**Manager’s report April 2023**

From the BBC website a week ago:

***About 3% of families in the UK - at least 2.1 million people - used a food bank in the year to March 2022, according to official figures.***

*That rose to about one in nine (11%) for families receiving state income-related benefits. Note that the figures miss most of the energy price crisis, which hit in April 2022.*

*Asked if they had used a food bank within the last 30 days, about 1% of families (at least 600,000 people) said yes - rising to about 3% for families on benefits.*

*Heather Buckingham, director of policy and research at the Trussell Trust, told the BBC that* ***a single person receiving Universal Credit gets £35 a week short of the amount the charity thinks is needed to afford the very basic essentials****.*

This month Wallingford food bank has sent food to 176 adults, 137 children in 118 households, compared with 144 adults, 78 children in 94 households in the same month last year. We are obviously seeing significant increases in the number of children; routinely double the number we fed last year. We additionally helped approximately 45 families, missing their children’s free school meals during Easter holidays with supermarket vouchers (referred via schools). Many thanks to David and Corinne for arranging this.

We're now at the end of our first year of helping Ukrainians fleeing the war in their country. To date we have helped around 250 people (including 95 children) with over £37000 worth of supermarket vouchers.

This month we have helped one new family plus second payments to 3 others.

Because of the significant increase in demand, we are going to open on Friday mornings from May, in addition to Mondays and Thursdays.

Four new drivers started in April - welcome to Eva, Helen, Liz and Tim! With the holiday season starting for many volunteers and with increasing demand for our services, a few more regular drivers would be most welcome. You need to have the use of a car (ideally with a big boot!), be available on a Monday, Thursday, or Friday between 1230 and 2pm, be able to carry heavy shopping bags and be willing to explore the far-reaches of our area seeking out the places where our clients live. We pay mileage of course.

With many thanks

Alice Penney

