



# News-Feed

March 2025

Issue: 19



Wirral

**Foodbank**

Together with Trussell

## A message from Phil Davies, Chair, Wirral Foodbank



As we enjoy the warmer weather which Spring has brought us, lots of people feel happier about life. Unfortunately, too many are still struggling to make ends meet. The cost of living continues to hit many families really hard, with increases in Council Tax, rents, water bills and the price of energy. Although the government recently announced some welcome news on increases to the national minimum wage, universal credit, and additional funding to help people get back into the labour market, this was accompanied by cuts to benefits which are likely to affect large numbers of people. May I take this opportunity to once again thank our volunteers, staff, and donors for the fantastic work they do to enable Wirral Foodbank to help individuals and families in need. As well as providing emergency food we need to step up the campaigning work to persuade those in authority to tackle the underlying causes of poverty and ensure that everyone has the basics to ensure a decent quality of life.

Finally, can I welcome Paul Franklin who will take over from me as Chair of Trustees from September and can I remind everyone that we are keen to fill a vacancy for Treasurer of Wirral Foodbank. If you are interested or know of someone, please contact [manager@wirralfoodbank.org.uk](mailto:manager@wirralfoodbank.org.uk)



## The Facts September 2024 – March 2025

- ❖ 32% increase in emergency food parcels post-Covid.
- ❖ 8,105 emergency food parcels.
- ❖ 34% of people attending are families.
- ❖ 117 tonnes of food distributed.
- ❖ 76 tonnes of food donated.
- ❖ 9 tonnes of food purchased.

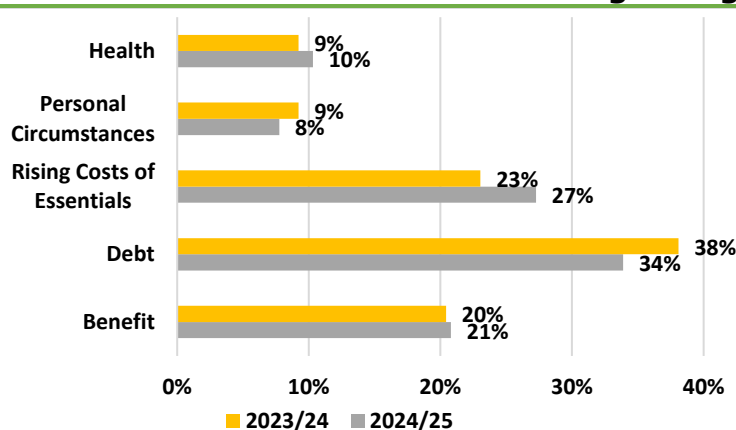
### Volunteer Vacancies

We are recruiting volunteers for Thursday and Friday at our foodbank centres. If you are interested please select the following link [Volunteer](#) or email [enquiries@wirralfoodbank.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@wirralfoodbank.org.uk)

### Wirral Foodbank Meeting Annual Review

You are invited to join us on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> September, 7pm at St Alban's Parish Centre, St Alban's Road, Wallasey, CH44 5UD. Guest speaker - Andrew Forsey OBE, National Director, Feeding Britain.

## The reasons for needing emergency food support



The reasons for needing emergency food support in Wirral are in line with the same period last year (September 2024 – March 2025.) There is an increase in cost of essentials and debt, which is no surprise as the cost-of-living continues to disproportionately affect those on the lowest income.

Find out more from [Trussell](#)

## The challenges ahead

Notwithstanding the recent announcement by the Government of proposed cuts to benefits, which are still subject to consultation and need to be voted on by MPs, the following changes start in April:

- [Council Tax Support](#). Prior to the changes, and dependent on income, some residents received 100% Council Tax support – all residents will now be expected to pay 17.5% Council Tax that is due on the property they live in, this equates to **£33** per month for Band A property, increasing to **£49** per month for Band D for those previously paying no Council Tax.
- [Local Housing Allowance rates](#) will be frozen from April 2025, whilst at the same time private rents are expected to increase. Many in the private sector, who receive housing benefits, will have to fund the increase in the rent shortfall. Based on a two-bedroom property, this could be an increase of **£48** per month.
- Increase in water bills by 32% over five years, with an average water bill increasing by **£14** per month.
- Energy price cap to rise by 6%, with average bills increasing by **£10** per month.

The above increases equate to a minimum of **£105** per month, that individuals need to find. This should be viewed against increases in benefits of 1.7% and 6.7% in the National Living Wage (an increase of £0.77 per hour).

Between now and September, we will be collecting data, to assess what impact these changes will have. We will also have a clearer understanding of the actual cuts to benefits, and their potential impact.

## Foodbank Plus

We are reminded that behind the statistics are individuals. Foodbank Plus, commissioned by Wirral Foodbank and delivered by Citizens Advice Wirral, is vital to address the underlying issues that many clients face. The following is a case study of a client who recently attended Wirral Foodbank and the importance of Foodbank Plus in supporting them.

The client was in receipt of state pension, Personal Independence Payment, Housing Benefit and Council Tax exemption. The client's wife was her husband's carer and received carers allowance. She explained that she had recently reached pension age and was now receiving state pension, at the same time her carers allowance for her husband stopped. When they queried this with DWP, they were incorrectly advised that as his wife was now receiving her state pension, she was no longer eligible for carers allowance.

After struggling for 9 months, they could no longer afford to eat and heat their home. They had no option but to reach out to the foodbank.

Foodbank Plus supported the client to get a certificate of underlying entitlement to carers allowance, which could then be used to dispute that the clients were entitled to [Pension Credit](#) based on the [the Carer Premium](#).

After 5 months of "protracted discussion" with pension credit, DWP finally awarded Pension Credit, due to the harm it had caused the clients. **The financial value for this outcome was an extra £54 per week, plus a backdated payment of £1,404.28. As they were now receiving pension credit it meant that they were also are entitled to:**

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |   |                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- winter fuel payment - £300 per year</li><li>- free prescriptions - £20 per month</li><li>- free eye tests and glasses - £30 per month</li><li>- the warm home discount - £150 per year</li><li>- free TV license - £169.50 per year</li></ul> | } | = £1,219.50 per annum |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|

The clients could not thank Foodbank Plus enough and used the backdated pay to top up their fuel meter.

## Donations

We are grateful for the generous support of our donors. As reported, we continue to see a demand for our services and although there has been slight decline in the number of clients attending, when compared to last year, there is still a need for emergency food support. At the same time there has been a reduction in food donations. Can you please help by donating a few items per week at one of the following [locations](#) or organise a collection at your local church, work place etc.

## Meet our Volunteers

Katy started her involvement at the foodbank in 2019 doing work experience for her course at Activate college. When she left college, she was delighted that she could continue as a volunteer alongside her support staff.

Katy enjoys working at the warehouse sorting items from a trolley and putting them in the correct place.



In 2020 the country went into lockdown, but Katy continued with her foodbank volunteering from her mum's house. This included collecting items that people had donated from around the Wirral and sorting them and fresh fruit and vegetables into bags for her support worker to take to the depot.

Katy continued with her collection and sorting of items back in her flat and was delighted when she was able start back at the depot. She and her support staff start their shift with a warmup routine to "Chain Reaction!"



Katy was very proud when Wirral Foodbank volunteers received the Queens award for voluntary service in 2021. (Katy with Mr Mark Blundell, Lord- Lieutenant of Merseyside)

Katy is very proud of her volunteering and being a useful member of society.



## Support Wirral Foodbank

### SHOPPING LIST

#### Items we are most in need of:

- Tinned Rice Pudding
- Tinned Fruit
- Tinned Potatoes
- Tinned Meat
- Jam

Select [Donate food](#) to find out the latest items we need.



#### Thank you to all our donors.

If you would like to know more about Wirral Foodbank, why not invite us to your place of worship, organisation, school etc? Please contact: [manager@wirralfoodbank.org.uk](mailto:manager@wirralfoodbank.org.uk)

#### Vacancy for Treasurer of Wirral Foodbank

If you are interested or know of someone who may be, please contact: [manager@wirralfoodbank.org.uk](mailto:manager@wirralfoodbank.org.uk)

Information about the role can be found at [Treasurer](#).



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Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered in England charity number 116 7967

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