Wallingford Emergency Foodbank is unique in Oxfordshire being entirely supported by the public through both financial and food donations. We are however, like the 93% of food banks in the UK, as we have seen a rise in demand this year (Independent Food Aid Network). This will be related to the fact that the DWP reports that 43% of households living on Universal credit are in food insecurity – the state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. There were 4.1 million households on Universal Credit in November 2021. That means there are about 1.7 million households in food insecurity in the UK.

Many food banks are struggling to manage as donations have dropped. We are therefore very grateful to all our supporters as we had the most wonderful, generous response to our requests for food this month, on our Facebook page. If you use Facebook do ‘like and follow’ us as it’s a good way to keep in touch with what’s needed.

Our financial supporters have maintained their generosity too, meaning that we have been able to support a total of 64 Ukrainian families, including 60 children. In early May we agreed to offer 4-weeks’ worth of supermarket vouchers (obtained through the HUGGG system) at the rate of £25/week for children and £50/week for adults and older teenagers. A small number of families have asked for extra support as their Universal Credit payments have been delayed. To date we have issued 234 supermarket vouchers worth a total of £22,450. They live across our area including the villages of Aston Tirrold, Benson, Berrick Salome, Brightwell, Cholsey, Crowmarsh, Goring, North Moreton, North Stoke, Warborough, Woodcote and in Wallingford. Their most popular supermarkets are Tesco, Waitrose, Aldi and Sainsburys.

This is in addition to 172 adults and 89 children in a total of 94 local households. This is a figure very close to that for December, traditionally our period of highest demand.

We are also about to start sending food to some of the families who normally benefit from free school meals. The summer holidays can be a real challenge for families with few resources. Local schools have referred those in the greatest need.

Thank you all once again for your support. Our volunteers continue cheerfully to work hard to sort and pack all the food. So many people living near you, are hugely grateful for all the volunteers do and for all you give.

Alice Penney

Manager