



## Update from Foodbank:

Over the year from April 2018 to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2019 the Foodbank has seen nearly a 40 % increase in demand.

This reflects the national pattern; data from the Trussell Trust showed that in the same period 1.6 million three-day emergency food parcels were given to people in crisis in the UK. More than half a million of these went to children. This is an 18.8% increase on the previous year.

The key reasons for people needing emergency food are benefits consistently not covering the cost of living, and delays or changes to benefits being paid.

In this period, our Foodbank received 1,303 vouchers, providing food parcels for 3,614 clients, of which 1,723 (48%) were children.

The main reason for referral was low income 42.3% followed by benefit delays and changes 31.6% which again reflects the national data as reported by the Trussell Trust.

Thanks to the dedication and generosity of the local community we have been able to meet the increased need. 26 tonnes of donated food and 1.4 tonnes of non-food items were distributed in the last year.

Recently the UN stated that 8.4million people in the UK are food insecure.

The issue of food poverty and insecurity is something we all should be aware of and need to consider how local initiatives can work together to address this. The Foodbank is continuing to work with other organisations to help & make food available to those in most need and to decrease food waste.

We welcome the opportunity to link with other initiatives.

## Summer Lunch Box Scheme:

The summer holidays can be a hard time for families if the children normally have free school meals. Last year we trialled a new initiative to provide lunch boxes for children on free school meals who might otherwise go hungry during the summer holidays.

Each lunch box contained enough food to provide five lunches. The initiative was so successful that we provided 211 lunch boxes – the equivalent of over 1,000 lunches to children at Letchworth schools during the summer holidays in 2018. This was a gigantic effort on the part of our volunteers at both the warehouse and the distribution centre and required us to purchase a lot of additional stock to supply the need.

This year we intend to extend the scheme to Baldock schools. Our volunteers are once again very much up to the task but unfortunately our stocks are running low for some items. Listed below are items that we need specifically for this initiative.

**If you are able to help by donating any of the items, we would be very grateful:**

Meatballs/hot dogs/ corn beef/ ham etc. Other items suitable for children could be ravioli / sausage & beans]
Pasta Sauce
Fruit Juice (long life)
Tinned Fish - Tuna
Tinned Fruit
Sponge Puddings
Tinned Rice Pudding / Custard
Cereal Bars; Biscuits
Sweets/Crisps – Packets for one.

**Thank you**

**OUR SUPPORTERS:** The Foodbank receives support in various ways; not just the food donations but financial to enable us to help the less fortunate in our community. Without our supporters we would not be able to function

**Our Thanks to the Heritage Foundation:**

Our warehouse lies at the centre of our operation. All the food we distribute passes through it, our food parcels are prepared there, it stores our Christmas goodies, and our summer school lunch boxes are being prepared there as you read this. By now you will understand the importance of our warehouse and how critical it is to us.

We have leased our facility from the Heritage Foundation for over five years and have just negotiated a new lease at the same extremely favourable rate. We know we could not afford to pay the full market value and we are extremely grateful to the Foundation for their generosity in leasing this unit to us on such favourable terms.

The Heritage Foundation have also nominated the Foodbank as their “Charity of the Year” and to date we have received donations of almost £800 from fundraising events organised and run by the Foundation staff.

To the Heritage Foundation and their staff: Thank you.



**Donations:** Donations from the public via the local supermarket collection points remain high and from our local faith groups and churches, particularly the Sikh community, plus our schools continue to support and donate to the Foodbank.

**Hitchin Girls School** continue to support the Foodbank with their termly collections. An amazing car full. Thank you.



**Quotidian supports the Foodbank**



Andy Smith from the Hitchin French Bakery Quotidian is donating surplus bread and pastries for our Foodbank clients on Tuesdays and Fridays. Our clients have been delighted and very grateful for their generosity.

**Foodbank Volunteers Summer Social Evening:**

On Friday June 21<sup>st</sup> we held a social evening for all our volunteers from the three distribution centres and the warehouse to say Thank You for their hard work.

It was a very enjoyable evening and good to meet with volunteers from all our centres. It is the one time each year we can all get together.

**FOODBANK STATISTICS**

**Summary for April 1<sup>st</sup> – June 30th 2019**

**No. of referral vouchers fulfilled: 334**

**Number of People supported: 956**

Reason for referral	%
Low Income	36
Benefit changes & delays	35
Debt & delayed wages	11
Other e.g. sickness, domestic abuse	16
Homeless	2

Distribution Centre	No. of Vouchers	No. of Clients
Letchworth (Howard Memorial Hall)	199	624
Hitchin (Scout Hut Our Lady Church)	117	280
Baldock (St. Mary's Hall)	7	26
Other	11	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>956</b>

**Newsletter Feedback**

Please email Susan Kostrzewska, Foodbank Newsletter Editor. [susan.kostrzewska@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:susan.kostrzewska@hotmail.co.uk)

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