**FOOD BANK ANALYSIS FOR JULY 2018**

I hardly know where to begin my report for this month as so much has happened. However I’ll start with the number of people coming to us for help – adults 84 and children 138.

We operate from a 78 year old wooden building in the Bullcroft Park and earlier this month some vandals decided to get up onto the roof (which is covered by roofing felt ) and jump up and down on it. This resulted in three cracked major beams above the kitchen (from where we pack the bags) and the toilet area. It was whilst we were open on a Monday morning that a surveyor came in and said that we had to evacuate the area immediately in view of the fact that the roof could come down. To cut a long story short, on a very hot Monday afternoon, 5 volunteers emptied all the food from the three very large metal cabinets and two filing cabinets, which also hold food, and with the help of two Parks and Garden men we moved all the cabinets out of the kitchen area and into the large hallway of the building. We then of course had to put all the food back again. This now means that we are having to operate from a very public area which is not at all ideal. The building is shortly to be inspected to see if the beams can be replaced and we are not sure whether or not we will be able to remain open during the repair. There is also a major survey to be carried out later in August to assess the general state of the building.

All of this puts the Food Bank into a very precarious position as there are no alternative premises from which we could operate: also the storage container, for the overflow food, is now on hold until matters are resolved one way or the other. This has come at a very busy time for us as the School Voucher Scheme has just started. Last Thursday we gave out food to over 60 people in a two hour period. This resulted in us having to do a huge shop on Friday in order to re-stock and we spent over £400 to do this.

The one thing that is not in doubt is that we are needed by the community and it’s not our food bank but God’s. We were given confirmation of this by the fact that on the first Thursday we were open after the crisis two people, on separate occasions, told us that we had saved their lives – not because they were starving but because we had taken the time to talk to them and showed them love by the giving of the food.

You will see from all of this that it has been a very challenging time, physically, mentally and financially, but I thank God that we ARE still open and WE WERE able to re-stock the cupboards and we do have the space to be able to TALK to people if they want to share their story.

Please pray for this situation and particularly that alternative premises might be found where we can have everything under one – hopefully solid – roof!

With many thanks

Jean Burt