



# News-Feed

*"Providing emergency food for people in crisis"*



Issue 12: July 2021

Wirral Foodbank volunteers have been honoured with The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest award a voluntary group can receive in the UK, equivalent to the MBE for volunteer groups.



This award is a tribute to the vision and commitment of a small group of local clergy and other community leaders who met ten years ago this month, to consider the possibility of setting up a foodbank to serve the Wirral, especially Birkenhead. During the ensuing decade, hundreds of volunteers have worked in our distribution centres, warehouse, and office, have contributed their technical skills, or have collected food on our behalf in churches, companies, and supermarkets. Over the years many of those volunteers have retired because of changed circumstances, ill health, or old age, while some have died, but the award recognises all their contributions.

The award makes special mention of the work which Wirral Foodbank has done during the covid pandemic, when we have worked closely with officers of Wirral Council. During the lockdown, some of us were frustrated at not being allowed to volunteer, but new volunteers took our places.

The award was made after a process of assessment conducted by two of the Deputy Lieutenants. Reading between the lines of that process, I think the two key qualities they were looking for were that Wirral Foodbank is sustainable and strategic. One of the Deputy Lieutenants commented that he was particularly impressed by our desire to work towards eradicating the need for our existence.

Thanks, and congratulations on behalf of the Trustees to all volunteers, past and present, whose work has been recognised by this award. **Rev. Colin Hart, Chair of Trustees**



Rev. Colin Hart, Chair of Wirral Foodbank, receiving the award, on behalf of Wirral Foodbank, from the Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside, Mr Mark FW Blundell

Since September 2020 we have:

- supported 8,643 people through our foodbank centres and Wirral Council Hub, equivalent to 77,787 meals
- distributed 23 tonnes of food to local schools, providing emergency food support to families - 1,264 adults and 743 children.

The actual number of people attending our foodbank centres is down on the comparable period for 2018/19 (pre-pandemic), however we have seen an increase in the number of schools requesting emergency food support for families. The total number of people supported since September 2020 is comparable to pre-pandemic levels.

The environment within which we operate is changing. In the past 12 months there has been an increase in local food charities and social supermarkets. We see this as complimentary to our work, as we concentrate on providing emergency food support to people who are facing a crisis situation.

We believe that the provision of food should not be the solution to poverty, regardless of how it is distributed. Wirral Foodbank Plus continues to support people who come to our Foodbank Centres. Foodbank Plus seeks to address the underlying reasons why people need emergency food support. Since September 2020, Foodbank Plus has supported 2,475 clients, with 5,777 issues. Your support makes a real difference, as highlighted in the case study below.

## Food Donations

For the period September - May 21, we received 159 tonnes in food donations, compared with pre-pandemic levels of 157 tonnes for the same period in 2018/19.

For our latest shopping list please click [here](#):

## News from Trussell Trust

Trussell Trust has issued its latest State of Hunger report, read the report in full [State of Hunger - The Trussell Trust](#).

## Stop Press

We have opened a new foodbank centre in Birkenhead, this will combine all other centres in the area. The centre will initially be open Monday - Friday 1pm - 3pm, with plans to extend opening hours later in the year. It is located in Grange Road West (previously occupied by the Wirral Centre for the Deaf). The building is leased by SVP; Wirral Foodbank will sublet part of the building. The centre will provide a range of services to the community of Birkenhead. If you are interested in volunteering, press [here](#).

## Client Case Study

### Background:

Mr X received emergency food support, as a result he was referred to Foodbank Plus. He lives alone and has poor physical and mental health problems, he has a two bedroom [Social Housing](#) property, as he relies on his family to visit and stay overnight, to support him with his care needs. He had a rent shortfall due to [under occupancy](#) and this had created rent arrears, which he was unable to repay. He stated that this was causing his mental health to become worse.

### Wirral Foodbank Plus:

Identified that he was potentially entitled to [Personal Independence Payment](#), due to his ill health and the impact this was having on his daily living, along with potential entitlement to [Discretionary Housing Payment](#). He was assisted to apply for both and was successful with both applications. This resulted in an award of £89.60 Personal Independence Payment each week, along with a backdated payment of £1,995. He was also awarded £48.86 Discretionary Housing Payment each week, along with a backdated payment of £760, this cleared the rent arrears in full. The total financial gain was £2,755 backdated awards and £138.46 better off each week/ £7,199 per year going forward.

### Impact:

Mr X can now stay in his current accommodation, with the threat of rent arrears and possible repossession action in the future removed, as a result of Wirral Foodbank Plus intervention. The worry of building up further rent arrears debt is also removed, causing him much relief. His weekly income has been increased due to the award of Personal Independence Payment, which means he will be able to afford food and fuel, essential to his good health. He was very grateful for our help and said 'a big weight has been lifted off my shoulders'.

## Report from Wirral Foodbank AGM

The latest annual report 2019 - 2020 for Wirral Foodbank is available [Annual Report of Trustees 2019 – 2020 | Wirral Foodbank](#)

We are grateful for the support from the following organisations



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Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered in England charity number 116 7967

Wirral Foodbank is committed to protecting your privacy and will process your personal data in accordance with current Data Protection legislation. Wirral Foodbank collects information to keep in touch with you and supply you with information relating to our work. A full data privacy statement is available from the foodbank on request. If you do not wish to receive further information from Wirral Foodbank, please email [manager@wirralfoodbank.org.uk](mailto:manager@wirralfoodbank.org.uk) with the word "unsubscribe" in the subject line, and your full name in the body of the email.