**Manager’s Report September 2023**

September has started steadily with requests for food from 174 households, including 311 adults and 101 children. The number of children having food from us is up by 61% already with two months of the food bank year yet to go.

Session leaders are the volunteers who answer the phone and let the packing volunteers know who to pack for. They have to be good at listening when a client calls in, often dealing with someone in distress. They also need to be able to extract all the relevant information accurately to ensure the client gets what they need. Equally they should be supporting the packing volunteers, spotting issues, and answering questions. Occasionally they have time to make coffee! It is a busy, challenging role – and this month I have made it more challenging still – but with a purpose.

A volunteer has moved our clients’ details onto an electronic database. This will be wonderful once we have all got used to it! It allows us to print the delivery label which should make the delivery drivers’ role a little easier. It will also allow me to respond more helpfully to queries from supporters, who sometimes ask how many people we support from their area. In the last week it has allowed us to identify someone when we only had part of their information, so they got their food. In general, it should be quicker now to find a client’s details and print their form, which will help that beleaguered session leader. This will be especially valuable as we enter the very busy period ahead of Christmas.

Anya Fergusson, who works full time for the NHS, has been the volunteer who has created the system for us. I really appreciate the considerable time and skill she has used to make the system user-friendly and her patience with my stupid questions. I also am very grateful to the session leaders who are all tackling this new system positively. By the end of October, it should all be second nature, (fingers crossed!)

We have had our first Harvest deliveries already for which we are very grateful. The food we receive now has historically fed clients well into January. This year it may not be quite as long as that, but it still makes a huge difference to feel that support from the local community. If you intend to send your harvest donations to us, please do get in touch as soon as you can, so arrangements can be made for receiving them. Email [agacclem@gmail.com](mailto:agacclem@gmail.com)

With many thanks for all your support

Alice Penney