**Manager’s Report August 2023**

August has been a relatively quiet month at food bank but is still significantly busier than the same period last year. We have fed 213 adults, 141 children in 125 households. An increase in households over the month of 64.5% on last August. Cumulatively we are up 32% on the whole of last year.

These figures do not include the families that we have supported fortnightly through the summer holidays. These families are those who especially miss the free school meals that their children receive during term time. We take referrals from local schools and send the families supermarket vouchers. Depending on the supermarket in which they choose to use them, they can also buy school uniform with the vouchers. We hope that this supports children in their return to school next week.

We are finding that Fridays are well established and are similar to Mondays now in the number of requests for food. This puts us in a better position as we enter the busiest time of year for the food bank.

We have hit a significant milestone this month which anyone involved with food bank over the years will find remarkable. After each shift the session leader sends out an email to their colleagues, with details as to numbers of requests, donations, and needs for shopping. This month we finally saw the sentence, ‘We are running low on baked beans’. That event, more than anything else shows that we are in an unprecedented situation!

I would like to share with you a thank you email received this month.

*Thank you all so very much for the bags of food delivered to myself today.*

*it will make a massive difference to our diet too, some items we have not had for months.*

We do not send out exotic items, so this email made me think.

September brings the beginning of Harvest, so if you are involved with a school, church or other organisation that has a harvest celebration and want to donate your gifts to the food bank please get in touch as soon as you can. We operate from the Ridgeway church, which is a busy building and must plan deliveries to avoid causing chaos.

We hope that you have had a chance to rest over the summer and are feeling restored and ready for the autumn.

With thanks for all your support

Alice Penney