**Manager’s report September 2022**

Like most other organisations Wallingford Food bank closed on the day of the late Queen’s State funeral. We did not feel able to operate usefully when all our referring organisations were closed.

Despite the unexpected closure we have had a busy month with 157 adults and 130 children from a total of 96 households asking for help. This is more than August and is a similar figure to July. It is a record number of children sadly – the last highest figure was 99 in a month.

Food inflation stands at 11% for the past year and this obviously affects our clients more than other people as food is a larger proportion of their spending. We are fortunate to have a volunteer who focusses on our shopping and seeks out the best prices on our behalf. Regularly the cheaper items are out of stock. Kate’s efforts save us money. She has calculated that our typical parcel of food for two adults and two children is valued about £48 – but as she says, ’the costs are going up each week.’

She has also recently investigated the amount of time our food takes to be heated, ready for eating, given the obvious cost implications. We have decided to no longer give out Fray Bentos pies as they take half an hour in the oven. We are also adding in items that can be eaten cold or microwaved as alternatives.

The flow of Ukrainian refugees seems to have slowed. We still had a dozen new families seeking help in August but only three in September. We have given out a total of £29,000 worth of supermarket vouchers to around 130 adults and 70 children in 84 households. We are glad to have been able to give this much needed support. We have had many messages of thanks and one lady has given back cash to the value of the vouchers we had previously sent her.

Just this week we are welcoming our first harvest donations. We are very grateful for all the food that comes to us in October. It sees us through to Christmas usually. If your organisation is collecting for us, thank you!

With many thanks for all your support

Alice Penney