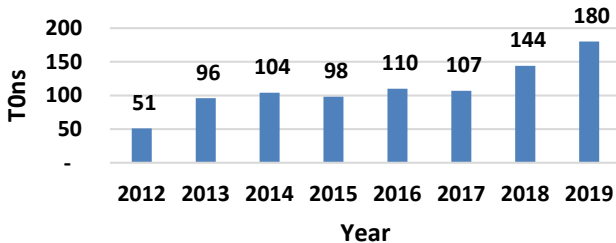


A message from Revd Colin Hart, Chair of Wirral Foodbank

Food Donations



Of all the statistics for 2018-19 which are reported in this newsletter, the one which has struck me most forcibly is the increased donations of food and other essential supplies. Almost every item which we give to people in need has been donated by members of the public on the Wirral. People in our area have been very generous towards those who are less fortunate than themselves. I am especially grateful for that generosity when people from other foodbanks tell me that donations in their area fall short of what they need to meet the demand.

Judging from conversations I have had, I think one of the main motivations for this generosity is an awareness that almost anyone could find themselves unexpectedly unemployed or too sick to work, reliant on inadequate social benefits and needing the help of a foodbank. It is not unusual for clients to tell me that they have worked all their lives and never imagined they would have to resort to “charity” to feed themselves and their families. I am glad to tell them, “People on the Wirral know there are many people like you who through no fault of your own need some help, and they have given food and toiletries because they want to help you. We are just the middle-people.”

Many of the people who turn to us for help do so because they are not receiving enough via Universal Credit to meet their needs. It is a matter of simple arithmetic: if Universal Credit is calculated to be enough to meet a household’s needs, but this amount is reduced by a cap on family size, a cap on housing benefit in accommodation deemed to be larger than the household requires (the “bedroom tax”) and repayment of an advance payment, the resulting figure is inevitably less than the household requires.

The only long-term solution to these problems is for all voters to put pressure on the Government via their MPs, to improve the conditions and amounts of payments made under Universal Credit. In the short term, we are very grateful on behalf of our clients for the generosity of the public in our area and hope it will continue as long as it is needed.

Rev Colin Hart, Chair of Wirral Foodbank

Key Stats for 2019

93% of people visited the food bank between 1 – 3 times in the last six months (see note 1)

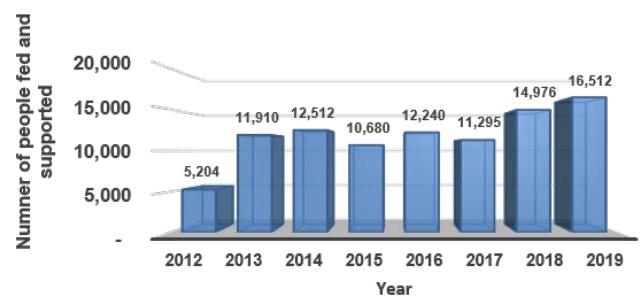
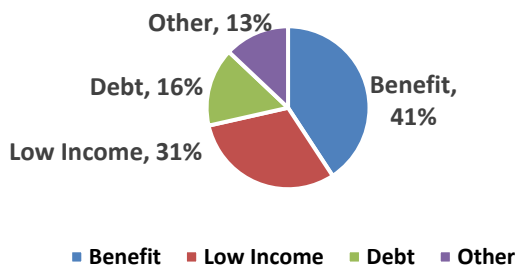
25% increase in single parent families using the foodbank.

180 tons of food donated, 25% increase on 2018.

16,512 people supported, 10% increase on 2018.

Note 1: 62% one visit, 21% two visits, 10% three visits, 7% more than three visits

Reasons for using the foodbank



In 2019, there was a 10% increase in the number of people needing our support, compared to the previous year. When the Foodbank started in 2012, it was never thought that we would experience the number of people now needing our help. It is only through the generosity of our donors and volunteers that we can continue to meet this demand. Food and monetary donations continue to increase year on year. We are overwhelmed and humbled by such support.

In 2019, we opened a new Distribution Centre at Christ Church, Oxtou. We are grateful to those who host our Distribution Centres, who provide their premises at no cost.

We are indebted to our incredible team of over 300 volunteers, who volunteer at the Warehouse, Office, Distribution Centres and Supermarket Collections. We are also grateful for those who assist us with our IT, Website and publishing.

Our reverse Advent was a great success, this contributed to an incredible 43 tons of food donated in the last three weeks of December. In anticipation of this, we took on a further warehouse to accommodate the expected increase in donations. The photograph illustrates some of the food donations received during Christmas, stored in our new warehouse.



As we begin 2020, it is almost certain that demand on our service will continue.

Thank you to all for your support.

Richard Roberts, General Manager, Wirral Foodbank

Foodbank Plus

In March 2018, Wirral Foodbank and Citizens Advice Wirral launched Foodbank Plus. A dedicated Citizens Advice Advisor is based at our busiest centres. As at the end of December 2019, Foodbank Plus had supported 1,782 individuals, presenting with 2,888 issues e.g. debt, benefit, low income. An incredible 79% of issues were resolved at the foodbank centre on the same day; the remainder were referred into Citizens Advice for further support. Foodbank Plus is funded from external sources and we are now seeking new funding to continue the project for a further two years.

News from Trussell Trust

“State of Hunger is the largest ever piece of research into hunger and food bank use in the UK. This three-year project, commissioned by Trussell Trust and carried out by researchers at Heriot-Watt University, will help to understand the scale of hunger and poverty in the UK.

The research reveals, for the first time, the key drivers of food banks use. Problems with the benefits system were widespread. Ill health and challenging life experiences such as eviction or divorce are also pushing many people into hunger and poverty, and many either don't have or have exhausted formal and informal support options.”

NEARLY 75% OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE USED A FOOD BANK HAVE AT LEAST ONE HEALTH ISSUE.



TWO-THIRDS OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE USED A FOOD BANK HAVE HAD PROBLEMS WITH THE BENEFITS SYSTEM IN THE PAST YEAR.



THE AVERAGE WEEKLY INCOME AFTER HOUSING COSTS FOR PEOPLE REFERRED TO FOOD BANKS IS JUST £50.



94% OF PEOPLE REFERRED TO FOOD BANKS ARE DESTITUTE.



STATE OF HUNGER



Download a full copy of the report from:

<https://www.trusselltrust.org/2019/11/05/state-hunger-2019-whats-driving-hunger-uk/>

We are grateful for the support of the following organisations



Contact Details

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Email: enquiries@wirralfoodbank.org.uk Tel: 0151 638 7090

Charitable incorporated organisation registered in England with charity number 1167967

Data Protection

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 with the word “unsubscribe” in the subject line, and your full name in the body of the email.