



Cleobury Food Bank

Annual Report

2021



## **History, Aims and Objectives**

Cleobury Food Bank was established in October 2019 to relieve food poverty and financial hardship in Cleobury Mortimer and the surrounding area.

It is a collaborative project managed by the Town Council, St. Mary's Church and St. Elizabeth's Church. There is a steering group with representatives of all three organisations.

The finances of the Food bank are managed by the Town Council Finance Officer.

The Food Bank was established when it became apparent that individuals and families in need in Cleobury Mortimer and the surrounding area were having to travel to other towns such as Ludlow, Bridgnorth and Kidderminster to access a Food Bank.

Cleobury Foodbank is a member of the Shropshire Food Bank Network and the Coordinators regularly attend meetings with other food banks.

We achieve our aims and objectives, in particular but not exclusively by:

- The provision of emergency food, items, advice and support to individuals and families in financial need
- Contributing to and co-operating with charities and other organisations
- Giving our users a £5 voucher to be used for the purchase of fresh food (bread/fruit/vegetables/meat/fish) at nominated local shops.



## **Organisation and Governance**

Cleobury Food Bank is open on Friday Mornings from 9.30 to 11.30 am and continues to operate in the Market Hall in Church Street.

Cleobury Food Bank is managed by 3 Coordinators – Debbie Brown (Town Council Chair), Patrick Buck (Town Councillor) and Beth Gadd (Community Volunteer). Debbie is enhanced DBS checked and is the nominated Safeguarding Lead for the Food Bank.

There is a bank of volunteers who assist at the Food Bank on a rota system. Their duties include:

- Collection of donated goods from the various donation points in the Town
- Checking and marking the donated goods with clear use by dates
- Re-stocking the food storage area
- Distribution of food parcels to Food Bank users
- Offering advice and support to users
- Signposting to other organisations

All volunteers are given both verbal and written advice and guidance about safe lifting, moving and handling and safeguarding adults and children. Volunteers sign up to our Volunteer Charter. The Food Bank has a Safeguarding Policy which is reviewed regularly to ensure inclusion of any statutory guidance.

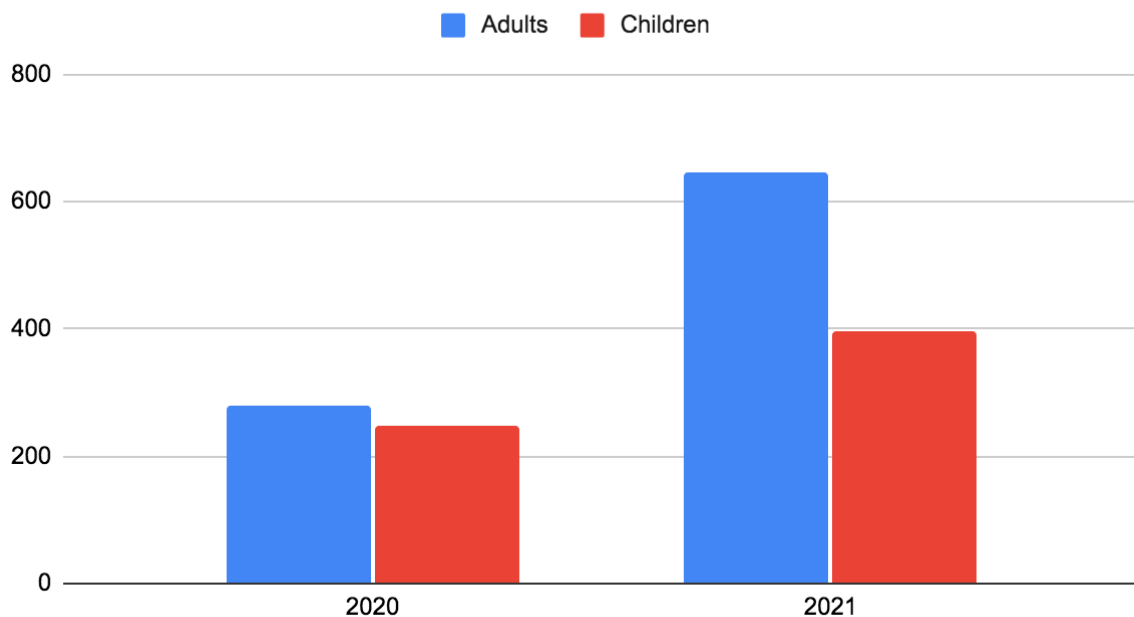


## Achievements and Performance in 2021

When comparing performance in 2021 to 2020 the Food Bank distributed food as below:

| Year | Adult parcels | Child parcels | Total |
|------|---------------|---------------|-------|
| 2020 | 281           | 249           | 530   |
| 2021 | 647           | 397           | 1044  |

### Food Bank - distribution 2020 - 2021



This indicates an increase of Food Bank usage almost double the previous year, with the largest increase in adults (an increase of 130% - particularly single adult households). There were 37 new referrals in 2021.



## Financial Pressures of 2021

Several factors contributed to the financial pressures placed on households in 2021. They include, but are not limited to, the following:

— **Covid-19 pandemic:** Lockdowns and rules on social distancing during the first half of 2021 left many in our area without employment or on reduced hours. The government's furlough scheme was not an effective safety net for all, as some financially vulnerable people work in low-paid jobs that are casual/seasonal.

— **Benefit reductions:** The end of the Universal Credit uplift in October 2021 hit some households in our area quite hard. The £20/week decrease (£80 month) stretched already tight household budgets to a breaking point.

— **Soaring energy costs:** From the price of petrol, to the cost of heating oil and electricity, energy costs increased substantially over the course of 2021. Petrol costs increased by nearly 25% during 2021. In October, home fuel bills increased for the second time since the beginning of the year, as energy regulator Ofgem raised the price cap to £1,277 from £1,138. The cost of heating oil also was up by more than 50 percent by year end. Low income members of our community were most affected by these increases, as they are more likely to live in homes that aren't energy efficient.

— **Rising food costs:** Food prices went up slightly during 2021, and increased the cost of everything from fruit and vegetables to pasta and biscuits. Prices for commonly purchased food and drinks were up 3.9% over the course of 2021, according to the UK Food Foundation. The sharpest increase in costs came in the last quarter of the year.



## **Covid-19 Pandemic**

During the Covid-19 pandemic, and subsequent lock-downs, the Food Bank continued to operate with additional safety features in place. We are able to supply face masks to users if needed, with provision of sanitising gel and hand washing facilities in the Hall. Users are asked to sign in to the Hall using a QR code in the entrance for track and trace purposes, and social distancing is practised at all times. Food Bank volunteers were eligible for vaccinations through Shropshire Council. The Food Bank also became a distribution point in the community for Rapid Flow LFT testing kits.

In 2021 the Food Bank has distributed a total of 239 packs of Rapid Lateral Flow Testing kits.

## **Donations**



The local community, neighbouring parishes, organisations and Churches have continued to be incredibly generous with donations of



both food and cash throughout 2021. The Food Bank has their own dedicated Facebook page and provides regular posts giving information about which items are in short supply. The Food Bank continues to be supported by Mawley Milk with a supply of fresh milk every week for our users, and by Doddington Heights Park who organise a weekly donation collection as a community group, which they deliver to the Hall. In 2021 the Food Bank set up an Amazon wish list for items which has been very successful.

We were also very grateful to receive a large cash donation from Ludlow Food Bank this year.

### **Christmas Hampers**

In 2021 were again able to provide a Christmas hamper to all of the families/individuals that attend the food bank







## **Networking**

The Food Bank has developed a collaborative approach to tackling food poverty and financial hardship by networking with other organisations - local housing officers, local schools, Shropshire Warm Homes Initiative and CAP (Christians Against Poverty) as examples.





## Financial Statement up to 31.12.2021

### Main Food Bank Finances (managed by Cleobury Mortimer Town Council):

#### Income

|                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Standing Order Donations | £450.00           |
| Grants                   | £4,250.00         |
| Ludlow Food Bank         | £10,000.00        |
| Other donations          | £570.00           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>£15,270.00</b> |

#### Expenditure

|                        |                  |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Petty Cash Top up      | £600.00          |
| Voucher re-imbursement | £580.00          |
| Room Hire              | £300.00          |
| Community Hub          | £250.00          |
| Equipment              | £69.65           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>£1,799.65</b> |

|                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| <b>BALANCE</b> | <b>£13,470.35</b> |
|----------------|-------------------|



### **Cleobury Food Bank Petty Cash Account 1.1.21 to 31.12.2021**

|                         |        |
|-------------------------|--------|
| Brought forward 1.1.21: | 593.65 |
|-------------------------|--------|

Cash in:

|           |        |
|-----------|--------|
| Donations | 624.50 |
|-----------|--------|

|                                  |        |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Top up from Council Main Account | 600.00 |
|----------------------------------|--------|

|                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b><u>TOTAL</u></b> | <b><u>1818.15</u></b> |
|---------------------|-----------------------|

Expenses:

|                          |        |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Food/fuel/other supplies | 843.47 |
|--------------------------|--------|

|           |        |
|-----------|--------|
| Equipment | 112.81 |
|-----------|--------|

|                                   |        |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| Special Items (Xmas Hampers etc.) | 187.25 |
|-----------------------------------|--------|

|                                  |        |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Fresh food voucher reimbursement | 270.00 |
|----------------------------------|--------|

|                              |                       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b><u>TOTAL EXPENSES</u></b> | <b><u>1413.53</u></b> |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|

|                              |               |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Balance at 31.12.2021</b> | <b>404.62</b> |
|------------------------------|---------------|