



Reaching out to the community in crisis situations

At the beginning of a New Year and indeed a new decade we wish everyone a Happy New Year. What a difference a year makes and at the close of 2019, after having completed our figures for the year, we see how the situation has changed for so many people and we know for our clients the change is not for the better. When delivering food to a client with 4 children it is apparent the difficulties being experienced when she bursts into tears and gives a grateful hug, how very hard life can be for some people.

During 2019 we received 1,308 referrals resulting in an increase in referrals of 21% over the previous year. 28,497 meals were provided giving an increase of 34% in the number of meals on 2018.

	Referrals	Adults	Children	Meals provided
2018 TOTAL	1,080	1,375	651	21,189
2019 TOTAL	1,308	1,637	1,085	28,497
% Increase	21%	19%	67%	34%

November and December proved to be the busiest months we have ever encountered and far exceeded our expectations of the number of referrals we would need to handle. Christmas is often a very difficult time for many people with additional pressures. Reflecting on how busy the food bank has been we consider it a privilege to have been able to help so many

2019	REFERRALS	ADULTS	CHILDREN	MEALS PROVIDED DURING MONTH	MEALS PROVIDED YEAR TO DATE
January	105	131	87	2,289	2,289
February	109	136	87	2,342	4,631
March	101	111	91	2,100	6,731
April	98	131	96	2,383	9,114
May	89	116	66	1,911	11,025
June	103	135	74	2,195	13,220
July	92	111	82	2,026	15,246
August	121	153	101	2,667	17,913
September	103	134	85	2,268	20,181
October	115	135	85	2,310	22,491
November	132	159	96	2,678	25,169
December	140	185	132	3,328	28,497
Year to date TOTAL	1,308	1,637	1,085		28,497

Since the food bank opened in February 2012
139,242 meals have been provided into the local community.

In the Bible in the Book of Hebrews, Chapter 13 verse 16 reads
“Don’t forget to do good and to share with those in need”.

Not only were we busy with food, toiletries and Christmas items being sent out, the amount of donations arriving daily was amazing and at times overwhelming. However, thanks to our wonderful volunteers helping in addition to their normal hours we were able to “keep our heads above the water” so to speak and all items were sorted, dated and stored. We are constantly amazed by the generosity of individuals, groups, businesses, churches and schools. Our shelves are well stocked because of the kindness of so many, so thank you all!

You might wonder what else has been happening at the food bank. A group of 63 Sedbergh School pupils arrived with donations and learned about our work. Other school visits were Underley Garden School and Arnside School, both bringing donations. Kirkbie Kendal School 6th form collected items and Queen Katherine School had a Christmas Jumper Mufti Day supporting the food bank. 10th Kendal Scouts came along with donations and Milnthorpe Brownies donated toys.



Our young people are amazing and enthusiastically support the food bank. Arnside School (left) delivering their Christmas collection and (below left) 10th Kendal Scouts with Kirkbie Kendal School (below).



During the December school holidays we again worked with Kendal and District Lions who provided packed lunch items for children who during term time receive free school dinners. These were much appreciated when collected by the families.

Kendal & District Lions also made a financial donation, pictured Kath Dennison, Past President handing over the cheque, watching on is Father Christmas.



In 2019 we were able to purchase 31 kitchen start up packs for people moving from hostels into new accommodation. These are purchased using specific donation received for this purpose.



Fundraising events were held by King's Church Kendal performing a Live Nativity and the Lakes Gospel Choir holding a concert in aid of the food bank and Manna House.

It is impossible to list everyone who donates to the food bank to say a huge **Thank You**, the numbers are just too great, but without the support of so many we would not be able to provide the service to the large number of people we do. Together we do make a difference to many, many people's lives.

One appreciative client emailed:

"I just wanted to say a massive thank you for the food parcel. I cried when I received it, I cannot believe the generosity. I have recently been signed off work meaning my wage is terribly low this month and my situation has been so desperate. I feel so blessed and it really will make a difference over Christmas."