



Spring 2021

Food poverty: rising number of children in England eligible for free school meals (**The Guardian Tuesday 30th March 2021**)



In the 10 months between January and October 2020 the proportion of children on free school meals increased from 17% to nearly 20%. Photograph: Justin Leighton/Alamy

Nearly 200,000 more children were registered for free school meals in England as the early economic fallout from the pandemic hit household incomes, figures published by the government show.

In the 10 months between January and October last year, the proportion of children on free school meals in England shot up from 17% to nearly 20%, meaning that 1.63 million out of 8.2 million state school pupils are now in receipt of free lunches. In January 2020 the total was 1.44 million.

The highest rates were in the north-east, where more than 26% were eligible, and 23% in the West Midlands. In contrast, only 15% of pupils in the south-east of England were eligible.

Some of the worst-hit areas included Wolverhampton, where the proportion of pupils on FSM went up from 27% to 32%, Blackpool, where the proportion rose from 32% to 37%, and Manchester, where it rose from 31.5% to 36%. In Birmingham, the country's largest local authority, the proportion rose to 33% – one in three state school pupils. Read the full article [here](#)

B30 Foodbank Statistics: 1st April 2020 - March 31st 2021

Total number of people fed in the last 12 months	Total number of adults fed in the last 12 months	Total number of children fed in the last 12 months	Total number of Kgs of food received in the last 12 months	Total number in Kgs of food given out in the last 12 months	Total number of voucher holder agencies who refer clients
6053	3638	2415	97310 Kgs	92468 Kgs	274

Food insecurity: now we have the data, it's time to act

Now that we know the extent of food insecurity in the UK, the Government's obligations are clear.



For the first time, [the Government has laid bare the true scale of household food insecurity in the UK.](#)

The Government's own research conclusively shows that, even prior to the pandemic, one in twelve of all households in the UK were experiencing low or very low levels of food security.

The data was in the Family Resources Survey 2019/20, published by the Department for Work and Pensions on Thursday 25th March.

Most shockingly, it shows that more than four out of ten (43%) households in receipt of Universal Credit experience high or very high levels of household food insecurity. This confirms what people who have to rely on Universal Credit to survive have known for a long time: the level of Universal Credit is simply too low.

It's time for change

The 2021 elections are a vital opportunity

We're calling on candidates standing in the elections on 6th May 2021 to commit to working towards ending the need for food banks

Read the full
Trussell Trust
Article [here](#)



A remarkable year B30 Foodbank

This has been a year of unparalleled challenge, concern and constant change. We are proud that our volunteers have risen to the difficulties presented by the Covid period with fortitude and tenacity. B30 FB has provided emergency food to local people in crisis on every Tuesday and Friday as normal (closed Christmas Day) throughout the year.

A reminder of our B30 Foodbank Year -

Jan - Feb and most of March	Normal B30 Foodbank arrangements in Cotteridge Church Clients continue to be referred by partner agencies who assess client as being in need of emergency food. Advice worker available from 'The Project' to give specialist advice on eg. Finances and housing matters where needed.
First 2 wks March 14.03.20	Concerns re Virus become public Panic buying in shops Foodbank referral agents begin to work from home on phone. Less direct support for vulnerable families/foodbank clients. Revision of food distribution method to ensure social distancing. There are 1140 known cases of CV19 in UK and 10 reported deaths
16.03.20	National lockdown preparation begins B30 FB receiving approx. 140 phone calls per day. Many are not foodbank related but concerned with school meals, not being able to get supermarket deliveries, not being able to contact social workers etc etc. Clients have restricted access to church, food is pre packed at warehouse, strict social distancing, masks worn at Cotteridge Church, limiting conversations to the minimum.
19.03.20	BCC Northfield Neighbour Office closes. This is the main access route to the FB for clients Closure produces even more phone calls to FB
24.03.20	Tues 2pm-4pm foodbank session provides food for 77 people/families. Becomes impossible to continue while keeping volunteers and clients safe. Referral system of FB vouchers and referral in meltdown. Decision taken to close foodbank operation at Cotteridge Church. 6pm Phone call with local councillors to find a way forward
25.03.20	Conference call with B30 FB, Steve Mc Cabe MP, Cllr Grindrod, Cllr Clements, BVT, The Active Wellbeing Society (TAWs) and Selly Oak Neighbourhood Network Scheme This call produced 1. A centralised method of receiving B30 FB calls through TAWs, who would also do client referrals to B30FB 2. A BVT delivery team to deliver B30 FB parcels direct to client homes.
26.03.20	Intensive work on details of new operating system. a) Warehouse packing, b) receipt of referral c) delivery details d) Health and Safety Risk Assessments
27.03.20	Last session at Cotteridge Church to mop up clients caught between new and old system. Roger and Anne gave out pre packed food from steps of Cotteridge Church.
31.03.20	Client referral received from TAWs Information translated into warehouse /delivery docs by Nicola and Michelle Prepacked food taken in van to Weoley Hill Hall by Roger Food delivered to clients by BVT Landscape Team who were on furlough. Organisation of BVT Team by Jess Allen. Health and Safety under constant review.
May 2020	Additional warehousing leased at No 9. FB now in No 9 and No 17 Castle Road made into one unit with building alteration. Additional space required as warehouse is centre of all operations including pre-packing of bags of food.
22.05.20	BVT landscape team went back to work. Delivery of food from Weoley Hill Hall ceased A new delivery team of B30 FB volunteers created All Health and Safety risk assessments in place Deliveries now direct from Warehouse.
July 2020	Second van purchased
31.07.20	Last day of TAWs fielding B30 FB telephone calls. Resume usual referral/voucher process
Sept 2020	Anticipating end of deliveries because of approaching bad weather, shorter daylight and other health and safety concerns for volunteers doing deliveries. Need to return to client collection of food. Approaches made to Cotteridge Quakers re possible foodbank use of FMH building and car park.
11.10.20	Ongoing wish to return to Cotteridge Church when pandemic restrictions lifted. Approval and welcome received from Quakers . Use of building to commence 27 Oct

23.10.20	Last day of deliveries to clients
27.10 20	First day at Cotteridge Friends Meeting House. Small building simpler to manage. One client only at a time in the building. Others wait in car park. Strict Health and Safety. Minimal number of volunteers present. Pre packed food delivered from warehouse and taken back to warehouse each session. Sign posting team of volunteers to telephone clients needing support from other agencies.
01.01.21	New Year lock down 5 partner schools receive food to distribute to needy families direct from school. Additional Health and Safety precautions due to more infectious virus variants. No clients enter Friends Meeting House. All food distributed in the car park. Telephone calls and texts to clients re food collection and other support. An office a car in the car park created as necessary during FB sessions to issue vouchers to clients who need food but have no referral.
	To be continued.....

A snapshot of February 2021 Foodbank

With the increase in Covid infections, the new variant and this lockdown, we have altered how we operate again. The need to maintain social distance and wear masks is paramount for both volunteers and clients.

Parcels are packed at the Warehouse. There are bags for meat eaters, vegetarians, children, toiletries etc. These are transported up to the Friends Meeting House in Cotteridge before each session and during a session if necessary. We are so fortunate to have two vans and strong drivers! The Cod Pot continues to provide us with fresh potatoes but other than that, everything is pre-packed. The bags are taken into the FMH along with nappies and sanitary products.

Clients are referred in the normal ways (evouchers, red vouchers etc) but we also are giving out more emergency vouchers as some agencies are difficult to get hold of. There is an 'office' in the car park at the FMH - actually a car. If a client turns up or has rung earlier, we write out a voucher there and then.

The vouchers and referrals via email are printed out and most clients are called and/or texted before the session. This way we are able to check that they know when and where to come, whether they have any problems getting to the FMH and they are reassured that food will be there for them and that they are welcome. Sometimes an NHS responder volunteer collects the food for a client. Phoning before they arrive reduces the time necessary to give a food parcel to a client and ensures Covid safety.

Clients arrive between 1.30 and 3.30 on Tuesdays and Fridays. Barriers are erected to guide the clients as to where to stand and they are assisted by a volunteer who encourages social distance and mask wearing.

When a client gets to the front, there is a very quick voucher check and they are asked whether they have any dietary requirements, need sanitary protection or nappies and also, how they are getting the food home. This information is then passed to the two volunteers inside FMH who then put the bags in to a trolley. The trolley is then wheeled out and the bags are put on the ground at a distance from the client. The whole process takes two minutes and the client is on their way with the right amount of food for their family, a toiletries bag and any necessary nappies etc. Consequently, clients are only queuing for a very short time, if at all, which is necessary, as it all takes place outside in the carpark. There have been very cold and wet volunteers! Every client is later texted with information about how to get extra support such as financial advice.

A few months ago, we set up a signposting team. Clients were asked if they would like a volunteer to call them and see if there was any other way in which we could help. A team of volunteers would then ring them from home. This was all up and running. Some clients were very pleased, others had changed their mind or were impossible to get hold of. But it did require an initial conversation when a client came to the FMH. This was ok when clients could be asked privately but with the move to everything being outside, such privacy isn't possible and also, conversations are kept to a minimum for obvious reasons. So this is on hold for the moment but will start again when the infection rate is down sufficiently for private conversations to take place. All the data inputting takes place off site.

When the schools closed in January, we set up a scheme whereby we've sent food parcels to interested schools (5 local schools, 1 secondary and 4 primaries). When a parent is in need, the school gives them the relevant food and toiletries bags and then writes out a voucher for us - sort of all in reverse. This is working well.

The work in the warehouse has been phenomenal!!!

The warehouse has become the nerve centre of B30FB. It is now fulfilling 4 major roles.

- Receiving and recording all donations and deliveries of food.
- Sorting food into types and checking every item is 'in date'. Storing and crating of food on shelves by date.
- Packing bags of food for clients by type, including meat, vegetarian, children, specialist diets. Also, nappies, sanitary products and toiletries
- Dispatching and loading van for distribution of food.

The warehouse team is operating with very few volunteers present to ensure social distancing. The saying 'All hands on deck' is a distant memory. It should be noted that it is sheer hard work for those volunteers valiantly sorting, shifting and loading!

The general public and various organisations have been enormously generous. Instead of being overwhelmed the warehouse team have sent excess food to various organisations that are related to us - other Trussell Trust foodbanks for example. Some local partner hostels etc with shared kitchens, and numbers of families have been sent suitable excess foodstuffs. We are in a strong position with regard to stocks of food and financial donations.

There are so many other things going on behind the scenes - foodbank phone calls and emails answered daily, coordinating the newsletter, writing hundreds of thanks you letters, new red vouchers being printed off and posted, data inputting, foodbank vans maintained, finance and accounts constantly scrutinised, the sign-posters poised and ready to go when things are a bit safer, social media being daily managed, food collections from supermarkets, liaison with all sorts of other agencies.....and so much more.

Statistics

During 2020 B30FB fed 6675 people---3879 adults and 2796 on 2919 vouchers

We received 90460 kg food and gave out 85494kg

We have over **250 agencies** referring needy clients. A large proportion of these agencies now use the Trussell Trust Electronic Voucher system. This has meant that face to face contacts can be reduced. B30 FB has dealt with more clients directly as there has been considerable difficulty for some clients in contacting their support agency by phone during the Covid period.

Local food provision

There are a variety of other temporary foodbanks in the area providing emergency food. Their criteria are varied and include providing food for those who are shielding but do have money to buy food. This has reduced the demand for food from B30 FB. The longevity of this other provision is not yet clear

B30FB has maintained the single criterion-

'Emergency food for those who are in financial crisis and have no money to buy food for the next 3 days.'

And finally...

We expect to see the demand for food from B30FB rise considerably- as the Furloughing Scheme ends and redundancies are declared. We are already seeing clients who are shocked at their change in circumstances and never expected to be visiting B30 Foodbank.

We thank you all for continued support....

Anne Cole on Behalf of B30Foodbank

B30 Foodbank at the FMH



Street Collections

With Covid the food bank has lost a number of ways of receiving donations. We have not been able to do food drives at supermarkets and churches and other places of worship being closed means that source has dried up and the contribution schools have given is much reduced. However, the spirit of giving has been revived by people willing to do a street collection in the road in which they live. These collections can be weekly, fortnightly or even monthly, they have served as a life line for the foodbank.



CHRIS
SELLY PARK

LES
NORTHFIELD ROAD

KYRA
HIGHBURY RD

MATT
GROVE RD

SALLY
STATION RD

FRANK
FEATHERSTONE RDRFRANKLIN RD



Marion and Tristan

Olwyn and Joan

Julian

Peter

Franklin Road

Maurice Road

Pineapple road

Northfield Road

Third Avenue



BRIAN
FRANKLIN RD

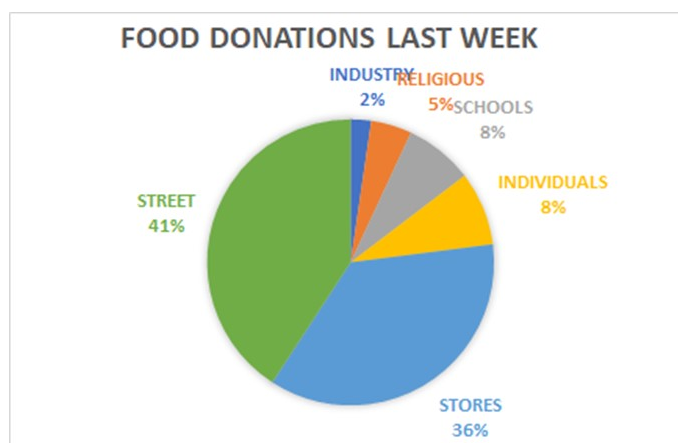
LINDA
MARYVALE RD

JANE
ASHMORE RD

SHAHEEN
KNIGHTON RD

HELEN
TEAZEL AVENUE

JOHN AND PAULA
BEAUMONT RD



The Project

B30 Foodbank Clients £137,987 better off last year

‘The Project’ at B30 FB—Grant funded by ASDA (£11.000 pa)

Thanks to funding from Asda, B30 FB employs specialist advisers in benefits, debt and housing to support clients. This support is to ensure clients are less likely to need to visit the foodbank again. The benefits and housing systems are complex to navigate, and debts are overwhelming ... the following is a snapshot of the huge sums reclaimed for B30Foodbank clients.

Estimated total number of B30 FB Clients receiving support from The Project **417**

Estimated financial value to B30 FB clients

B30 foodbank services users between Jan 20 and Jan 21

B30FB clients received the following staggering entitlements due to specialist adviser intervention and support from The Project

£ 41,856 in backdates benefits owed to clients

£85,269 in new benefits (over a 12-month period)

£10862 in clients’ debts which were written off

Total £137,987!

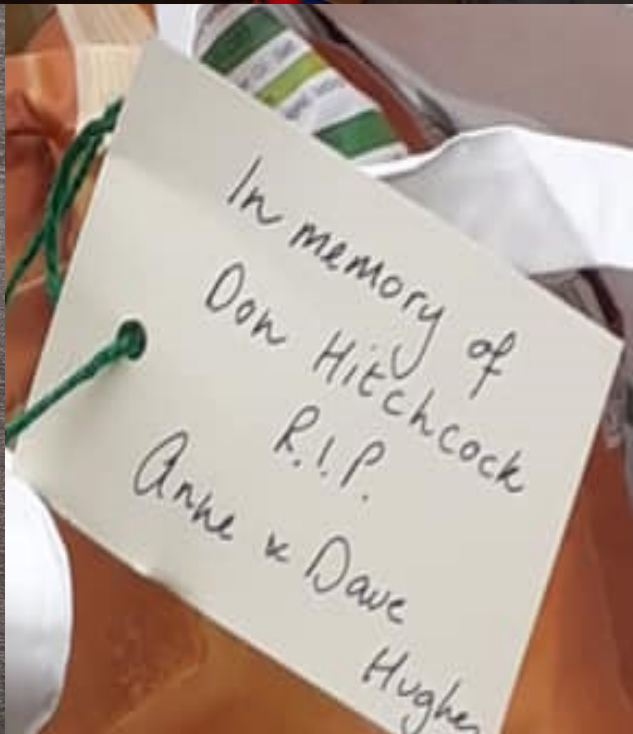
And also

- 26 people have said that they now have the confidence to manage their finances in the future.
- 100% said they would recommend our support services to a family or friend.
- 140 people received more than one support service including housing, benefits and debt showing that the people who are referred have multiple and complex needs. Being able to provide multiple support services in one place reduces stress and the need to tell multiple people your issues, advisers work in collaboration to resolve all the issues

In Memory of Don

The funeral of our much-missed and founding volunteer, Don Hitchcock, took place in March.

Many people have been asking how to donate in his memory. Please drop food donations into any of our supermarket collecting bins or bring them to the warehouse Tues or Friday, 2-4pm, or see our website B30.foodbank.org.uk for monetary donations. Thanks for your generosity in memory of Don.



The Cod Pot



Peter's potatoes are a fresh treat!

B30 Foodbank gets very welcome support from a number of local businesses, but one that gets straight to our clients is the Cod Pot chip shop in Cotteridge.

Cod Pot owner, Peter Christoforou, has been sending sacks of fresh potatoes to the foodbank for several years now and over the last few months has doubled his donation, covering every session, twice a week.

Our volunteers bag the potatoes in to smaller bags and they are given straight out to clients as an addition to a food parcel. Peter explained that when he heard about the foodbank a few years ago, he wanted to do what he could to help.

Although we depend mostly on tinned and long-life food, Peter persuaded us that the potatoes themselves have a long life and would be well worth giving out as an easy to use, fresh vegetable. We took him up on his offer and have been very grateful for his long term and ongoing support ever since.

We asked some clients this week what they might do with their potatoes, with mash coming out on top. "Mashed potatoes - it's a classic and goes with everything," said one young man.

Thanks to Peter for his continued and increased support, which is really making a difference to the local com-



Thanks to Donna and her colleague from Dunelm Highgate store, delivering the latest donation from generous customers and staff!

Supermarket deliveries – an easy way to donate

Did you know you can get your supermarket to deliver shopping direct to the foodbank warehouse? It can be a quick an easy way to donate, meaning you can stay safe at home and donate what you want, when you want.

Just make sure the supermarket knows our warehouse address -

Unit 17, Castle Road, Kings Norton Business Park, Birmingham B30 3HZ - and that deliveries are only made on Tuesday and or Friday between 2 and 4pm.



Pictured here is James from Sainsbury's who delivered a fantastic donation. The anonymous donor obviously looked at our most needed items and bought everything on the list, it was perfect! Thank you whoever you are .

Thanks to all the staff, pupils and parents at Bishop Challoner Catholic College for their ongoing support for our clients.

Much appreciated!





Local people in need of emergency food should contact their

- social worker
- support worker or
- a local Foodbank Referral Agent to get a referral to B30 FB.



Alternatively ring either

Birmingham City Council Advice Line

0121 216 3030

Citizens Advice Bureau (Foodbank Helpline)

0808 208 2138

The Project 0121 453 0606





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Keeping in Touch

“One way to keep in touch with what’s going on at the foodbank, as well as seeing pictures of volunteers and donors, is through our three social media channels.

The foodbank has pages on **Facebook**, **Twitter** and now **Instagram**. We try and keep them simple, bright and positive. So, if you’ve got the tech, a smart phone, laptop or tablet, why not have a go at interacting with one of the foodbank pages? Just search for B30 Foodbank on any of the platforms and hopefully you can see what we’ve got going on.”

Virtual walk brings in generous donation.

Lucinda, who works at John Lewis, brought in a very generous donation after raising money by doing a virtual walk between the company’s stores. Thanks to whoever came up with the idea, Lucinda for taking part and everyone who sponsored her and donated!

If you’ve done something unusual to raise cash or encourage food donations, please let us know so we can spread the word.



B30 Foodbank, The Cotteridge Church, 24 Pershore Road South, Cotteridge, B30 3EJ

The Warehouse , Unit 17, Castle Road, Kings Norton Business Park, B30 3HZ

B30 FB Warehouse is open Tuesdays and Fridays 2pm –4pm



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