

Malmesbury and District Food Bank NEWSLETTER

February 2014

This is the first in a series of newsletters to let you know what we are doing and what progress we are making.

First thing to say is “thank you”. Those that organised the Public Meeting on the 15th were very gratified to have such a good attendance and so much support. Whilst we had heard that there was good support it is not until people turn up and show an interest that you can judge the true level of that support.

So What Has Happened?

It is still early days but the steering group has been making some progress. We now have a Treasurer! Mike Langtree has agreed to join us in this capacity and as Mike is also treasurer for CTiM that should fit in very well until we are fully up and running and have totally separate accounts etc.

Dick Gray from Christian Aid and the Abbey has agreed to be on the steering group and to look after the database. It is this data base that is being used to send out this letter. If you know of other people that would like to receive information then please do let Dick know.

Members of the group have been tracking down information about the client group and how they are being helped at present – if they are. What has come out of these enquiries and discussions is that there is very definitely a need for a foodbank in our community. It is clear that various recent changes to welfare benefits have impacted on quite a number of families and are causing food crisis for some. From discussions with the education sector there is evidence that teachers and welfare workers are seeing children that are being affected by food shortages.

Citizens Advice offices in both Chippenham and South Cotswolds covering Tetbury report that they have an increasing number of cases from our community where the services of a food bank is becoming essential.

We have met with our local police and again they know of cases – both young and mature – where a food bank will be an invaluable service. There are young people “sofa surfing” in the area and in this situation they are unable to feed themselves which leads on to other problems.

So far we have also been pleased at the willingness of some organisations to work with us for the community and to issue vouchers to those identified as being in need. We will need more partners (particularly in the area of health care) to be able to issue vouchers and will continue to work toward that goal.

Money

We have applied to the Carnival Committee for a grant and have been fortunate to receive a grant that will help us with the refurbishment of the stores and the cost of start-up. We do need more and have applied to some local charities for help. It is a very clear objective of the steering group to keep our start-up and running costs to a minimum whilst providing a facility that meets the needs of our community. It must be safe, secure and be a place that people feel is suitable to come to. We are told by Trussell Trust that the location and size are ideal but we need to make it more “homely” so that people can feel at ease and not be intimidated by their surroundings.

The Next Steps

Very soon we will be looking for help with the refurbishment of the stores. We will need straightforward labouring help to clear out and knock out. There will be some carpentry, electrical work and some plastering to be done. Of course we will need to paint and kit out the area. Watch this space.....

Regards and thanks for your continued support.

Richard Payler (Hon Sec!).

Steering Group

The Steering Group is currently comprised of:

- Chairman: Ray Sanderson
- Hon. Secretary Richard Payler (01666 829665)
- Hon Treasurer Mike Langtree
- Co-opted Member Dick Gray

and they will be responsible for guiding the formation of a Malmesbury and District Food Bank.

To send e-mails to the Food Bank, please use the address:

malmesburyfb@gmail.com

Data Base of Interested persons

We have a list of interested people collected at the Open Meeting on January 15th, but we really need to formally collect this information with your approval so that we can store it on a computer and use it in connection with the Malmesbury and District Food Bank.

On the last page of this newsletter is a form for you to give the details and your approval for this information to be stored on a computer.

There is a section on the form for additional information—we would be interested to gather information about how you could help the Malmesbury and District Food Bank.

Please complete this and return it to Dick Gray (see first page for contact details), or e-mail to: **malmesburyfb@gmail.com**

Personal Details solely for the use of by Malmesbury and District Food Bank

Title: _____

First name: _____

Last Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

E-mail address: _____

Contact Phone number: _____

Additional Information (please include any skills you may have which may be of use to the Food Bank):

Data Protection: I agree that information supplied on this form may be stored on a computer data base for the benefit of Malmesbury & District Food Bank. Malmesbury and District Food Bank will keep this information confidential and secure.

YES/NO (please delete as appropriate)