

North Cotswold Foodbank

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2025

Message from Kevin

Recent research for Trussell reveals that almost one in five people receiving Universal Credit and disability benefits have used a food bank in the last month, while a shocking 77% have gone without essentials in the last six months. Disabled people are far more likely to need support from a food bank, reflecting the fact that life costs more for disabled people, with additional costs like therapies, treatments, specialist kit to help with day-to-day activities and paid care on top of food, bills and toiletries.



North Cotswold Foodbank sent representatives to London to join a mass lobby of Parliament campaigning to ensure that Universal Credit covers the cost of life's essentials. This was instrumental in the government making changes to the parliamentary bill such that large parts of the original cuts will not now go ahead. And there was also an uplift in the basic rate of Universal Credit – an important step towards it at least covering the cost of essentials.

Food banks were not always needed as they are today. Together, we can build a future where no one needs a food bank.

Finally, I want to say a big "thank you" to Alexia Monroe who has stepped down as a Trustee. She has been a volunteer at the Moreton centre since its start in December 2011 and a Trustee since 2016. We thank her for all her hard work and are delighted that she will continue as outlet lead for Moreton.

Kevin Carden, Project Manager

North Cotswold Foodbank joins national lobby of MPs

Three trustees from North Cotswold Foodbank joined a mass lobby of Parliament on 18 June to support the nationwide 'Guarantee Our Essentials' campaign.

Spearheaded by Trussell and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the campaign is aimed at ensuring that Universal Credit covers the costs of life's essentials.

Mike Sibthorpe, Jonathan Brown and Jenny Jones joined around 700 people from all over the UK to lobby local MPs.

Along with colleagues from Trussell and other food aid charities, they attended a briefing and heard from those with lived experience and from comedian Nish Kumar, one of Trussell's ambassadors.

They then met the Parliamentary Assistants for our local MPs Cameron Thomas (Tewkesbury) and Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown (Cotswolds).

"The discussions were hugely productive as the reality of life on Universal Credit and the suggested changes to the system were explained," said Jonathan. "On behalf of both MPs, there was a commitment to learning how they can play their part in ensuring that our social security system is fit for purpose. We believe that ending the need for food banks is a mission for all, and one that every politician should be taking seriously."

The collective power of thousands of people pushing for change has reduced enormously the cuts that had been proposed, but the bill still contains a significant cut to support for people who become disabled in the future. This means that they will miss out on a huge amount of support – and risk facing hunger and hardship.

Large parts of the original cuts will now not go ahead – specifically, cuts to disabled people's Personal Independence Payment and cuts for people already receiving Universal Credit support for sick and disabled people. And any changes to PIP will now only happen after a review that will meaningfully engage with disabled people.



Trussell analysis shows that this will protect hundreds of thousands of disabled people from severe hardship, when people's resources are so low they are at high risk of needing to turn to a food bank. All told, over £6 billion of a £7 billion package of cuts has been stopped.

We can also celebrate a 'Guarantee our Essentials' win, with the bill also bringing in an uplift to the basic rate of Universal Credit. This is an important step towards a future where social security at least covers the cost of essentials.



Hunger and hardship at record levels

Who experiences hunger? Trussell has published new research that demonstrates that some parts of society are significantly more likely to face hunger than others: almost one in five people receiving Universal Credit and disability benefits used a food bank in the last month.

The research, conducted by YouGov on behalf of Trussell, reveals that more than three-quarters (77%) of people claiming Universal Credit and disability benefits have gone without essentials in the last six months.

Just over four in ten (43%) people claiming Universal Credit and disability benefit have skipped meals to keep up with other essential costs in the last three months, while more than a third (37%) said they had not been able to keep their home warm enough last winter. "I'm terrified the government will stop or cut disability benefits and if they do, I can't bear to think of the outcome," said one person in the survey response.

Another said: "It's just going to get worse, my health will get worse. I won't be able to renew my car insurance or get an MOT this year. I think I'll soon fall behind with gas and electric bills."

A quarter (25%) of people claiming Universal Credit and disability benefits have been unable to afford pain relief or other over the counter medication in the last three months. Four in ten (37%) participants were behind on bills, with 28% behind on gas or electricity in particular. Disabled people are over-represented at food banks, as 75% of people referred to a food bank in the Trussell community said that they or a member of their household are disabled.

To fulfil its long-term ambitions, Trussell says the UK government must take serious action to reduce hunger and hardship by investing in social security. Focusing on short term cuts will just push more people deeper into poverty and to hunger and hardship, and this will harm us all.

Donate Food

We always welcome non-perishable food and hygiene and cleaning products. The items we need change regularly, so please check the list on our website to see the latest shortages.

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

You can take your donations to the store in Guiting Power, which is open on Tuesdays from 10.00 -12.00.

You can also take donations to our food bank centres whilst they are open. For a list of our centres and opening hours, visit our website at <https://northcotswold.foodbank.org.uk/locations>

There are also collection points in the following locations:

Post office and One Stop shop, Chipping Campden

Bishops Cleeve Parish Council Office, GL52 8LR (Monday-Friday 9.00am-12.00pm)

White House Surgery, Moreton, opposite the North Cotswold Hospital

Tesco in Stow and Bishops Cleeve

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

Coventry Building Society, Winchcombe

Please note that supermarket collection points are for in-store purchases only.

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

Follow us



Keep in touch with us on social media:

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via Instagram: www.instagram.com/Northcotswoldfoodbank

Thank you

We are very grateful to all the people and organisations who have so generously donated to us over recent months.

Earlier this year, we received £700 from The Co-op from the sale of their Co-op Foodbank Bags, a reusable shopping bag which customers could purchase in store. All profit from the sale of these bags was donated to the Co-op's Food Bank Fund. Thank you to The Co-op and its customers for supporting us.



Thank you to the schoolgirl in Chipping Campden who collected donations of products or money for our food bank recently. She collected lots of food and the money donated was used to buy more of the products on our shopping list. The photo shows what she delivered to us. Thank you very much!



A huge thank you to all the Tesco customers who generously donated during our two recent collections in Stow. We collected over 800kg of our most-needed items.



And last, but not least, a huge thank you to all the volunteers who keep North Cotswold Foodbank going. We couldn't do it without you! Recently, our volunteers were treated to an afternoon tea at Guiting Power Village Hall and given a huge slice of thanks from Chair of Trustees Garry Dick and Food Bank Manager Kevin Carden. "We really appreciate the work that you all do," said Kevin. "Sadly, the need for food banks continues to rise and being able to rely on your unstinting support and generosity means such a lot."



At Easter, many of the people who use our food bank were delighted to receive a gift of Easter eggs. Thank you to the staff and residents of Brio

Retirement Living in Stow and staff and pupils at Woodmancote Primary School for their kind donations of Easter eggs, and to The St Vincent De Paul Society for their wonderful donation of Easter hampers.

On 13th July, St Mary's Chapel in Westcote held a special service in aid of North Cotswold Foodbank. The service, entitled 'Cotswold Hymns', featured hymns that all have a Cotswold link and raised over £500, for which we are extremely grateful.