

www.andoverfoodbank.org.uk

Volunteer Newsletter

All the latest news and events from the Andover Food Bank

Dear Food Bank volunteer,

July 2009

Welcome to our two monthly newsletter for Food Bank volunteers which aims to help you keep in touch with news, events and future plans at the Food Bank.

Recently, Food Banks nationally have had a lot of press coverage. An important article in The Tablet, the national Catholic weekly, has profiled our own Andover Food Bank. We look at what it had to say in more detail below.

As the economic crisis deepens the role of Food Banks is becoming more and more important. Over the last two months (to end June 09) the Andover Food Bank has fed 335 people – another significant increase of 32.4% for the same period last year.

Volunteer help has been of fundamental importance during this time – in the warehouse sorting food, running the administration in the office and helping with supermarket collections.

You, the volunteers, are continuing to provide essential support for local people in difficulty and your work is vital and greatly appreciated.

Dates for your diary

Supermarket collections

Sainsbury's 5 September, 31 October

ASDA 5 December

Results from previous collections

Sainsbury's 20 June 399.6 kg

ASDA 4 July 521.9 kg

Volunteers Evening and AGM

Our next volunteers evening and our very first Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 16th September.

A huge increase in demand for food boxes

For the first time since its founding the Food Bank ran low on supplies needed in June. Boxes for single people and families were down to one's week supply. This was a direct result of the dramatic increase in demand due to worsening economic conditions which has unfortunately coincided with a fall in donations - something most local charities are facing at the moment.

Food contributions are needed urgently and supermarket collections are crucial. The Food Bank is looking at new ways of getting donations and publicising its work to those who do not know about it yet. Some traditionally loyal supporters have also needed reminding recently as supplies decrease.

“Feeding a Need” – an article in the Tablet

The national Catholic weekly ran an article by journalist Isobel de Bertodano who had interviewed Trevor Sleath, Manager of the Andover Food Bank and Chris Mould, director of the Trussell Trust.

The statistics were impressive: the Andover Food Bank fed 1,785 people over the year – an increase of 42% on last year.

Trevor emphasised the current crisis in food supply: “Unemployment is rising and there are so many people who need our help that we are desperately short of food for the first time”. He warned that although market towns like Andover can look prosperous from the outside there are “pockets of real poverty in the town and surrounding area with drug addiction and homelessness causing serious social problems”.

The Food Bank was described as a “frontline charity” with “ambition and motivation” – and an estimated half of all shoppers in the town now contributing to supermarket collections.

Mr Mould of the Trussell Trust stressed that as the recession bites deeper Food Banks nationally (by the end of the year there will be 50 in Britain) will do much to expose the “hidden hunger” in the country and help those affected.

Food Distribution Centre

A rota has been set up for the centre and more volunteers have come forward to help run this new initiative but much more help is still needed. To get this important project, which will help the homeless and hungry in the heart of Andover, off the ground we need your support.

Please contact Trevor if you think you can help 01264 362111
www.andoverfoodbank.org.uk

Community Activities

Children from Bishops Wordsworth, Bishops Challoner and Marlborough College have worked at the Food Bank over the last two months – on their return to school some of them have given talks to their classmates about the work done at the Food Bank. Bishop Challoner School generously donated 135 kg of food in May.

Representatives from the Food Bank will be giving talks at churches throughout the county for Harvest Festival in the Autumn. Trevor will be talking at three different churches on Sunday 4 October. Many presentations are planned for local schools as well.

On 12 June Andover Churches Together ran a Family Fun day in Vigo Park at which the Food Bank was represented by a stall.

Local Press

The Andover Advertiser ran an article highlighting the need for food donations as the demand for boxes “soared”. It stated that the problem had been raised with Andover MP Sir George Young and that nationally The Trussell Trust (with which the Food Bank is linked) is campaigning to improve the benefits system.

The Andover Advertiser also reported on a collection at Testway Housing for the Food Bank.

Andover Sound on 106.4 has been a fantastic supporter of the Food Bank over the last few months reporting on supermarket collections and the resulting food collected in news bulletins and on their “What’s on” slot. One listener came into Sainsbury’s to fill a trolley just for the Food Bank before continuing with his weekend chores purely as a result of station’s publicity!

Andover Sound featured the Food Bank on Tuesday 9 June with an interview with Trevor Sleath which was replayed on every news bulletin. Trevor described the 50% rise in demand over the last year and stated “We don’t want to turn anyone down who needs our help”.

Andover Food Bank

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A registered charity number 246871

Thank you for supporting the Andover Food Bank

To find out more about what we do please visit

www.andoverfoodbank.org.uk

Thank you!