

Harris McGregor Family

The Harris McGregors are a **small family** with a single mum and two young children. They are an example of a family that might live anywhere in Scotland, and a group of Community Advisors worked together in 2021 to imagine the details of their lives.

Who lives here?

Nora (aged 36) works part time in a supermarket, and she organises her work schedule to fit around the school run (day shifts Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays). Nora might leave the children with a friend or family member occasionally, but she isn't able to rely on this for work patterns. Her job is fast-paced and fairly high-pressured.

Sofia (aged 5) goes to primary school, and on the weekend she likes to go to the park with her mum and brother to play outdoors and feed the ducks.

Jack (aged 2) goes to nursery on the days that Nora works. On Mondays and Fridays, Jack stays home with Nora while she catches up on housework.



Co-creating Our Families

The **Our Right to Food** project aims to understand what the right to food looks like for families living in Scotland, and how we'll know if we're making progress. We wanted to know what people in Scotland would choose as a healthy and enjoyable way to eat if incomes from wages and benefits were sufficient. We are doing this so that rights holders and decision makers can better identify how to make this accessible for all. The project is funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and delivered by Nourish Scotland.

In 2021, we worked with groups of Community Advisors to co-create four case study families living in two different household sizes:

- ▶ **Large family:** two adults with three children (aged 7, 10 and 15)
- ▶ **Small family:** single parent with two young children (aged 2 and 5)

Community Advisors were people with experience shopping for, preparing and eating in families in today's Scotland. They have diverse cultural, geographic and socioeconomic backgrounds, and they worked together to co-create case study families that they believed most people in Scotland would recognise.

Repurposing leftovers

Community Advisors created the foundation for the family's shopping list by imagining, discussing and negotiating each part of the day and week for the family members. For example, the group discussed how it can be difficult to find the energy and time to cook from scratch as a single parent. Group members also thought about how 'disheartening' it can be to put effort into a meal that your children refuse to eat. As a result, the advisors decided that Nora Harris would use some of the leftover meat from Sunday's Roast Chicken Dinner in Monday's Chicken Casserole. They also agreed that Nora would make a larger amount of Spaghetti Bolognese sauce on Thursday so that they could add beans and eat this as Chilli con Carne on Friday.



Together, we explored how families in these household sizes are likely to shop, prepare and eat food each week to establish a strong understanding of current cooking and eating patterns. This helped the groups think about what the families *would* eat if everyone was able to afford the food that keeps them healthy and well.

The shopping lists we developed together include the healthiest balance of foods that people with experience shopping for, preparing and eating in families could agree is a good fit for people's lives and would be enjoyed by most people in today's Scotland.



Eating Patterns

Breakfasts

During the week, Nora rarely has time for anything other than a slice of toast and a cup of tea while she is busy getting the children ready to go to school in the morning. Sofia and Jack usually have a bowl of cereal or porridge, and some days they will eat a banana or handful of strawberries along with their breakfast. On days when she isn't working, Nora can sometimes find time for eggs, toast and a piece of fruit after she and Jack return from dropping Sofia off at school.



On days when Nora and Jack are at home together, **Jack** generally has a small ham and cucumber sandwich and snacks throughout the day rather sitting down to eat at a specific mealtime. Nora likes to fit in as much housework as she can around the school run, so she is likely to eat a sandwich and cereal bar or piece of fruit when she has time.

Nora packs a lunch twice a week, and on the third day that she is at work, she gets a meal deal from the supermarket. Jack's nursery provides meals, which helps with Nora's planning for the week.



Weekday lunches

Sofia is in early primary school and could eat a school meal every day. However, Nora needs to buy enough food to send a packed lunch twice each week because Sofia doesn't always like what is on offer. Her packed lunches usually include a small ham, cucumber and mayo sandwich, with some snacks like a cheese string, small box of raisins or piece of fruit like an apple or banana.

Harris McGregor: Weekday Lunches

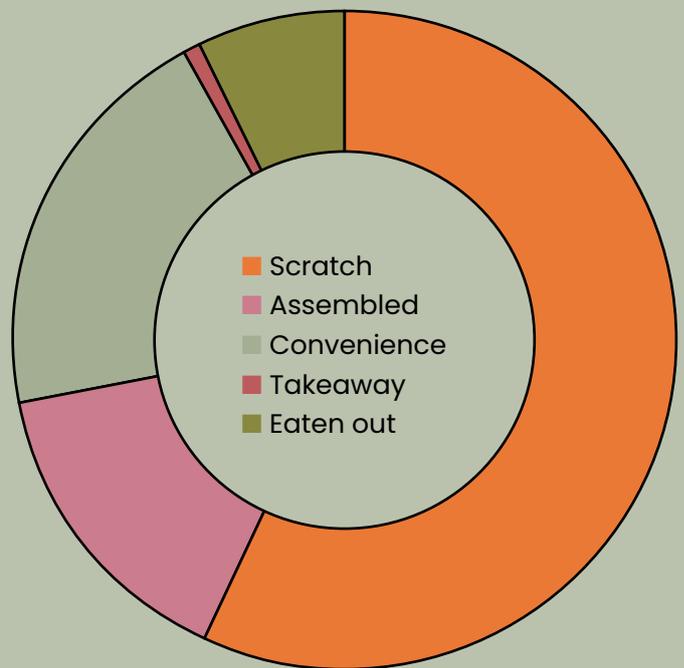


Cooking Patterns

“I mean kiddie food is not adult-friendly. And if you’ve had a long day and you need a bit of a treat for yourselves, you’re not going to eat fish fingers with your kids five days a week, are you? But, of course, sometimes you do because you can’t be bothered or whatever. Quite often, I’ll just have cereal for dinner at the end of the day because I can’t be bothered anymore. And you do get a bit forgotten about. But it’s nice, I would say, at least a couple of days a week, to have an adult meal, whether they’re sharing that or not.” (Group 2)

Dinner preparation

The McGregor children usually eat the same evening meal at the same time, and Nora tries to keep these dinners simple so that Sofia and Jack both have something they like. Sometimes Nora doesn’t want to eat a ‘kiddie food’ again, so she will have something light (toast or cereal) with them and either order a takeaway for herself or make something after they go to bed. One meal she likes to eat on nights like this is Salmon with Rice and Vegetables.



Scratch	Chicken casserole (Monday) Spaghetti Bolognese (Thursday) Chilli con Carne (Friday)
Assisted	None
Assembled	Salmon and rice and mixed veg (Nora, Wednesday) Fish fingers, chips and baked beans (Sofia and Jack) and bowl of cereal (Nora, Tuesday)
Convenience	Supermarket pizzas (Saturday) Macaroni and cheese (Sofia and Jack, Wednesday)
Takeaway	Curry (Nora, 1x per month)
Eating out	Pizza Hut / Brewer’s Fayre / McDonald’s (2x per month)

Shopping List

What is included?

Each item on the family's shopping list comes from the discussions we had with groups of Community Advisors over a series of monthly meetings in 2021. Choices about what kind of foods, brands and amounts were all negotiated by the group members, with input from public health nutritionists and the project team. They are an example of a **relatable, recognisable shopping list** for a similar sized household in Scotland today.

What are they for?

These shopping lists are not a tool for individuals. They are a tool to help decision-makers understand what people value, and what is needed to help improve the affordability of culturally valued food that meets our needs. Local and national governments can use this information to see how their actions are influencing people's ability to afford the food that keeps them healthy and well.

CLOSER LOOK: Fruit and Vegetables*

Description	How many?	How often do they buy this?
Bananas (5-6 per bunch)	2	Weekly
Cucumber	1	Weekly
Salad leaves (90g)	1	Weekly
Mushrooms (200g pack)	1	Weekly
Apple & Grape Pot (100g)	4	Weekly
Tomato based Pasta Sauce (500g jar)	1	Weekly
Garden Peas (375g, frozen)	1	Monthly
Apples (5 pack)	2	3-4 times per month
Raisins (12 pack)	1	2-3 times per month
Easy peelers, satsumas or clementines (bag)	2	2-3 times per month
Carrots (1kg)	1	2 times per month
Mixed Vegetables (1kg, frozen)	1	2 times per month
Strawberries (227g)	1	2 times per month
Salad Tomatoes (6 pack)	1	2 times per month
Onions (1kg)	1	1-2 times per month

*Beans or pulses, like baked beans and lentils, can also count towards one of your 5-a-day.

Weekly Food & Drink Costs

What does this cost?

Each family's weekly food and drink costs include everything they need to purchase at the shop, as well as the meals and snacks they buy out of the house. The total cost includes what

Community Advisors agreed the family would choose to spend on having guests and visitors round, as well as things like celebrating holidays and birthdays or going out for a meal.

Weekly Food and Drink Costs by Category: Harris McGregors	Total: March 2022
Fruit and vegetables	£17.57
Pasta, bread, cereal, rice, potatoes	£7.40
Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins	£16.55
Dairy	£5.55
Oils and Fats	£1.44
Packaged foods (e.g. pizza, soup)	£6.85
Cooking ingredients and condiments	£1.37
Drinks (coffee, tea, no sugar options)	£2.47
Sweets, chocolate, crisps, pastries, biscuits and sugary drinks	£9.36
Alcohol	£6.50
Guests and visitors	£2.16
Weekday lunches	£3.00
Takeaways and eating out	£9.76
Holidays and birthdays	£7.40
TOTAL Food and drink	£97.38

