



Annual Report

April 2018
to
March 2019

**Bath Foodbank enables local people to help their neighbours
at times of crisis.**



**We would like to thank everyone who has donated food,
money or their time so that people in the city of Bath do not
have to go hungry.**

Chairman's Report 2018-19

This has been another year in which we have seen increasing demand. There has been an increase of 8% (this compares with 19% for all Trussell Trust Foodbanks) in the use of the Foodbank compared to the previous year. With the help and commitment of all our many volunteers, and the generosity of the people of Bath, we have been able to meet this additional demand.

We were also able to invite all primary schools in the city to opt into a scheme whereby help is given during the summer school holidays, to families whose children are eligible for free school meals. Sixteen schools opted into the scheme. Many of the families who accepted the offer made it clear that this made a real difference to them. See below for more detail.

We received a visit during the year from the Trussell Trust for a Quality Assurance Visit. The resulting report was very positive with no significant problems being identified.

Two supporters ran in the Bath Half Marathon to raise money for the Bath Foodbank, and specifically to support the summer school project. They raised the amazing sum of £3200 and we are very grateful to them for all the time that they put into training and, of course, for their achievement on the day of the race.

We are grateful to all those people and organisations that have supported us financially. Our expenses have remained largely stable during this year, thanks to the support that we have received, but will be greater in 2019-20 as a consequence of an increased contribution to necessary administrative costs. As the Foodbank is operated entirely by volunteers there are no salaries to pay and so our main expenses, apart from the administrative costs mentioned above, are running and maintaining the Foodbank van, and the rental on the warehouse. Especial thanks are due to the St. John's Foundation, Kenneth Copeland Ministries and Redcliffe Homes for their generous donations.

We have been well supported by schools, churches and supermarkets throughout the year. We are also grateful to the Theatre Royal & Egg Theatre for giving us some tickets to give to families as a 'Christmas' treat for families undergoing hardship

We have again maintained our involvement with Bath University, this year supporting a group of students on the University of Bath's School of Management MSc courses through a self-managed project. This involved the students in designing a project that would raise community awareness of the Bath Foodbank, and, in addition, raise some funds to support us.

We have a problem with the warehouse in that at times when most donations are given – harvest festival and Christmas – we can find ourselves short of space. As a short-term measure we have taken a one-year lease on a unit at the Bath Safestore, at a discounted cost (for which we are grateful to Safestore) and supported further by a Trussell Trust grant (available due to funding from Asda). This has allowed us to separately store food earmarked for the school summer project. As detailed below, we are well into the lease on the current premises and so ideally would like to find larger more centrally placed premises. The ideal would be to have the warehouse and distribution centre on one site, reducing the environmental impact of running a diesel van back and for along the London Road, and also increasing the opportunities for engagement with clients.

Tim Harris
Chair of Bath Foodbank Management Committee
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Summary of activity over the last year:

- 51,620.3 kgs of food were donated to the Bath Foodbank
- 4469 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.

Who has been helped?

4469 people in Bath were given food for 3 meals for 3 days to help them at a time of crisis. Of this number **1359** were children with many of those being under 11 years of age.

The following table compares Foodbank use by city ward. Whilst all wards are represented the table shows (unsurprisingly) wide variation.

The distribution centres for people to collect food are, appropriately, in some of the places of highest need – the city centre, Twerton, and Southdown.

Wards of Bath	Number of people		
	2018 / 2019	2017 / 2018	2016 / 2017
Abbey	300	306	166
Bathavon North	64	37	23
Bathwick	27	24	11
Combe Down	378	313	273
Kingsmead	231	210	150
Lambridge	89	81	115
Lansdown	80	112	97
Lyncombe	56	53	50
Newbridge	195	102	44
Odd Down	326	233	147
Oldfield	198	222	176
Southdown	324	242	202
Twerton	747	759	501
Walcot	191	142	117
Westmoreland	213	203	192
Weston	182	171	79
Widcombe	129	111	62

Reasons given by the agencies for use of the Foodbank?

The major reasons given were low income and benefit changes or delays. It has been necessary to support some people who have had lengthy periods without benefits for that period of time.

Crisis Type	People affected
Benefit change	597
Benefit delays	770
Child Holiday Meals	17
Debt	614
Delayed wages	25
Domestic violence	69
Homelessness	132
Low income	1752
No resource to public funds	41
Sickness	138
Other	314
Total	4469



During this year a questionnaire survey was undertaken with the agencies responsible for assessing need and giving out the red vouchers to clients. This has provided useful information to plan our future work

Shirley Ward
Agencies Co-ordinator

Distributing the food to those in need

This has been a very busy year for us at all three of our foodbank centres and we have relied on our dedicated team of volunteers to cope with the growing demand, always showing compassion and respect to all who need to use our service.

Everyone who comes to the Foodbank is referred from one of the agencies in Bath that hold our vouchers. Bath Foodbank vouchers are given out by these agencies to people who are in need: situations leading to such need have been listed in the table above.

As a guideline, an individual can be given up to 3 vouchers in a 6-month period depending on their circumstances. This is only a guideline, and 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 foodbank centres where our volunteers will greet them, offer a hot drink and a chat if they wish, and signpost to other services if they require additional help.

The food is put together based on the number of people in the family and taking into 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.

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

Food for families during school summer holidays 2018

This is a recent project we have set up to assist families with food during the summer holidays. The scheme is offered to families in participating primary schools whose children currently receive free school meals. The schools involved distributed letters to the families informing them of the scheme.

16 Bath primary schools participated last summer, covering most areas of the city. For a lot of the families the food they received each week meant they didn't have to struggle so much financially without the free school meal provision; for others it helped them do 'a little extra' with their families over the long summer break.

Most of the families came weekly for the 6 weeks of the school summer holiday and we estimated that 18% of the eligible families used the scheme. The number of food parcels distributed was approximately **500** over the whole holiday period, which we think helped about **80** families.

The scheme ran at all three of our foodbank centres:

- Rose Cottage, Twerton
- Manvers Street, City Centre
- St Barnabas Church, Southdown

Each centre relied upon volunteers and local people who turned up ready to help for a big packing day, a lovely way for people to help their local communities.

We had some very positive feedback - as well as helping with hunger these are some other ways the scheme has had an impact:

One mum was so thankful for the food because it helped her save on food bills so she had been able to take the children swimming AND get the bus home again when they were tired afterwards - a luxury she couldn't normally afford.

Another mum took the children to the cinema and can't remember when she last did this: "The holidays are so long when you have no money to take the kids out". The scheme meant they could have a family outing.

One woman recently moved to Bath with her children to escape domestic violence. She is finding it hard to settle so far from home but has been overwhelmed by the kindness of people.

For families coming weekly, (especially to St Barnabas and Rose Cottage) regular conversations enabled relationships to be built. These centres were also able to introduce other schemes to those families most in need. We hope to run this very worthwhile project again next summer.

**Grainne Moher
Centre Co-ordinator**



Bath Foodbank Van

Throughout the year the Bath Foodbank van collections and deliveries have continued to be scheduled every week, including revised schedules to cover Bank Holidays and special collections.

On Mondays and Tuesdays, the van has collected 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 at Manvers Street, Rose Cottage, and St Barnabas Church, and to Lifeline, located on York Street.

In addition to the above, the van is also used to offload stock at a newly acquired Safestore facility on the Lower Bristol Road. This additional storage space enables food to be collected for the Summer Project and to ensure that the main depot storage space at Batheaston can be managed effectively and efficiently.

The Bath Foodbank van schedule continues to be well supported by volunteers who are prepared to drive the van and/or act as assistants on the van, loading and unloading food. Ideally, the van is crewed by three volunteers with a minimum of two approved drivers and one assistant. On a few occasions, there has only been one driver available, but this is kept to a minimum.

There have been no serious incidents reported, or injuries to volunteers in the last twelve months. However, there continue to be a small number of very low speed minor scrapes to the van body, usually involving bollards and very tight corners.

Collin Carr
Bath Foodbank Van Co-ordinator



Bath Foodbank Warehouse

The Bath Foodbank Warehouse is in Batheaston and comprises 4 shipping containers located in an open barn. This is the main storage facility for food donations, which in turn supplies the distribution centres in Bath.

In August 2020 the warehouse tenancy expires when it is likely Foodbank will have to vacate the premises or negotiate an extension to the lease. In the last 6 months the Foodbank Committee has been looking for new premises but to date all searches have been unsuccessful due to the scarcity of suitable premises in and around Bath. The search continues.

Food donations are collected weekly by the Foodbank van from the numerous public collection points around the city, most of which are located at the main supermarkets and smaller convenience stores. Other food donations may come from church and school collections, local businesses, or planned Saturday collection days at one of the larger supermarkets arranged when it is judged that stocks need replenishing. Food deliveries from the warehouse to our distribution centres can range from 0.5 to 1 tonne per week depending on demand.

The busiest time in the calendar year for the warehouse is between October and December mainly due to generous Harvest Festival donations, resulting in large volumes of food needing sorting during that period. This period is closely followed by the run up to Christmas, so it may take us a few months to complete the sorting. The additional storage facility at the Safestore may help with the storage issues when stocks are high.

In the last two years Foodbank has run a summer project supporting those families over the summer period that receive free school meals (see above for details). This has put additional pressure on the warehouse in the supply and distribution of the food to the Distribution Centres for the weeks of the school summer holidays. We are grateful to the warehouse volunteers and those who operate the van for all the extra work done to support this project – volunteer resources can be stretched at this time as it coincides with people's summer holidays. As mentioned above, the additional storage at Safestore has taken some of the pressure off the warehouse as stock for the project can be transferred, on a regular basis, to this external storage for eventual use in August. This has freed up much needed space at the warehouse making it a more volunteer-friendly environment in which to work.

Throughout the reporting year the warehouse and van has been operational 4 mornings every week except for the period between Christmas and the New Year. There has been the usual turnover of volunteers leaving and joining, a typical week having on average 25 - 30 volunteers either on warehouse or van duties. A manager and three deputies oversee the warehouse operation, the former having recently stood down after many years' service. *Foodbank is currently looking to recruit a replacement Warehouse Manager.*

In addition to supplying food to the Distribution Centres and the summer project, food is regularly supplied to 'Lifeline' (one of the other projects managed by Genesis Trust Bath)

Risk Assessments were reviewed in March 2019, no issues arising, or changes considered necessary.

Warehouse Statistics for the year are as follows:

- Stock at 31 March 2019: 10,251.9 kgs (2018: 10,769 kgs;)
- Food donations received: 51,620.3 kgs (2018: 47,100 kgs)
- Food supplied to the Distributions Centres, Summer Project 2018 and similar: 52,137.7 kgs (2018: 45,611.8 kgs).

Pete Cottell
Bath Foodbank Warehouse Manager

Working with local businesses

Local businesses and other organisations continue to support and show interest in the work of Bath Foodbank.

In March we were invited to attend a concert at Komedia, where Glenn Tilbrook of Squeeze was playing as part of his tour to support Trussell Trust foodbanks. A collection at the door raised £229.24, and we also received food donations.

Businesses have been contacted to see if they can help with our hunt for new warehouse premises, but so far without success.

We are very grateful to all the businesses who support us throughout the year – this is especially the case around Christmas when many offers of support are received. It is not possible to record details of all these donations but we would like to record our appreciation in this report.

Jane Middleton
Business Co-ordinator

Working with local churches

Many of the local Churches in Bath support the Foodbank with regular donations of food especially at Harvest and Christmas. We are very grateful for their support.

An increasing number of churches are happy to help us with targeted collections as and when required throughout the year.

We are also grateful for the financial contributions during the year – an invaluable support in helping to run the Foodbank.

We very much want to build relationships with local churches and are happy to come to introduce congregations to the work of the Bath Foodbank

Greville Mills
Churches Co-ordinator

Plans for 2019 to 2020

1. To ensure that we collect sufficient food to meet the needs of those coming to the Bath Foodbank.
2. To increase awareness and understanding of the Bath Foodbank through the local media and social media sites.
3. To assist families (with a free school meal entitlement) with food in the long school holidays.
4. To consider options for the warehouse site.
5. To investigate the possibility of an additional distribution centre in Combe Down
6. To evaluate the service by sending feedback questionnaires to the agencies.
7. To engage with agencies to understand any variation in their use of the Foodbank



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.

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

As an established and well-supported Foodbank, we look forward to continuing to assist people in need with food.

We are grateful to the administrative staff at Genesis Trust for the considerable help, support and advice that, as one of their projects, they provide to the Foodbank.

Volunteer Opportunities

There is often a need for new volunteers to help the Bath Foodbank. This could be for a few hours every 2 months, helping with a supermarket collection; or assisting at the warehouse or distribution centres for a few hours each week.

If you can help in anyway then please do contact us:

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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