

fb Times



Serving Letchworth, Hitchin and Baldock October 2019 Issue 12

Update from the Foodbank: The summer has seen a continued increase in the number of referrals. Over the last three months, more than 350 people received support from the foodbank each month, compared to a monthly average of just under 300 people in 2018. The single main reason for referrals is now low income.

Our **Summer Lunch Box Scheme** in Letchworth and Baldock during the 6-week holidays was very successful. 417 lunch boxes were provided for children who normally receive free school meals with each lunch box containing enough food to make up five lunches. Last year, 211 such food parcels were provided. A great big thank you to our supporters in faith and local communities for their generous donations and to our dedicated volunteers for making all this happen.

Donations: Our warehouse was getting quite low on supplies after the summer. However, the continued generosity of schools, churches and faith groups through harvest festivals, as well as the general public's donations via our supermarket collection points have enabled us to restock for the time being.



Northfields Infants and Nursery School Harvest Donation

With winter and the festive season approaching we expect the need for the Foodbank's services to grow. Our Christmas season food parcels will include extras such as chocolates, festive food & crackers.

As will be seen from the article on our warehouse, it takes time and effort to sort, weigh and distribute the donations. To have the festive season food parcels ready; if you, your school, local group or business are thinking of having a Christmas collection for the Foodbank we really need donations for the first week in December.

Thank you in advance for helping us to help people and families in need at Christmas and throughout the year.

Why we are here: we provide food parcels, but our volunteers are ready to offer a listening ear and if possible, some direction for clients to get help or advice. We recently received a thank you note from a client that ended : "I will be forever in your debt - this service is a life saver. I am so grateful; I don't know what I would of done without it"

Thank You to Morrisons, their staff and customers:

Morrisons supermarket in Letchworth have always been a supporter of our Foodbank with a collection box.

In September Alan Byrne, our supermarket liaison volunteer, received a call from Yvette, the Community Champion at Morrisons Letchworth. Yvette had organised a raffle to support Morrisons Charity partner CLIC Sargent , the first prize being a trolley full of food to the value of £80.

Vicky P from the barista bar was the lucky winner who very kindly decided to donate the prize to the Foodbank. It was a great pleasure to receive this wonderful donation on behalf of people and families in need. Thank you, Vicky, for your generosity.



New collection basket at Morrisons: A big and better collection basket has been installed at Morrisons. Thank you to Morrisons and all your customers for continued support



A walk through our Foodbank warehouse:

Have you ever thought what happens to the jar of coffee or the packet of biscuits that you donated?

Our warehouse is the vital hub for the Foodbank to function effectively. All donations whether big or small from a group, individual, school, faith community or workplace is taken to the warehouse for sorting and preparing for distribution to our clients.

On arrival at the warehouse, donations are placed in holding crates and held in the holding area in date-received order. A goods-in slip is raised, recording the donor, number of crates and the date received.

Crates are then taken, in date order, to the checking-in area, where the donations are weighed and use-by date checked. Weight is recorded on the goods-in slip. All items are sorted into product type: baked beans, tinned fruit, pasta, etc.



Each product is sorted by date. Items such as milk and cereals are sorted by month. Tinned items such as fruit, vegetables, meat are sorted by quarter. Once items are date-sorted they are stacked on shelves in boxes in the storage area ready for transfer to the picking area as required.

The picking area is where balanced food parcels are prepared. Parcels are prepared for: one person, two persons, three/four persons or larger if needed. This allows us to fulfil the requirements of both large and small families. Each parcel is weighed and recorded. The food parcels are kept on the call-off shelves awaiting a call from one of the three distribution centres. Volunteer drivers take the requested parcels to the distribution centre where a client is waiting to receive their food parcel/s.

Weighing and recording both donations in and food parcels going out allows us to keep an accurate record of the stock in the warehouse at any time. It is a carefully worked out process which enables us to use and maintain stocks effectively. We are very grateful to our warehouse volunteers who make all this happen.

FOODBANK STATISTICS

Summary for July 1st – September 30th 2019

No. of referral vouchers fulfilled: 370 Number of people supported: 1048

Reason for referral	%
Low Income	47
Benefit changes & delays	25
Debt & delayed wages	11
Other e.g. sickness, domestic abuse	13
Homeless	4

Distribution Centre	No. of Vouchers	No. of Clients
Letchworth (Howard Memorial Hall)	212	591
Hitchin (Scout Hut, Our Lady Church)	138	397
Baldock (St. Mary's Church Hall)	5	17
Other	15	43
Total	370	1048

Newsletter Feedback

Please email Susan Kostrzewska, Foodbank Newsletter Editor. susan.kostrzewska@hotmail.co.uk

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