



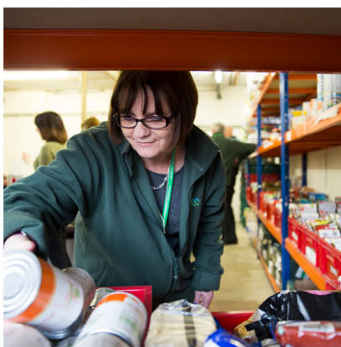
“Meeting people, telling them the important job the foodbank does, explaining to them how it works and who we help.”



North Cotswold Foodbank

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

WHAT WE DO AND WHY WE DO IT



“You can see when you've made a difference in someone's day.”



Contents

1. Introduction and Welcome
2. The Trussell Trust
3. North Cotswold Foodbank
4. Our Values
5. Inclusivity
6. Information for Volunteers

1. Introduction and Welcome

Welcome to the North Cotswold foodbank team.

Firstly, we would like to thank you for giving up your time to help us and our local community.

This booklet is designed to give you a clear picture of all the work the foodbank does and why we do it, as well as to set out some general guidelines about volunteering with us.

Whether you simply want to make a contribution to the life of your community, or have a particular passion for volunteering with us, we hope that by the time you have read this you will have a better understanding of what we do and may even learn some things about us that you didn't know before.

Please read through the booklet, and if you have any questions don't hesitate to ask - we will be glad to help. We are always looking to improve the service we offer so please tell us if you think there's anything we could do better!

Our volunteers are the life blood of all that we do, and the foodbank couldn't help the many people it does without you! We are so lucky to work with a diverse group of volunteers who give us an incredible amount of their valuable time and skills.

Thank you for the time you kindly give us - it really is appreciated and we're delighted that you've decided to join the team. We hope that you will enjoy your time with us!

Rhian Morgan, Project Manager

2. The Trussell Trust

North Cotswold foodbank is part of a national network of foodbanks across the UK run by The Trussell Trust.

The Trussell Trust was started in 1997 by Paddy and Carol Henderson using money willed by Carol's mother, Mrs Trussell, to help children living on the streets of Sofia, Bulgaria's capital city.

In 1999 Paddy and Carol were promoting their Bulgaria work in their home town of Salisbury when they were challenged by a local mum who was struggling to afford food for her children after her partner left her suddenly. While helping this family it became clear that there were many other people living in the same way: just enough money to cover the bills but vulnerable to any crisis such as job loss, illness, family break-up or a delay in welfare payments. The Trussell Trust then developed Salisbury foodbank to meet this need. In 2004, the UK foodbank network was launched resourcing and facilitating churches and communities nationwide to start their own foodbank. Paddy and Carol now live in New Zealand having retired in 2007 although they continue to follow the work of The Trussell Trust.

Today there is an extensive network of foodbanks throughout the UK, and The Trussell Trust continues to support work with vulnerable young people in Bulgaria through their partner charity FSCI. Furthermore, The Trussell Trust now works to combat UK poverty more widely, through its More Than Food programme, which enables foodbanks to offer a variety of additional services to help clients address longer-term challenges. The Trust also carries out research and campaigning work, in partnership with other organisations in the sector.

North Cotswold foodbank is part of The Trussell Trust's network and this enables us to take advantage of a number of resources and opportunities including:

- Support from a Regional Development Officer who offers face-to-face, email and telephone guidance when required.
- An Operating Manual with extensive guidance and editable resources (updated regularly to ensure we stay up-to-date with good practice and statutory requirements).
- Initial and on-going training.
- A website available to edit locally.
- A data collection system which is used to produce vouchers, record food donations and collect statistics about foodbank usage.
- A branding pack with our logo and designs for leaflets, posters and banners.
- Access to national and regional conferences and meetings.
- Corporate relationships brokered by The Trussell Trust nationally such as Tesco food collections and cash top-up and access to surplus product donations from large companies.
- Access to The Trussell Trust's 'More Than Food' programme.
- Occasional access to funding grants administered by The Trussell Trust.
- An annual Quality Assurance visit.
- Access to media opportunities and support from The Trussell Trust's press and public affairs teams.
- General assistance from the Network Support team

3. North Cotswold Foodbank

Every day people in the North Cotswolds go hungry for reasons ranging from redundancy to receiving an unexpected bill on a low income. North Cotswold foodbank provides a minimum of three days' emergency food and support to people experiencing crisis in our local community.

North Cotswold foodbank relies on the support of the local community through volunteering, food donations and fundraising. Almost all food is donated by the community through churches, schools, businesses, and supermarket collection days. Our clients are referred to us by over 60 frontline care professionals such as social workers, debt advisors, health visitors and teachers, who identify people in need, and give them a voucher they can exchange for a food parcel containing three days' worth of nutritionally-balanced food at our foodbank centres. Sometimes we can also provide toiletries and items such as baby food and nappies. Some agencies hold emergency boxes for us in the local area making sure that people can still access emergency food even if they can't get to our foodbank centres.

Our volunteers help in the foodbank warehouse sorting food donations, as well as at the foodbank centres where they chat with clients, pack food parcels, and prepare refreshments. They also help signpost clients on to other agencies who can help with their specific problems, in the hope of helping them find their way out of their current emergency. Volunteers also carry out essential admin tasks such as data entry and letter writing; manage our website and social media pages, encourage food donations and help with fund and awareness-raising.

Our goal is to make the foodbank an informal and friendly place, where clients and volunteers feel welcome.

The foodbank is governed by North Cotswold Foodbank and there are 5 trustees. More information about North Cotswold foodbank can be found at <https://northcotswold.foodbank.org.uk>.

4. Our Values

You will probably already know that our work focuses on helping people from all walks of life, restoring dignity and reviving hope - whether it is with our foodbank clients, supporters or indeed our volunteers. We welcome people from all backgrounds.

We are a Christian-based organisation motivated by Jesus' teaching on poverty and injustice. We operate according to Christian principles of compassion, honesty, integrity, openness, kindness and care of all people, regardless of backgrounds or beliefs. We believe in turning faith into practical action, living out God's love for everyone.

Whilst we are a Christian-based organisation, we serve and work with people of all faith groups and beliefs, or none. Volunteers that share our principles are welcome, whatever their personal faith position.

We are passionate about inclusion and being non-judgemental is central to what we do. We believe that everyone has the right to have food on their plate, dignity, a chance to work and hope for the future. Everyone has unique skills and gifts to bring to society.

5. Inclusivity

We want to include people from all walks of life as volunteers. Some volunteers have extra needs - such as social or learning difficulties, physical disabilities or mental health issues.

We may also have volunteers who have been victims of crime or ex-offenders. Some volunteers may have been out of work for a long time and are looking to regain some confidence through volunteering, or even young people of school age who are investigating what it means to be a volunteer through us or as part of a scheme such as the Duke of Edinburgh awards. Other volunteers join us at a particular point in life such as after bereavement or when they have just moved to the area.

Whatever the needs of our volunteers, we try to do our best to meet them by making sure that we make the effort to include them in tasks that are carried out in our projects and offices every day. We also hope that all our volunteers will work together well to create mutually supportive and happy teams, and sometimes volunteers will 'buddy' with someone who needs a little more help to accomplish the task in hand.

We firmly believe that no-one should be left out and we will make the effort to ensure that all volunteers have the opportunity to play a full part in our community project. Wherever possible, we will also work together with support workers to ensure that we can understand and cater for any specific needs.

6. Information for Volunteers

We would very much welcome your support in the following areas:

1. *General Rules and Procedures*

A. Changes to Personal Details:

We may need to contact you in an emergency, so please notify the Project Manager if any of your contact details, or those of your emergency contact, change.

B. Time Commitment:

If you are unable to attend any of the times you have arranged to help us, due to holiday, ill health, or other commitments, please let your Outlet Lead know as soon as possible, so we can make arrangements for cover.

C. Statements to the Media and Photos:

Volunteers must not make any statement to reporters from newspapers, radio, television, or any other media about The Trussell Trust or the foodbank. Any media enquiries should be directed to your Project Manager or The Trussell Trust's media team. If we would like your support for a campaign, we will approach you first.

From time to time photographs or filming may be undertaken. Please ensure that you have signed our permission form so that we can use photos for our fundraising etc. If you do not wish to be photographed or filmed, we would appreciate if you would please tell people at the time, rather than us having to check our files.

D. Volunteers' Property:

No liability is accepted for any loss of, or damage to, property brought onto our premises. You are advised not to bring any personal items of value to work or leave any items here overnight. Volunteers should take note of designated areas for personal belongings, so as to avoid their own possessions being mixed in with donations. Please do not take mobile phones, wallets or bags into your working area - these must be placed in the designated areas provided.

E. Insurance:

The foodbank has an up-to-date public liability insurance policy which covers the organisation in the event that a member of the public suffers a loss or injury as a result of the foodbank's activities.

F. Cash Collections:

Cash collections for another good cause on our premises are only allowed with our permission. If you wish to obtain sponsorship, conduct raffles, request donations etc. for a good cause please discuss this with your supervisor or the volunteer coordinator. If you wish to raise funds for the foodbank, we will be able to help you to do this by providing sponsorship forms, logos, posters and collection buckets. We will also be able to promote your activity/event on our website and social media pages.

H. Problems:

Should you have any problems related to the way you are treated by us, our employees, other volunteers, or the people we serve, please raise these with your Outlet Lead or the Project Manager who will attempt to resolve the issue. If you are unhappy with the outcome, you may raise the issue with Project Manager or a trustee.

We will always try to give our best support to our team.

2. Standards

Volunteers are expected to behave responsibly while with us. Normally we would bring any difficulties to your attention informally. However, the behaviour listed below would result in us refusing any further voluntary assistance from you:

- a. Grossly indecent or immoral behaviour, deliberate acts of unlawful discrimination or serious acts of harassment;
- b. Dangerous behaviour, fighting, or physical assault;
- c. Incapacity whilst volunteering, or poor performance caused by intoxicants, alcohol, or drugs;
- d. Possession, supply, or use of illegal drugs;
- e. Taking part in activities which result in adverse publicity for ourselves;

- f. Theft or unauthorised possession of money or property, whether belonging to us, another employee or volunteer, or a third party;
- g. Destruction or sabotage of our property, or any other property on the premises;
- h. Serious breaches of Health and Safety procedures;
- i. Maltreatment of service users, volunteers, staff, clients, visitors or donors;
- j. Failure to report an incident of abuse, or suspected abuse, of a service user by an employee, other volunteer, or member of the public; and
- k. Convictions for any offence which may affect your suitability for the volunteering duties you are involved in.

Please note that a criminal record will not necessarily preclude you from volunteering, but we may need to make an assessment of any risks both to you and to others.

3. *Security*

A. *Right of Search:*

We have the right to carry out searches of volunteers and their property (including vehicles) while they are on our premises. You are entitled to be accompanied by a third party (to be selected from someone who is on the premises at the time), as you are in the event of any further questioning taking place. You may be asked to empty the contents of your pockets, bags, vehicles, etc. You may refuse to be searched, but this could result in us prohibiting any further voluntary assistance from you. We reserve the right to call the police at any stage.

B. *Confidentiality:*

You must respect our Confidentiality Agreement (signed at the beginning of your time volunteering with us), and not disclose any confidential information about our clients, volunteers, business, or intellectual property, to any person at any time, whether during or after your volunteering with us. You must also take reasonable care to keep safe all documents or other materials containing confidential information. This is for the benefit of everyone, including keeping our charity a safe and caring place for volunteers.

C. Use of Computer Equipment:

No new software may be added (whether by CD-ROM, USB flash drive, download or any other means), copied or removed from our computers without the permission of the Project Manager. You may be required to use the internet or email system to carry out your duties. Any unauthorised use of either (e.g. for engaging in the dissemination of offensive or confidential content, bullying, piracy or other illegal activity, pornography, gambling, copyright infringement, or personal use unrelated to your task) may result in the termination of your relationship with us. You may be allowed to use the internet for personal tasks during break times but you must ask the Project Manager's permission.

4. Health, Safety, Welfare & Hygiene

A. Personal Safety:

- i. Your Outlet Lead will advise you of the Health and Safety requirements and any hazards associated with your responsibilities. Please also be alert to any risks or hazards.
- ii. You are expected to use any protective equipment provided for your task (e.g. gloves).
- iii. You must not take any action that could threaten the health or safety of yourself, other volunteers, workers, employees, clients, visitors or members of the public.
- iv. You should report all accidents and injuries whilst on voluntary duties, no matter how minor, in the accident book. The Project Manager or Outlet Lead will advise where this is kept.
- v. When working at height, ensure you have been shown the correct procedure and only use the special safety steps provided. Do not work at a level with which you do not feel comfortable or safe.
- vi. Ensure that proper manual handling procedures are observed when undertaking any heavy lifting. Always lift with knees bent and back straight, and refer to the posters on display. Do not attempt to lift anything too heavy-if in doubt, always ask another volunteer to help you. You must tell the Outlet Lead/Project Manager if you have a health condition which prevents you from carrying out a particular task e.g. if you have back pain, you must not carry out any lifting tasks.

B. Smoking Policy:

Smoking is not permitted inside any of our buildings or close to any door or window. If we have provided you with over-garments e.g. tabards, please remove them before smoking. If we have provided you with branded clothing e.g. a polo shirt, please change into your own clothes before smoking (including e-cigarettes).

C. Lost Property:

Articles of lost property should be handed to the Project Manager or Outlet Lead who will retain them while attempts are made to discover the owner.

D. Parking & travel:

Please contact individual locations for specific details on parking.

No liability is accepted for damage to private vehicles, however caused. Sometimes public parking will need to be used instead. We regret we are not able to reimburse parking or travel costs. However, we will reimburse travel and parking costs should you be asked to carry out a task for the foodbank using your vehicle. Prior to using your private vehicle for volunteer driving for the first time, you will be asked to confirm in writing that your motor insurance policy covers you whilst volunteering. If you are using your own vehicle to collect food, you must be careful not to overfill your car or stack food such that visibility is obscured.

We will not reimburse any speeding or parking fines incurred whilst volunteering at the foodbank. If you are a volunteer driver using the foodbank's own vehicle, you will be given instructions about recording mileage and keeping safe.

E. Hygiene:

- i. Any exposed cut or burn must be covered with a first aid dressing. First aid boxes are on every site and the first aider or Outlet Lead can help you should you need it.
- ii. If you are suffering from an infectious or contagious disease or illness, you must not report for volunteering duties without clearance from your doctor.
- iii. Contact with any person suffering from an infectious or contagious disease must be reported before commencing volunteering duties.

F. Hygiene for Food Handlers:

- i. You must wash your hands immediately before commencing volunteering and after using the toilet.
- ii. Any cut or burn on the hand or arm must be covered with an approved visible dressing.
- iii. Aprons/tabards and gloves, where provided, must be worn.
- iv. No jewellery should be worn, other than wedding or engagement rings, without the permission of your supervisor.
- v. You should not wear excessive amounts of makeup or perfume, and nail varnish should not be worn.
- vi. If you are suffering from an infectious or contagious disease or illness, or have had vomiting or diarrhoea in the past 48 hours, you must not report for volunteering duties without clearance from your doctor.
- vii. Long hair should be tied back.
- viii. Hygiene training is included for volunteering in the foodbank centre.

G. Suitable Clothing:

Footwear with closed toes and heels must be worn to protect your feet. Clothing appropriate to the task and environment must be worn. If you are volunteering in the warehouse you should wear warm clothes, particularly during the winter months when it can get cold. In the foodbank centres, branded name badges will be provided and must be worn.

H. Protection of Minors and Young People:

We have a responsibility to see that minors while helping out at the foodbank are afforded the protection consistent with our Safeguarding Policy.

This is expected to be complied with by all volunteers and staff. A copy of the Safeguarding policy will be given to you to read at your induction and is also on display at the foodbank centres and warehouse.

We would appreciate if you would please be team minded and help any volunteers needing support (if you are safely able to), especially younger people who may not be able to lift or move things or work at height.

I. Safeguarding:

We work with adults with care and support needs, including those with learning, mental and physical difficulties, so aim to meet any special requirements for the benefit of both the volunteer and the foodbank. However, in order to do so we need to be informed of such particular needs.

If you have a particular need, or know of a volunteer who has a need and for some reason might not have told us, please tell us of any specific support required. Where we can reasonably make adjustments or give extra support we will endeavour to do so.

Volunteers helping with regulated activities will be assigned a supervisor to assist. They will be required to complete a criminal records check with the Disclosure and Barring service. For most tasks, you will not require a criminal records check. However, all volunteers must declare any unspent criminal convictions on their application form. Failure to do so may result in the foodbank refusing to allow the person to volunteer.

Our foodbank aims to foster a culture of transparency. If you have any concerns about the behaviour of an employee, volunteer, worker, trustee, visitor or client you must report this at the earliest opportunity to one of the foodbank's Safeguarding Officers. Their contact details are displayed at the warehouse and foodbank centres or you can obtain them from the Project Manager.

J. Lone working:

For safety reasons we aim to ensure no volunteers work alone. Volunteers visiting a foodbank centre or the warehouse when no-one else is present must notify the Project Manager/Outlet Lead by text or phone of their arrival, and alert when they leave or are joined by a colleague. Ladders and steps must never be used unaccompanied and doors should be locked, with the key kept in the lock should you need to make a quick exit.

K. Welfare:

We are concerned for the welfare of our volunteers and would encourage you to do no more than the equivalent of two days volunteering with us each week. There will be exceptions, we know - especially around busy times of the year-but we would ask you to adhere to this principle whenever possible.

L. Personal data:

The foodbank holds personal data about volunteers. This data is recorded in the volunteer application form, volunteer interview form, and volunteer record card.

The foodbank is committed to keep personal data secure and to process personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. Volunteers' data will only be used for purposes directly related to your volunteering activity. It will only be seen by foodbank personnel responsible for volunteering activity. It will not be sold or passed to any other organisation.

Your data will be removed if you cease to be a volunteer at the foodbank.

You have a right to object if you think we are misusing your data. You have a right to ask for your data to be corrected, if you think it is wrong.

A full data privacy statement for volunteers is available from the foodbank manager on request.

Contact details:

North Cotswold foodbank:
Address: Unit 2, Glebe Farm Buildings
Guiting Power
Gloucestershire, GL54 5TZ
Email address: info@northcotswold.foodbank.org.uk

Telephone: 07879 375562

Website: <http://northcotswold.foodbank.org.uk>

Registered charity number 1181310

To find out more about The Trussell Trust please visit: www.trusselltrust.org

