

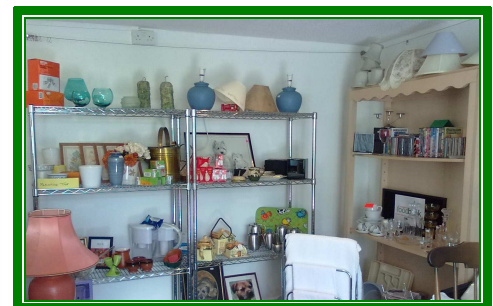


Evaluation Report, May 2011

Background

Wadebridge Foodbank provides three days worth of nutritionally balanced, dried and tinned food to local people in times of crisis. Food is donated by local people and the project is run by volunteers. Food is given out in exchange for a voucher, distributed by local statutory and voluntary agencies. It is available to anyone living in Wadebridge, Bodmin, Padstow, Camelford and the surrounding rural North Cornwall area.

When clients collect their food box, other needs such as a lack of furniture, white goods or household items are often discovered. As a result, StoreHouse was borne - out of direct response to local need and requests from statutory agencies. Members of the community donate second hand furniture, white goods and household items in good condition to the StoreHouse, and these are given free of charge to someone in need, or sold for a reasonable price in our small charity shop. Income from the StoreHouse contributes to our overheads project running costs.



Some clients later return to us as volunteers, helping to sort food and pack food boxes, working in the shop or helping at supermarket collection days. This is actively encouraged, as it increases confidence and self esteem and helps to alleviate social isolation.

Existing work and the difference it is making

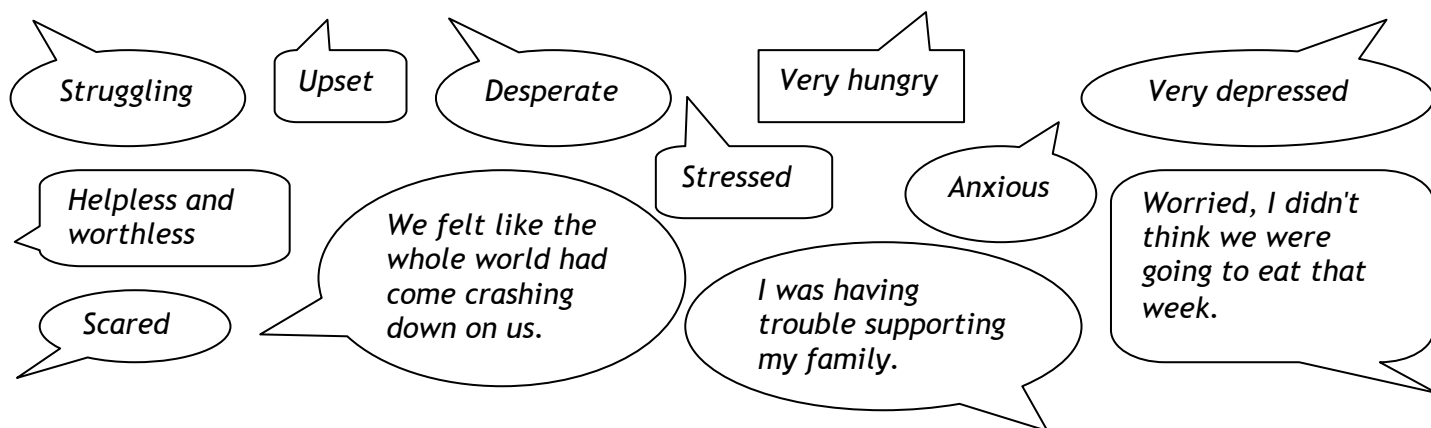


Demand for food boxes from the Wadebridge Foodbank has tripled since we first opened our doors in 2009. In our first 11 months of operation (2009-2010) 129 food boxes were given out, feeding 352 adults and children in crisis need. In our second year (2010-2011) 390 food boxes were given out, feeding 566 adults and 411 children, an increase of 202% in the number of foodboxes given out during the year.

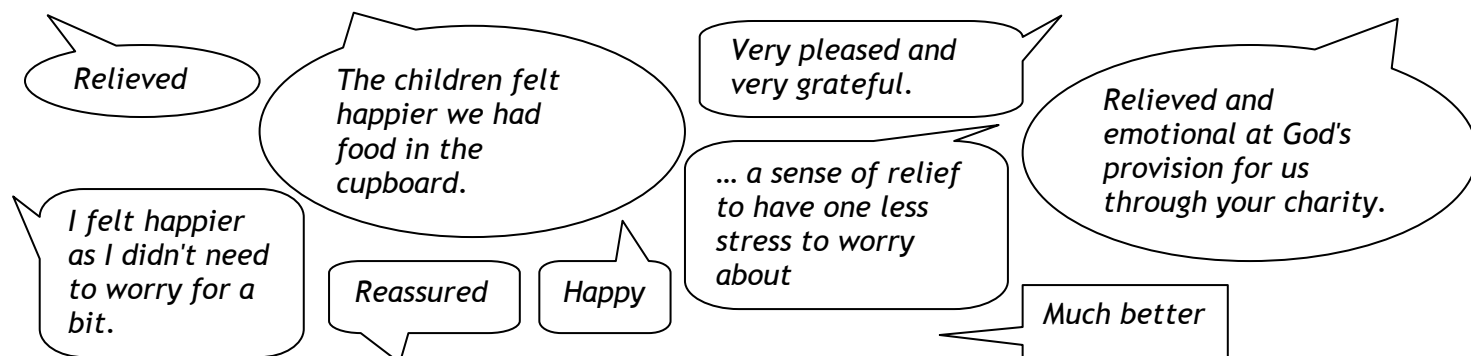
StoreHouse gave away or sold 124 items of furniture in the six months to March 2011, and has a waiting list for some items.

Since February 2011, a **Client Survey** has been given out with every foodbox, in order to gain feedback from our clients. We use this to review what we do and to improve our services. The qualitative comments from the client survey clearly indicate the difference that a foodbox makes:

How did you feel before you got your food box?



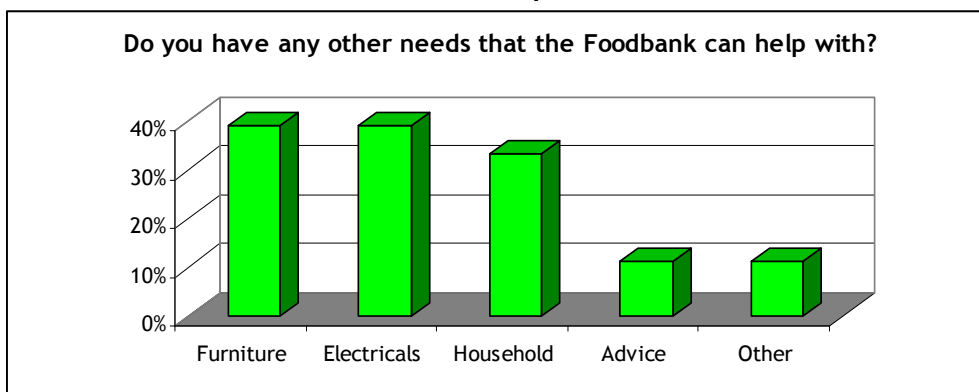
How did you feel after you received your food box?



Did you receive any other help from the Foodbank?

23% of clients who responded received other help from the Foodbank in the form of advice, support and household items.

Do you have other needs that the Foodbank can help with?

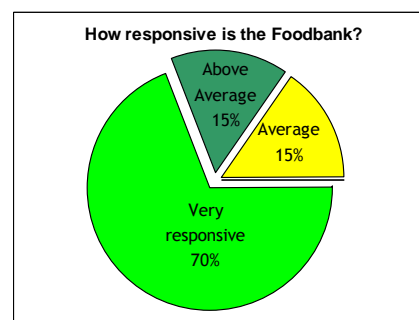


39% of clients who responded needed help with furniture and/or electrical items, and 33% with household items. The other needs included help with a forced house move, and children's clothes.

Several clients used the improvement / suggestions section to comment instead on how pleased they were with the service. Comments included:



In results from the on-line **Distributor Survey** (February 2011) organisations report that the Foodbank and StoreHouse met the needs of their clients quickly and compassionately. 70% of distributors said that the Foodbank is very responsive:



77% of distributors are aware of the StoreHouse.

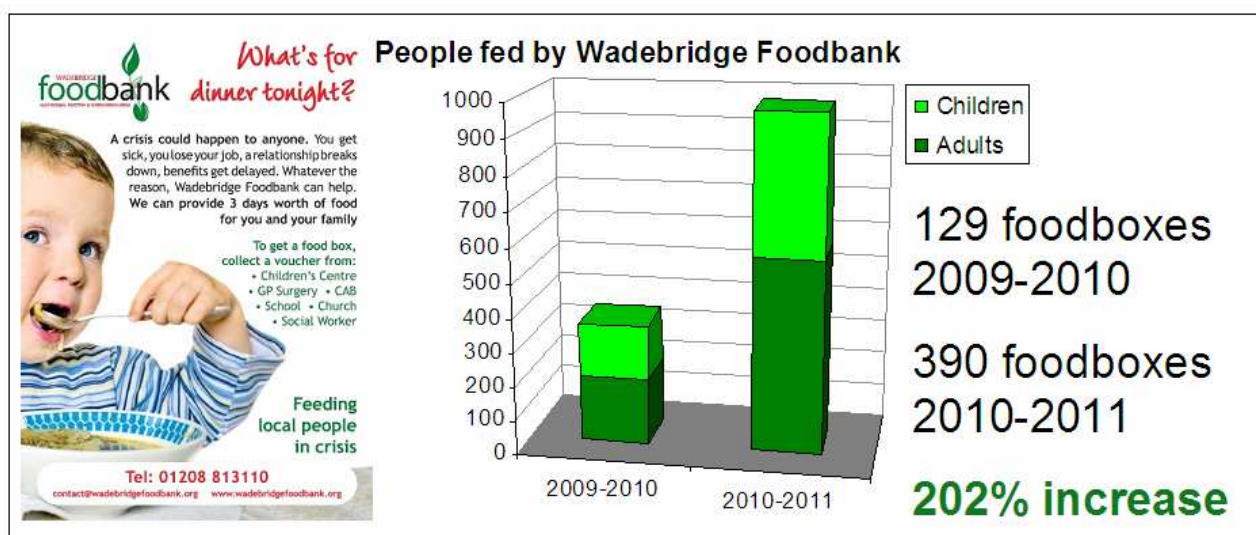
Need for this work

Cornwall still has one of the lowest GDPs in the UK, with many people living in low income or workless households. 10% of the population in Cornwall live in the 20% most deprived areas in England. Cornwall is the 82nd most deprived local authority area out of 326 with a score of 22.5. Cornwall is the 8th most deprived local authority on the employment deprivation scale, and 9th most deprived on the income deprivation scale (Department for Communities and Local Government, Indices of Deprivation 2010). Many households rely on low paid, insecure seasonal work and average house prices are now 9-10 times median annual earnings (2010). One in five (20%) households in Cornwall are estimated to be in fuel poverty, a higher proportion than in the South West (13%) and in England (12%). (A household in fuel poverty spends more than 10% of their income on heating their homes.)

The area served by the Wadebridge Foodbank includes two Lower Super Output Areas in the most deprived 20% in England - Bodmin St Mary's Ward South East is the tenth most deprived area in Cornwall, and Bodmin St Mary's Ward East. 46% of the foodboxes given out in 2010-2011 went to people living in Bodmin.

In the combined areas of Bodmin, Wadebridge, Padstow & Camelford that we serve, there are 3,961 households that are categorised as Low Income Estates or Low Income Older People (Experian's 'Mosaic Public Sector' household classifications - Cornwall Council Community Intelligence Team, Community Network Profiles 2008).

These figures, plus the evidence of increased demand for the Foodbank & StoreHouse over the past year - an increase of 202% in the number of foodboxes - demonstrate the increased need for this work. The current economic climate is exacerbating this, with more people becoming unemployed or facing problems due to benefit cuts/delays and debt. Already during 2011 due to local authority cutbacks some of the voucher distributors have lost their jobs. This makes it more challenging to reach potential client groups, who are still in need, but more isolated.



Note: 2009-2010, was the first year and covers 11 months.

What has worked well

The project works with 47 local statutory and voluntary agencies (compared with 30 in 2009-2010). Distributors of Foodbank vouchers include: Children, schools and family services, doctors and health services, police, probation and courts, homelessness charities, young people's services, SHARE (an

advice service for young people), Connexions, pregnancy crisis counselling, parent support advisers attached to schools, children's centres and churches.

We have developed a reputation with local statutory and voluntary agencies as a real place of refuge for those in need, somewhere that they can refer people to when no one else is prepared to help. It seems we are filling a gap in provision that sometimes leaves those who are most isolated, most vulnerable, and most excluded with nowhere to turn, falling in-between the gaps of postcode lottery service provision or strict funding criteria. We have been unprepared for the situations we would find people left in by agencies that are supposed to support them, but have been touched by the generosity of people donating goods and the response of those we have helped. We have learnt never to underestimate the impact of helping some one practically, and have seen amazing transformations in the lives of some of the people we have met.

Some of the comments that our voucher distributors made in the on-line survey include:



What difference more funding will make

Currently the Wadebridge Foodbank & StoreHouse is run entirely by a fantastic team of dedicated and highly skilled volunteers. It has grown so much that we now need to employ a full-time Project Manager & part-time Administrator, to develop and extend the services we offer, build capacity & make the project sustainable in the long term. This will enable us to put time & energy into:

- Increasing the amount of food donated, by fostering close links with local schools, community groups & business.
- Increasing our visibility by developing a marketing & fund-raising strategy, & developing new promotional materials for the project.
- Using our increased staff capacity to support & train existing volunteers to provide added value to clients, in the form of a befriending service to decrease social exclusion and rural isolation and improved sign-posting to other agencies.
- Actively recruiting new volunteers, with a particular emphasis on providing opportunities for volunteers needing additional support, in partnership with a local organisation, Home Farm Trust, that provides support services for people with learning disabilities.
- Moving the provision of our twice weekly drop-in facility & our existing charity shop to a bigger and more long-term location, refurbishing it to enable us to provide a drop-in internet café facility.

Our current limitation is storage space, and we regularly have to say “no” to donations of goods. With more space, we could help even more people, and this is something we would really like to address. In addition to our very small Foodbank premises, we have been benefiting from the donation of space by a local businessman to store larger furniture items. The site is due to be re-developed at some point in the near future however, and so we need to secure our own long term premises to house both the Foodbank & StoreHouse securely.

The Client Survey asked clients if they had access to a computer and/or the internet, and whether it would be useful if internet access could be provided at the Foodbank & StoreHouse drop-ins:

- 50% of clients who responded do not have a computer.
- 56% of clients who responded do not have access to the internet.
- 89% of clients who responded would find it useful if internet access was provided at the Foodbank & StoreHouse.

In the Client & Distributor Surveys we asked respondents for suggestions on how we could improve the service, and the following suggestions were made:

- Open more days/longer opening hours.
- Details of local collection centres & opening hours to be added to the back of the vouchers for the clients to have.
- Better publicity to increase awareness of the charity.
- A monthly list of what StoreHouse has available.
- To provide washing powder, toilet rolls and toiletries.

Funding through Reaching Communities will enable this community led project, which is meeting real local need, to step up a gear and extend the services it provides. This will enable us to come alongside more people in crisis need and help them to break the cycle of poverty, and support them as they develop skills, experience and self-esteem, improving the quality of their lives.



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