

North Cotswold Foodbank

NEWSLETTER

September 2021

Message from Kevin

It's amazing how much difference Zoom has made to our lives during the past 18 months. At the beginning of last year I associated the word zoom with driving too fast, an ice lolly from my childhood and a song by Fat Larry's Band! Now I associate the word with connection and communication.



As well as keeping in touch with friends and family via Zoom, it has been invaluable for Foodbank Trustee and Committee meetings in order to keep our volunteers safe yet still be able to carry on with our decision-making processes and responsibilities.

There has been lots of hardship over the past year and, as expected, the financial year (from April 2020 to the end of March 2021) was extremely busy: we handed out 711 food parcels, providing food to 2,497 people, a 13% increase. Of these, 1,259 were children, an increase of 17%.

In the Trussell Trust network of foodbanks as a whole, a record 2.5 million emergency food parcels were given to people across the UK between April 2020 and March 2021, with just under 1 million going to children - that's two parcels every minute.

We were able to meet the increased demand as we have been very fortunate with lots of regular donors and the number of people offering support in terms of food or money or volunteering last year was absolutely incredible. We're also extremely grateful to all the individuals and organisations who have been fundraising on our behalf this year.

In April, we opened a sixth Foodbank centre at Stow which has helped to alleviate the demand at our other centres. We were delighted to welcome Joy Dimond and her team of volunteers to the centre at Stow Baptist Church.
Kevin Carden, Project Manager

New Foodbank centre in Stow

In April we opened a new centre in Stow-on-the-Wold. This is our Foodbank's sixth centre, joining those in Moreton-in-Marsh, Chipping Campden, Bourton-on-the-Water, Winchcombe and Bishops Cleeve.



The centre is based at Stow Baptist Church and is open on Wednesdays from 10.00 – 12.00 for the provision of emergency food parcels. The team of volunteers is led by Joy Dimond, with assistance from Chris Bishop

from Stow rugby club.

We have seen a significant increase in clients needing to use the Foodbank over the past year, as the Coronavirus pandemic has brought financial hardship to many families in our communities, particularly those involved in the hospitality sector. More people than ever are struggling to afford to feed themselves and stay warm. The new Stow centre is a valuable asset to our network and has helped to alleviate the demand at our other centres.

Role call

In August we said farewell to Ian Fowler who will shortly be starting his role in the military as an Army Chaplain. Ian has supported our foodbank for almost ten years.

Ian was the lead volunteer at our Bourton outlet since its opening and more recently took on the Warehouse Manager role.

We would like to thank Ian for all his support and wish him and his family all the best for the future.

Jo Cooper has succeeded Ian as the lead volunteer at Bourton. Jo is one of our Trustees and has been supporting our foodbank for over six years.

People forced to use foodbanks face extreme poverty

People forced to foodbanks at the start of the pandemic faced extreme poverty, with just £248 a month to survive on after housing costs, according to new research.

The Trussell Trust's "State of Hunger 2021" study sheds light on the groups of people across the UK disproportionately affected by hunger and the drivers behind foodbank use.

More than six in ten of working-age people referred to a foodbank in early 2020 were disabled – that's more than three times the rate in the UK working-age population. And single-parent families are more likely to be forced to a foodbank, with almost one in five of households referred to foodbanks during the pandemic being single parents – that's more than twice the rate in the general population.

The Trussell Trust says hunger in the UK isn't about food, it's about people not having enough money for the basics. In early 2020, the average monthly household income after housing costs for people who needed to use a foodbank was £248 on average, or £8 a day for a couple without children. This needs to cover energy and water costs, council tax, food, and other essentials and is just 13% of the average national income.

The main reason people had such low income was due to social security payments failing to cover the cost of living, according to the research. This was often due to the design of the system, including issues such as the five-week wait for a first Universal Credit payment and low levels of payments.

With high rates of unemployment and redundancies, more people than ever are likely to need the social security system to keep them afloat. The Trussell Trust says this should start with keeping the £20 increase to Universal Credit introduced during the pandemic but set to be removed in the autumn.

Emma Revie, chief executive of the Trussell Trust, said: "It's time for the government to make this a priority – to recognise that it must be an essential part of their levelling up agenda to work towards a hunger-free future where we can all afford the basics."



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The Foodbank is very grateful for the generous financial support of: the Notgrove Trust; Co-operative Community Fund; the Baptist Union; the Summerfield Trust; Gloucester Community Foundation; the Moreton Charity; Edith Mann Charity; Bourton on the Water Trust; the Northleach Club; Sudeley Lodge; Yorkshire Building Society; Dormer House School; Muslim Hands; Emporium Gifts; Moreton Conservative Association; The Unite Union; and many parish councils, churches, town councils, individual donors and groups.

News update



A huge “thank you” to all the Tesco customers at Stow-on-the-Wold and Bishops Cleeve who supported the national Tesco summer collection in July. The collection yielded a record 1,800kg of food and several

customers even donated entire trollies full of food. We are very grateful as this helped us to provide emergency food parcels to families in need over the school holidays.

We'll be collecting again at the Tesco winter collection from 18th - 20th November so please do come along and support us as we will be asking for items to put in our Christmas hampers.

We now have a permanent collection point for customer donations at Bishops Cleeve Tesco, as well as Stow Tesco. Items purchased at either of the stores can be left at the collection bins. Tesco provide a top up of funds to help us, based on the weight of stock donated, which is why only items purchased in store can be accepted at the collection point.

In April, Kevin Carden was nominated by *So Glos*, an online magazine for Gloucestershire, as one of the monthly 'Heroes' in the first instalment of their monthly “GlosHeroes” campaign, designed to celebrate and champion local charity volunteers and essential key workers during the pandemic. As well as ensuring everyone referred to North Cotswold Foodbank received the food parcels they needed, Kevin has also been responsible for managing volunteers to make sure everything is run in a Covid-safe way.

Kevin said: “I have no idea who nominated me and, to be honest, I was a little shocked as I certainly do not consider myself to be a hero. The real heroes in our organisation are all of our fantastic volunteers. That said, I am very happy that our foodbank has been recognised.”



Summer reading challenge

Gloucestershire Library did another brilliant job this year putting together a summer reading challenge for local children. They kindly donated packs to the Foodbank so that we could distribute them to clients with children. The summer reading challenge is an initiative to keep children reading in the summer holidays. This year the theme was the environment, which is particularly relevant. Books are targeted at different age groups and included new Julia Donaldson titles.



Donations

If you would like to donate food, the store in Guiting Power is open on Tuesdays from 10.00 -12.00.

There are also collection points in the following locations:

Post office and One Stop shop, Chipping Campden

Tesco in Stow and Bishops Cleeve

Co-op in Bourton, Moreton, Winchcombe and Bishops Cleeve

Please note that supermarket collection points are for in-store purchases only. You can find a list of what we're short of on the home page of our website at northcotswold.foodbank.org.uk

Details of how to donate money can be found on our website here:

northcotswold.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/

Contact details

Store:
North Cotswold Foodbank
Unit 2, Glebe Farm Buildings
Guiting Power
Cheltenham GL54 5TZ
Tel: 07879 375562

Email: info@northcotswold.foodbank.org.uk
Website: northcotswold.foodbank.org.uk

The store is open on Tuesdays from 10.00 – 12.00 for donations.

Fundraising events

We're very grateful to a number of individuals and organisations who have undertaken fundraising activities to benefit North Cotswold Foodbank over the past few months.

Thank you to Gill Donovan who ran a plant sale at the Southam village fete to raise money for our Foodbank.

In August, the Winchcombe Rotary Club very kindly held a static “bikeathon” ride outside the Co-op in Winchcombe and collected for us.

The residents of Mangersbury village recently held a local event and have donated the proceeds to us.

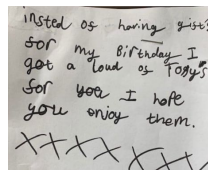
Mickleton WI ran a Scarecrow competition and donated money raised on the day to us.

The Cotswold Farm Park are supporting us again with their Potato Patch this month. They will be raising awareness of our foodbank and providing donations of money and potatoes!



To mark their 30th year in business Hayman-Joyce estate agents in Moreton have just completed a 30 mile fundraising walk in aid of North Cotswold Foodbank. They raised over over £1000, which is a fantastic sum and we're really grateful to them.

And, finally, we have to say a huge “thank you” to the young supporter who gave all his birthday toys to us, and wrote us a lovely letter too!



These donations will help us to provide additional support for clients.

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