



ROCHDALE FOOD BANK

Affiliated to the Trussell Trust (Charity Number 1172470)

Newsletter Number 6 - January 2020



A brief word from the Editor. Welcome to our sixth Newsletter, which henceforth is to appear three times a year. It is hard to believe that it's already twelve months since we were struggling with massive repairs to our main premises at South Parade and even harder to believe that just a few months ago our shelves were close to empty and we were having to use financial donations to buy in sufficient food supplies to meet the ever-increasing needs of our clients!

What a difference a few months make. We are of course used to the bulk of our donations coming during the Autumn Harvest celebrations and the lead-up to Christmas, but in the latter stages of 2019 we witnessed an extraordinary degree of generosity from the people of Rochdale. I've dedicated this Newsletter to highlighting some of those individuals and organisations who have helped us so much but it's worth setting out some overall figures.



THE EDITOR SETS OFF FOR ANOTHER WEDNESDAY MORNING AT THE FOODBANK

In October we received 8803 kilogrammes of food, in November 6601 kilos and in December a massive 16471 kilos. This latter figure compares with the 10459 kilos donated to us in December 2018, an increase of around 60 per cent.

I'm not sure what the reasons for this huge increase are, but it may be that the publicity our Foodbank has received during the past year via the Rochdale Observer and Rochdale Online has certainly helped, as has the high-profile work of the Trussell Trust in highlighting food poverty across England.

What is certainly true is that while donations increase so too does the number of clients coming to our door. In October we provided food to 513 adults and 229 children, in November the figures were 540 and 275, and in December 471 and 252, giving an overall total across the 3 months of 1524 adults and 756 children. All of these months showed a major increase in need over those of 2018.

The result of the General Election suggests that, since the level of benefits looks unlikely to rise and the introduction of Universal Credit is to continue, there is no danger of our service not being required. Whatever your political views, there is no doubt that foodbanks have become for the moment a permanent feature of our country and who can be proud of that?

However, we are all extremely proud of the service we provide and with those thoughts, I'll wish all our volunteers, trustees, agencies, and all those churches, schools, businesses and individuals whose support is so crucial to us, a genuine if belated Happy New Year!

IN FOCUS – OUR GENEROUS DONORS

John Swinden, the owner of J and D Alexander Jewellers on The Walk in Rochdale just opposite the Foodbank, is pictured handing our Treasurer Mo Evenson a cheque for a very significant amount of money!

John, who has owned the shop since 2002, was named "Man of Rochdale" in 2018 because of his donations to local charities. He raises money through his singing, his stage name being John Alexander, and this isn't the first time he has made such a fantastic donation to our Foodbank.

We (and especially our clients!) are really grateful to you John!



JOHN SWINDEN PRESENTING THE DONATION TO MO EVENSON



CHRIS WOOD AND IAN SANDIFORD UNDERTAKING THEIR STINT IN FESTIVE FASHION

Every year in December, Tesco's Store in Sudden enables us to have a food collection; Foodbank volunteers spent three days cheerfully persuading generous shoppers to donate and the result was a splendid 169 boxes of food totalling 1991 kilogrammes in weight plus £225 in cash donations.

Our sincere thanks to the staff at Tesco's for their help and support, and to the fine men from Lovick's Furniture Stores who once again saved volunteers' backs and time by moving all the food to our Wheatsheaf store!



YEAR 8 PUPILS ALI HUSSAIN, DEKLIA LEIKEN, PHOEBE HARGREAVES AND ISHMAEL HUSSAIN

In November students in Years 8 and 10 at Falinge Park High School collected a massive 424 kilogrammes of food to donate to us

The pupils were greeted by Wednesday Volunteer Chris Martucci.

When Schools Coordinator Wendy Fell and I went to the school to say a massive thank you for their efforts we were given a placard containing a huge number of thank you messages from the students to our volunteers and another with a large number of very moving messages of support for our clients.

How lovely was that!

A HUGE THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SCHOOLS

The full list of schools which held Harvest or Christmas collections last year is as follows – many thanks to all the students and staff involved:

All Saints CE Primary, Bamford Academy, Belfield Community School, Broadfield Primary, Caldershaw Primary, Crossgates Primary, Healey Primary, Heybrook Primary, Holy Family RC Primary, Kentmere Primary, Littleborough Community School, Lowerplace Primary, Meanwood Primary, Milnrow Parish School, Moorhouse Primary, Norden Community School, Sandbrook Primary, Shawclough Primary, Smithy Bridge Primary, Spotland Primary, St Andrew's CE Primary, St Edward's CE Primary Castleton, St Mary's RC Primary, St Peter's CE Primary, St Vincent's RC Primary, Whittaker Moss Primary, Falinge Park High, Hollingworth High, Matthew Moss High, Oulder Hill High, St Cuthbert's RC High, Woodlands School Bury.

A HUGE THANK YOU TO ALL OUR CHURCHES

We also gratefully received donations from the following churches – again tremendous thanks to all the churches and their congregations:

Bamford Chapel, Brimrod Methodists, Christ Church Healey, Greenhill Methodists, Latter Day Saints Church, Littleborough Benefice, Milnrow Evangelical Church, Methodists, Norden Methodists, Ogden Baptist, Smithy Bridge Methodists, St Aidan's, St Andrew's, St Chad's, St Clement's, St James' Ashworth, St James' Wardle, St John's Facit, St Luke's Deeplish, St Mary's RC, St Mary's Balderstone, St Martin's Castleton, St Patrick's, St Paul's Norden, Thrum Hall Methodists, St Thomas's Kirkholt, St Vincent's, Syke Methodists, Thornham St John's.

Staff from **AST Hampson's Solicitors**, whose office is next door to our Foodbank, and from **Hansons Springs Ltd**, who are regular supporters of our Foodbank, brought in a large number of very generous and beautifully created Christmas hampers for our clients.

Dating and sorting the enormous amount of food we have been given has been (and continues to be) quite a task. I am hugely grateful to volunteers from various teams who have given up extra mornings to help with this work at our Wheatsheaf Centre store.

We have also received a considerable amount of help from various other sources, including staff from **Biffa** and **Lloyds Bank**.

The young volunteers from the **Cooperative Central Office** in Manchester (pictured) worked their socks off for a morning just before Christmas, sorting a massive number of boxes in that time. They were a real pleasure to work with as well.



CHARLOTTE LEACH, MAAEEZ BHAIJI, DONALD PALIN, ALAN HARRIS AND LAUREN HOLMES FROM THE COOPERATIVE CENTRAL OFFICE IN MANCHESTER

IN FOCUS – OUR VOLUNTEERS AND THEIR ORGANISER

Sue Cannell has been a volunteer and a member of the Tuesday team at our Foodbank for around 5 years, having been persuaded to join by a presentation Margaret Wight made to Rotary members at the Norton Grange. When Margaret and Iain were “retiring” in January last year, Sue says Margaret somehow contrived to persuade her to take over responsibility for recruiting, selecting and organising the 108 volunteers! And an excellent job she has made of it ever since.



SUE CANNELL

Sue says she has been on quite a steep learning curve but really enjoys meeting people in her new role. Her husband handily helps her with the computer side of things, and Sue reckons she has introduced around 15 new volunteers to the Foodbank team in the past year.

She says the standard of those volunteering is very high; as we all know, those applying have to be interviewed and produce references before Sue takes them round the Foodbank to show them what is involved.

Away from the Foodbank Sue has been a school governor, is still involved in other charities including Petrus, and loves gardening, always having had a passion for horticulture.

So, she's well placed to “grow” our team of volunteers.

R.I.P. – DIANA RUSHTON

We were all very sad to hear about the sudden death of Diana, one of our Friday volunteers. Diana was born in London but grew up in a children's home in Rochdale where she said she had a very happy childhood.

Diana was widowed twice but always maintained a positive attitude to life.

Her Team Leader, Wendy Fell, said “Diana was a very warm and forthright person – woe betide anyone who messed with her shelves!

We all admired her fortitude and were very fond of her – we'll miss her very much.”



DIANA RUSHTON - WHO SADLY PASSED AWAY RECENTLY

AND FINALLY,

Well it's the only chance I get to have one.....As always, this Newsletter will go in printed form to all volunteers and members of the Board of Trustees, while an electronic version will be sent to all associated churches and other agencies and to all members of Rochdale Council. My thanks to everyone who has contributed information and/or photographs and as always to Dave Drake for shaping my efforts into something worth looking at.

Best wishes from the Editor, John Rowe