



Burngreave Food Bank 2021

As we come towards the end of 2021, we just wanted to start this report by saying a massive thank you to everyone at the church for your amazing support of the foodbank, not just this year, but over the past 9 years of the foodbank's existence. As always, we remain completely reliant on donations to keep us running and we would not have got this far without your faithful, loving support. Over the past two years, to date (end Sep 2021) St John's has donated a staggering 10.3 tons of food and toiletries, providing over 17,000 meals! Your recent Harvest collection totalled 176 kg which will provide 420 meals. We can not thank you enough!

The graph above will give you some idea of the roller coaster ride that the food bank has been on over the course of the last two years. You will see that demand for food increased dramatically as the Covid pandemic began and we were forced to change the way that we operated by closing both our centres and delivering all our food parcels instead to keep everyone safe. A brief drop in numbers over the summer last year rebounded to an even greater surge in demand through the winter months as the effects of the pandemic continued to impact lives.

We are so grateful to God that He more than met the increased needs by providing in abundance, not just the food that was needed but also the volunteer drivers to deliver it to client's homes. We have been able to meet every request for food without interruption due to the incredible generosity of our supporters.

However, as covid restrictions continued we were really missing the interaction with our clients that we used to have when they came to the food bank to collect their food and we were able to offer a chat over a hot drink. We've always wanted the food bank to be a place where people don't just receive food but also a listening ear and maybe some signposting to other services that can help them or some prayer. So, when all restrictions were lifted we took the decision to reopen our

centres at the start of July 2021. Rock Christian Centre's new Community Centre was spruced up and fitted out with a kitchen area, providing a lovely welcoming area for clients to come and collect their food in a covid-safe way, and our partner, Living Water's Fellowship in Darnall has also opened its doors once again.

You'll see from the graph that our reopening has coincided with a drop in demand for food which thankfully has enabled us to ease gently back into the new routine. However, whilst it's always (we hope!) a positive sign to see demand for food bank services decline, recent developments with fuel price increases and the loss of the Universal Credit uplift in October will have a big impact on those who are already struggling with their finances. We are anticipating an increase in demand once again as we head into the winter months.

So it's with a mix of gratitude as we look back, and expectation that God will continue to provide, as we look forward, that we head into the coming months, whatever they bring.

With our grateful thanks once again.

Rachel Snow,

Burngreave foodbank manager.