



Annual Report

April 2016
to
March 2017

Bath Foodbank enables local people to help their neighbours who are struggling.



We would like to thank everyone who has given food and their time so that people in the city of Bath do not have to go hungry.

Chairman's Foreword

2016-17 has seen a consistent increase in the use of the Foodbank with 3010 people being given a food parcel of 3 meals per day for 3 days, an increase of 13.33% over the previous year.

Whilst we would have liked to see a fall in the use of the Foodbank, the reality is that due to benefit changes, the converse is the case, and there is no indication of a reversal in this trend. Fortunately, due to the generosity of the local community, we have been able to meet the need.

The work of the Foodbank is only possible because of the large number of dedicated volunteers that make this possible. We have no paid employees but rely on more than 100 volunteers working throughout the organisation.

During the year 2016-17 there have been a number of changes in the membership of the management committee. Last year's report was produced rather late, and so I was able to include the sad news of the death of Chris Jensen, who had been the Supplies Co-ordinator since the start of the Bath Foodbank. We have missed his enormous contribution but I am delighted to say that part of his role has been taken up by his wife Vi – we are so grateful to her for her help with inputting data from the warehouse, something required by the Trussell Trust. Pete Cottell, the Warehouse Manager, has with the help of deputy managers taken on other aspects of Chris's role.

Collin Carr has joined the committee as Transport Co-ordinator and is also co-ordinating Health & Safety Issues.

Nick Beach has joined the committee as the Churches Co-ordinator and is contacting churches within Bath to invite them to support us, in a variety of ways (many already do, of course). He is also offering to arrange a short presentation, on the work of the Foodbank, if that would be helpful.

We continue to be well-supported by local schools, especially at Harvest time. School harvest assemblies give us the opportunity of talking to children about the reasons for the Foodbank and how it operates. One secondary school (Kingswood School), supports us throughout the year and we are grateful for their interest and generosity.

During the year we have been involved with a Trussell Trust Pilot, 'Energy Bank', and with 'Eat Well Spend Less' courses – see below for more on both of these.

Although we are well-supported by our volunteers, inevitably due to a variety of reasons, people are unable to volunteer indefinitely, and so we are always grateful to have expressions of interest from people considering volunteering with us.

Tim Harris
Chair of Bath Foodbank Management Committee

Bath Foodbank - summary

Purpose:

The purpose of the Bath Foodbank is to collect and distribute food to individuals and families in crisis. This requires raising awareness of what we can provide by ensuring that Foodbank vouchers are readily available at more than 100 agencies throughout the city.

We also strive to 'signpost' clients to other sources of help as appropriate e.g. CAB, CAP etc.

Objectives:

Our main objective is to ensure that nobody goes hungry, by providing a welcoming and friendly reception and environment to those whose circumstances mean that they do not have enough food for themselves and their families.

This objective requires systems for the collection of food, the raising of funds, a food storage facility, currently housed in Batheaston, and conveniently sited distribution centres in Manvers Street (City Centre), Rose Cottage (Twerton) and St. Barnabas Church (Southdown).

Food collection is largely through supermarkets, schools and churches.

To fulfil these objectives we rely upon over 100 committed volunteers working in the warehouse, the distribution centres, driving the van, being involved in supermarket collections and doing essential data entry as required by the Trussell Trust. We also rely upon the dedication of those on the management committee who volunteer enormous amounts of time to oversee and manage the various elements of the project.

What has happened in the last year?

- 34.473 tons of food were donated to the Bath Foodbank
- 3010 People in Bath were given food for 3 meals for 3 days
- over 100 volunteers help on a regular basis to ensure that food is collected, stored and distributed to those in need in the city.
- over 100 agencies have vouchers to give to people who are experiencing a crisis and need help with food.

Outcomes 2016-17

Compared to the previous year we have seen an increase of 13.33% in the number of people fed.

We have successfully negotiated renewal of the warehouse lease, for a further three years at only a slightly increased rental.

Our financial position remains secure helped by a grant from the Welfare Support Service at BANES, and by several fund-raising events.

Who have we helped?

3010 people in Bath were given food for 3 meals for 3 days to help them with a crisis. Of this number 908 were children with most of the majority of those children under 11 years of age.

Of this number we also helped 61 adults who were aged over 65 years of age.

2125 of the people who came to Foodbank described their ethnicity as White. Other groups were recorded as Asian (15), Black (46), Mixed (235), Other (58) and 531 people chose not to disclose their ethnic group.

Reasons why people use the Foodbank?

The major reason given was Benefit delays and Benefit changes. We have supported people who have not received benefits for many weeks.

The second reason was low income. A number of people are on zero contract hours and many have not had any increases in wages for some time.

Other reasons include domestic violence, homelessness, debt and sickness.

Bath Foodbank Warehouse

The Bath Foodbank Warehouse is located at Batheaston operating out of 4 shipping containers in an open barn. The warehouse has been there for just under 3 years having moved from Bathampton in 2014.

The renewal of the warehouse tenancy has been renewed so the warehouse will remain at the current site for another 3 years until 2020.

The warehouse is the main holding facility for all stocks of food and non-food items but has no direct contact with the public. Food donations are collected by the Foodbank van from Foodbank bins mainly located at local supermarkets and at Harvest Festival time from local churches and schools. Similarly the van delivers from the warehouse the weekly orders for the Foodbank Distribution Centres located around the City of Bath.



Throughout the reporting year the warehouse has been open 4 mornings every week with the exception of the period between Christmas and the New Year. There has been the usual turnover of volunteers leaving and joining the warehouse but volunteer levels have been maintained on average around 40 volunteers during the year either on warehouse or van duties. Additional Warehouse volunteers would be very welcome. Van driver retention

continues to be a problem due to insurance restrictions placed on the van although currently we have good driver coverage.

One area that was highlighted by the volunteer turnover was the need to have better coverage for those volunteers in key posts when absent. Two new Deputy Warehouse Managers were appointed to the Tuesday and Thursday morning shifts and a new Shift Manager was appointed to the Wednesday morning shift. These appointments are working very well.

Stock level at the end of this year stood at **9,272 kgs** compared with 10,340 kgs at the end of the previous year. Generous Harvest Festival donations during October 2016 gave us a very busy time sorting the large amount of stock coming in over a short period of time.

Food donations from churches, schools, Saturday supermarket collections and the general public during the year amounted to 34,473.5kgs. Stock supplied to the Foodbank Distribution Centres was **26,489.2kgs**. We also supply food to Lifeline, one of the Genesis Trust projects.

The Foodbank van has now done over 100,000 miles so consideration will be given to its replacement in the next couple of years.

At the time of writing this report, stocks are sorted but at a lower level than previously following unprecedented demand. There are no major issues envisaged in the coming year although we are currently reviewing Health & Safety procedures.

Pete Cottell
Bath Foodbank Warehouse Manager



Bath Foodbank Van:

Throughout the year the Bath Foodbank van collections and deliveries have been scheduled every week, working around Bank Holidays. On Mondays and Tuesdays the van collects food that has been donated by the public from various locations including supermarkets, churches and schools within the Bath area.

The van is loaded with food at the depot in Batheaston on a Wednesday and on a Thursday the food is delivered to the Distribution Centres - Manvers Street, Rose Cottage, and St Barnabas Church, and to Lifeline.

The van is crewed by three volunteers with, ideally, a minimum of two approved drivers and one assistant. On rare occasions, there has only been one driver available.

There have been no road accidents reported or injuries to volunteers. However, there have been a small number of very low speed minor scrapes to the van body, usually involving bollards and very tight corners. The van has covered more than 100,000 miles and it runs on diesel which is no longer considered suitable for an urban environment.

One key challenge facing Bath Foodbank is to establish a suitable business plan to enable us to replace the vehicle for one that will ensure that Bath Foodbank will be able to function effectively in the future.

Collin Carr
Transport Co-ordinator



Distributing the food

Everyone who comes to the foodbank is referred from one of over a hundred agencies in Bath who hold our vouchers. These agencies cover a multitude of organisations and services in the area working to assist people in crisis. Bath Foodbank vouchers are given out by these agencies to people who are in need: situations leading to such need have been listed above.

An individual can be given 3 vouchers in a 6-month period depending on circumstances. In extreme cases more assistance can be given through consultation with the Foodbank team.

On receipt of a voucher the individual can then take it to one of our three Foodbank centres in Bath where they will be greeted by our volunteers, offered a hot drink and a chat if they wish, and signposted to other services if they require additional help. The food is put together based on the number of people in the family and taking in to account any special dietary needs where possible.

We also provide toiletries and household items, when supplies permit. At Easter we provide Easter Eggs and at Christmas we provide festive treats and small gifts for children.

Our aim is to make the foodbank centres informal and friendly places, where people feel welcome.

Our foodbank centres are located at:

- Manvers Street Baptist Church, city centre
- Rose Cottage, Twerton
- St Barnabas Church, Southdown

We would like to thank Manvers Street Baptist Church, Rose Cottage and St Barnabas Church for all the support they give: allowing us use their premises and providing a warm welcoming place for both the people who use our services and our volunteers.

We also wish to thank our many dedicated volunteers without whom none of this would be possible.

Grainne Moher
Foodbank Centre Coordinator



New Projects

This year Bath Foodbank has been involved with 2 new projects

Energy Bank

As a Trussell Trust Foodbank, this year we have been involved in a pilot study – ‘Energy Bank’. This offers to providing guidance on reducing energy usage and ‘switching’ suppliers if appropriate, and in addition, to helping clients to access appropriate websites for grant applications. Colin Norman has taken on the role of co-ordinating this project.

Eat Well Spend Less

We have also been involved, with Lifeline, in setting up ‘Eat Well, Spend Less’ courses – so far two have been run, one at St. Luke’s Church and the second in Weston.

We hope to run more courses later over the next year.

Plans for 2017 to 2018

1. To ensure that we collect sufficient food to meet the needs of those coming to Bath Foodbank.
2. To promote Bath Foodbank to ensure that we are known to the agencies and people of Bath.
3. To develop promotion of the Bath Foodbank through the local media and social media sites.
4. To set up a pilot scheme to assist families (with a free school meals entitlement) with food in the long school holidays.
5. To consider options for the replacement of the Foodbank van – something that we anticipate will be required over the next year or two.

Conclusion

We have been well supported by local people, churches, schools and businesses in Bath and this has enabled Bath Foodbank to offer food to individuals and families at times of crisis.

As an established and well-supported Foodbank, we look forward to continuing to assist people in need through our core activity of food provision. We aim to signpost clients to other agencies as appropriate.

We are grateful to our many volunteers and to those who support us financially and with food donations.

If you are able to help in anyway then please get in contact.

Contact details for Bath Foodbank c/o Genesis Trust Bath
The Old School House
South Parade
Bath BA2 4AF

Email info@bath.foodbank.org.uk

For more information see www.bath.foodbank.org.uk

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/107980915969223/>

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Bath Foodbank is part of the Trussell Trust and operates under the Genesis Trust Bath;



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