**Manager’s Report September 2024**

For the first time since I took over the day to day running of Wallingford Emergency food bank, we have seen a decrease in demand from clients over the past month. This is slightly encouraging as my ambition, as no doubt is the ambition of every food bank volunteer in the country, is that food banks are no longer needed and can close down. However, we are not there yet. This month we fed 224 adults, 158 children in 106 households, a decrease of 36.1% in numbers of households. This compares to 281 adults, 204 children in 166 households last September. (We are much closer to the figures from September 2022:157adults, 130 children in 96 households.)

The need for our help is still high (and that is before anyone switches on their heating). What the new government decides to do in the coming months will also have a direct effect on our clients and the demand for our service.

Looking further ahead I can tell you that this year in response to the continuing high demand for food we are holding our first fundraiser.   We are delighted to host the Waterperry Opera Festival in a performance of an annual Christmas tradition, a concert version of the Messiah.  Their Messiah concerts have delighted sold-out audiences since 2021. A wonderful, festive evening awaits you with their ensemble of renowned singers and period instrumentalists. It will take place in St. Mary’s Wallingford on the evening of Sunday 8 December. Please make a note in your diary and watch out for information as to how to buy tickets.

But back to the present! We have had our first Harvest deliveries booked 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. For ideas as to what to donate, please consider tinned vegetables, long life milk and juice, jars of coffee and tea, tinned potatoes, tinned rice pudding and custard and cereal and jam. Despite everything we are well supplied with tinned fish and baked beans so no particular need for those.

If you do intend to send your harvest donations to us, please get in touch as soon as you can, so arrangements can be made for receiving them. Email Gaby, who is kindly organising the receiving of donations, [agacclem@gmail.com](mailto:agacclem@gmail.com)

Finally, I am delighted to report that we have received a very generous donation from the Rowse family trust. They had learned of our financial concerns and like many of you, were moved to support the food bank. Their donation, and others makes us feel more confident as we move into the colder months.

With many thanks for all your support

Alice Penney