



Charity Number: 1144831

Westminster Foodbank Newsletter

We would like to take this opportunity to update you on the work of [Westminster Foodbank](#).

Westminster Foodbank is run and supported by Westminster Chapel; an evangelical church on Buckingham Gate. Serving our community and helping the poor is at the heart of what we do, and a key reason this church was [originally founded](#) in 1840: making a huge impact in the local area (which was in those days one of London's poorest slums). The Foodbank is one expression of our heart for the poor.

We continue to work with volunteers from corporate and public sector organisations as well as individual volunteers, without their help and support it would be difficult to continue to operate and provide this service to the community.

We would also like to express our thanks to all our donors, volunteers and partners who continue to support and work with us in meeting the needs of those in crisis.

Our Foodbank provides short-term emergency food parcels to individuals and families in crisis whilst a long-term solution is found. We provide non-perishable food items, some items of toiletries e.g. deodorant, shampoo and household products e.g. toilet rolls, washing powder etc.

A few messages from Foodbank users:

"I am struggling because of high bills – the Foodbank helped me to support my kids"

"Suffering from Homelessness, PTSD – Feed help and sustain me during my homelessness"

"My wife's illness caused me to lose my work - I had to become a full-time carer. This has helped us to survive! Can't thank you enough"

"Became ill and lost my job, fell into debt – this has provided me with much needed food!"

"Went self-employed, did not work out, couldn't afford food"

"Sick for a year and unable to work. God bless you all, thanks to all the staff"

We continue to support the wider agenda of reducing poverty and raising awareness of the issues facing those in crisis; this has included having meetings with key representatives from Department of Work and Pensions and attending All-Party Parliamentary Group's (APPG) sessions when appropriate.

Key publications and information:

- Financial insecurity, food insecurity, and disability Report: https://trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/06/OU_Report_final_01_08_online.pdf.
- Fix Universal Credit: <http://endhungeruk.org/universalcredit/#endhungeruk>
- End Hunger Week: 13-20 October 2018, for further information www.endhungeruk.org – sign the petition.
- Child Poverty Action Group - [The Early Warning System](#) (EWS) - gathers information and case studies about the impact of welfare reform on children and families across the UK.

Working in Partnerships

We welcome visits from current and potential voucher distributors and donors who are interested to see how the Foodbank works.

Please contact us at foodbank@westminsterchapel.org.uk if you would like to arrange a visit to find out more about the Westminster Foodbank with the Subject Heading: 'Visit to Westminster Foodbank - Voucher Distributor or Donor visit' as appropriate.

Voucher Distributors - A reminder that the changes in the Data Production Regulations we no longer require the Client Ethnicity section of the Foodbank voucher to be completed. Please note the rest of the voucher information needs to be provided including address, year of birth, the number of clients the voucher is for written in as e.g. Two or 2 etc, a X should only be used to cross out the boxes not relevant to the client information.

If your organisation currently has in stock vouchers with a 5 digit or less voucher code could you get in touch to get updated versions. Additionally, please let us know if there are changes to signatories and/or main contact.

Donors – We receive a large amount of stock during the Christmas period and would ask you to consider waiting until Spring 2019 to donate as this is often when we have a shortage of stock such as Tinned Meat (e.g. stews, curries, corned beef etc), Tinned Vegetables, Fruit Juice (Long-Life), UHT Milk, Powdered Milk, Soya/Almond Milk, Jam, Sponge Pudding, Rice Pudding, Cooking Oil, Sugar Shampoo, Conditioner, Kitchen Towels, Toilet Rolls, Toilet Cleaner (not bleach) and Washing Powder.

However, if you are looking to donate for the Christmas period, we would be grateful if you could let us know; also, if your donation could be in by week commencing 10th December it will give us enough time to distribute to clients.

August Bank Holiday Closure: Please note the Westminster Foodbank will be closed on Monday 27th August 2018.

We continue to work with in partnership to provide additional support to our users:

- [CAP Debt Advice Service](#) - provides sustainable poverty relief through debt counselling, advice and practical help; negotiates with creditors and supports people right up until they are debt free.
- **Trailblazer, Westminster City Council Homeless Prevention Project (Monday Sessions):** Confidential Support & Advice Service, Westminster City Council is launching a new confidential support & advice service which you can contact for free. A dedicated personal advisor will work with you to resolve any issues you may be facing including:
 - Difficulties with your landlord or tenancy
 - Overcrowding in your home
 - Family or relationship problems
 - Paying your bills, finances and benefits
 - Finding somewhere affordable to live
 - Coping with stress or health concerns

Referrals can be made directly to see one of the Advisers (T: 020 7641 5021): at the Foodbank including those clients who do not need the Foodbank service.

- **Thrive Tribe - 2nd Monday each Month:** Local council funded smoking cessation service (Kick It) and cardiovascular disease prevention service (Healthy Hearts) is the tri-borough's cardiovascular disease prevention programme. Offers FREE Adult Weight Management, Healthy Cookery Classes and Physical Activity Classes, Stop Smoking Support.
- **Age UK Westminster (T: 020 3004 5610):** Debt Advice Service at our **Thursday sessions** they provide general advice for all clients using the Foodbank service and will refer and/or signpost them to relevant agencies. Specific Debt support and intervention is only be available for residents in Westminster over the age of 50.
Referrals can be made directly to see Edward, Debt Intervention Adviser (T: 020 3004 5610): at the Foodbank including those clients who do not need the Foodbank service.

Website: <http://www.westminsterchapel.org.uk/ministries/foodbank/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/westminsterfoodbank/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/wmfoodbank?lang=en>