

Cirencester foodbank news

**Volunteers
Needed!**
Please contact info@cirencester.foodbank.org.uk

Issue 5 • November 2016



Cirencester Foodbank expands its services...

As always Cirencester Foodbank remains busy and indeed since the beginning of 2016 we have seen a real increase in the need for our services. We have also been aware for some time of the challenges that some of our clients face in getting to us to access food. We have been addressing this in a few ways, not least by opening a new Foodbank centre in Tetbury, which is now open on Tuesday mornings from 9.30am – 11am. We also have a variety of emergency food boxes that are held by some of our referral partners so that they can be directly given out to clients, which prevents them from having to come back into town for a Foodbank session if they live in an outlying area. We also continue to allow frontline agencies such as health visitors and social workers to collect food on behalf of clients.

We have increased our partnership working with other agencies that are similarly committed to helping the more vulnerable within our community. At Christmas we worked with the Salvation Army in helping to provide food parcels for families in need and plan to continue that work this year. Alongside other local Foodbanks we have also been part of a successful fundraising bid with our local Citizens Advice Bureau, which aims to help people through crisis.

Rachel, our project manager, has now been in post for over twelve months and has transformed our work, particularly in liaising with our referral partners. So looking ahead one of our main challenges is establishing sustainable sources of funding to maintain this role. Our local community is incredibly generous in responding to our need for food, particularly as evidenced earlier this year when the demand for our services during the long summer school holidays threatened to outstrip our supply of food. We remain very grateful for this but we

are conscious of the need to also raise funds to sustain our work for the future.

We are also seeking to develop some of our More than Food projects such as cooking on a budget courses so as to help our clients develop some key skills that might decrease their reliance on the Foodbank for the future. To that end we have arranged some key volunteer training so that our volunteers are better equipped to help signpost people to other sources of local help that might be appropriate for them and we are keen to develop this further.

The other challenge we face is in finding sufficient warehouse space for the amazing amount of donations that we receive. We have been working with Cirencester Baptist Church and in the New Year are looking forward to the prospect of being able to store all our food in a purpose made space within the basement of their new building on Chesterton Lane.

I continue to hope and pray that eventually there will be no need for our services. For the time being we continue to serve the more vulnerable in our society making sure that no-one in our community goes hungry, and hopefully starting to develop their financial resilience for the future.

Dr Mandy Fry
Chairman, Cirencester Foodbank.

an interview with...

Terry Volunteer Warehouse Manager



How did you get involved with the foodbank?

I had retired from teaching and I was keen to use the time this gave me to volunteer in an organisation that was giving help to people in need. I was also keen to have a practical role where I was directly involved with the people being helped. I checked out the Cirencester Volunteer website and was pleased to find that the Foodbank was asking for volunteers and this seemed exactly what I had been looking for. Not only that, but it was just starting up and I was able to be involved from the very beginning.

What happens at the warehouse?

The basic role of the warehouse is to receive donations of food, manage our stock and move food to the distribution centres at Ashcroft and Tetbury for giving to clients. With regard to incoming food, we are fortunate to have such a very generous donor community. Regular donations come in throughout the year from a range of sources - churches, schools, businesses and individuals - and we have a great team of volunteers who all work hard to keep the warehouse well organised and operating smoothly.

What challenges have you faced so far?

At harvest time and Christmas the volume of donations increases significantly. This leads to very high stock levels at these times of year and it's quite a challenge to store and process it all. This is a particularly busy time for the warehouse volunteer team.

Another big challenge is to prevent any food going out of date in the warehouse. To do this we organise the food in the warehouse in sell-by date order and take the shortest date to give to clients. This is one of the main tasks at the warehouse.

And, of course, the annual stock-take, where we check that the actual amount of food in the warehouse matches that on the online data system, is always something we look forward to!!

What have been the high points and joys?

It is always pleasing to see the stock at the warehouse run down as it means that we are helping people who are in need and who we know really value the help we give them.

I have also enjoyed meeting and working with so many kind people, not just within the Foodbank but also our donors and the other agencies that support our clients.

A particular specific high point was at last Christmas. As a result of people's great generosity, we had more than adequate stock and so we were able to work in partnership with the Salvation Army in providing Christmas food parcels for needy families.

What challenges do you see for the future?

In the New Year the warehouse is to move to new premises in the basement of the new Baptist Church on Chesterton Road. This will involve designing and fitting out the area and moving all the stock from the current premises. However it will increase the amount of space that we have available and in the longer term will be a real step forward for the Foodbank.



David McAuley, CEO of the Trussell Trust and Phil Coysh, Regional Development Officer for the Trussell Trust visit our warehouse

Cirencester foodbank banquet March 18th 2017

Come along and see what a local chef can make of a Foodbank box! Please join us for what promises to be a fun evening of food, good company and dancing... and help us raise much needed funds for the future.

For more information please contact
info@cirencester.foodbank.org.uk

Small foodbank, big impact!

Every year the Trussell Trust holds an annual conference for the 400+ foodbanks that are part of their national network. This year Cirencester Foodbank not only attended as usual but were able to contribute to the programme. We helped devise and lead a seminar on "Small foodbank, big impact" showing that the smaller, more rural foodbanks can still have a significant impact on their local community.



Cirencester FB Baked Bean Trail has national impact at the Foodbank conference

Warehouse move



Cirencester Foodbank warehouse team leaders meet with representatives of Cirencester Baptist Church in our new warehouse – definitely still a work in progress!

Plans are now well under way for us to move our warehouse from our current location in Beeches Road to the new Cirencester Baptist Church building on Chesterton Lane. We should get access to our new space in mid December and are aiming to be fully settled in by the end of January. On Saturday 28 January the church building will be open to the local community so feel free to come along and see our new warehouse in action! We are gaining approximately double the space that we currently have so are hopeful we will be better able to cope with the peaks and troughs of demand and supply.

Don't worry – if you regularly bring food to us at Beeches Road then keep up the good work until further notice. We promise to tell you when we have moved!

Save the date...

We are doing our next Tesco collection on Thurs 1st – Sat 3rd Dec 2016 at Tesco, Kingsmeadow. If you would like to volunteer to help, even for a couple of hours, please get in touch. Alternatively if you find yourself shopping on one of those days then please donate some food. At the moment we get a generous monetary top-up of 20% of each kilogram of food collected at Tesco (valued at £1.68/kg) and "every little helps"!

Foodbank opening times:

Cirencester: Ashcroft Church, Monday 1pm-3.30pm, Thursday 9.30am-12pm.

Tetbury: St Mary's Community Centre, Tuesday 9.30-11am.

Donation amount: £10 ☐ £20 ☐ £30 ☐ Other £

Frequency: ☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Annually

Starting on: 20th* of / / /

(*Please choose a start date at least two weeks from today)

☐ Please tick if you are happy to receive emails from the Cirencester Foodbank

Further information...

☐ I would like to receive the Cirencester Foodbank Newsletter.

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your home address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below:

☐ I want to Gift Aid this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 2 years to the Cirencester Foodbank..

Date: / /

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. Please notify the charity if you: want to cancel this declaration; change your name or home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.



- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit Cirencester Foodbank will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request Cirencester Foodbank to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by Cirencester Foodbank or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society – If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when Cirencester Foodbank asks you to
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

Individuals and local community groups generously donate the food that we give out, and volunteers undertake the vast majority of the Foodbank's activities. However, the Foodbank still has running costs to consider, such as our warehouse rent, utilities, our project manager and funding our more than food activities.

We would therefore welcome regular financial contributions to our work.

Your gifts help us to enable families manage themselves out of a crisis situation.

A recent example in Cirencester is of a family we supported during the Christmas

period. One of our volunteers signposted the family to one of our partner agencies, P3. At our recent Tesco collection in July, the family greeted us with thanks and expressed how grateful they were for our help, and explained that they were receiving ongoing help via P3 and that their whole outlook had improved significantly.

We know that it costs £3.60 to feed one person for one day, and just £47 would feed a family of four for three days. So please, if you can, help with a monthly gift.

Having regular income every month will help us ensure we are always there for families and individuals in crisis.

Cirencester Foodbank joins the social media revolution

You can now follow Cirencester Foodbank on twitter or visit us on Facebook. Do sign up for updates so you can see how you can get involved!



@CirenFoodbank



Ciren Foodbank



Quotes from the frontline...

From one of our voucher holding agencies:

"Thank you to your team. My family were so grateful for your support and it really helps us to build stronger relationships by being able to help them provide food to their children."

From a client

"Thank you so much, I never thought I'd need to use a Foodbank, I'm so thankful for your support."

From a client

"The Foodbank has really helped me through a difficult couple of weeks. I felt really welcomed and your team made sure I had everything I needed."

Volunteers needed

Like many charities, Cirencester Foodbank couldn't function without our amazing team of volunteers. There are lots of different roles available, ranging from a couple of hours twice a year to help at supermarket collections to a regular commitment at one of our distribution centres. If you'd like to get involved and want to know more please contact us at info@cirencester.foodbank.org.uk



Getting the word out...

Often people seem to think that anyone can just turn up at the Foodbank and ask for food. Whilst we wouldn't turn away anyone who is clearly desperate on a one time basis the vast majority of clients are referred by our partners by a voucher system that enables people to access 3 days' worth of emergency food. The usual guidelines are that such vouchers can be issued to the same client for a maximum of three times within a six month period, unless there are exceptional circumstances. We don't want people to become dependent on our services so everyone who comes for food gets signposted to other organisations who can help them out of their crisis situation so we work closely with other local agencies such as the CAB. But anyone can find themselves suddenly on hard times...think about how you might manage if the main wage earner in your family was suddenly unable to work, or if you found yourself in an abusive relationship you needed to leave, or the car that you rely on to get to work suddenly broke down...

We are keen to explain how the Foodbank works to our local community as this often helps dispel myths and rumours as to what we are about. So we often play host to local groups such as the Scouts and Brownies, who enjoy coming to see what we get up to. We also give talks to local churches and community groups. If you are involved in such a group and want to find out more, or would like one of our team to come and talk to your group then please get in touch with us! Challenging people's misconceptions of how the Foodbank works and how people need vouchers to access our services is one of our key aspirations.

Cirencester foodbank in numbers



For further details of the work of the Cirencester Foodbank and how you can be involved please:

email: info@cirencester.foodbank.org.uk

or check out our

website: www.cirencester.foodbank.org.uk

find us at

 [@CirenFoodbank](https://twitter.com/CirenFoodbank)  [Ciren Foodbank](https://www.facebook.com/CirenFoodbank)

or write to us at

Cirencester Foodbank, Cirencester Ashcroft Church, Ashcroft Road, Cirencester, Glos, GL7 1RA.

Charity registration number: 1159810

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