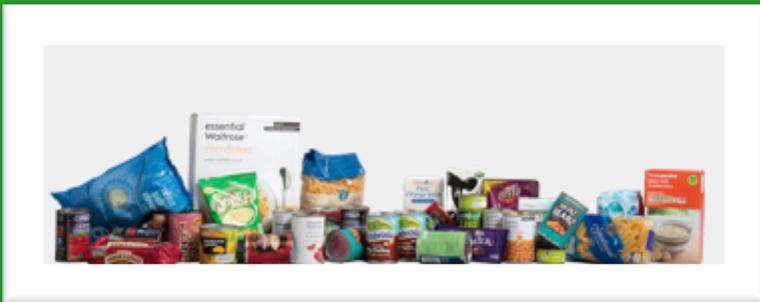




St Neots Foodbank 5th Anniversary October 2018



St Neots Foodbank 5th Anniversary

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FOREWORD

It does not seem possible that it was five years ago that a colleague asked me if the St Neots Foodbank could use some empty offices at our warehouse in Eaton Socon.

At the time I thought there couldn't be many people in St Neots that require a food parcel.

HOW WRONG CAN YOU BE!

The volunteers set up an excellent facility at Brittain's Warehouse and have been providing help and assistance to the needy ever since.

Many hours of hard work have made the Foodbank a successful and necessary charity.

The volunteers and the committee and the food providers should all be congratulated.

NIGEL BRITTAIN

BRITTAINS (FURNISHERS) LTD

June 2018

St Neots Foodbank 5th Anniversary

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet marks the 5th Anniversary of St Neots Foodbank. Its aim is to tell you about our work for some of the neediest people in our community. Since it opened, it has helped nearly four and a half thousand local people. The foodbank depends upon the generosity of the public's donations of food and money and the time and energy freely given by our volunteers. We hope you will enjoy reading this booklet and consider playing your part in the future of the foodbank.

Dr Roger Peppiatt
Chair of Trustees



HELPING OUR CLIENTS

Our clients are people in a financial crisis and struggling to buy food for themselves and their families. Help is available via two steps:

1. Obtain a voucher.

These are available from our professional colleagues in the community, who include teachers, doctors, social workers, Citizens Advice, housing officers, police, and many others. They assess the client's needs and issue them with a voucher, which states how many people require help. As the figures below show, over one third of those fed are children. The year-on-year increase of vouchers redeemed between 2016 and 2017 was our largest so far – 26.8%. We expect this increase in demand for our services to continue.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total Vouchers	66	455	424	409	593
Number of Adults	97	641	613	595	857
Number of Children	62	344	361	434	448
Adults + Children	159	985	974	1029	1305

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The three main reasons why people attend for help with their financial crisis have remained the same, although the order changes:

- Benefit Change
- Benefit Delay
- Low Income

Low Income is becoming a more frequent cause.



Distribution team enjoying a joke at St Mary's Church Eaton Socon

2. Attend a Food Distribution Centre

Our four distribution centres are each open on a different day to give cover across the week. A team of at least three volunteers is on duty at each session. When clients arrive they are offered a drink and biscuits and the opportunity to talk about their situation with a volunteer, whilst others pack the contents of an appropriate crate into carrier bags.

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Food, generally tinned or long-life, is designed to last the client at least three days. Having listened to clients, when appropriate we signpost them to agencies which may be able to offer support to help them out of their current crisis situation. Before clients leave volunteers may offer to pray with them. Clients are told that they can obtain up to three vouchers during a period of crisis. If more are required, their situation may need to be reassessed.

We offer the following additional food and services:

Summer and Christmas hampers

Before Christmas and the summer holidays we ask our voucher holders to nominate those who they know would benefit from extra food supplies. We then provide bags full of suitable food for them.



Summer hampers ready for distribution

Fruit and Vegetable vouchers

In 2018 we have been trialling a scheme, in which we give a £5 voucher to clients with children. Clients can redeem their voucher at Hamilton's in Cross Keys Mews for fruit and vegetables. We are unable to store fresh food, so this is a way of providing it to clients. They have proved very popular.

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“Moneylife”

Some volunteers have been trained to use an online benefits and grant website to check if clients are entitled to benefits or grants they are not currently claiming. We run this on an appointment basis, fortnightly at St Mary’s Eaton Socon at the same time as the foodbank is in operation.



HOW WE OPERATE

We have a warehouse and an office, which are co-located, and are where we receive and send out all donated food. Our four distribution centres are where our clients are met and given food.

Food in/out

We have a team of people who collect food from our supermarket drop boxes and deliver to the warehouse, whilst other food donors deliver directly to us. All food is weighed in and each item is dated using a black marker. Items are then stored in the appropriate crate.



Volunteers in the warehouse

Food parcels are made up from the relevant picking list for 1 person, 2 people, 3-4 people and a family of 5+. The crates are weighed out as this is how we stock-take. A team of drivers then delivers the crates to each of our distribution centres.



Contents of a food parcel

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In addition we send supplies of ‘extras’ from which clients can choose items to take away with them. These include sauces, toiletries and pet food.

We record food in and out by weight (kg), as do all Trussell Trust foodbanks. The figures in the following table are rounded to the nearest kg:

Total	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Food in	8,035	15,293	13,344	14,200	18494
Food out	2,181	14,310	16,462	15,244	17,413

The “food out” includes **seasonal hampers**. These assist families known to us and to local schools, who would



benefit from help during holidays to make up for the lack of free school meals. These have proved successful and their numbers are likely to increase.

Hampers	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Christmas	16	75	121	183	209	
Summer	-	-	-	21(trial)	77	99

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Media, Publicity and Education

We try to inform all interested parties of what we are doing at the foodbank as well as any new developments. This is done via newsletters, use of our website, Twitter and Facebook.

In August this year we were guests of Huntingdon Community Radio on their “Over to You” programme.

We also give talks to organisations, go into schools to take lessons and invite groups such as Cubs and Beavers to take part in sessions in the warehouse carrying out some of the jobs our volunteers normally do.



Roger Peppiatt (trustee) receiving a cheque from pupils of Kimbolton School



Adrienne Dunn and Roger Peppiatt on air at Huntingdon Community Radio



David Pacini (trustee) teaching pupils at Priory Junior School about the foodbank

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Help From Supermarkets

Three supermarkets in St Neots offer us invaluable help. As well as allowing us to provide a **collection bin for food items** after shoppers pass through the tills, they cooperate in other ways:

Tesco - as well as allowing us to have at least two weekends when we can give out “shopping lists” to shoppers inviting contributions of food (some also donate cash), Tesco generously give us a cash top-up. Nationally the Trussell Trust and Tesco have agreed this scheme, whereby Tesco give us 20% of the value of all food donated by the public to foodbanks. This is one of our main sources of income, both food and cash.



Co-op – offer us the occasional opportunity to talk to shoppers about the work of foodbanks.



Waitrose – we have benefitted from their “green token” scheme, gifts of “bags for life” and occasional extra food supplies.



OUR VOLUNTEERS

The foodbank is run entirely by trained volunteers, which means that all money donated or raised goes towards feeding the hungry in our community.

Key Roles

Project Lead: Angie Robertson was the first project lead and instrumental in setting up the smooth operation of the foodbank. Adrienne Dunn took over in January 2016 and is responsible for the day-to-day running of the organisation. Her tasks are too numerous to mention but include developing the necessary paperwork to support the Foodbank's safe operation, training and managing volunteers, liaising with front-line professionals and distribution centre leads, plus attending trustee meetings.



Adrienne and Rona in the office

Office Manager: Rona McCormick runs the office, all IT work including data-inputting, answering the phone, dealing with correspondence and a host of other things!

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Warehouse Manager: Lynda Cronin is responsible for the food store, ensuring donated food and outgoing food crates are weighed and food is stored properly. Teams of volunteers work under Lynda's guidance to ensure Trussell Trust guidelines are adhered to.



Lynda and the "Monday team"

Foodbank Volunteers

In all there are about 90 volunteers who help in the warehouse, distribution centres, moving food to and from the store, supermarket



Volunteers at a social function

collections, producing newsletters, dealing with social media and running our extra services such as "MoneyLife" and the green grocery voucher scheme. In the last year we estimate they have contributed about 300 hours per month. We have four distribution centres, which operate weekly and have at least three trained and experienced volunteers each session.

Voucher-holders

In order to receive food, clients have to obtain a voucher from one of our voucher-holders in the community. We have 70 professionals in our area who have agreed to hold our vouchers and have been trained



in their use. These include Citizens Advice Bureau, St Neots Locality team, GP surgeries, social workers, teachers, children's centres and housing officers.

GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE

St Neots Foodbank is part of the **Trussell Trust network of foodbanks**. In the beginning they provided a Manual of how to set up and operate a foodbank and training for volunteers. This is continually updated online. The support we receive continues in the form of:

- **Annual Quality Assurance visit** with recommendations as to how we can improve our service.
- **IT support** for data collection and printing vouchers
- Opportunity to attend **local, regional and national conferences** to share best practice.



Jo Stevenson (Trussell Trust area manager for the East of England) with Adrienne and Rona at a "QA" visit



Jonathan Djanogly MP visiting one of our Tesco food collections

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The Trussell Trust **campaigns nationally** against poverty.

Via its relationship with **Tesco** nationally, we benefit from being able to hold two food and money collections per year at the Tesco store Eynesbury and also receive a cash top-up (see pages 9 and 16 for more details).

The Trussell Trust is a **charity founded on Christian principles**. We work with people of all faiths and none, but are inspired to do what we do by the words of Jesus in Matthew 25: 35 – 36: *For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.* St Neots Foodbank was founded by a group of Christians and it continues to be supported by Churches Together in St Neots.

The foodbank is a **charity in its own right**, being registered with the Charity Commission in 2013, number 1154018. There are ten trustees, one from each of the ten founding churches. A separate management committee meets quarterly as does a meeting of Distribution Centre Leads.

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Trustees

The constitution of the foodbank stipulates that there should be one trustee from each of the ten founding churches, and this continues to be the case. Trustees meet four times a year and provide strategic direction, as well as ensuring that its various policies are implemented and charity law is adhered to. Annual Reports are sent to the Charity Commissioners.

Church	Trustee
St Mary's Eaton Socon	Dr Roger Peppiatt (chair)
St Mary's Eynesbury	Mrs Margaret Tabone (secretary)
New Street Baptist	Mr Malcolm Crawford (treasurer)
Open Door	Mrs Andrea Lees
United Reformed	Mrs Jennifer Henderson
St Joseph's RC	Dr David Pacini
St Mary's St Neots	Mrs Carol Way
River	Mr Roger Sare
Berkley Street Methodist	Dr Barbara Spencer
St Neots Evangelical	Mrs Kelly Buckley

FINANCES AND FUTURE PLANS

The Foodbank's success and its ability to provide food to those in need depends entirely on the generosity of donors. By far the largest donation is food given by individuals at the various collection points in the town and the value of this is about £35,000 a year.

The Foodbank relies entirely on its volunteers who give their time and use their vehicles to collect and deliver food, so there are no costs for employing staff or transport. In addition the churches that have offered their premises as Distribution Centres do so with no charge to the Foodbank.



Volunteers at a Christmas food collection at Tesco

There are day-to-day running costs of £8,500 per year for the food warehouse and office such as rent, electricity, equipment, telephone, insurance and office expenses. The payment of these costs depends on financial donations. We are grateful to organisations that make regular donations such as Tesco (which makes an additional donation based on the value of food left at its collection points), the Town Council, Brittain's Furniture Store and partner churches.

However, over half our running costs are met from donations from individuals and other organisations. Without

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their continuing support we would not be able to help those in St Neots who suffer hunger poverty.

Running Costs

£8500 per year

£163 per week

£41 for every distribution centre session

FUTURE PLANS

Coping with increasing demand

The number of clients we have helped has steadily increased. We are expecting an additional demand as Universal Credit is being rolled out to Huntingdon District (which includes St Neots) in October 2018.



Some of the crates in our warehouse

Other foodbanks have experienced a 20%

increase. This progressive increase requires more food – fortunately the public generosity in terms of food donations has so far kept pace with demand. This in turn will require more efficient use of our limited storage space and our volunteers will be busier coping with the extra workload.

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Improving communication

Better communication is vital to cope with our increased workload, additional strands of service offered to clients and Trussell Trust driven improvements. We are considering supplying our distribution centres with tablet computers and mobile phones. These will aid communication with our office, improve signposting for clients and make it possible to accept “e-referrals” from voucher holders.

Coping with increasing costs

The cost of running the foodbank has risen considerably in the past 12 months, mainly due to an increase in the rent we pay for our store and office. We anticipate the need to raise an additional £3000 – 4000 p.a. Until this time we have not needed to fundraise due to the generosity of local donors including churches and Tesco.

Developing our services

As well as the above, we would like to extend our fresh fruit and vegetables voucher scheme. We will also continue to implement improvements suggested by the Trussell Trust through their annual Quality Assurance visits.

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5th Anniversary Appeal to the general public

During the forthcoming year, we are hoping to use this milestone to publicise our work and attract the resources we need to finance our services by encouraging the general public to:

- sign-up for our newsletters
- follow us on social media
- continue to donate food via supermarkets, schools and churches
- take out monthly standing orders (eg for £5 -20)
- explore becoming one of our volunteers.

On behalf of my fellow trustees and all who volunteer at the foodbank, thank you for taking the time to read this booklet and learn more about our work.

Dr Roger Peppiatt
Chair of Trustees

APPENDIX 1: OUR HISTORY

The story begins early in 2013 at a St Neots ministers' breakfast meeting. The increasing requests from members of the local community for help with rising costs of food and other household expenses were discussed. The question was asked: "Is it time to start a foodbank in St Neots?" It was agreed that the idea should be explored by a visit to the well-established Bedford Foodbank. This took place on 12 March 2013 and included interested clergy and members from several churches. Over the following 18 months, the foodbank was established in the form we have today, joining the Trussell Trust network:

April 2013: Representatives of 10 churches in the town came together to form an Action Group to consider the setting up of a Foodbank in St Neots.

May 2013: St Mary's Church Eaton Socon opened a temporary informal foodbank, and other churches collected and contributed food.

June 2013: The Action Group received a visit from the Trussell Trust Regional Officer and took the decision to join the Trussell Trust Foodbank network, the cost being funded by equal contributions from each of the 10 churches. Brittain's Ltd donated warehouse premises in Little End Road (our office and store are still in this accommodation). A local business financed initial shelving.

July 2013: A Constitution was adopted and 10 trustees appointed, one from each participating church. Open

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Meetings were held to report progress to the wider public and recruit volunteers. More than 120 potential volunteers indicated an interest.

August 2013: An application for registered charity status was submitted to the Charity Commission. St Neots Town Council approved a grant of £2600 for equipment.

September 2013: Two Volunteer Training sessions were held and the warehouse formally opened. The first supermarket collection took place (over 800kg donated).

30 Sept 2013: Registered Charity Status was approved by the Charity Commission.

1 & 4 October 2013: Distribution Centres opened at St Neots United Reformed Church and St Mary's Church Eaton Socon.

19 October 2013: a Thanksgiving Service was held in which all 10 churches took part.

Autumn 2014: Two more Distribution Centres opened at Berkley Street Methodist Church and Open Door Church.

So, by the first anniversary, the foodbank had successfully laid the foundations, which continue to the present day:

- established an office and warehouse
- opened 4 distribution centres
- developed a team of volunteers to run the organisation.

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- begun building a relationship with the local community which resulted in donations of food and money
- secured charitable status run by a board of trustees.

APPENDIX 2: THE NATIONAL FOODBANK MOVEMENT

The Trussell Trust established the largest network of foodbanks in the UK in 2004 and now supports a network of over 420 foodbanks across the UK, which provides emergency food to people in crisis, offers additional support and campaigns for change. Last year over 1.3 million food parcels were distributed in the UK by network foodbanks including our own. Donated food is sorted into emergency food parcels by over 40,000 volunteers and given to people in need. Foodbanks also offer a lot more than food. Volunteers provide a listening ear to clients over a warm drink, and signpost people to other charities and agencies, which can help resolve the underlying cause of the crisis.

As well as the Trussell Trust network, there are estimated to be over 700 independent foodbanks in the UK (as reported by the Independent Food Aid Network).

A recent report in “The Independent” (6th June 2018) states that “nearly four million adults have been forced to use foodbanks” which is “1 in 14 Britons”.

The **All-Party Parliamentary Group on Hunger and Food Poverty** exists “to raise the issue of hunger in this country, to try to understand the underlying causes and ways of addressing the issue”. In December 2014 it published a report on the work of foodbanks in the UK.

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St Neots Foodbank

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To subscribe to our newsletter -- go to our website or email us: info@stneots.foodbank.org.uk

Follow us on facebook

(www.facebook.com/stneotsfoodbank) and

Twitter (@StNeotsFoodbank)

Warehouse & Office

Mondays, Tuesdays & Fridays, 9.30 - 12 noon

Distribution Centres

Mondays 4 - 6 pm

Open Door Church, 31A St
Neots Road, Eaton Ford

Tuesdays 10 -12 noon

United Reformed Church, High
Street, St Neots

Thursdays 4 - 6 pm

Berkley Street Methodist
Church, Eynesbury

Fridays 10 - 12 noon

St. Mary's Church, Eaton Socon

