

As time goes on and Lockdown returns.



During the Covid 19 pandemic Chippenham Food Bank has changed and adapted in many ways to the circumstances.

Initially mid March demand for food parcels was very high as people had to wait for Universal Credit to be processed and implemented. Referral agencies were all closed and obtaining information on where to seek help was limited.

People started to return to work and the level of infection across the country reduced. Agencies such as Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

reopened. By mid-July, the Food Bank had reverted to giving parcels out to people who had been referred and had a voucher, but still giving food parcels out to emergency cases when necessary. With self isolation restrictions relaxing, more food parcels were being collected and less being delivered.



In July the Salvation Army in Chippenham said good bye to Major Dawn McGarvy, who has moved to a new post in Lincoln, and welcomed Captain Sandra and Chris Hall. Just before Dawn left, we were conscious that we had used most of the funds that were raised at the initial

outbreak and launched an appeal. With the help of local Members of Parliament, local councillors, local Churches, local charitable organisations and generous individuals the food bank's financial situation was improved.



As demand for parcels reduced following the return to work, the generous donations of goods continued from Morrisons, local groups and individuals. Then in September many Churches kindly held Harvest Festivals and collected produce for the Food Bank. The generosity of every one has meant that food donations have met the demand since mid-July and very little produce has needed to be purchased.



With the easing of restrictions the Salvation Army were able to resume Sunday services, which meant the Food Bank had to re organise its operation and store all its produce in small rooms, cupboards, which in the main was achieved at the Citadel, with only the long dated tins being moved for storage to the Rotary Hall.

It was a real honour to be asked to accompany Jackie Dixon from the Salvation Army to collect the Civic Award that Chippenham Town Council gave to the Food Bank volunteers in recognition to their contribution to our community.



Then came the Autumn half term and Marcus Rashford's campaign to highlight the needs of low income families and provide meals for youngsters in need. The demand for food parcels noticeable increased and with the help of packed lunches provided by Morrisons we were able to provide some of the local families with prepared sandwiches and fruit.

We are now going into a second lockdown, but the Food Bank is prepared for this and can gear up quickly with a large list of fantastic volunteers all ready to help when needed. Stock levels are good and if demand soars as it did when the first lockdown occurred, we are better prepared this time.

Due to the great community spirit here in Chippenham, we have been able to help those in the greatest need. Please continue to support the Food Bank as we work towards eradicating food poverty here in the UK.

