

Gloucester Foodbank Newsletter

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A Message from our Chairman Dave Walker

During the last 9 months since the start of the first National Lockdown we have faced the challenge of adapting our service model to delivery only. Not only did we have no means of doing so at the time we also faced the self isolation of many of our volunteers. During that time we have learned so much about ourselves but also the spirit of the city of Gloucester. We have been able to source 3 vans and local volunteers from various organisations to establish a fully functional delivery service. None of this would have been possible without the generosity and selfless giving of the businesses, churches, charitable organisations and the people of Gloucester



With the support of all the donors (mentioned above) we have distributed 72.8 metric tonnes of emergency food and toiletries as 5,000 parcels to individuals and families referred to us as struggling to feed themselves. Our emergency parcels provide enough food to feed each member in the household 3 meals per day for 7 days. This has enabled local families and individuals to make over 100,000 meals. 35.5% of these parcels are for children under the age of 16. The demand continues to increase and last month we supplied individuals and families with over 11 metric tonnes of food and toiletries. We aim to also provide struggling families and individuals with Christmas Hampers in December too they can also celebrate Christmas. The support we have received also means that those in crisis know that they are not struggling alone and with the help of the local community there is hope.

So whether you have given a cash donation or dropped a food donation into one of our drop boxes in the local supermarkets I simply would like to say **THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU.**

How Gloucester Foodbank acquired a fleet of vans (well three)

Gloucester Foodbank used to rely on volunteers using their own vehicles to collect food from supermarkets, schools, churches etc. Clients would come to the Foodbank to collect food.

But the current pandemic changed things. Clients could not come to the Foodbank and we were delivering food etc to clients. We did not have enough vehicles!

So we applied to **Summerfield Trust** who kindly donated funds to allow us to buy a van. In the meanwhile many individuals donated money to us to allow us to buy another van.

A couple of weeks later our manager and Chairman were invited to the Police HQ, where the Police Commissioner and Chief Constable surprised us by handing over the keys for a third van.

Thanks to prayer, and the generosity of so many, we can now operate much more effectively in our mission to help people in need.

How you can help Gloucester Foodbank

- * **Please pray for our clients and volunteers**
- * **Donate a regular sum via our 200 Club (email us and we will send a form) or via text giving. FEED107B to 70085 or one off FEED107A to 70085. You can donate via our webpage link. Please Gift Aid if you can!**
- * **Donate food and toiletries at your local supermarket**
- * **Do your online shopping via Give As You Live (it costs you nothing)**
- * **Drop in old inkjet cartridges to us (we can claim back £1 a cartridge)**
- * **If you know of a local shop who would like a collecting tins please let us know**

Christmas Giving

Gloucester Foodbank aims to help families and individuals in need all year round. After such a wretched year for many, we are trying to ensure that families do have a good Christmas, and know something of the love of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

We are delighted that the **Hans & Julia Rausing Trust** has donated enough money to give 500 families each a Christmas hamper. We know that there are many more families who need help, so we are grateful to people for donating items. Most supermarkets in Gloucester have collection boxes for the Foodbank. If you can give something extra for Christmas, you would really be helping our clients. Things like tinned turkey, tinned potatoes, Christmas cake, mince pies etc would be great—but nothing containing alcohol please.



Our Warehousing Manager Gerry Malecki tells us how Covid has changed things



It has been a year of change to our normal working practices brought on by the impact of the pandemic. This has necessitated the safe handling of incoming goods, received and collected, and the need to quarantine these goods in order to eliminate

risks to staff and, ultimately, recipients of food supplies.

Despite the many obvious difficulties being experienced by those in the local community, who have suffered reductions or loss of income, the ongoing support for the Foodbank in terms of food donations has been – and still is – truly overwhelming. Donation boxes in most local supermarkets have been – and continue to be supported to unprecedented levels. We are grateful to the Managers and Staff at these Supermarkets for their ongoing support and co-operation.

Throughout a period of months through the summer, we received unprecedented weekly bulk supplies of food through Tesco plc, Morrisons and Investec. This has helped enable increased provision to Clients in need over a sustained period.

For a number of years logistics has been a major problem in terms of collection, movement and storage of goods. However through the support of local organisations – namely: Rotary Club of Gloucester Severn, Summerfield Trust, Cotswold Van Centre Ltd and Gloucestershire Constabulary – we now have a large van for goods collections/transfers and two smaller vans for food parcel deliveries. We are eternally grateful as this not only enables us to continue safe food-handling in the presence of the pandemic but will also help sustain our warehousing operation in the future.