

TAKEAWAYS EXCLUSION ZONES STUDY

Newsletter 3, January 2023

Welcome to the third newsletter for PPI contributors to the Takeaways Exclusion Zones Study.

We are over halfway through our project and the results are starting to take shape.

Exclusion zones are areas around schools where planning permission is denied to new hot food takeaway outlets.

For exclusion zone policies to improve health, they must first stop the rise of new takeaways in our towns and cities.

In this edition, we report on our statistical analyses in work package 1, which helps us understand how exclusion zones effect sales of takeaway food.

We will also tell you about our work with children and young people through the Hertfordshire Young People's Advisory Group (YPAG). After all, school students are the people who will be most affected by exclusion zone policies and their opinions need to inform our work.

Lastly, our Researcher Profile for this edition focuses on Matt Keeble, a Research Assistant on our team. He has been thinking about how independent and bigger chain takeaways react to exclusion zone policies that will affect their businesses

Please contact us with any feedback from this issue, and as always thank you for your contributions.



Tom Burgoine
Lead Researcher



Annie Schiff
Project Coordinator

Early findings from work package 1 (retail impacts)

How do exclusion zone policies affect our high streets?

We collected data from 35 local authorities that implemented an exclusion zone (EZ) policy before 31st December 2017 and compared them to similar local authorities that did not have exclusion zone policies. We made comparisons at key time points both before and after the exclusion zone policies were implemented, so we could see what difference it made.

To do this, we carried out statistical tests using Interrupted Time Series (ITS) analyses to understand the impact of exclusion zone policies on the opening of new takeaways. We're the first research group ever to conduct a national analysis of exclusion zone policies!

Results

We found that, overall, there is evidence to suggest that exclusion zone policies result in fewer businesses applying to the local authority to open a new takeaway in the area, and more applications for new takeaways being rejected by the local authority.

In the two years after adopting an exclusion zone policy, local authorities:

- ⇒ received on average around 7 fewer applications for takeaways per quarter
- ⇒ rejected on average an extra 19% of applications per quarter

These results are statistically significant (ie. unlikely to be down to chance) and suggest that exclusion zones are likely to be effective in stopping the rise of takeaways.

What next?

Our results have implications for local government policy-makers. We'll be sharing our analysis with them directly through our Policy Advisory Group, conferences and other communication channels.

We'll seek to publish our analysis in open access peer-reviewed scientific journals so that others can critique our methods or draw on this information when making decisions about planning policy.

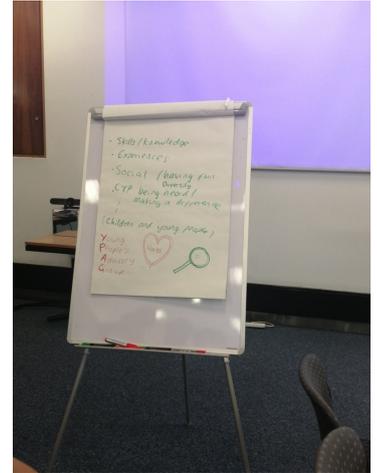
The results will inform work packages 2 & 3, where we investigate the effects of reduced takeaway numbers on health and on the local economy.



PPI with young people

We're lucky to work with the Hertfordshire Young People's Advisory group (Herts YPAG). The Herts YPAG are a research advisory group for young people aged between 8 and 18 years who live in Hertfordshire.

We met with them in July 2022 to talk about our study, and in particular our plans to carry out go-along interviews as part of work package 6 later this year. Go-along interviews are conducted walking around a familiar area, sometimes in groups, and talking about what goes on in that area. This helps the researcher understand how people feel about their local areas and how they make decisions about what to do there, like buying food for example.



We talked with the YPAG about their experiences of takeaways and what they think of policies like exclusion zones. They helped us to write the questions for our interviews and also reviewed our information sheets so that they will make sense to the young people who will be interviewed.

YPAG member, Samuel commented: *“The topic of food helped to make the conversation interesting and brought the whole group together. During our conversation it was clear that many people turned to fast food after school as a quick and easy meal.”*

You can read more about the workshop in [this blog](#).

Many thanks to Dr Louca-Mai Brady at the University of Hertfordshire and all the members of the Herts YPAG for their ideas and enthusiasm.



Researchers Claire and Denise at the YPAG workshop

Reviewing participant information sheets for young people



Researcher profile: Matt Keeble

Role

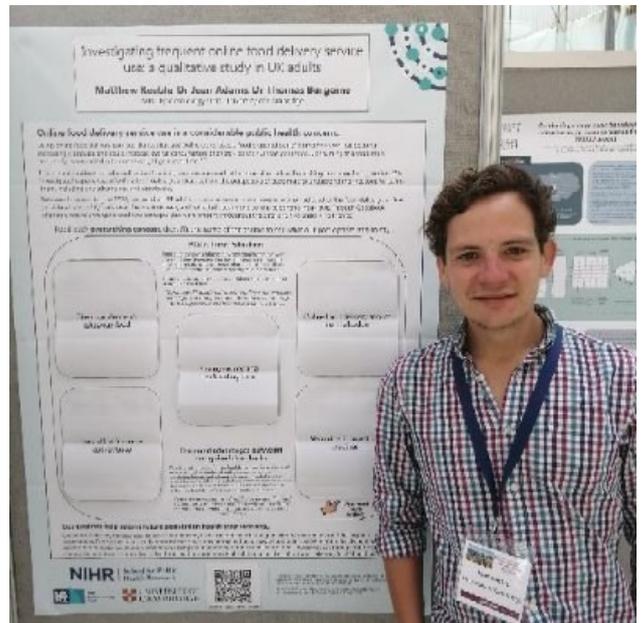
Research Assistant

Work location

A combination of the MRC Epidemiology Unit and the beautiful Wolfson College

Background

I have been working and studying in Cambridge for over six years. In that time I have investigated the use of the planning system to shape neighbourhood food environments, and in 2022 I submitted my PhD thesis, which investigated access to takeaway food through online food delivery platforms like Just Eat and Deliveroo. Given that food sold online is often prepared in existing food outlets, I am particularly interested in the link between neighbourhood food environments and the digital food environment.



Why I research takeaways

It is well-recognised that takeaway food dominates our physical food environments. I am interested in how research can inform public health action that supports society to have access to a variety of food.

Project news

Kenton campaign group

The Kenton “No McDonalds” campaign group is a group of Newcastle residents who ran a successful [campaign in 2016](#) to stop McDonalds from opening a drive-thru restaurant just 500 metres from one of the largest secondary schools in the country. Our team met with the group to learn how they accessed and used evidence in their campaign, and to discuss our dissemination plans. We want to make sure that the findings of our study are accessible to similar groups in the future.

London Healthier Places (LHP) Network

London Healthier Places is a public health network for London boroughs working with town planning, licensing, trading standards & environmental health to promote healthier town centres and high streets. Tom Burgoine and John Rahilly presented the findings of work package 1 at a meeting of the network in January. The talk was well received and we found it a great opportunity to raise awareness of our work amongst the planning and policy community.

FUNDED BY

NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

The full name of the Takeaways Exclusion Zones Study is: **Evaluation of planning policy to regulate takeaway food outlets for improved health in England**

This project is funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Public Health Research Programme (Project Number NIHR130597). The views expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the NIHR or the Department of Health and Social Care.

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