



# Clacton Foodbank

## Quarterly Newsletter

### 2023 Sees the Food Crisis in Clacton Worsening!

AS business closures and job losses remain prominent in the news, interest rates together with inflation rise further and we see domestic bills also continuing to rise, we perhaps shouldn't be surprised that more and more people are feeling the depth of pain associated with the ingrained worry of "how do I meet these costs, how do I feed my family, how do I feed myself?"

As the number of our local people who find themselves in food insecurity grows month on month, so the number of our donations drop as the pinch of financial worry intensifies further across our community.

Doing as we always done may no longer be sufficient. We need to find ever innovative ways to provide emergency food and support to those in need; and find ways to reach those, who perhaps find they are unable to reach out to us but are living either in fear of hunger or actual hunger.

Now more than ever we need to think towards winter and beyond; work tirelessly to ensure the kind donations are maintained to meet demand and funds can we grown to meet need.

Fundraisers are desperately needed and on page 8 we reach out to everybody who can help. In this month's Newsletter we also promote the money saving and fundraising idea - 'Don't Burn Your Money'.

The graph to the right illustrates that for these past 3 years the number of food parcels provided by Clacton Foodbank exceed the donations received. This means we have to buy essential food items to continue supporting those in our local community who find themselves in food insecurity.

In November Clacton Foodbank will be 10 years old. In that same year (2013) the Guardian Newspaper quoted 'there has been a dramatic increase in demand for food banks and charitable help in the UK, with more than 20m meals provided in 2013 – a 54% increase on the previous year. In 2023 we must work harder still to end this!



**Clacton Foodbank turns 10 years of age (Pages 3 & 4)**

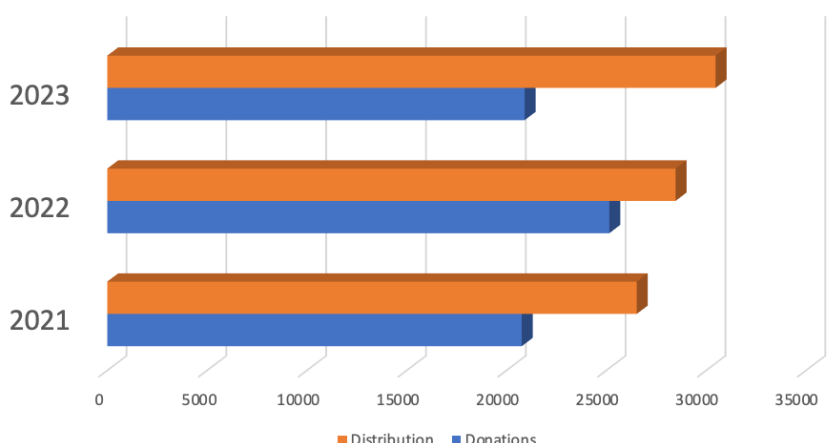


**2023 Christmas Hamper Appeal & Toy Appeal (Page 7)**



**We're looking for Fundraisers (Page 8)**

Increasing Demand -v- Reducing Donations



## **In this month's issue:**

Our Foodbank stocks have been under strain as we moved out of 2022 and into 2023. Due to the hard work of our volunteers and generosity of the people in and around Clacton, as well as our business supporters we have still been able to ensure that every person in food insecurity who has been referred to us have received a balanced 3 day food parcel.

Many of us are now feeling the impact of the cost of living crisis this country is currently moving through and it's times such as these, when local Foodbanks come under even greater pressure, as we see increasing numbers of people, due in part to skyrocketing bills, finding they do not have the means to regularly put food on the table.

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The Clacton Foodbank is about our local community. It is only with **your help and support** that we are able to help and support our neighbours within the local community. Everyday there are families and individuals in food crisis, through no fault of their own but simply because of an unforeseen change in circumstances for example; none of us truly knows if or when we may need this lifeline.

There are many ways you can support the Clacton Foodbank, just one can of potatoes donated next time you are shopping, is a source of comfort to someone locally who is in food crisis. We ensure that no food which is donated goes to waste!

At times we look for new volunteers to join our existing team of volunteers in the many areas available. We're always happy to have a chat on the phone, by email or over a coffee.

**The Clacton Food Bank - Contact [Tracy.Dobbs@salvationarmy.org.uk](mailto:Tracy.Dobbs@salvationarmy.org.uk)**

**If you are in food crisis - HELP THROUGH HARDSHIP - is there to support.  
Tel: 0808 208 2138. Opening hours Monday - Friday 9am to 5pm. Closed Bank  
Holidays.**



# Clacton Foodbank is 10 Years Old!

In November 2013 Clacton Foodbank was formed and for the past decade has been supporting families and individuals in our local community who find themselves in food insecurity.

Looking back to 2013 David Cameron was Prime Minister, leading Britain's first coalition government in nearly 70 years; and we still had another 3 years to go before the Brexit vote. As we went into November 2013 Eminem took over the Number 1 position in the UK music chart with The Monster (featuring Rihanna). April 2013 saw the death of the former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and on 5th December of that year Nelson Mandela, the anti-apartheid figurehead and former president of South Africa died at the age of 95, following a prolonged respiratory infection. Locally Clacton was featured on the BBC News in October 2013 when the Helter-Skelter at Clacton Pier was blown down in strong winds.

## 'No-one wants food banks to be a reality'



Volunteers - Tracy Cooke (front), with (from left) Barrie Sampson, Debbie Chard, Maria Sampson, Pete Baker and Theresa Hall

Tracy Cook has headed up Clacton's food bank for five years. While demand has been steady and support constant, she is bracing herself for an increase in users as the country bears the brunt of the rollout of universal credit. The volunteer dispels some of the myths surrounding food banks and takes a look at why some people feel comfortable admitting they need help, while others suffer in silence.

By TOM DALEY  
tom.daley@esqand.co.uk

FOOD banks face unprecedented demand.

Between April last year and March, the Trussell Trust, which operates the largest network of food banks in the country, handed out 1,332,952 three day emergency food supplies to people in crisis.

This is a 13 per cent increase on the previous year, with almost 500,000 of those packages going to children.

As necessary as they are, they are an unpleasant reality in a first world country like Britain.

Just ask Tracy Cooke, who heads up Clacton Food Bank, based in the town's Salvation Army headquarters in Old Road.

To mark the food bank's fifth anniversary, Tracy stood up in front of her many donors and supporters to thank them for their support.

She said: "It wasn't a celebration. I would struggle to ever use that word in the same line as food bank."

"When I talked at the end to thank everyone for their support I didn't say 'Hope to see you again in another five years'."

"This is the great dilemma, nobody wants food banks to exist, but they are necessary."

"The challenge is asking whether you are creating something which is in itself creating a need."

"This is why we don't create a big show out of it, when we run short of something we put out an appeal to our partners directly."

Over the past year, the 20-strong team of volunteers at Clacton food bank has helped to dish out 17.5 tonnes of food to people in need.

The group work with 55 referral agencies, including the probation service, job centres and the Citizen's Advice Bureau, to ensure their packages go to those who need them the most.

In its five year history, the food bank has helped to prevent 8,658 people from going hungry and handed out 3,522 food parcels.

In spite of the national trend,

Tracy is confident Clacton's food bank can meet the demand of its users.

She feels there is a misunderstanding around the purpose of food banks, particularly over identifying who accesses their services.

She said: "The homeless issue is slightly different, in that there is a soup run which primarily supports them, breakfast drops here and at churches."

"Very few rough sleeping homeless access the food bank."

"Probably in excess of 40 to 45 per cent are single adults as we do have a lot of bedsits here."

"For many people, it is short-term, for example if they are put on statutory sick pay."

"We monitor it well and make sure we are signposting to the agencies who will help and provide support for as long as is needed."

"We have people bringing food to us week in, week out, from schools, churches and businesses."

"We have support from supermarkets, including Tesco, Co-op and Asda, and a partnership with Lidl which will bring in some bread and fruit, some fresher foods."

Clacton is a town with a high elderly population, but pensioners make up a tiny proportion of food bank users.

Tracy suspects this is simply

because many are too proud to ask for help.

She said: "Over 65s across the UK account for less than 2 per cent of the users of Trussell's food banks."

"This doesn't mean there aren't many who need us, it is because they don't want to ask for help."

The Clacton food bank hands out 120 food parcels a month, averaging 30 every week.

While this figure has remained fairly consistent year on year, Tracy is anticipating an increase coinciding with the rollout of Universal Credit.

The system, a compulsory alternative for people receiving tax credits or disability benefits, has come under fire for its complex online application process.

Claimants must wait five or more weeks for their first payment, leading to issues with rent payment and an increasing reliance on food banks to get by.

Emma Revie, Trussell Trust's chief executive, said: "We're really worried that our network of food banks could see a big increase in people needing help."

"Leaving 3 million people to wait at least five weeks for a first payment - especially when we have already decided they need support through our old benefits or tax credits system - is just not good enough."

Also in 2013 UK house prices rose by 8.4% resulting in the average UK home according to Nationwide Building Society being valued at £175,826 (average value in May 2023 is £286,000). Also headline news in 2013, 'Food prices set to soar' - one example was potatoes rising from £114 to £245 a ton and bread, sausages, bacon and milk were all labelled with significant price increases that year - sadly we are still seeing similar a decade later.

The picture and article above appeared in the Gazette News in 2018; we are now a further 5 years on and the challenges we face in Clacton remain. Tracy provides an update on page 4.



*A message from Tracy Dobbs – Clacton Foodbank Project Manager*

*On our 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary I recall saying that we didn't want to be around at the 10 year point!*

*Very sadly, we are still here, and needed more now than ever before. The impact of the Covid Pandemic swiftly followed by the Cost-of-Living Crisis has seen demand on our service reach unprecedented levels.*

*The reality is we now have more food going out each month than we have coming in. This means we are often purchasing food to bolster the stock level.*

*We are extremely grateful to all our donors who give food and financial gifts, without this continuous regular support it would be a much bleaker picture. It is greatly appreciated.*

*Whilst we continue to provide food parcels, we are working hard on helping to tackle the underlying issues that brings someone to a Foodbank in the first place.*

*Over the coming months we will be working closely with Citizens Advice to introduce advisors into our Foodbank sessions. The Citizens Advice are experts in this field, and we are delighted to be partnering in this way.*

*I want to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers, donors, supporters, referral agencies and supermarkets, without whom we would not be able to offer what we do throughout the year for our local community. Thank you.*

*Tracy Dobbs*

# DINNER MATTERS - Soup Makers

Harvest Moon - the full moon that occurs nearest to the autumn equinox, usually towards the end of September – the traditional start of the autumn season and when Harvest Festival takes place. As daylight hours decrease and the days and nights grow colder, what better time to consider soup? Of course soup makers are not essential equipment for making nourishing home made soup, however they mean less equipment and mess. Healthwise, water intake increases leaving us fuller for longer and home made soup contains far less salt. Additionally all kinds of nutrient rich and immune boosting ingredients can be added, as well as using up leftovers in the fridge. Many Soup maker recipes are readily available but here to get things going, we feature a cheap and easy to make Vegetable Soup.

## Recipe Card - Vegetable Soup (Soup Maker edition)

Whizz up this versatile vegetable soup in a soup maker using your favourite vegetables. Serve with a dollop of crème fraîche and some herbs.

(Recipe is from the BBC Good Food collection).

Serves 2

Preparation time 5 minutes. Cooking time 30 minutes

Cost - Approx <£0.50/serving

### Ingredients:

- 200g vegetables, such as onions, celery and carrots, chopped (although you can of course use any vegetables of your choice)
- 300g potato, peeled and chopped (£1.60/2.5kg)
- 700ml vegetable stock £0.75 for 12 cubes)
- crème fraîche (£1.05/300ml) and fresh herbs, to serve



### Method

#### Soup Maker

**STEP 1 - Put the vegetables, potatoes, and stock into a soup blender, and press the 'smooth soup' function. Make sure you don't fill the soup maker above the max fill line.**

**STEP 2 - Once the cycle is complete, season, and pour into bowls with a dollop of crème fraîche and some herbs.**

### Cost of Ingredients:

Cost of ingredients based on (Asda current prices 11/09/2023). Quantities of some ingredients mean you will have already started to build an at home 'on the shelf' supply which can be used in this and future recipes. It is assumed vegetables will be leftovers from the fridge.

# In Focus - What's happened and What's ahead



## Clacton Foodbank's 10th Birthday

Covered on pages 3 and 4 of this, our October 2023 Newsletter, we focus on Clacton Foodbank turning 10 years old this month.

## Clacton Foodbank Steering Group

The 2nd meeting of the Clacton Foodbank Steering Group took place on 27 September. Arranged and hosted by Tracy Dobbs, Manager and Project Leader of the Clacton Foodbank, the meeting was attended by Asda, Citizen's Advice, Clacton Lions Club, Clacton Salvation Army, Community Voluntary Services Tendring (CVST), St Peter & St Paul Church St Osyth, Tendring District Council (TDC) and by volunteers from Clacton Foodbank. The next meeting is scheduled for 16th January 2024.

## Extending our media reach

We are pleased to be able to report we have a regular article going into the St Osyth News each month.

Improvements are being made slowly to our website and we're also pleased to have been included on the Trussell Trust Panel of Foodbanks involved in the Trust's current website improvement project.

Our Facebook Friday feature is now into its 24th weekly feature as of 29th September, so please do take a look at our Facebook page every Friday, as we would love to see as many likes 👍 to our features as possible.

**GUARANTEE  
OUR ESSENTIALS**



# Looking back to Harvest and forward to Christmas



## CHRISTMAS HAMPER APPEAL 2023

More than ever this year, families in Clacton will be struggling financially this Christmas. Help make "Happy Christmas" a reality for these families by putting together and donating a Christmas Food Hamper. We will then distribute the hampers to families in need.

Please obtain one nice size "bag for life" and fill it with the following items:

- Chocolate Christmas Log or Cake
- Children's Christmas Chocolate e.g. Selection Box
- After Dinner/Adult Chocolates (no alcohol filled ones please!)
- Fancy Sweet Biscuits
- Pringles or similar
- Hot Chocolate
- Tinned Ham
- Tinned Tuna/Salmon
- Sweet Pickle/Chutney
- Jam

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT:**

ALL ITEMS FIT INTO ONE BAG  
 ALL ITEMS ARE PERISHABLES, AND ALL ITEMS HAVE A USE BY DATE OF 25<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER OR LATER  
 THERE ARE NO HOMEMADE ITEMS

**PLEASE DROP OFF YOUR HAMPER ON TUESDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER BETWEEN 11.30AM - 4.00PM TO THE SALVATION ARMY COMMUNITY CENTRE, OLD ROAD, CLACTON (OPPOSITE ALDI).**

THANKYOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS

If you are able please support our Christmas Hamper appeal. Each hamper costs in the region of £20 to make up and will make a big difference to those in our local community who are suffering food insecurity. Thank you.

Leading up to Christmas, the Salvation Army are again running their donate a gift appeal. If you are able to help, please do. Thank you.

**Be a Star and donate a gift**

**Be a Star!**

Could you help us make Christmas special for those who may have little or nothing under the tree on Christmas morning?

We work closely with Social Services and other referral agencies to provide gifts and Christmas food hampers to those who otherwise would have very little.

We are appealing for gifts (not stocking fillers) for children and young people from Birth to 18 years.

Toys, Games, and Vouchers would all make ideal gifts.

Thankyou

Donations can be dropped to The Salvation Army Community Centre, (opposite Aldi), 103 Old Road, Clacton We are here Monday - Friday from 9.00 - 2.00pm

**THE SALVATION ARMY**

**FR** Financial Reporting REGULATOR

The Salvation Army Trustee Company acting as Trustee of The Salvation Army Trust (Central Area), 26 Chancery Street, London EC2A 4EJ and its subsidiary (SCSA) Ltd. The Salvation Army Territorial Headquarters, 1 Chancery Park, London SE1 8LQ.

# We're looking For Fundraisers!

Download our Fundraising Booklet- <https://clacton.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/>



In our July Newsletter we spoke about the fantastic efforts of **Julia Smith**, from **Blue Garden Cafe** in Clacton, who on the 23rd April this year ran in and completed the **London Marathon** in 6 hours, 19 minutes and 27 seconds. In doing so she raised the absolutely tremendous sum of **£3537.44** for the **Clacton Trussell Trust Foodbank** run by the **Clacton Salvation Army**, 103 Old Road, Clacton-On-Sea.

In the past year there has been an **increase of 61% of people in our local community needing support from the Clacton Foodbank** because they have found themselves in emergency food crisis. As we start to move into the autumn and winter months and the even greater challenges local people in food insecurity face during this time, we are **REACHING OUT TO YOU** to help us raise money through any fundraising activities you are able to do. Are you a **business**, a **group of friends**, **work colleagues**, or perhaps a **local chess club**, **football or cricket team**, **martial arts class**, or maybe a **knitting circle** - do you think you could engage with us to **raise money for the Clacton Foodbank** - to support us in continuing to support local people in food insecurity?



One idea we are recommending is '**Don't Burn Your Money**', which we featured in Clacton Foodbank's Facebook Friday Feature on 15th September. There are no shortage of features in the media regarding how the population haemorrhages it's money pointlessly and with no added value. We're promoting '**Don't Burn Your Money**' as an easy and beneficial way for you to not only **reduce your weekly or monthly spend** (and make some savings yourself) but also to **help us at Clacton Foodbank to raise funds to help those in our local community who find themselves in food crisis**.

There are **numerous items which many of us could be wasting our money on** - these include **wasting food, impulse shopping, smoking or vaping, subscriptions** we no longer want but fail to cancel and buying **newspapers** and **magazines** we don't read, or the articles we do want to read are available for free elsewhere

If we think for a moment about the working day, how commonplace is it to buy a morning coffee from our favourite branded supplier (let's say £3.75) and then a Meal Deal for lunch (let's say £3.95); that's already £7.70 each day potentially unnecessarily spent, when our offices and workplaces may have free drinks machines and we have the ingredients and know how to make our own (most likely healthier) packed lunches at home. Over a 5-day week this adds up to £38.50, an eye opening £154 over a month and a staggering £1848 over a year! WOW! Expand further on these thoughts and hold those savings in a Savings Account paying 4.2% interest it may have been possible to make yourself an additional £77 instead of losing almost £2000!

Currently at Clacton Foodbank we are running low on Biscuits (Asda Digestives £0.70), Instant Hot Chocolate (Asda £1.75), Instant Mash (Asda £1.00), Pasta Sauce (Asda £0.90), Tinned Pulses (Asda prices start around £0.65), Tinned Tomatoes (Asda £0.55) and Tinned/Carton Custard (Asda £0.58). Based on Asda prices on 9 September 2023 these items combined will cost £6.13 (less than ones day's coffee and meal deal). **PLEASE HELP US IF YOU CAN TO HELP THOSE IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY WHO THROUGH FOOD INSECURITY DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH MONEY FOR THE ESSENTIALS TO LIVE.**



## ‘A Chat over a Cuppa’

For this edition another of our volunteers has gone one step further and taken up Tracy’s invitation to sit down over a cup of tea and chat about themselves.



### Pippa Downton joins Tracy at the table for tea, a biscuit (or 2) and a chat



**Your role at Clacton Foodbank:** Joint Warehouse Manager

**How long have you been volunteering:** I started in the Warehouse in October 2014, but Robert (The other half of Warehouse Manager) and I only started managing when the previous Manager retired to get his knee replaced last Christmas.

**Are you a tea of a coffee person:** Coffee – milk and sugar please

**Favourite Biscuit:** Chocolate Wholemeal

**Why did you start volunteering?** When I retired I was keen to do something helpful and I had had contact with some people who had been helped by a local Foodbank so I offered my services. The warehouse needed someone extra, so I went there.

**What do you get from volunteering:** We are a good team and that is important. It saves me from joining a gym – weight lifting with trays of soup or beans is an excellent substitute, and if I get really ambitious I can move onto Pasta Sauce and Milk cartons! A tray of soup weighs about 17kg while one of milk cartons comes in at just over 30kg! My husband has always been very scathing about my ‘heavy lifting ability’ – there is always a way of doing things, even if it is one carton at a time. It restores faith in humanity! Apart from the rest of the team who do that anyway, it is amazing that we get so many donations – during the pandemic, when things were so difficult for so many people, when vulnerable people had leftovers from their government delivered supplies they were immediately sorting out how to donate them to us!

**Hopes for the future:** Obviously anyone who works at a Foodbank hopes that the need for them will be removed! I am afraid, even at my most optimistic, I can’t see that happening in the immediate future, but improvements in the system to reduce the number of people who need to use our services would be good. From a more personal point of view, retirement is lovely, so I hope my health and the health of those close to me continues to be good so we can enjoy it! I do get teased at the Warehouse about my holidays and travel, but with two of my three children abroad, together with the grandchildren, the ‘weightlifting’, and the Park Running will help with this – number 116 was completed recently (Something else I have started in retirement!!)



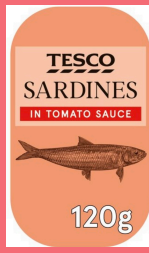
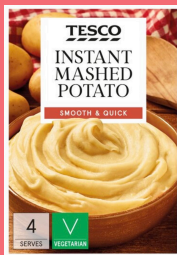
**October 2023 - Our warehouse is running low on the following items -**

**PLEASE HELP IF YOU CAN**

Up to date information is always available on the BanktheFood App

We urgently need:

(Correct at 2 October)



FOOD NEEDS	NO. BOUGHT	ADD
BISCUITS		(+)
CUP A SOUP		(+)
INSTANT HOT CHOCOLATE		(+)
INSTANT MASH		(+)
PASTA SAUCE		(+)
TINNED FRUIT		(+)
TINNED PULSES		(+)
TINNED TOMATOES		(+)
TINNED/CARTON CUSTARD		(+)
COFFEE		(+)
DRIED RICE		(+)
MUG SHOTS		(+)
TINNED FISH		(+)
TINNED POTATOES		(+)

Donations may be made at the collection points in the following locations - Tesco Superstore (Brook Retail Park), Asda Superstore (Bull Hill Road), Co-Op (Coopers Lane), Co-Op Daily (Old Road and Frinton Road), Lidl (St Osyth Road), Morrisons (Waterglade Retail Park), Sainsbury's (St John's Road).

The community together supporting neighbours in food crisis.

Thank you for your help.



**CLACTON FOODBANK - \*PLEASE REACH OUT FOR OUR HELP**

“The foodbank was there when we really needed it, it was an absolute lifeline.”

We don't think anyone in our community should have to face going hungry. That's why we provide three days' nutritionally balanced emergency food and support to local people who are referred to us in crisis. We are part of a nationwide network of foodbanks, supported by The Trussell Trust, working to combat poverty and hunger across the UK.

**\*IMPORTANT** - Our foodbank works using a voucher referral system. In order to get help from our foodbank, you will need a voucher issued by local agencies.

**FOODBANK VOUCHERS**

We know that anyone can find themselves at crisis point for a number of different reasons. In order to provide the most appropriate help for the circumstances of your situation we work with local agencies. If they feel you are struggling to put food on the table, they will issue you with a foodbank voucher. The local agency can also provide long term support if needed to help address some of the issues behind the reasons for your crisis.

For further help and support please ring 0808 208 2138 - HELP THROUGH HARDSHIP. Opening hours Monday - Friday 9am to 5pm. Closed Bank Holidays.

**Local food drop of points - supporting Clacton Foodbank**

- Tesco Superstore**  
Brook Retail Park  
London Road  
Clacton-on-Sea  
CO15 4EF
- Sainsburys Local**  
St Johns Road  
Clacton-on-Sea  
CO16 8DU
- Morrisons**  
Waterglade Retail Park  
Old Road  
Clacton-on-Sea  
CO15 1HX
- Co-Op Foodstore**  
Coopers Lane  
Clacton-on-Sea  
CO15 2BX
- Lidl**  
St Osyth Road  
Clacton-on-Sea  
CO15 3BN

**Asda**  
Superstore  
Bull Hill Road  
Clacton-on-Sea  
CO15 4AU

**Co-Op Daily**  
Old Road  
Clacton-on-Sea  
CO15 3AY

**Co-Op Daily**  
53 Frinton Road  
Clacton-on-Sea  
CO15 5UH



**FEEDBACK** - We hope you have enjoyed reading our Newsletter. We hope you will take a few moments to share your thoughts about our re-launched publication and let us know about any articles or features you would like us to consider covering in future issues.