



for such a time as this....

Hello from Wendy

What a year this has been, and it's only half way through...

Some days it's hard to remember what it was like when we first started on my dining-room table, those tentative first steps, in 2006, into the fulfilment of the vision Jesus had given me waaaaay back in 2002!

But here we are, just over five years later; we've given away over 125,000 meals to people in desperate circumstances right across the region, lost track of the amount of clothing and bedding given out and still the need grows!

Thank You so much for ALL your support, Thank you to ALL our volunteers (this really wouldn't have happened without them) and your contributions.

Loads a love,
Wendy



FOOD BANK REACHES FIVE YEAR MILESTONE



Black Country Food Bank was five years old on 21 June this year. It's a journey that's seen us go from a dining room table to a 5,000ft² storage facility and eight distribution centres.

On the one hand, it is something to be celebrated and an achievement we are all immensely proud of. It is testament to hard work, dedication and faith of everyone who has been involved and supported us over the years who all share a commitment to helping others in crisis.

On the other hand, our very existence is a sad reflection of the times where thousands of people, families and children in the Black Country alone have and continue to face real crisis.

Scratching the surface :

When we started in June 2006, we

fed 50 people that year. However, in 2010 we fed 5234 people. That's an increase of nearly 10,500%! Yet, despite the big numbers involved, we believe we are only scratching the surface of the level of need within our communities.

During the last five years we have fed a jaw-dropping total of 12,794 people across the Black Country and provided enough food to make over 125,000 meals as well as giving away vast amounts of toiletries, clothing and bedding. Food for thought don't you think?

Says Wendy Fryatt, Founder and Coordinator: " Reaching our 5th Birthday is a wonderful achievement and I would like to thank everyone, our volunteers, local churches and all our other partner organisations, for their amazing help and support."

The future:

The need for what we do is growing and the stories become more harrowing but we have faith that with the continued support of our amazing volunteers, churches, partners and the general public, we will continue to be there to support the people who will need our help in the months and years to come.

“Thank you for the food you gave me last week. It really helped me settle into a new place without having to worry about food.”

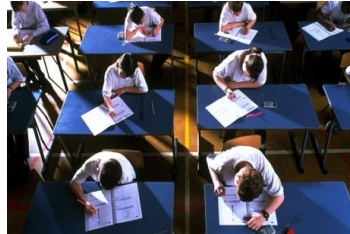
17 year old mum fleeing domestic violence with a five month old baby.

“The food provided to me gave me hope and strength. It enabled me to eat for to weeks and gave me a much needed confidence boost that I am truly thankful for.”

27 year old homeless man – now housed

WENDY'S BLOG

They say ‘there’s nothing new under the sun’ but watching the faces of our volunteers this morning has been painful.



Other 16yr olds are concentrating on their GCSEs

S has just come in for an extra shift at The Storehouse with TWO shopping lists, not for stock at the distribution centre she runs, but for TWO teenagers who presented separately at BCFB.

One, 16 years old, still in school uniform, trying to sit for GCSEs, has been made homeless by his parents. He’s got nothing!

The other one is a wheelchair user and again has nothing but the one

thing they have in common is they’re both homeless teenagers.

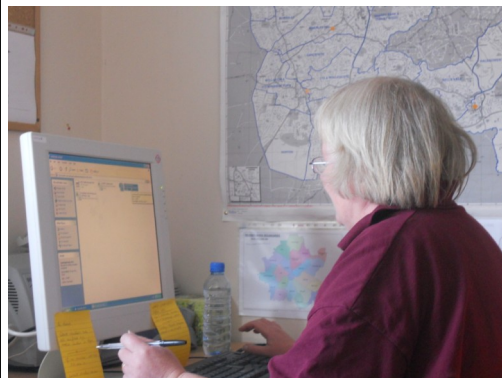
S is up on the mezzanine gathering together clothing and bedding etc; she got them both fed yesterday and issued toiletries. They’ve both been found accommodation by a local housing association; well done...BUT what is happening to us as a society?



Last time I sat and ‘blogged’ I penned the thought about the day I’ll be able to say we’re not needed anymore, that day just seems so much further off this morning.

Read more of Wendy’s bogs at www.blackcountryfoodbank.org.uk

VOLUNTEER PROFILE



Meet Frances, our resident number cruncher! Frances has been volunteering at our main storehouse in since January 2010 and is responsible for managing the database of all the food vouchers we receive.

The work Frances does is vital to the smooth running of the Food Bank’s food distribution service. For starters, it means we know exactly

how many people we have helped during any given period and the amount of food distributed.

The data gathered from the vouchers also enables us to identify the reasons why people are facing crisis as well as trends. For example, we now know that demand for our support increases significantly during the main six weeks school holiday and we can plan ahead accordingly.

Frances likes the following quote: “You have to walk a mile in someone else’s shoes to understand them”.

LYDIA FASHIONS CLOTHING PROJECT



Anna-Christina with 'Lydia'

Black Country Foodbank has launched a new clothing project to help local people.

Called Lydia's House, the aim of the project is to prevent local people in need from having to

choose between buying clothes and other basic living essentials.

How it works:

The plan is that project will run in the same way as the main Foodbank project where people will be issued vouchers by local agencies and will be able to ex-

change these for three outfits per person.

Anna-Christina, a volunteer at Foodbank, who will be running the project says: "I'm really excited about Lydia's House. It's another important way we can help local people in need."

We've recently purchased a second-hand six head embroidery machine (that's Lydia) which will be used to rebrand donated clothes as well provide cost-effective embroidery services to other local organisations and businesses.

If you have any clothes or shoes you would like to donate or are a local organisation that would like some clothing branded please call us on 0121 448 8184.

PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

This was an email received by Wendy Fryatt from Walsall Youth Justice Service and shows the impact our work can make to people's lives.

"I would like thank to that you for coming to Walsall youth Justice Service to give us a talk about the Black Country Foodbank and the wonderful work that you do. I spoke to the staff afterwards and they all said how interesting your talk was and how beneficial your service will be to the vulnerable young people we work with now that we can give out our own vouchers.

Personally I would like to express my gratitude towards you, staff and volunteers who work for the project as they were very supportive when I came to collect a food parcel for one of the young people I work with. This particular young person was a single mother from Romania who was waiting to hear about benefits and had no income. We got a food voucher from the Citizens Advice which I collected, on her behalf, from the Church at J10.

Not only did I leave with 3 bags of food, I also got some clothes and nappies for her baby, a Christmas present for them both and through talking to yourself I managed to get her a

pram, winter coat and a hooded jacket. The young person was delighted with all of the things that had been donated and her baby enjoyed playing with his present, which was a stuffed animal.

I would like to say thank you once again, the work that all of you do is valuable and very much needed."

Did you know?

You can now follow us on:

facebook

twitter

Our Distribution Centres :

Brierley Hill Project

South Street,
Brierley Hill,
DY5 2RR
01384 572 227
Mon-Fri 12:00-15:30

Replenish @ St.John's

St. John's URC Church,
St John's Road,
Stourbridge,
DY8 1EH
07827 610 617
Mon, Weds, Fri 10:00-12:00

J10 Foodbank

The Church @ Junction 10
323 Wolverhampton Road
Walsall
WS2 8RL
01922 639 277
Mon & Thurs 10.00-13.00

Community Zone @ ZION

Little Cornbow,
Halesowen,
B63 3AJ
0121 501 3542
Tues & Fri 13:00-15:00

RefreSh

61 The Broadway
Dudley
DY1 3EB
07732 665 935
Tues & Fri 10:00-14:00

Lookout Project

116 Commonsidge,
Pensnett,
DY5 4AE
01384 918 801
Mon, Thurs, Fri 13:30-15:00

Take a Break

St. Paul's Church, Five Ways,
Lower Gornal,
DY3 2AU
01902 679 578
Thurs 10:00-12:00

Children's Society

The Oratory
Hagley Road, Edgbaston
Birmingham
0121 448 8184
1st Wed, of month (10.00-



BLACK COUNTRY
foodbank
for such a time as this

Want to get involved?

Hopefully after reading our newsletter you will. There are many ways you can get involved and support us in making sure we can continue to do what we do and be there to help local people in crisis.

Volunteer - got some free time? We are always looking for volunteers to get involved in all areas from helping out at a local distribution centre to helping out with fundraising, administration or marketing. Whatever your skills and interests, we can make use of them.

Organisations - are you a local church, community organisation or business and want to get involved? We are always keen to hear from other organisations who would like to work with us so please get in touch.

Possible opportunities include :

- Setting up a distribution point
- Becoming a voucher distribution partner
- Corporate volunteering and mentoring
- Fundraising events and sponsorship
- Food and clothing collections

Donations - we can only give out what we get in. So we always need donations of food (see list on website), toiletries, clothing, bedding and household goods. Let's be blunt, we also need people to donate money to help fund us. We rely solely on donations - it costs us about £40,000 per year just to cover Foodbank's basic running costs.

Even if you're not sure yet how you think you can help, just get in touch and we will work with you to come up with a plan.

Our contact details:

Call: **0121 448 8184** (10.00am - 2.00pm Monday-Friday)

Email: admin@blackcountryfoodbank.org.uk

Visit and donate online: www.blackcountryfoodbank.org.uk

Black country Foodbank, The Storehouse,
2 Littlecornbow, Halesowen, B63 3AJ

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