

Update on St Bart's Food Pantry - Jackie Tominey, SBFP Co-ordinator

PPC Meeting 7.30 pm, Wednesday, 8 March 2023

(Social Justice – Mark James, Lead)

Since our last meeting in January things have continued on a steady pace – food in, food out - in spite of the church being closed except for mass times while Father Francis was away attending to his precious family. The volume of food over the last week has picked up.

The support of Mark James, Dawn Pace, and Claudine has been invaluable here – thank you!

Surplus food during the time that the church was closed (Above the food that was shared with SACP) was taken to the Catholic Workers Farm (CWL) where it was gratefully received by the mainly Eastern European families who are supported there at this time. Mark has suggested a monthly delivery from now on if that is possible.

Most of the parish groups have been contacted regarding their understanding of what the parishioners in their groups feel they/others they know, might need/appreciate some support at this time. We are planning a face to face groups meeting shortly after Easter.

St Adrian's school have benefitted from occasional drop offs from the beginning of this year and Aideen has said she will work with around 20 plus FSM (Free School Meals) families to ask what they need and how, and then liaise with me, the SBFP co-ordinator, to organise requests for donations, collection and delivery.

The support of Martha, Lizzie and Emma has been invaluable here, too – thank you!

I attended this week's parents' and toddlers group in our parish hall this Tuesday morning and the leader of the group phoned me this afternoon. It's, as many know, no longer a parents and toddlers group associated with the parish thought most, if not all, the women and children are local. The group is made of child minders who meet most weeks in our hall apart from the summer holidays. Whereas they themselves and the families they work with, don't obviously fall into the category of needing support, they knew others that did and understood that they and their families could also soon need help. Subject to PPC agreement, we have considered working with them in a similar way to St. Adrian's.

Our Facebook page posts, though not many on the pantry, have proved quite popular and the messages in them responded to positively. I think this and bespoke WhatsApp groups are the way to go.

Maureen and Lizzie have asked me for a piece on the Food Pantry for the Parish Booklet/St. Bart's Together – please see my draft sent to Maureen today*

It is important to note that, as with our ecumenical work in the PPC/parish, the SBFP will cut across all groups and, as such, I feel it is important for me to keep all the

PPC in the loop of any progress in a regular and timely manner which, I'm sure will be reciprocated. Any new ideas/initiatives will be presented to the PPC first and, if approved, followed through.

Regarding moving forward and further actions, I'll leave to see the outcome of our March PPC discussions.

Jackie Tominey March 2023

1. Appendix - Draft Insert Parish Booklet

St. Bart's Food Pantry (SBFP)

At our November 2022 Parish Council meeting it was agreed to set up a food pantry in the church entrance to support parishioners, their family, friends and/or neighbours with free food provisions during this cost-of-living crisis. We are working with our parishioners, our parish group networks and St. Adrian's Primary School to strengthen our pastoral care in the wider community to make sure no one is left hungry in this age of plenty. Initially we are providing non-perishable food but hope to progress to offering fresh fruit and vegetables in the future. Bags are provided to take the items away and the church opening times are displayed outside the church and on our social media platforms. We are relying equally on generous donations and a big effort from all to share the food and reach those most in need. Our watch words are dignity, respect and community. Any queries or offers of help as the pantry builds, please contact Jackie Tominey on 07702 948585 or jackie.tominey@ntlworld.com God bless.