

Update from the Foodbank: We are now providing food parcels again.

Since the start of the Covid 19 pandemic all walks of life have found day to day existence challenging. The Foodbank has seen an increase in demand of over 90%, which matches the national picture as reported by the Trussell Trust.

As many of you are aware, we had to change the way we function due to the practicality of social distancing at our warehouse and many of our volunteers having to self-isolate. Coupled with the drop in donations via our usual routes, it was decided that as from April 6th to introduce the issuing of supermarket cards /vouchers instead of food parcels. This has worked extremely well over the last 3 months. The generosity of the local community, individuals and businesses in financial donations has been extraordinary and has enabled us to fund the purchase of the supermarket vouchers. We have also been successful in applying for funding from Letchworth Heritage Foundation, North Herts District Council COVID 19 Community Fund, Tesco Bags of Help COVID Fund, B&M, Settle and other charitable funds.

New procedures in place for our Warehouse & Distribution Centres.

Our Warehouse Manager has developed new procedures for social distancing and hygiene practices. The warehouse is now open 4 days a week, sorting donations and packing food parcels. It is fully stocked with supplies, mainly through food donated by Tesco that has been distributed to us by British Gas as part of the national food distribution scheme. Any short fall in items have been purchased. **Our Distribution Centres at Letchworth, Hitchin & Baldock are open** as usual Tuesday and Friday 10 - 12.00 midday, manned by a small team of volunteers, to enable clients to collect food parcels. Due to social distancing we are not able to provide tea & coffee or offer a friendly chat. Our clients are still referred to us in the usual way from the varying referral agencies, either using the red referral form or in many cases now via email. We have enough stock for 4-6 weeks. We, however, expect demand to continue to increase as more families and individuals find themselves in need due to further redundancies after the Government furlough scheme comes to an end. Our focus now is to ensure we receive enough food donations to be able to help support the neediest in our community.

Thank you once again for your tremendous support; enabling us to help people and families in need.

Please donate:

Our Supermarket collection boxes are in use again:

We are extremely grateful to our local supermarkets, Sainsbury's & Waitrose in Hitchin, and Morrison's & Sainsbury's Local in Letchworth.

If you are able, please donate via the supermarket collection points.

Plus, we are asking churches that are reopening if they can have a collection box. The Foodbank drivers will be able to collect or donations can be taken to any of the distribution centres when open.

Items urgently needed include:

Shampoo
Shower Gel
Deodorant
Toothpaste
Toilet Rolls
Size 5 & 6 Nappies
Sponge pudding
Tinned Rice Pudding
Tinned Custard



Working with other Agencies: Throughout the current situation we have worked with other local agencies to help maintain a co-ordinated approach to helping those most in need, including Letchworth Heritage Foundation, Letchworth Community Support Group, Hitchin Food Provision Group who provide food parcels to families, Hitchin Roundtable, Baldock Community Support Group.

We also continue to work closely with the Howard Day-care Centre, the Salvation Army and Settle.

This co-ordinated approach will continue as we all adjust to new ways of working to keep safe and help support others.

Various community groups have organised food collections, including the Sant Nirankari Mission in Hitchin who brought an amazing quantity of items to our Hitchin Distribution Centre. The Sant Nirankari Mission is a worldwide organisation, originating in India with a mission in Hitchin.



Polestar Pottery Fundraiser for the Foodbank: To raise funds for our Foodbank a local potter is selling handmade pottery.

To see the fabulous vases, jugs, plates, tea light holders, plant pots and more made at Polestar Pottery go to.

<http://www.facebook.com/PotteryFundraiser>

Purchase by donation direct via the Facebook link, local delivery can be arranged.

Thank You: We want to thank everyone who continues to support the foodbank without the generosity of the local community we could not maintain the service.

Monetary support is always welcome. If you feel you can help in this way, please refer to our website on how to donate:

www.letchworth.foodbank.org.uk



For further information on the Foodbank, how to obtain a referral, find our Distribution Centre, or make a donate please go to our website:

www.letchworth.foodbank.org.uk

or

See our Facebook page

FOODBANK STATISTICS

Summary for period – April 1st- June 30th 2020

No. of referral vouchers fulfilled: 604

Number of people supported: 1791

Reason for referral	%
Low Income	51
Benefit changes & delays	21
Debt & delayed wages	3
Other e.g. sickness, domestic abuse	23
Homeless	2

Distribution Centre	No. of Vouchers	No. of Clients
Letchworth (Howard Memorial Hall)	312	983
Hitchin (Scout Hut, Our Lady Church)	178	523
Baldock (St. Mary's Church Hall)	64	154
Other	50	131
Total	604	1791

Newsletter Feedback

Please email Susan Kostrzewski, Foodbank Newsletter Editor. susan.kostrzewski@hotmail.co.uk

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