

Exmouth Food Bank Feb 2024 News

Demand during the past month

Demand for the Food Bank remained steady during January. On average we distributed 80 parcels per week and over the entire month provided food to support 656 people. These numbers remain largely in line with the support we provided in January 2023.

What we have noticed over the past few weeks is an influx of single people, many with complex physical and mental health needs, who have been referred to us by agencies. We are grateful for the strong links that we have developed with NHS professionals and with advisers from Citizens Advice East Devon and East Devon District Council who can help these individuals access the additional advice and support they need beyond the Food Bank.



Contents of an out of hours parcel

Emergency out of hours food parcels

Our emergency food parcels are currently held in over 30 churches, schools, GP surgeries and organisations in and around Exmouth. The food parcels contain an emergency supply of non-perishable foods that should 'tide a person over' until the Food Bank is next open.

Partners who hold these parcels distribute them to those in food crisis at their own discretion and in their own way. At times it is appropriate to give a whole parcel to a family in need or to share the contents of a parcel across several people. Some churches put the contents on a table and let their congregation know that it is available for anyone in need. We then replace the parcels as required.

If you currently hold one of these parcels please can you check the **best before date**, then if they need replacing contact us and we will exchange them. Equally if you are interested in finding out more about this scheme please email info@exmouthfoodbank.org.uk or telephone 07787 758511.

Keeping the conversation about food poverty centre stage

Exmouth Food Bank continues to remain an apolitical organisation; however, we recognise the wider role we need to play in contributing to the debate about food poverty. We are keen to share our experiences of working with those in need in the community along with the lessons we have learnt so far.

By joining groups such as the Mushroom Community and Food Network and the Woodbury, Exmouth and Budleigh Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSE) Network we are able to work collaboratively at a local level to address issues that are often linked to food poverty such as health and social care, inequality and social isolation.

As a result of the connections we have made through these networks we were delighted to be invited by East Devon District Council to participate in their forthcoming peer review of their anti-poverty work. The review will analyse how well they are working collaboratively with partner organisations to provide emergency help for those in need as well as to address the root causes of poverty.

We were also pleased to show District Councillor Melanie Martin around the Food Bank last week. During her visit we were able to raise our concerns about people working in the care sector who are increasingly turning to us for help as they struggle to afford food.

