

North Cotswold Foodbank

NEWSLETTER

January 2022

Message from Kevin

As I write this, Covid restrictions are being eased, which is good news. Hopefully, our lives will begin to return to something more like normal. However, the rapid rise in inflation and energy prices means that this year will not be so happy for many people who will struggle to meet the higher costs of living. Impossible decisions caused by poverty mean more people will need help from their local food bank, and we are expecting to see an increase in clients referred to us this year, particularly if energy bills begin to soar as expected.



Last December, we were significantly busier than the previous year, with a 45% increase in the number of three-day emergency food parcels issued. I want to say a huge "thank you" to all our volunteers for their magnificent efforts at the outlets and warehouse in coping with this increase in workload. And a big thank you, too, to all of our wonderful supporters who donated food, both for our food parcels and for our Christmas hampers. These have meant so much to families who would not otherwise have been able to afford the little extras that make the festive period more enjoyable, particularly to children, and we gave out 165 hampers in December. A friend of one of our clients wrote a lovely poem about their experience in visiting the foodbank – you can read this overleaf.

This year our team of volunteers will continue to ensure that people without enough money for food are able to access emergency support. But because we don't think it's right that any of us are forced to turn to any charity for emergency food, we'll be continuing to fight for a hunger-free future.

Wishing all our supporters, clients and volunteers a happy and healthy 2022.

*Kevin Carden
Project Manager*

Freshly picked

We're very grateful to The Cotswold Veg Box, a food delivery service to local people, for their support in providing high-quality fruit and vegetable boxes for our clients. As one of our partners, they have been delivering to our Chipping Campden and Moreton centres for some time now and we're pleased that their service will now be extended to clients visiting our Bourton, Stow and Winchcombe outlets this year.



Christmas cheer

Last December, Year 7 students from The Cotswold School loaded up a school minibus with boxes of contributions for North Cotswold Foodbank sent in by school families.

Collecting for the foodbank was part of learning about 'reverse Advent' in tutorial sessions.

The items they sent in, from chocolate treats to Christmas dinner trimmings, tins and savoury staples, have been very gratefully received by our clients.

We also want to say a big thank you to everyone who took part in the Little Compton Santa Trail, the proceeds of which were donated to North Cotswold Foodbank.



Foodbank use expected to rise further

Figures released last November show that more than 5,100 emergency food parcels were provided for people every day between April and September 2021, on average, by foodbanks in the Trussell Trust network. That's at least three parcels given out every minute and is an 11% increase compared to the same period in 2019, as need for emergency food remains well above pre-pandemic levels.

Alarming, families with children have been hit the hardest, with food parcels for children increasing at double the rate for adults, compared to pre-pandemic levels. Between April and September 2021, almost 2,000 parcels were provided for children every day on average, compared to almost 1,700 in 2019.

As more and more people across the country face destitution – meaning they are unable to afford the absolute essentials to eat, stay warm, dry and clean – the Trussell Trust warns that the need for emergency food is expected to rise further still, this winter and beyond.

The charity says many families already at breaking point face the fallout of the £20 per week cut from Universal Credit payments that hit last autumn. This is on top of rising fuel costs during the coldest season, as well as soaring inflation.

This is forcing many families deeper into poverty, the charity says, and is leaving people facing impossible decisions where their only option is to either skip meals to provide food for their children or heat their home.



© North Cotswold Foodbank 2022 Charity Number: 1181310

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.

January 2022

News update

A huge thank you to everyone who supported us at the Tesco collection last November. Food items weighing a total of just under 2 tonnes were donated by customers at the Bishops Cleeve and Stow Tesco stores. We also received £500 in financial donations and will receive a top up from Tesco who add up how much food customers have donated, then top this up by 20%.

Many of the food items were used in our Christmas hampers and the remainder bolstered our stock ahead of the busy Christmas period. The photo below shows the crates of Christmas puddings, chocolates, biscuits, mince pies etc all ready to start assembling the hampers at the warehouse.



Our Citizens Advice adviser, Morwenna, has been busy helping our clients at Bourton, Chipping Campden and Stow since she started last October. Citizens Advice advisers can check if people are entitled to any benefits they're not currently claiming and tell them about other local help they could get. They can also give advice about budgeting and debts. Morwenna also acts as an 'Energy Champion' for Citizens Advice and is able to support clients who are concerned about rising energy costs.

We're delighted to learn that our partners at North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice have recruited another part-time adviser who will support our Bishops Cleeve and Winchcombe centres. Emily will join our teams on a weekly basis from February.

Donate food

We have a list on our website of items we're short of here:

<https://northcotswold.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>

The items we need change regularly, so please check the list to see the latest shortages.

Grateful Wonder

We received this lovely poem from someone who visited one of our centres last month to pick up a food parcel on behalf of a client who had been referred to us. The person described the volunteers at the centre as "so kind, so giving" and was inspired to write a poem to say "thank you for all they do and the feelings they left me with".

Grateful Wonder

I feel awe and a certain warmth

Each person greets with a smile

Friendly happy joyful people

With a hello in their voice as they pass you by

To and hither busy bees

Giving their all for those in need

No thanks asked no fee ever demanded

Just that of grateful thanks and with wishes of sincere seasonal greetings

Safely on your way they send you with warmth in one's heart and a radiance of delightful joy

How infectious this kindness and charity truly are to those most at need

For desperate times call for desperate measures

No mouth too small no mother alone for the arms of our givers hold them so

They arrive shy embarrassed and down nervous and worried

But each will leave with happiness comfort and support

For sometimes this is all that is needed a kind word or two and a gentle touch

To remind us all that we do exist and that someone really does care in these dark days we live in

The light created is so bright so strong the darkness diminishes and shies away and we, us, all united

Celebrate the joy of Christmas and the joy of giving whilst remembering to give thanks to those kind enough to help their fellow human.

Merry Christmas

And

Thank you

We're recruiting

We're currently looking for volunteers to help out at our centre in Bourton. If you are interested in joining our friendly team, please visit our website for more information and to apply:

<https://northcotswold.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/volunteer/>

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.

Follow us



Keep in touch with us on social media:

via Twitter: @NthCotsFoodBank

via Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NorthCotswoldFoodbank>

via Instagram: www.instagram.com/Northcotswoldfoodbank