

Food For Thought Update January 2016



Many thanks to everyone's generosity in the run up to Christmas, we exceeded all expectations and made a great difference to people's lives. There has been good progress in the development of the co-ordinated approach to become part of the Trussell Trust network in Wythenshawe and this update gives some information from a presentation given by the Trussell Trust. There are still lots of things to be worked out and we will be carrying on with our current model operating from St Luke's for the foreseeable future. Once everything is clearer information will be sent to PCCs via Team Council before any formal agreements are signed and changes implemented

Introduction to the Trussell Trust food bank model

Adam explained that "The Hub" at Civic (known as Unit 20 or Unit-e) is being called the Wythenshawe Food Bank and set up as an independent charity. Adam is the Chair of the Trustees. The Hub will support existing food banks in Wythenshawe (including our Food For Thought project that runs from St Luke's) to become more sustainable in the long term.

Linda from Trussell Trust came to explain how the traditional Trussell Trust model of Food banks works. It was noted that the "Wythenshawe model" may be different because we aren't starting from scratch, there will need to be a transition period and there will be additions such as fresh food, and some educational work too through the partnership with Real Food Wythenshawe.

A copy of Linda's power point presentation will be available but here are some key points –

- Trussell Trust has grown considerably since 2000 and runs 420 food banks across the country
- Trussell Trust food banks fed over 1 million people in the last year
- Trussell Trust encourages local responses to local need so that means we need to keep up with donations etc Trussell Trust can provide posters etc for donation points

- People that visit a Trussell food bank are given enough food to feed a family for 3 days – this is around 3/4 bags for a single person and 7/8 bags for a family This is much more than we currently give out
- It is NOT 3 strikes and you're out – There has been concern that the Trussell model only allows someone to access a food bank 3 times and that's it. This is not the case. If you visit a food bank 3 times within a 6 month period this will get flagged up on the system. You will be invited to talk to someone about your situation to see if you can be supported to access additional services. If you know from the outset that a situation is so complex it will definitely take more than 3 food bank visits in 6 months, you can contact the Hub to discuss in advance of flags on the system.

How does it work

Local organisations will be invited to register with Wythenshawe Food Bank so that they can give vouchers to individuals and families in need. The number of organisations who are registered will build up over time. Traditionally this would be places like schools, health visitors, job centres, housing providers. *We need to give some thought to the kinds of places and services that would be right for Wythenshawe. We know anecdotally that some people come to churches and other voluntary sector organisations because they are fearful of other agencies* These organisations are known as **referrers**. Each referrer will have a unique reference number and will receive a supply of specially printed vouchers. Named people from each referrer will be trained to complete an assessment form. Once an assessment has been made that there is genuine need a voucher can be issued. The client can choose which of the local food banks to visit.

What will happen at a local food bank?

Using Food for Thought as an example –

We will continue to open on Tuesdays and Fridays and Saturdays at the usual times or new times that we might choose. People will come and present their voucher. They will be invited in for a hot drink and there will be people to talk to. Bags will be brought to them

This is what needs to be better explained. At a previous meeting (30th September at St Lukes) people were assured we would know in advance how many people to expect because of the centralised model through the Hub. We have asked for more information about this

What about donations?

At some point We will be expected to send all our donations to the Hub BUT in return we will get back enough food to give out to everyone who has a voucher. People may still bring us donations and we will take them but we need to let people know we are sharing them with the Hub so that everyone can benefit. Currently some Church members give us cash donations. We will need to talk to them about that and ask them how they would like us to use their donation – to buy food, to buy tea and coffee etc for people visiting or to provide some extra services for example a breakfast morning in school holidays or a community meal. **None of this has been worked out yet**

What about people that currently use our food provision?

We know that many of the people who use our current provision need extra support to move on. They have become dependant upon us which is not helpful for them and is not sustainable for us. We have had many good success stories. We need to work out why people are using our provision – for many they will have just got used to it and they value the interaction and social support they get from being part of a “community”. To accommodate that we may choose to run an afternoon drop-in on a different day (or change the days when food parcels are available). We will have to think about how we support people through the change to something different. This might mean offering everyone the chance of a one to one chat about their situation. It will definitely mean giving a firm date of when things will change and we will have to be clear how people can access other things. This wont be easy and will take time. We will need to be sure that we are all following the same plan so there will be meetings and training for volunteers. All volunteers both new and existing will be asked to attend at least one session of training organised by Trussell Trust. Volunteering will be encouraged amongst people that use our provision too

What next?

This is a very complex piece of work and its fair to say that things have evolved even since the start of these regular updates from last October. For now its business as usual but we will try and get a timeline together. No formal agreements will be signed with Trussell Trust or The Wythenshawe Food Bank without the full approval and consideration of Team Council. Trussell Trust is a Christian-based organisation and a member of our clergy Team (Adam) is Chair of this new venture. There are probably more questions than answers at this stage. Please do discuss this in PCCs and send any questions through to Tracey or Adam and they will work together to find the answers

Tracey Rawlins wyth_anglicandevlopment@yahoo.com

07476305947