**Manager’s report May 2023**

May was a unique month, with a Coronation, Eurovision, three Bank holiday Mondays, and Wallingford food bank opening on Fridays for the first time.

We have fed 228 adults, 158 children in 138 households this month, compared with 154 adults, 75 children in 98 households last year. I cannot do a like-for-like comparison just yet, but with the extra bank holiday, we were only open on an additional two days compared to last May. By the 12th May we had already sent food to more children than in the whole month last year.

The Fridays have been quite steady. We have only put two people on the packing shift initially and this rises to three in June and July. We have needed the three drivers delivering however, due to the geographical spread of addresses. The big difference is the relief it offers to Thursday. Food ordered after midday on Thursday is now delivered on Friday unless it is desperately needed. This allows drivers to depart promptly and takes the pressure off them a little on that day. We already have clients and referrers using Fridays to request food, so it seems to have been the right thing to do.

The driving team have additionally added to their load, collecting the donations from Waitrose on a weekly basis. Waitrose are losing their van, so can no longer deliver the donations from the box in store. This has happened seamlessly which is a huge relief. However, we would welcome more help with this, so if you have a reasonable size car and can manage a maximum of 30 minutes on Wednesday mornings, meeting at Waitrose at 0830, maybe once or twice a month we would be glad of offers for help from the end of June onwards.

I am very grateful for so many volunteers being flexible and understanding as we transition to operating on Fridays. It’s required a lot of thought and planning. I am especially grateful to David Tole, Gaby Clements and Celia Hallett who have wrestled with the rotas to make this all work. It’s a challenge to get the right number of packers and drivers in the right place at the right time and they have done an amazing job.

We were very grateful this month to have a large donation from the Oratory School. It is wonderful to still have that support from local organisations.

Thank you all so much

Alice Penney

