

Co-ordinator's report

This report covers the year 1st April '23 – 31st March –'24.

Vouchers

1654 vouchers issued – 5313 people helped . That is up by 14% on the previous year. That equates to helping 554 more people.

Last year the split of distribution workload was :

47% - Orangefield

53% - Dundonald

This year it is more like a 50/50 split during this period.

This percentage increase is much less than 2022-23 when we saw a doubling of the vouchers issued from 2021-22.

Christmas

Last Christmas saw 220 packs issued. These were matched with Christmas bags that contained a bag of seasonal treats and also a £20 meat voucher.

E- vouchers

More agencies are now using our e-voucher referral. This is an encouraging step change away from paper vouchers. We believe this is a more efficient way of processing vouchers which our admin staff would wholeheartedly agree with.

This goes hand in hand asking clients to get a referral from an agency before coming to the foodbank for help, after their initial visit to the foodbank. This means that more people are being seen or at least listened to by our referral agencies. The referral agencies are also often better informed and trained on the benefit system can advise clients on potential other help and support that may be available to them.

Referral agencies

Top 5 referral agencies :

- 1) BWC – 17%
- 2) MLA / MP Offices – 14%
- 3) Advice Centres (EBIAC, Advice NI, Advice Space) – 9%
- 4) FS Roma - 5%

During this time self-referrals to Orangefield – 28% ;
to Dundonald – 15%

These have changed slightly in that we have seen an increase in the use of MLAs and slightly less self-referrals. 43 % of all vouchers fulfilled were from self-referrals as opposed to 49% in same period last year.

Stock

2023-24

Stock in source	Donated in kg (% of source total)	% of overall total
Supermarkets	23586.65	53%
Churches	10463.68	24%
Individual(s)		5%
Educations		4%
Other		3%
Purchased – by Foodbank		11%
Totals	39309.48	100%

Approximately 637 kilos more stock than previous year. Just over 11% of that was purchased.

Supermarkets

- 60% of all donated stock comes from Asda and Tesco.
- Tesco remain our number one source of food donations. This has increased slightly 44.5% (2.5% increase) of all our incoming stock during this period came from public donations through Tesco. This partnership is facilitated by Trussell Trust.
- In terms of church giving 2nd Comber were the most generous of the churches in terms of food donations which is closely followed by Dundonald Elim.

Tesco and Asda Food Drives

- We continued to raise food donations through our food drives at Tesco and Asda. This helps greatly with our stock over the winter period. Our foodbank volunteers in Dundonald and Orangefield continue to support us in these events. We are continuing to increase the number of extra volunteers (not foodbank volunteers) who have come forward to help out at these events.

Fuel poverty

The Fuelbank Foundation continues to be an amazing resource for people in fuel crisis. We are 1 of 800 Fuelbank partners supporting people across the UK in this way. The Fuelbank aspires to give people 10 days of support and they tailor the amount they offer with this in mind. We issued 232 fuel vouchers during the year.

Highlights

- 4G/ Torr Bank Special School have continued to work with us in the foodbank on a Wednesday, helping out with dating and sorting stock. We're delighted to have them on board.
- First Aid – we now have trained Emergency First Aiders on all shifts in Dundonald.
- New windows have been installed recently to provide ventilation and emergency fire exit upstairs.

Other news

- Belfast City Council Hardship Fund – 72% of clients using the foodbank came from Belfast City Council so we were able to qualify for this grant which was for almost £9.5K.
- The Henderson group are continuing to support us.
- **Guarantee our Essentials Campaign.** This campaign continues through the Trussell Trust and the work of the foodbanks to bring awareness to the government that growing numbers of people in the UK do not have enough money to cover their basic essentials.