

## Phew!

It is often said in retail that the majority of business is done in the run-up to Christmas and in January. That seems to hold good for the Foodbank too and although we have unfortunately seen a general increase in client need this year (and in December we usually experience a peak in client numbers), this year we broke yet another record with 5769 meals being provided, compared with 5400 in December 2016.

Fortunately this need was matched by the generosity of our donors, with the weight of food donated so far this year up 10% on 2016/17. The additional demand generated by the move to Universal Credit has not impacted as much as we had feared and the Food Pantry is proving a blessing to those whose needs extend beyond those which can be met by the standard Trussell Trust '3 vouchers' system.

## The Food Pantry

On a snowy Tuesday morning the Food Pantry at Grace Baptist Church was providing a warm welcome and retreat for its members.

The newest arm of the Foodbank, launched in November last, provides a welcome avenue for those whose needs extend beyond those that can be met within the normal Trussell Trust 'rules'. Members are referred to the Pantry from the Foodbank itself, often the Welfare Benefits Advice section.

They pay £4 per week and are then able to select up to £20 worth of well known brand grocery and household items from the shelves in a room at Grace Baptist church which is laid out like a mini convenience store. Each shelf is colour coded according to value and clients then select items which approximate to the £20 total value.



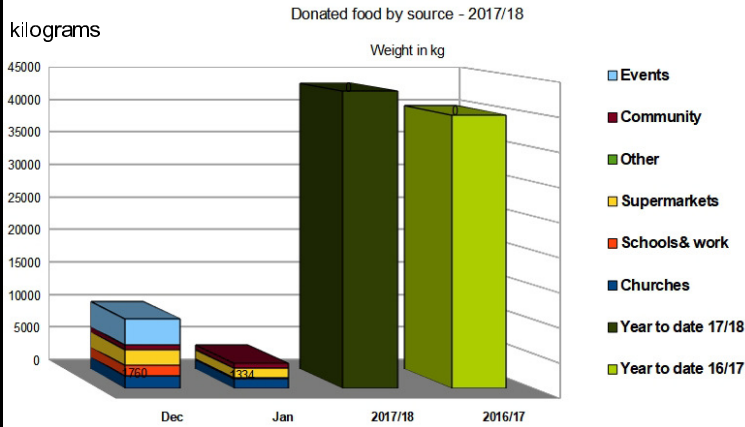
It is clear that members welcome the dignity and choice making their purchase gives them and they are seen by the volunteers at the Pantry as friends who drop in weekly for a cup of tea and a chat, as well as collecting much needed groceries. Talking to Abigail from the Salvation Army, who was there on the morning I dropped in, she was full of praise for the way in which all the arms of the Foodbank are helping the vulnerable families that she is assisting. Other support agencies such as Christians Against Poverty (CAP), Sefton Advocacy service, and Living Well in Sefton are also available to provide what support they can.

Restocking of the shelves is largely done with purchases from the Fareshare warehouse in Speke, with the foodbank van being used for a weekly run there each Friday. This is supplemented by fresh milk, donated by Southport's Bates Dairy, more recently toiletries which were 'recovered' at the security gates at Liverpool airport and other ad hoc donations from local firms.

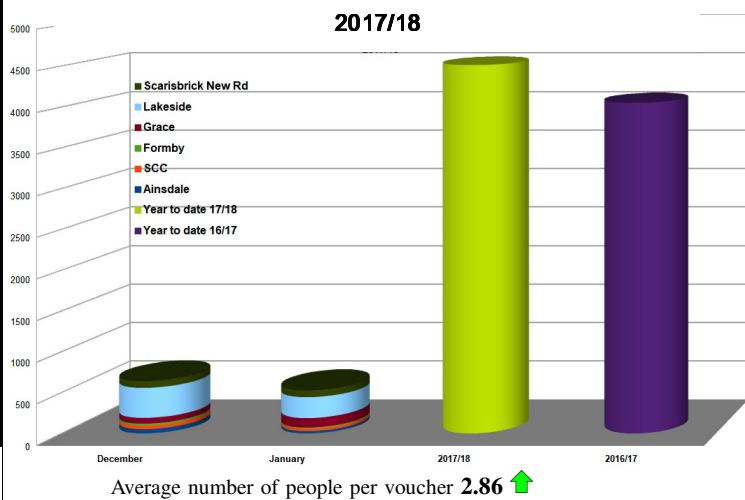
The whole operation is managed by Vicki who has overseen the project from its outset. She has a dedicated team of volunteers, some of whom go on to help with the long-standing Foodbank Distribution Centre operation at Grace on the Tuesday afternoon.



## Sources of donated food



## People fed - by Distribution Centre



## Home and dry

Whether prompted by worries over the super abundance of rain these past few months or by some other factor, our intrepid fund raising knitter, Elaine Avery, was commissioned to produce a Noah's Ark, complete with Noah and his wife, 18 animals and birds and a ramp to provide access for those without the power of flight.

This raised £80 for Foodbank funds in one swoop (but lots of clicking) and Elaine enjoyed the challenge - but she hopes, after this Olympian effort, that future commissions will be on a slightly less grand scale.



## CELEBRATE – CONCERT

JOIN US AND RAISE FUNDS FOR OUR FOODBANK

at

LEYLAND ROAD CHURCH, LEYLAND ROAD, SOUTHPORT

2 pm, Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March

Featuring 2 bands – *RHYMING WITH ORANGE*  
– *VINNY AND THE ENGINEERS*  
plus sketches and monologues

Tickets £5 – including refreshments

Available at Lakeside Church – ring 544419  
from - John Sullivan

## Very talented

*The Parable of the Talents* Lakeside Youth at Elim were recently inspired by the Parable of the Talents and decided to put it into practice. A kind donor gave each of the youth members £10 to be used to multiply the investment - all profits going to the Southport Foodbank.

Twelve young people took on the challenge and did various things to invest their money; selling sweets, creating cards, making picture frames and much more.

A combined profit of over £125 was made and this was gratefully received by the Foodbank.

## Your privacy

Southport Foodbank takes data security very seriously. You have received this newsletter because you are on our list of supporters. If you would like to see a copy of the privacy policy for supporters' data please email [actomox@gmail.com](mailto:actomox@gmail.com) with 'Supporters privacy statement' in the subject line.

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