.08kg of waste.**

This helps us understand the levels of surplus food expected at a festival, and in turn target our resources appropriately.

The Festivals In Pictures



The Food In Stats



The Food In Words

Food safety was a big focus for the project: we worked alongside NCASS and FareShare National to develop a bulletproof system for checking, recording and distributing food.

Firstly, before the festival began we notified traders of what food we could and couldn't take. On collection, we recorded weights, types, use-by dates, temperatures and freezing details before we sorted the food into suitable orders and sent it on to our distribution network.

It became immediately apparent that certain foods were larger contributors to the food waste problem than others. As you can see from the 'Food in Stats' graphic, one third of all the food we collected was bread. Bread is cheap, light, and perishable meaning it's easy to over order and, unlike expensive products like meat, makes little sense to take home. Many traders are very specific about the types of bread they serve. If festivals offered a choice of suppliers and on-site wholesalers, traders would be able to order little and often, rather than in bulk.

Vegetables and salads comprised the main bulk of the remaining collections, a puzzling 1,600 cabbages and plenty of lettuces forming the majority of this. Good, reliable, timely delivery services on site could easily rectify this as long as prices for on-site food were kept on par with food off site.

Our team was constantly surprised at the quality of food that was collected – it was usually undamaged and nutritious, with long use-by dates. This was appreciated by the organisations that received the food, as they usually find fresh fruit and vegetables hard to come by.

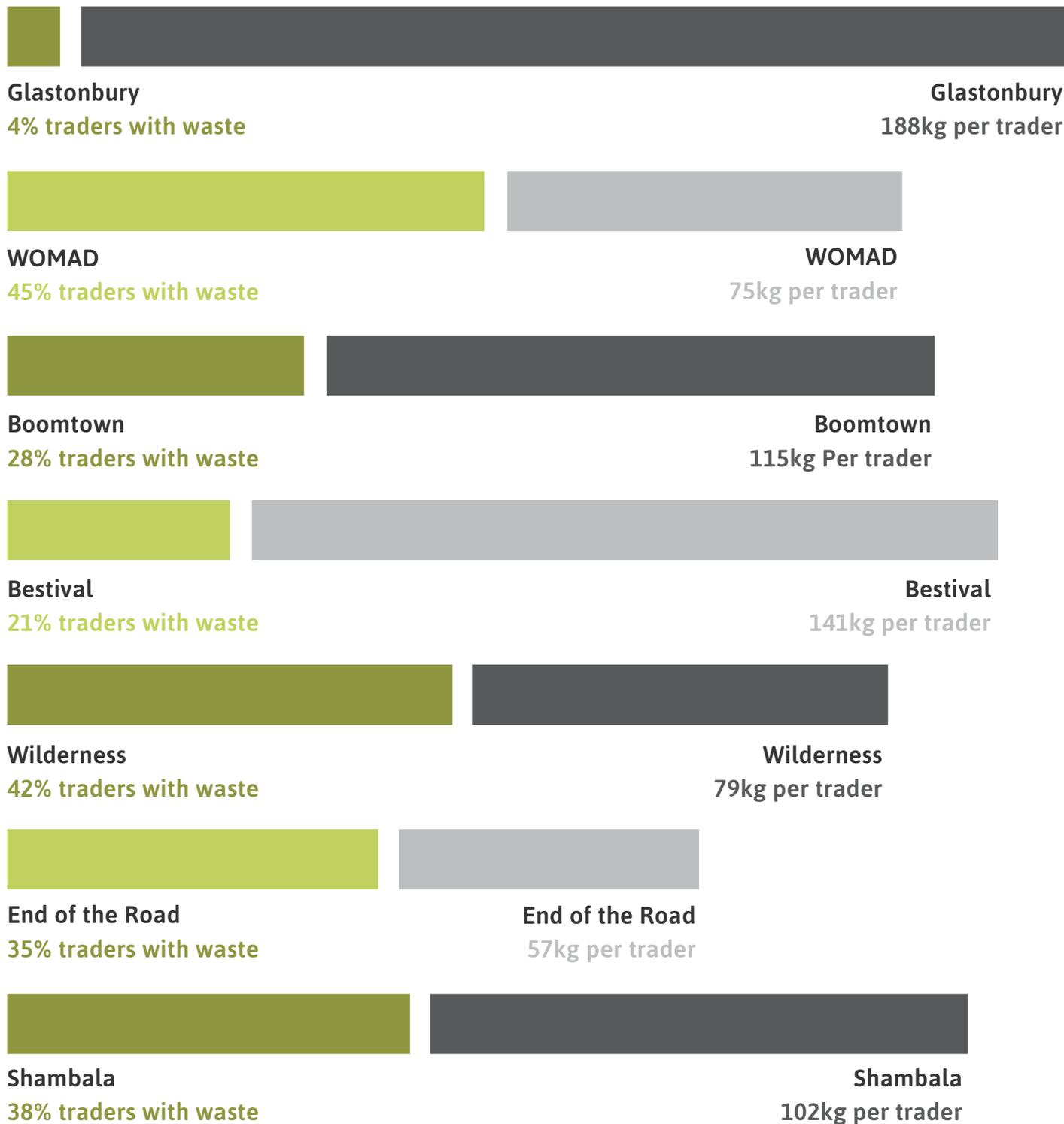
Something we set out to record, that hadn't been done before, was the waste generated through uneaten food from the campsites. This food is particularly of interest as it's mainly longlife non-perishable food that makes up a good base stock for food banks when fresh fruit and veg is scarce. We were unaware of the scale of what was available, and when a flat bed truck carrying 3.5 tonnes of mixed surplus food arrived at our on-site refrigeration at Glastonbury, we realised this was something we needed to look into further.

We did ask ticket holders at many other festivals to donate their food, but unfortunately not many of them did. It became apparent that if we wanted the food we would have to collect it ourselves, as we did at Glastonbury. This is what we did at Boomtown, and we collected half a tonne from two campsites before we are asked to stop due to an unrelated security issue. Campsite collections are something we hope to look into further in 2016, which will ultimately help us produce reliable figures to predict campsite food waste levels.

The Food in Pictures



The Traders In Stats



N.B. We couldn't reach all traders at Glastonbury due to its size. We estimate around 40% of traders would have had surplus.

The Traders **In words**

The efficacy of the entire project depends on the cooperation of the event traders, and luckily for us we always had a very warm reception.

We tailored the process to make sure the traders had to do as little work as possible, recording and weighing all food ourselves, and providing roaming volunteers and an on-site hotline to make sure we were always around when traders were packing down.

We found that, as a general rule, 30% of traders would have surplus food. This varied from 42% at Wilderness down to 21% at Bestival, in accordance with the type of clientele and consequently the traders. Wilderness prides itself on its selection of food, most of which is created fresh daily, and this meant more traders had surplus. In contrast, Bestival's clientele are more focused on partying than eating, so traders used more frozen, tinned and longlife foods to minimise waste.

As well as collecting food we surveyed all the traders to ask them what they thought the main causes of food waste were and how it could be prevented. Three simple suggestions came up over and over again:

***Let traders know final numbers for ticket sales
Notify traders of their pitch location before they come on site
Inform traders of how many other traders are at the festival***

These three simple pieces of information would allow traders to more accurately predict sales. A few other common causes of low sales were raised but these can't be addressed so easily:

***The unpredictability of the weather
Unknown footfall with free one day events
Inexperience on the traders' behalf***

Most of the traders we collected from and spoke to said that they already donated what they could to charity or shared it around with friends and colleagues on site. EighthPlate represents a formalising of that process, and allows them to do it with greater ease.

At no point over the course of the whole project did we come across a trader who was unwilling to donate. The general enthusiasm for the project we received was fantastic, so a big thank you to all 183 of the traders who were involved in the project - see you next year!

The Traders In Pictures



"I don't like food waste, we always try and find places for it to go. I'm very happy that Eighthplate are taking it."



"It's sad, it's unnecessary! With Eighthplate collecting while we are scratching down makes it so easy and helpful."



"We have to over order, it's wonderful that there is a place for it. Please continue."



"Trying to go minimal is difficult at a unpredictable event, really happy to donate."



"It's terrible, it's good EighthPlate are collecting. It's a long time coming."



"It's good what EighthPlate are doing. I give what I can away but I don't have another gig and I don't have the freezer space."

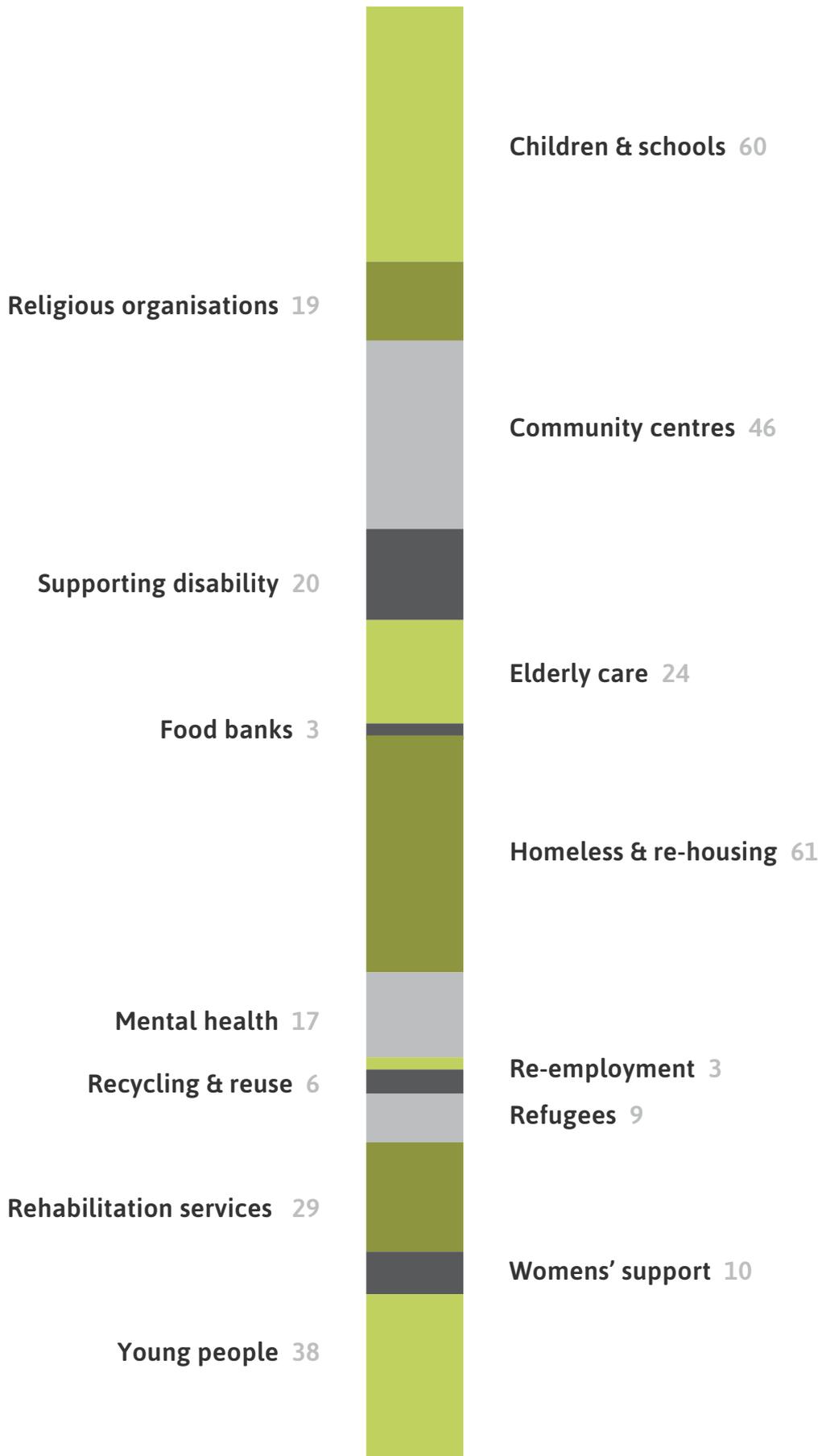


"It makes me feel bad, I'm really happy you're taking it instead of it going in the bin. In my country we don't waste food, it's very precious. Here in the UK it's sad."



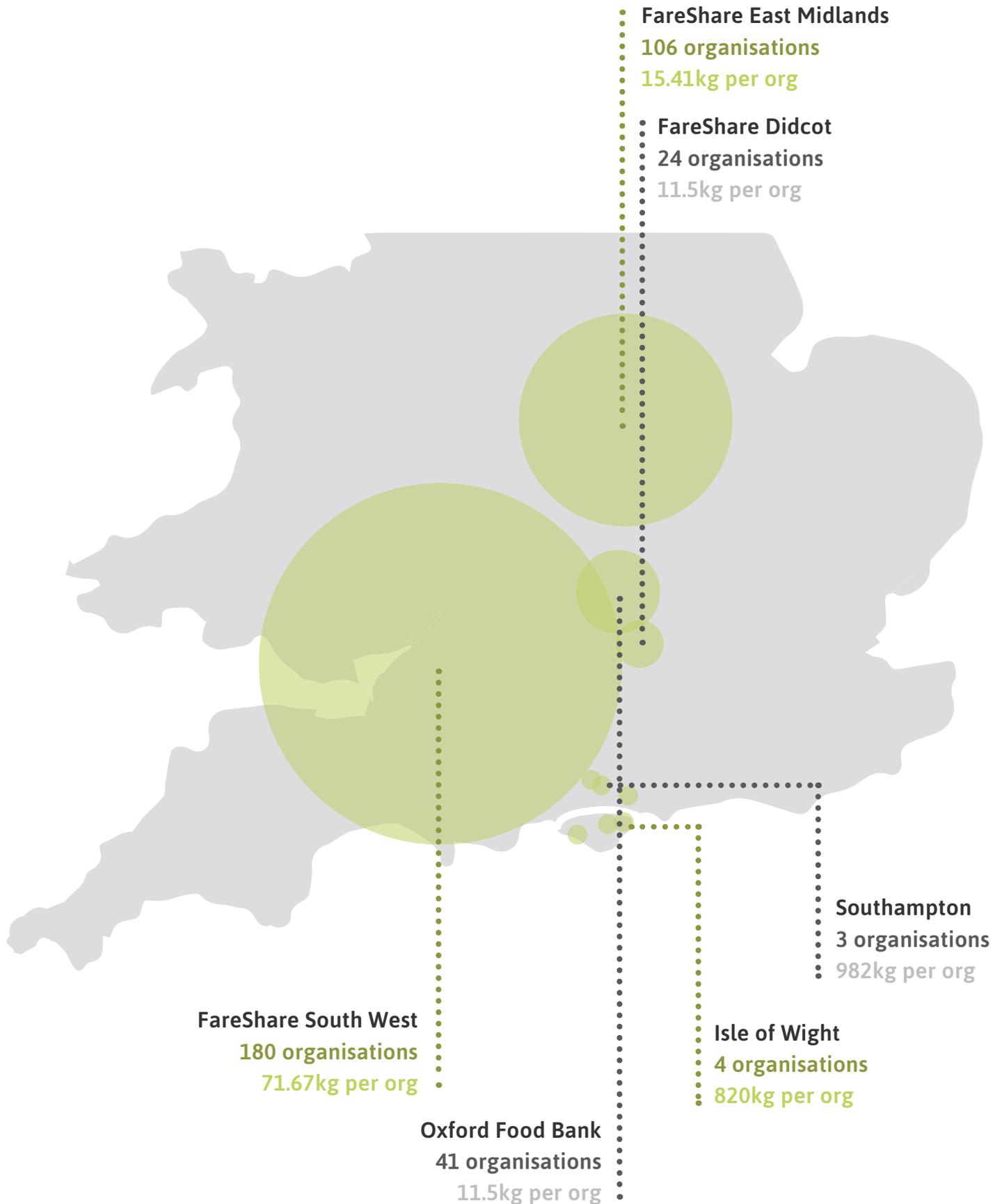
"It's a disgrace! My mother hates it, she would go nuts, she would find ways to use the waste. She would feed the birds and I feel the same."

The Deliveries In Stats Organisations



The Deliveries In Stats

Locations



The Deliveries **In Words**

Distribution was one of the biggest challenges we faced. What do you do with five tonnes of food? How do you distribute two tonnes of bread in three days?

We managed this with the help of a number of distribution centres, primarily through the FareShare network as it has 17 centres across the country. Each one delivers to around 100 organisations that support vulnerable people.

We faced a unique delivery challenge at Wilderness: large amounts of perishable food. The best way to make sure none was wasted was to distribute it to as many places as possible so they could get it out to organisations quickly. With the help of The Oxford Food Bank, FareShare Didcot and FareShare South West we managed to distribute the food to 244 organisations within 48 hours of collecting it.

Because Bestival is on an island we had to work without the help of any local distribution centres. Instead, we worked with large hostels and foyers that took over half a tonne of food each. This meant we had to consider what food each project had requested, and deliver it accordingly. We delivered over three tonnes of food to only four projects, making them very happy beneficiaries indeed!

The final destination is not the only problem with delivering food: maintaining appropriate temperatures when moving and sorting it is always a constant battle. But through a rigorous system of probing, refrigerated vans, cool boxes and fridge stacking, we were always able to ensure the freshness of the food on arrival.

The largest delivery problem we faced was something that goes hand-in-hand with festival logistics. No, not mud...traffic. Overcoming the inevitable Monday gridlock that comes with over 20,000 blurry-eyed revellers going home was one of our biggest challenges. Not an insurmountable one though; by working early or late, making multiple deliveries at once, and utilising off-site vehicles to supplement our fleet we always managed to get our food off site in one piece. Eventually.

By the end of the project we managed to deliver over 23 tonnes of food to 357 (mainly South West) organisations, with each of them getting around 65kg of food. Through the FareShare network we had access to over 2,000 organisations and were able to deliver as far north as Aberdeen and as far south as Southampton. Expanding the project outside of the South West in 2016 should be easy...

The Deliveries In Pictures



Case Study **Glastonbury**

As the UK's biggest music festival – and one of the largest in the world – Glastonbury is unavoidably associated with excessive amounts of waste. The scale of the problem meant we had to use innovative methods to tackle it. Our inaugural efforts were successful, and also revealed that there is significant need for expansion in future years.

185,000 festival goers

4 EighthPlate volunteers

513 Food traders

2 EighthPlate vans

The challenge

Glastonbury was the first festival of the season, and twice the size of all the other festivals we helped. The sheer number of traders, and the fact they didn't have any festivals following immediately after to sell leftovers to, meant surplus food levels were high.

Our response

Established EighthPlate HQ onsite and used posters to make ticket holders aware that they could donate uneaten food.

Collaborated with trader managers to inform traders that we would be collecting food onsite.

Delivered a walk-in refrigerator to site on Monday morning along with our kit in two refrigerated vans.

One driver and one volunteer per section collected leftover food from traders and loaded it into the van.

Logged food by type, weight, temperature and use-by dates using system devised with the help of Nationwide Caterers Association (NCASS).

Took food in vans back to our on-site refrigeration unit, where it was sorted according to perishability. Drove urgent food back to FareShare South West.

Glastonbury's vehicles collected donated food from designated spots and delivered it to our on-site refrigeration unit. Our four volunteers spent seven hours sorting the food into usable and unusable stock.

Took all food back to FareShare South West, sorted into orders, and shipped out to one of 180 organisations that we support.

Case Study **Glastonbury**



Unique considerations

Glastonbury was the only festival that we needed to hire a walk-in refrigeration unit for. By doing this we managed to save around 2.5 tonnes of food that would have otherwise perished in the heat on Monday morning.

The outcome

We collected a staggering 7.5 tonnes of food. And we learnt that there'll be more edible food for us to salvage in future years; probably around 11 tonnes from traders and around 6 tonnes of campsite waste.

7.473 tonnes of food collected in total

3.432 tonnes from campsites

4.041 tonnes from traders

17,793 meals distributed

180 organisations received food

Case Study **Boomtown**

A transient town, a masterpiece in set design and mighty logistical feat, Boomtown Fair 2015 had over 100 food vendors spanning China Town, Old Town, Mayfair, the Wild West and beyond. Because Boomtown is less food focused than other festivals, traders found they sold less stock than usual.

50,000 festival goers

15 EighthPlate volunteers

121 food traders

2 EighthPlate vans

The challenge

Boomtown presented two main logistical challenges. The first was geographical: half the site was at the top of a hill, and the other half was at the bottom. The second was chronological: traders couldn't leave their pitch until 4pm on Monday, giving us only three hours to collect food and deliver it to the relevant organisations.

Our response

Arrived onsite and posterised to inform ticket holders that they could donate their uneaten food.

Visited all traders and handed out fridge stickers detailing what food we could take.

Monday morning team briefing: split team into three: five people collected food directly from campsites, five people worked uptown, and five worked downtown.

Logged food by type, weight, temperature and use-by dates using system devised with the help of NCASS.

Full collection vans returned to on-site sorting area. Chilled food stayed in the refrigerated vans, and we only unloaded food that could be stored at room temperature.

Sorted and divided food to make sure each organisation got equal, and varied contributions. Delivered food to the organisations.

Took some of the disproportionately large amounts of bread to FareShare South for its projects.

Case Study **Boomtown**



Unique considerations

The lovely people at Boomtown gave us use of a buggy and trailer so we could collect food directly from campsites. We learned that campers – when prompted – were more than happy to donate food: we saved them carrying it home, and also saved it from being wasted. Having collected half a tonne of food from just two campsites, we predict there'll be around two tonnes of campsite waste in total to be collected in future years.

The outcome

We collected nearly four tonnes of food, and one and a half of these was bread. Because bread is light to carry traders tend to over order it, and because it's perishable and cheap, they tend to leave it behind. Through Boomtown (and Bestival) we honed our skills in getting rid of large amounts of similar items, from bread to oranges via half a tonne of chilled chips!

3.929 tonnes of food collected in total

0.5 tonnes from campsites

3.429 tonnes from traders

9,534 meals distributed

3 organisations received food

"We were delighted with the service that EighthPlate provided us with at Boomtown this year and the feedback from our citizens and traders has been incredibly positive. Their organisation, determination and passion for the project has helped us give something back to our local community – whilst also saving us money on waste tonnage."

Emma Neilson, Assistant to Commercial & Operations Director

Case Study **Wilderness**

Wilderness is a foodie's dream with banquet halls, myriad food stalls, and a mouth-watering array of culinary delights. This presents its own challenges: lots of good food means lots of fresh ingredients, which can often mean more waste. Fortunately, traders at Wilderness were more enthusiastic and involved in the project than at any other festival – they obviously didn't want to see good food go to waste.

18,000 festival goers

15 EighthPlate volunteers

84 food traders

2 EighthPlate vans

The challenge

Our main issue at Wilderness was dealing with the large amounts of immediately perishable donations. We dealt with this by delivering small amounts of food to as many different organisations as possible.

Our response

Arrived onsite and posterised to inform festival goers that they could donate their uneaten food.

Visited traders and handed out a hotline number and fridge stickers that detailed what food we could use.

On Monday morning briefing the team split into two: five people sorted at our onsite space, and ten people went out collecting food from traders. As well as roaming the site the team also took direct calls from traders.

Logged food by type, weight, temperature and use-by dates using system devised with the help of NCASS.

Full collection vans returned to on-site sorting area. Chilled food stayed in the refrigerated vans, and we only unloaded food that could be stored at room temperature.

Delivered food to three depots, which then delivered it to registered organisations.

Case Study **Wilderness**



Unique considerations

We have to tailor our service to each and every festival. Because Wilderness created a lot of perishable and delicate food for collection, we decided to trial a food collection hotline. This allowed traders to phone us as and when they had food to collect, preventing it from sitting in the sun and going off. Ultimately, that meant the traders could go home earlier, and we could collect more food. The system proved to be so successful, we now use it for every event.

The outcome

We collected nearly three tonnes of food and, with the help of FareShare Didcot, FareShare South West and the Oxford Food bank, delivered it to 244 organisations.

Working with Wilderness had an added bonus: the quality of the food we received. Food banks don't generally receive the most nutritious food, and they were really excited to be receiving pallets of organic fruit and vegetables!

2.783 tonnes of food collected in total

6,626 meals distributed

244 organisations received food

“Without the help and advice of EighthPlate we wouldn't have known where to start.”

Rufus Lawrence, General Manager of Wilderness Festival

What next?

This year the EighthPlate project was supported by funding from the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) and Esmee Fairbairn. Next year we'll be running EighthPlate as a waste management service.

We will be looking to charge a moderate fee to cover our costs and help the business grow in 2016. We have seen a definite need for this specialist recycling service that cannot be met by existing waste management companies.

We want to expand the EighthPlate project beyond the South West and make it nation wide. We will also be looking to attend more events than just music festivals. County shows, sports events and street food markets have all been raised by traders as events where considerable amounts of food could be collected.

In addition to collecting food waste for human consumption we are hoping to look further into disposing non-edible food waste in more beneficial ways than composting. For example, developing routes to pig feed when we have large amounts of unusable bread, or looking into working with anaerobic digestion when we have large amounts of spoiled food.

As fuel and food become more expensive the need to reuse what we have becomes more apparent. We're confident that within the next few years redistributing surplus food will become as standard as recycling plastic within the events industry.

EighthPlate Find out More

To find out more about the EighthPlate project or to talk to us about collecting food from your event please feel free to email:

Emma@faresharesouthwest.org.uk

To learn more about the project head on over to our website:

www.eighthplate.org.uk

Follow us on twitter:

@8thPlate