B30 Foodbank Newsletter February 2018

"TON UP" CAMPAIGN TO TACKLE UNIVERSAL CREDIT

The **"Ton-Up for B30 Foodbank"** campaign is gathering support as the shadow of universal credit spreads. The initiative aims to persuade 100 local companies or individuals to pledge at least £1 a week by standing order. The money would help us cope with the impact of Universal Credit (UC). We hope many voucher holders and existing supporters will sign up too.

RECORD DEMAND IN 2017 – AND MORE TO COME

In 2017, we provided three days emergency food for a record 7500 adults and children. The campaign target would give us enough cash to cope with a 10% rise in that need.

This January we fed 21% more people than last January. UC only started in our part of Birmingham a few months ago so, although we suspect the new system is the cause, it's too soon to be sure. Foodbanks in established universal credit areas have seen an average increase in demand of 30%.

Jane and her colleagues at Whateley Wealth Management in Cotteridge not only signed up for the "Ton Up" campaign, but they also donated a small mountain of food.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT IS MAKING A BAD SITUATION WORSE

Northfield's Labour MP Richard Burden says he's being contacted by a "soaring" number of people who cannot make ends meet.

"There is no doubt that the way the benefits system operates has been causing big problems for some time and the way the new Universal Credit system is being introduced is making a bad situation still worse," he said.

Richard added that the five-week wait for the first UC payment means people are simply running out of the money they need to buy food and to pay their rent and fuel bills.

"I am calling on the Government to pause and fix its roll out of Universal Credit before more hardship is caused. Until the Government does this, it is likely that still more people will have no alternative but to turn to foodbanks for help," he said. Richard adds that because of low pay in the area, many of his constituents are struggling even though they have jobs.

Sign up to the "Ton Up" campaign with a standing order
Lloyds Bank: sort code 77-85-14: account no 34292560
Add Gift Aid if you're a taxpayer
More details at B30.foodbank.org.uk
And a big THANK YOU to all our loyal and generous donors and supporters

B30 Foodbank Statistics: February 2017 – January 2018

Total No of adults fed in the last 12 months	Total No of children fed in the last 12 months	Total No of people fed in the last 12 months	Total amount of Kgs of food donated in the last 12 months	Total amount of Kgs of food given out in the last 12 months	Total number of voucher holder agencies who refer clients
4427	3228	7655	65490	63048	201

OUR CLIENTS' STORIES

Emma came into B30 Foodbank for an unusual but not unique reason. Her partner got a full-time job and their benefits were stopped immediately. They were left with very little income until the end of the month when he gets paid. "It's a crazy situation," said Emma, who's a 24-year-old mum with a young daughter. "I think it's wrong when you get left with almost nothing, when all my partner was doing was getting a job - which is what they wanted him to do."

It was Universal Credit that brought Jacqui to the foodbank. She received a message on her phone saying she would get her first payment in two days. But the next day she discovered that her claim had actually been closed and she had to start all over again. "I'm disgusted with what's happened, but I'm so happy that you people are here to help," she said.

FOODBANKS IN PARLIAMENT

A new All Party Parliamentary Group focussing on foodbanks has been meeting at Westminster. Neil Coyle, the Labour MP for Southwark in London, told us he set up the informal cross-party group in response to the "national scandal" of increasing dependence on foodbanks.

"The group accepts that foodbanks should not be required in a state that has an effective social security system," Neil explained.

"The last session I hosted discussed the pernicious effect of Universal Credit, and how it is expected to drive a million children into poverty. The next session will focus on the link between foodbanks and disabled people."

Please, don't forget to donate.

- Deliver your food to the Cotteridge Church – there's a green wheelie bin just inside the entrance.
- Fill up collection boxes in shops & supermarkets
- Get an online shop delivered during our opening hours.
- Set up a standing order
- Or get in touch, if you need us to collect

SUPPORT IN THE MAIL

The challenge of securing more food to feed even more people in crisis, is about to receive a major boost from the Birmingham Mail. It's putting the final touches to a campaign supporting all the city's foodbanks..

The picture shows recent stories in the Mail following visits to B30 foodbank

Editor Marc Reeves said: "The Birmingham Mail's readers tell us they are increasingly concerned about rising homelessness and poverty in our city. We find ourselves covering these issues more and more, including the demand for foodbanks and the impact of Universal Credit. Mail readers tell us they want to help, so I was delighted to talk to the team at B30 Foodbank and discuss ideas for a campaign. I can't wait to get started."

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Last year, 82% of all new global wealth went to the richest 1% in the world.
42 individuals now have as much wealth as the poorest half of the global population.

Source: Oxfam

Child poverty figures have revealed a third of children in the Edgbaston, Northfield & Selly Oak constituencies are living in poverty - in Hall Green it's almost half. That's a total of nearly 40,000 boys & girls in the four constituencies where almost all B30 Foodbank's clients live.

Source: End Child Poverty

Finally, a belated Happy New Year and a huge THANK YOU to all our volunteers, voucher holders and donors. We're going to need your support more than ever in 2018.

The Cotteridge Church, 24 Pershore Road South, Cotteridge, B30 3EU
The foodbank is open 2.30pm – 4.30pm on Tuesdays & Fridays

07582 143972 info@b30.foodbank.org.uk www.b30.foodbank.org.uk
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