



Newsletter July 2015

Thanks to the dedicated workforce of volunteers coordinated by Brigitte Sweeney, Kirkcaldy Foodbank continues to fulfil its role as a key provider of much-needed food support for local people, funded by local people and staffed by local people.

The collection and packaging hub is still in Dysart St Clair Church of Scotland, and the Foodbank is very grateful to the Minister, congregation and Kirk Session for allowing this to continue, particularly since it puts much of their basement out of use. Since losing a much-needed storage facility at St Bryce Kirk, Dysart is the main storage facility for our ever-expanding stock, and board members are actively searching for suitable premises which are large enough, secure and accessible. This is no easy task but we are hopeful that a new storage facility will be identified soon. Food banks across Fife face similar storage problems to ours and discussions are to take place with Fife Council Asset team to investigate all possibilities.

DISTRIBUTION CENTRES

Our busiest distribution centre is probably St Bryce Kirk, which is in a central position and relatively close to the bus station. Staff there report a steady demand for food parcels, particularly from young, single people. Although the distribution point in the Methodist Church is still operating, the small numbers of clients requiring parcels is small and volunteers running the Credit Union there have offered to distribute food parcels if necessary. Freeing up Foodbank volunteers for tasks elsewhere.

Foodbank volunteers are now staffing the food outlet at Linton Lane and have been allocated a room for this purpose which is available from 9.30 till 12.30 on 5 mornings a week.

The Carmelite Convent in Dysart has ministered for many years to local people in need and until recently augmented this with self-referrals for Foodbank parcels. The sisters no longer feel able to participate in this way but are continuing as before to provide help for local people in need.

NEW REFERRERS

Potter About, the busy and popular café in Burntisland is run by Pat and Lorna, who also organise food aid for local needs. Pat Hanson works for Christians Against Poverty (CAP) and recently requested that she should be an official referrer for Kirkcaldy Foodbank. As she works directly with clients and fulfils all our criteria, the Board of Trustees was happy to accept her offer. This is in addition to the referrer status which the Kirkcaldy drop-in centre already has.

The Board has received a request from *16+ Learning Choices Team* to become Referrers.

Maureen Campbell, (Manager of service) and Matthew Ritchie (Keyworker) gave an outline of their work supporting those young people leaving school with “negative destinations”. They worked with each of Kirkcaldy’s High Schools. Most of these young people are in a very vulnerable situation and their 5 key-workers are in an excellent position to assess whether they (and their families) are in need of emergency food. It was agreed that the team should become Referrers.

Kingdom Housing and the YMCA have also just come on board as referrers.

PUPILS AND STUDENTS HELP OUT

Several schools and Fife College have made valued contributions to the Foodbank in recent months. Lynn Jenks reported that part of the Sainsbury’s event on 23rd and 24th May was a bag-packing service on one of the days. Grateful thanks again to all schools who have contributed recently,

particularly Kirkcaldy High School pupils, who regularly organise in-school collections for us.

On 5th May, Fife College held a charity dinner in aid of the Foodbank and this event was supported by a number of Foodbank members.

Starley Hall School, Burntisland, recently organised a pop-up clothes shop in the Mercat. Two senior pupils, Alex and Yasmine, wrote to Cllr. Judy Hamilton and David Torrance MSP with an idea for helping Kirkcaldy Foodbank. Having collected donations of clothing for a full 6 months, they then persuaded the management team of the Mercat that it would be a good idea to stage the event in a vacant retail space. A surprise visit as pupils and helpers were setting up from the manager of British Home Stores produced a donation of a whole rack of brand new garments for sale and at the end of the day the group was proud to be able to donate around £2000 in cash and food donations to the Foodbank. Well done everyone and thank you!

Iain Anderson, Angela Gourlay and Carol Latimer attended Starley Hall School's end-of-term open day on 9th July, where they saw a video presentation created by Yasmine and were able to thank the pupils publicly and award certificates of excellence on behalf of the school to Yasmine and Alex, who was also presented with the Pupil of the Year Award by the school's Director, Mr. Phil Barton.



l. to r. Phil Barton, Yasmine, Alex, David Torrance MSP

OTHER DONATIONS

Donations and offers of help come in from many different churches, clubs and organisations. A very recent donation came from Kinghorn Lunch Club, whose members held a collection following a talk given by a Board member. Club organisers, Yvonne Georgeson and Elsie Tribe used their donation of £40 to buy food from Morrison's, Kirkcaldy. Not only that - they persuaded Morrison's to donate a further £20 worth of food as well!



Elsie and some of the members presenting their food donation to Carol

The car boot sale held at Linton Lane on 21st May raised £318. 60p. minus the cost of hiring Linton Lane.

MAKING OUR PRESENCE KNOWN

We now have 3 extra pop-up banners. It was decided that we should acquire 3 extra banners for use at awareness-raising events, etc. It was possible to purchase these from existing funds rather than make a specific donation appeal.

Judy Hamilton, Iain Anderson and Carol Latimer attended Fife Council forum for local food banks on Wednesday 3rd June in Fife House. Contact with representatives from other food banks and welfare organisations is always useful and it was interesting to note that many of our own observations on the causes of food emergencies are exactly similar to those of other food banks, the chief one being benefits sanctions.



On 1st July Angela Campbell, Judy Hamilton and Hugh MacKenzie represented Kirkcaldy Foodbank at the Royal Garden Party at the palace of Holyrood in Edinburgh. The sun shone and, as you can see from the photo, they all did us proud!

The Board of Trustees meets once a month to discuss ongoing issues, consider applications from potential referrers, coordinate planning and collate financial and governance reports and statistics. The current trustees are:

Ian Campbell - Chairperson who also liaises with our partnering agencies

Judy Hamilton - Vice-chair of Kirkcaldy Foodbank

John Cullen - Secretary of the Foodbank who attends many events on the Foodbank's behalf

Lynn Jenks - treasurer of the Foodbank, who is also on the Schools Committee and the Supermarket Committee

Brigitte Sweeney - our volunteers coordinator

Carol Latimer - writes and circulates our newsletters, newsbites and press releases

Matthew McWilliams - deals with the Foodbank's online referral system and website

Megan Nawrot - deals with our legal matters, website and social media and is in the process of setting up a business subcommittee

Marc Prowe - leader of our faith groups subcommittee

Other volunteers with particular roles are:

Iain Anderson - provides nutritional advice for the contents of our food parcels, liaises between the Foodbank and Fife Council and is a member of the supermarket subcommittee

Graham Gourlay - deals with the website and monitors our emails and ensures that the emails are passed on to the relevant person or group

Kerry Horsburgh - responsible for sending out our thank you letters

Angela Gourlay - the leader of our schools subcommittee

Thanks to the hard work of all our volunteers, in April Kirkcaldy Foodbank was able to put enough food on the table to provide 3519 meals. Since December last year we have distributed 3931 food parcels; enough to make around 62,559 meals. That's a lot of food donated by a lot of generous people. Let's hope (as we always do) that the need diminishes by the end of the year.