

# the oxford food bank

FEEDING THE COMMUNITY - PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

## Happy 5th Birthday - and getting Bigger and Better



This year the Oxford Food Bank is celebrating its fifth birthday with growing support from the local community and recognition of the work it is doing in saving food waste and helping feed those in need.

From small beginnings in 2009 the Foodbank now operates seven days a week collecting donated food from supermarkets and wholesalers and delivering to more than 40 charities in Oxfordshire, through a team of 100

volunteers.

The Countess of Wessex (*left*) joined the birthday celebrations with a visit to our base in Botley and was presented with this year's must have gifts - an Oxford Food Bank apron and mug before cutting the birthday cake.

She told the audience of supporters, food suppliers and volunteers "The food bank is doing wonderful work and everyone connected with it should be very proud of its achievements"

The Foodbank was also honoured in the Queen's Birthday honours in June with the co-founders, Robin Aitken and David Cairns (*below*) receiving MBEs for Services to the Vulnerable.

They said: "This is really an MBE for the Foodbank as a whole and is



**WELCOME** to our new (actually second-hand) van which joins the existing team of two Nissan and Ford vans enabling the Foodbank to operate a complex collection and delivery schedule, seven days a week.

We were able to buy it through the generous financial support of individual donors who make up nearly 80 per cent of our income.

The Foodbank receives no government or council support whatsoever and is entirely dependent on the generosity of local people.

**WELCOME** also to our new-look website. Please visit us at

[www.oxfordfoodbank.org](http://www.oxfordfoodbank.org)

for all the latest news, information and how to donate or volunteer to help the Oxford Food Bank.

## BECOME A VOLUNTEER FOR HALF A DAY

Oxford Food Bank is a charity run entirely by a workforce of around 100 volunteers, with no paid employees at all. Some volunteers do a single three-hour shift per week but others commit considerably more time to keeping us fully operational – there are always plenty of jobs to do!

Although we have many long term helpers there are always people moving on so we are permanently on the lookout for another pair of helping hands. There are several different roles that volunteers can take on as follows:

**Drivers and Helpers** who pick up food from suppliers and deliver it to charities. It is at the core of what we do, distributing much-needed food to charities who feed their clients, and it is what the majority of our volunteers do on a regular basis. There are several shifts each weekday, in the mornings and afternoons, plus two shifts on Saturdays and one on Sundays. Each shift takes about three hours and it does involve some physical effort (e.g. lifting large boxes and sacks of food), but nothing too strenuous. Drivers must be at least 25 years old, experienced drivers, and comfortable with the idea of driving a delivery van (Ford Transit or similar).



**Base Co-ordinators** on site at our Botley base. These individuals carry out the very important functions of cleaning all areas of the base, controlling our food stock, and generally ensuring that we operate in line with all of the relevant food handling and hygiene regulations. During weekdays there is one shift every morning and another every afternoon, each lasting three hours

Please visit our website [www.oxfordfoodbank.org](http://www.oxfordfoodbank.org) for more details under the “support us” section.

## A CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH



David Kay is sitting on top of the world - actually he's on the Foodbank's floor scrubber - proudly displaying our glowing report from the Vale of White Horse Council's Food and Safety Dept on the way we handle food.

As the Foodbank's Food Hygiene Controller, David has the job of ensuring that our procedures

meet the strict hygiene standards required of any organisation involved with storing and handling food.

After a lengthy and thorough trawl through the procedures, and an inspection of our base at Curtis Yard Industrial Estate, Botley, the council inspector gave it all a big thumbs up.

In fact she stated that the OFB food handling and hygiene procedures were better than those used by the vast majority of commercial food operators and “couldn't think of a single way that OFB could improve their operations”.

*Although our organisation may be totally run by volunteers we aim to be highly professional in all our methods of operation. So the charities that we supply can rest assured that all of the food - mostly fresh vegetables and fruit - they receive will be safe to use and in the best possible condition, just as from any supermarket or supplier.*



For every £ donated £25 of food is distributed free to more than 40 local charities  
Everyone is a volunteer - nobody gets paid. We depend on donations to keep going  
It costs £30,000 a year to run the Foodbank, raised by local donations

## FOOD BANK FACTS AND FIGURES

## SPREADING THE WORD ABOUT WHAT WE DO

The work of the Foodbank is growing - and so is the way we operate, as a sustainable, volunteer-based organisation. So far this year we have had visits from a wide range of people, keen to see at first hand what we do.

Local MP Nicola Blackwood (*far right with volunteer Cathy Howard*) has shown continuing interest and brought us to the attention of the Cabinet Office. A few days later Francis Maude, Minister for the Cabinet Office, paid a visit.

The Cabinet Office plays an important role in progressing issues that do not fall neatly within a single Governmental Department and the Oxford Food Bank (being a charity distributing food to alleviate food poverty, but also working to reduce food waste) definitely falls between several Departments. This was an important opportunity for the most senior representative of the Cabinet Office to find out what the Oxford Food Bank was all about, and for us to explain why its mode of operation is the best model for other new food banks to emulate.



Meanwhile at the Houses of Parliament Chairman David Cairns, was presenting information about the Oxford Food Bank to a number of other politicians at a cross-party Parliamentary Enquiry into food poverty.

We also received a visit from the Lord Mayor of Oxford, which was particularly apt as many of the charities we support are based within the city.

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## SUPPORT FROM OXFORDSHIRE BUSINESSES



While most of our donations are given by generous individuals we are also supported by local businesses and organisations who have donated vehicles, and financed our two chiller rooms.

The latest business to help us is Nominet, the Oxford-based company which controls the UK

registration of internet domain names. Nominet has chosen the Oxford Food Bank as its charity partner for the next two years. All the money the company raises through its regular fund-raising will be given to us.

So far we have received £8,000 and more fund-raising is underway.

Lesley Cowley Nominet's Chief Executive visited the base to see our operations and is pictured having a chat on the doorstep of one of our chiller rooms with Chairman David Cairns. Nominet staff have also taken part as volunteers.

One staff member, Julie Gerring is getting on her bike to undertake a sponsored cycle ride from Oxford to Paris, covering 300 miles in 3 days to raise funds.

A group of A.C.Neilsen employees spent a day at the base giving it a thorough clean and power washing the dozens of food crates we use for deliveries, as well as getting involved in the collection and delivery runs.

For a fairly small and local charity, like the Oxford Food Bank, donations, whatever the amount, and practical help can make a real difference and we are indebted to both individual and corporate supporters.

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## FOOD BANK FACTS AND FIGURES

Locally we are preventing 250 tonnes a year of good food from going to waste  
Our deliveries provide up to 7,000 meals a week to people in food poverty  
Each year we deliver £1 million-worth of food, mainly fresh produce



## FUNDRAISING CAN BE..... FUN



While most of our time is spent collecting and delivering food, and keeping our base tidy, some of our volunteers also help us by attending fetes and events to raise money and understanding of the Foodbank.

This year we have a full programme of events in and around Oxford. The encouraging thing is that as soon as we set up our stall, lots of people come across to find out how we operate and want more information.

So you may see us at the following venues: the Cowley Road Festival; Elder Stubbs Festival, Botley Fete and Littlemore Charity Fair. If you do, come and have chat!

## HOW WE SUPPORT A FAMILY CENTRE IN THE CITY

Donnington Doorstep is a long established family centre in south Oxford which receives a daily delivery from the Foodbank. It caters for pre-school children and carers during the day and older children in the evening. An important part of the centre's work is providing healthy, nutritious meals.

Anna Thorne of the centre says "Our food costs are probably reduced by two-

thirds. To have this quite amazing range of what otherwise would be really expensive ingredients is just fantastic.

"We also get staple produce from the foodbank which we use every day.

"We absolutely rely on donations and have to generate our own income to keep going.

"It fits in with our ethos. We have to make do with what we have and reuse and recycle."

## WATCH OUR NEW VIDEO

We have produced a five minute video about the Oxford Food Bank, produced by Evans Woolfe Media, with financial support from Oxfam. It is available on our website and also on youtube, if you type in Oxford Food Bank 2014.

## Who we are

**The Oxford Food Bank is a registered charity entirely supported by the local community.**

**We are non-political and receive no grants from central or local government.**

**We have two objectives 1. To reduce food waste and 2. to distribute donated food to local charities providing meals for those in food poverty.**

**We are covered by Charity Commission rules and elect Trustees at our Annual Meeting.**

**The current Trustees are:**

**Robin Aitken, David Cairns (Chairman), Howard Davies, Noel Heaven (Treasurer), Mike Hiron, Rod Hopstone, David Kay, Helen Naylor, Sarah Phibbs, Ann Poulter (Secretary).**

**For further information please contact**

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## OUR SUPPLIERS

We are indebted to the following supermarkets and food wholesalers who freely donate food to us.

<b>Alatoni</b>	<b>Bicester</b>
<b>Aldi</b>	<b>Bicester</b>
<b>Aldi</b>	<b>Botley</b>
<b>Bookers</b>	<b>Oxford</b>
<b>Chef Direct</b>	<b>Didcot</b>
<b>Fresh Direct</b>	<b>Bicester</b>
<b>Roots</b>	<b>Oxford</b>
<b>Sainsburys</b>	<b>Bicester</b>
<b>Sainsburys</b>	<b>Kidlington</b>
<b>Tesco</b>	<b>Cowley</b>
<b>Waitrose</b>	<b>Headington</b>

*This newsletter is published by the Oxford Food Bank.*

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