

Welcome to the newsletter of Norwich foodbank. We hope you will find this to be of interest whether our local Christian charity is new to you or you are a regular supporter.

## 2018 Update

During the course of 2018, we received an incredible 127 tonnes of donations, distributed 127+ tonnes and fulfilled 4,063 vouchers, each providing 3 days of food to those who were referred. The vouchers related to 6,175 adults and 3,147 children. All 10 of our distribution centres, along with the warehouse, driver and office volunteer teams, continue to work hard to ensure that all who come through the doors are welcome and those who phone or email are listened to and receive not only food, but also hope, respect and support.

**Norwich foodbank is a local Christian charity that does not affiliate itself with any political party. We are non-judgmental and inclusive, providing assistance to people of all backgrounds, with or without faith, who are found to be in genuine need.**

## Winter Provision

Following the pilot in 2017/18, November 2018 saw the second round of 'Energy Bank', providing emergency support to foodbank clients referred by one of 7 key referral agencies. For the first time, we have also been able to provide oil for a client who had no heating or hot water. Their feedback made us feel so grateful for our own situations: **'I cannot begin to tell you that you made our Christmas, having hot water to wash with and the heating on.'**

The scheme will run until the end of March and, at the end of January, we had granted over £2,500 in payments, thanks to funding from Hopkins Homes via Norfolk Community Foundation. So far, we have supported 60 households; 97 adults and 59 children.

Thanks to Norwich City Council and international charity St Vincent de Paul, we also have winter packs available to pass on to clients, which include items such as hats, scarves, gloves and socks.

Great Yarmouth and Kings Lynn have run a Winter Shelter for the last couple of years and Norwich City Council in partnership with 3 local churches (NCBC, St Peter Mancroft and St Thomas) are providing beds and space for approximately 20 men and women who otherwise would be sleeping on the streets. All those who access this support have been referred by the Pathways team (see Winter 2017 newsletter for more info) who work hard to provide practical help and advice to all those who don't have a home as well as support for other issues they may be facing.

## Lent Appeals

This year, we've got 3 ideas you may like to join in with during Lent. We would love to hear from you if you're getting involved in any of these campaigns either individually, as a family or with a church group or work team.

**#40for40** is a Trussell Trust initiative, where people are encouraged to put aside 40p for the 40 days of Lent and then give this amount to your local foodbank – if we can claim gift aid, this would mean a sum of £20 can be donated.

**Give up and Give** has been around for some time – many people give something up over Lent such as chocolate or a treat of some kind, so we're asking supporters to go one step further and donate the money you would have spent on this item to us so we can keep helping people who aren't giving treats up by choice but by necessity.

**Live on £1 a Day** is a multi-layered idea! For 5 consecutive days during Lent, our Project Manager and a few volunteers as well as a reporter from the EDP will each be living on £1 per day for all food and drink (and no freebies from friends or families or using items in the cupboard, fridge or freezer!). Those who want to do the same, may choose to donate what they would have spent or a portion of this money to the foodbank so they can provide food for those who are living on limited incomes on a daily basis. Doing this will also help those taking part to feel grateful for the choices and options they have and also that the 5 days will end. There will also be an increased awareness of shopping habits as we may usually buy what we like the look of, rather than only looking at the price and shopping choices—if your local shop is a large supermarket, there are far more cheaper options than at convenience stores and a bus fare or long walk to a bigger store may be difficult to manage.



A suggestion of items to buy includes porridge oats, milk, teabags, pasta, tinned tomatoes, chick peas, tinned sardines, baked beans and fresh carrots—all available from most major supermarkets for under £5 (see left—£4.83 at Lidl!). We do ask that you carefully consider if this is a practical option for you, especially if you do a very physical or manual job.

There will be a blog sharing experiences and thoughts from the foodbank team who are taking part in the Live on £1 appeal: [www.norwichfoodbank.blog](http://www.norwichfoodbank.blog). Please do have a look and share your own experience with us.



## Spectacular Support

While food donations are our main concern and the thing that keeps our core work going, like all other charities, we also need money for running costs and to help us with various projects we want to develop or start. We are very grateful to local groups and businesses who give us the opportunity to talk about our work spread and who provide practical support where possible, including extra shifts in the warehouse and volunteering at FISH clubs. We are therefore delighted that Figbar, Smithfield Foods and Smurfit Kappa continue to support our work with donations of food, money and time. And in January, we were welcomed as Howes Percival's charity of the year for 2019 (see right) and there are several ideas in the pipeline for how we can work together. Wymondham Rotary have chosen FISH as a project to support and have already raised £1,000 to help their local club with food and activity costs during the coming sessions. And we are one of three charities up for the 'Heart of the Community' vote in the Virgin Money Lounge on Castle street, which will result in a cash donation. For all of these opportunities and gifts, a sincere thank you to those who have made it happen.



We had a recent successful grant application with KPE4 for which we are extremely grateful, as this will support at least 7 FISH clubs running sessions in 2019 and contribute towards the 2019/20 Energy Bank (see page 1 'Winter Support').

We are really pleased to receive regular donations from a number of individuals through direct debits and standing orders, as well as via Local Giving and PayPal. A couple of people have hosted fundraisers through these platforms; one generated almost £1,000 through sponsorship! We will be affected by the recent announcement of the closure of BTMyDonate but are looking at other online platforms to give donors a choice. 'Easyfundraising', which generates a free donation when you shop online, is another way people support us. Thank you to all those who help us continue serve those who need us.

## Signposting Update

Part of the Trussell Trust model and something we strongly subscribe to is 'signposting' clients to other helpful agencies. Signposting means giving information to clients – we are not in a position to advise, but sharing contact details of people who can and explaining what they can offer means that we can further support those who come to us move on and out of crisis as quickly as possible. All those who use our service are referred by a care agency or professional (such as Citizen's Advice, Social Services, health workers and housing associations), but sometimes they are dealing with one particular issue and there are multiple areas that need to be addressed – for example debt, housing, benefits, mental health or telling people about social activities and events that are going on in the local area; many people are not only in need of food, but also company.

We have dedicated signposting volunteers at 3 of our 10 distribution centres – New Hope, St Stephens and Alive! / Gateway Vineyard – which cover 4 days of the week. We also have digital inclusion volunteers from Voluntary Norfolk at Norwich Central Baptist Church on one other day to support clients who need help with setting up email accounts or managing their Universal Credit claim (which is all online) or anything else web based.



Plus we've given out around 50 recipe kits (see our Spring 2018 newsletter) and made 4 referrals to 'Free Cakes for Kids' (see left for one of the cakes) which connects bakers to families that can't afford a cake for their child's birthday. These extras provide a great conversation starter between our volunteers and those who use our service and, despite it being a simple offer, it can make a massive difference to an individual or family and is so appreciated.

## Delightful Donations

We receive all manner of donations from a variety of donors – individuals, churches, schools, businesses and groups – and while most are foodstuffs and toiletries that we use in food parcels, occasionally we get gifts we can pass on to our partners or use in a different way. We have received over 1,000 beef burgers from a local farmer and multiple kilos of chicken from our friends at Smithfield Foods which have provided meals at FISH, Oak Grove Community Church alongside their foodbank session and several other free meals throughout Norwich. Thanks to Figbar's continued support of our work, we received £300 of supermarket gift vouchers from them, thanks to November and December sales of their Snickers dessert. And in December, a local business donated over 200 fancy tins of biscuits following a marketing event and these made a lovely addition to other festive treats that went out alongside the standard foodbank parcels throughout December

We've also had some great donations that aren't necessarily what you would expect – such as several boxes of books from author Gracie Wright from her Silly Eric series. Her second donation included a Christmas version where Eric donates to his local foodbank and, along with donations from Aviva and some individual donors, we put together and distributed over 200 Christmas presents to families struggling in December.

Thanks to EVERYONE who supports us with donations of food, toiletries, time, money and other things (!) to help us continue to help those in need.



**"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy." Proverbs 31:8-9**

For more information or to send us details of what you are doing for Norwich foodbank please email us at [admin@norwich.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:admin@norwich.foodbank.org.uk) or contact us at Norwich foodbank, Henderson Business Centre, 51 Ivy Road, Norwich NR5 8BF; Tel 01603 251733; website: [www.norwichfoodbank.co.uk](http://www.norwichfoodbank.co.uk); Charity number 1143528  
Norwich foodbank Patrons: **Delia Smith CBE & Susan Hill CBE.**