



Cirencester
foodbanknews

with Fairford & Tetbury

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

**4.4 African
elephants**

Issue 8 • July 2019

info@cirencester.foodbank.org.uk • www.cirencester.foodbank.org.uk

What do the African elephants represent?



I bet when you picked this newsletter up, you didn't expect to see elephants on the front cover? So why are they there? Well to help explain what **30 tonnes** of food looks like. It's an astonishing amount and that's the amount of food Cirencester Foodbank gave out in the last financial year. This represented an increase of **23%** year-on-year, alongside an increase in client demand of **30%**. **The Foodbank supported 3,851 clients in our area last year, up from 2,967 in the previous twelve months.**

What has led to this increase?

Every client who comes into us is referred in by a frontline referral agency, such as Citizens Advice, Town and District Councils, health teams, GPs, schools and other charities. Each client presents with a voucher which the referral agency has completed. The voucher contains information such as the name, address and size

of family, as well as the reasons that particular client is in need of our support. The voucher information is vital to us in many ways. At the most practical level, our teams redeem the voucher for the appropriately sized food parcel, as well as engaging with the client, offering a tea or coffee and having a chat about what other help and support is available. At the more strategic level, every voucher is inputted into the Trussell Trust data system. The anonymised reasons for crisis, size of family and age range of clients are aggregated to help provide a national view of Foodbank usage.

At a local level, this information enables us to see why our community is accessing Foodbank support. In the last twelve months over a **third** of our referrals were due to insufficient income to cover the costs of basics, over a **quarter** (and increasing) due to benefit delays and changes, a **fifth** in child holiday meals (in lieu of the free school meal), just under **10%** were due to ill health and **7%** due to debt. **3%** of referrals were down to homelessness.

Many of you will have read about the effect Universal

Credit is having on foodbank usage and many of our clients have experienced the five week wait for the initial payment and ongoing payment delays. Universal Credit was introduced into Cotswold District in December 2018, and since then almost every time we've opened, we've seen at least one client who has been adversely affected by UC. It's a constant reminder that it really could be anyone of us at anytime who suddenly finds themselves in need of Foodbank support. Examples include the young man, with a retail job, who had worked in December and earned enough to cover his rent, food, bills and travel to work. In January, his employer was only able to offer eight hours work. The UC system works by looking at the previous month's PAYE, which suggested this client was earning well, so he was left with no UC at the end of January when he most needed it. This left him unable to pay all of his rent, and with nothing left for food or any other bills and with a Foodbank voucher. At the point this client most needed support, he was unable to obtain it.

We have countless stories we could share. It's worth us all reflecting on the "what happens if my employer goes bankrupt and can't pay redundancy?, what happens

if myself or my partner is suddenly seriously ill? What happens if I have to give up work to care for a relative?"

The Trussell Trust is campaigning for a reduction in the five week wait, if you are interested in learning more or joining this campaign, please visit www.trusselltrust.org/five-weeks-too-long/

Our priorities in the year ahead

Our ultimate aim is not to be needed, and while we strive for that, we recognise that there is much more we can do.

We have identified three key areas to focus on:

1. Reach the elderly and those in rural locations unable to access Foodbank support
2. Deepen relationships with referral agencies to deliver multi-agency solutions
3. Use our local data to articulate the use of our Foodbank

We remain hugely thankful to EVERYONE donating their time, their resources and donations. Our clients are incredibly grateful for the help and support they receive and very heartened at the compassion and generosity shown by so many towards them.

You may have seen Daisy May Cooper, "This Country" at the BAFTAs, wearing a bin bag dress designed by her mum and a friend. Rather than spend money hiring a dress, she donated what she would have spent to us.

A massive thank you to Daisy for such a wonderful gesture. We'll be working with her more through the year.



Food donation points

We now have the following permanent collection points across the area:



Cirencester



Cirencester



Tetbury

Each week one of our team collects all the items from these points and brings them to our warehouse for sorting and sending out to our Foodbank sessions.

Our warehouse is in the basement of the Cirencester Baptist Church and is open for donations as follows:

- **Monday 6pm-7pm**
- **Wednesday 10am-12.30pm**
- **Thursday 6pm-7pm**

Ways to donate financially

The Foodbank is always very grateful for both food and monetary donations. There are a number of ways to donate financially:

1. Write a cheque to **Cirencester Foodbank**
2. Set a **standing order** up
3. Donate via *Virgin Giving*



If you are considering donating, please also consider gift aiding your donation as this allows us to reclaim the tax on your behalf.

Session opening times

Our weekly Foodbank sessions are as follows:

Day	Time	Venue
Monday	1pm-3.30pm	Ashcroft Centre, Cirencester
Tuesday	9.30am-11.00am	St. Mary's Community Centre, Tetbury
Wednesday	1pm-2.30pm	Fairford Community Centre, Fairford
Thursday	9.30am-12pm	Ashcroft Centre, Cirencester

We are joined by our partners Citizens Advice and P3 advisers in each of our locations, this enables us to provide our clients with additional, immediate support and information.

Privacy notice

New data protection regulations came into force in 2018. We wish to draw your attention to the following statements.

If you do not wish to receive newsletters from Cirencester Foodbank, please email info@cirencester.foodbank.org.uk with the word **"unsubscribe"** in the subject line, and your full name in the body of the email.

Cirencester Foodbank takes data security very seriously. You have received this newsletter because you are on our list of supporters. If you would like to see a copy of the privacy statement for supporters' data, please email info@cirencester.foodbank.org.uk with **"supporters privacy statement"** in the subject line.

Peter Langman

Warehouse & Tesco
collection point
volunteer



How did you become involved?

I became involved with the Foodbank shortly after retiring from fulltime paralegal and land management work at Network Rail in 2014. My wife had already been working with the Foodbank since it started in 2012 and so I was aware of how it had grown to serve the needs of local families and the on-going need for more volunteers.

What is your role?

I initially joined the warehouse team at the Beeches Road workshops. As I became more familiar with the stock control I was asked if I would be prepared to be responsible for the weekly collection of donated food from the Kingsmeadow Tesco. This involves collecting the donated goods from the permanent in-store collection point, taking them to the warehouse and then weighing them in ready to be dated and put out on the shelves. At first this was all done in shopping trolleys and multiple carrier bags but since we have taken delivery of the Foodbank van the goods can be loaded straight into storage crates before shipping to the warehouse. Of course they still need to be weighed in before being dated ready to be put out on the shelves, not exactly a "green gym" but good exercise never the less.

What motivated you to become involved?

Some 30 years ago, long before Foodbanks were thought of, I was made redundant and my family and I were blessed by church members who put together food parcels to help us out during the first few weeks before the benefits started to come in. It was good to know that others really cared at what was a difficult time with two young children and a mortgage to maintain and so I can empathise with those who, for whatever reason, find themselves struggling to make ends meet. Having retired, I wanted to use my time

constructively to help others and working behind the scenes with a small team appealed to my practical nature. In the warehouse I

have also been able to make good use of some of the DIY skills that I have acquired over time. Every little helps as they say.

What have been the high points?

It has been enjoyable meeting people from different backgrounds and to be part of the team of volunteers helping those less fortunate. The move to the purpose made warehouse last year was a big highlight leading to increased efficiency in the storage, sorting and distribution of food. It always amazes me how generous people are, giving as they do, week after week and particularly at Harvest as well as during the two major supermarket collections organised with help from Tesco and the Trussell Trust.

What are the challenges for the future?

Challenges for the future include maintaining the profile of the Foodbank whilst working with other organisations to deliver a comprehensive service. This is needed to support the growing number of families and individuals referred by all of the "social services". At busy times, space in the new warehouse can become critical and it remains to be seen whether it will be sufficient if demand continues to rise. Clearly the solution to food poverty lies beyond the realms of the Foodbank but if everyone helps a little, it can mean such a lot to those who are in need, often on a daily basis.

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Hold a *dinner party* with a difference!



Make a dinner date with friends and family. Cook a delicious supper using ingredients typically found in a Foodbank parcel and instead of guests bringing flowers, wine or chocolates they bring a monetary donation to support the Cirencester Foodbank.

You have a lovely evening whilst helping to raise vital funds for the Cirencester, Fairford and Tetbury Foodbank!

For more information on how to arrange your evening and to sign up visit:

www.cirencester.foodbank.org.uk/supper



@CirenFoodbank



Ciren Foodbank

info@cirencester.foodbank.org.uk

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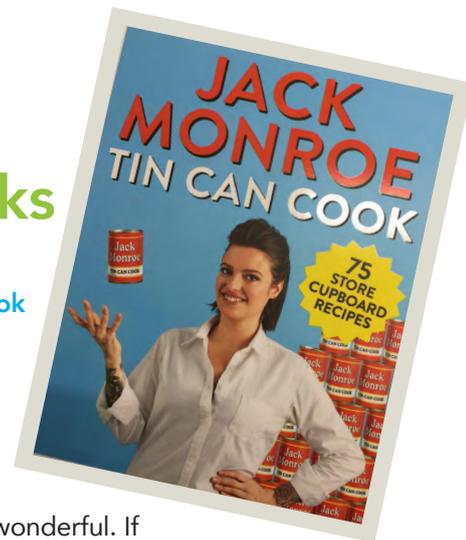


Foodbank goes mobile

We were delighted to take ownership of our van in July 2018. Huge thanks goes to The Summerfield Trust for its wonderful grant enabling us to increase our offering to our clients. We would also like to thank Cirencester Community Church, Nationwide and Lafford's garage in helping us with the van appeal. It really has transformed our operations and ability to support our clients.

Tin Can Cook Books

We're delighted to have received 56 Tin Can Cook recipe books from Jack Monroe. This book is packed full of recipes using tinned food. Our early client feedback to receiving this has been wonderful. If you'd like to donate a copy to us so we can share with more clients, please get in touch!



Cirencester Foodbank – Social media

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



Cirencester Foodbank in numbers since 2012



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  Ciren Foodbank

or write to us at

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