



Information update – October 2015

A meeting was held for members of the Wythenshawe Church of England to learn more about Food for Thought and potential future developments. Several partners were also there including Real Food Wythenshawe, Wythenshawe Community Housing group, the Wythenshawe Food Poverty Action Group and the JONAH Group. (you can find out more about these partners at the end of this bulletin) It was clear that some members had more information than others and communication across the Team needs to be better

The Community Development Worker (CDW) for the Wythenshawe Church of England will produce bi-monthly updates which will be distributed to each clergy member for distribution to PCCs and display on Church notice boards

- CDW gave a brief account of the history of the churches responding to food poverty through food parcels being available from vicarages. Demand had increased so much that this had evolved into a centralised service run from St Lukes 3 times a week. Since coming into post CDW had become linked to the food poverty group etc and we have benefitted from working with other food banks and sharing resources. Particularly we have benefitted from the Wythenshawe campaign at Christmas and adhoc donations of food from Tree of Life Centre. St Luke's currently provides in-kind support of the premises and each Church has a box in Church for donations of food. All harvest festival contributions go towards the project and a number of schools that we work are also donating.
- Real Food talked about the new "Unit 20" food hub which is being set up in Civic Centre. In the first instance this will be a distribution centre to other food bank services like ours. Unit 20 will be managed as a separate legal entity by the JONAH and food poverty Group. There is a management group – we are represented on this by Adam Dickson. Unit 20 is very much a community initiative – it is NOT a Real Food or WCHG project. WCHG were approached by the food poverty group to lead on a bid

to Manchester City Council for funding for the Unit based on a previous idea that had been started in discussion with the late Paul Goggins MP. This was successful. The Unit is currently being kitted out through in-kind support from WCHG and other businesses including Marks and Spencers. Unit 20 will be registered as a Trussell Trust Scheme. The initial registration fee for the first 12 months is funded. The mid-term plan is to offer support and advice from the Unit – there will be a full working kitchen etc to provide education classes etc

In practice what does this mean for our project – Food for Thought?

- Our be-friending/café approach to giving out food is similar to the Trussell Trust model.
- As a partner of Unit 20 parcels will be made up ready for us to give out
- All volunteers will be able to benefit from recognised Trussell Trust training
- There will be increased opportunities for volunteering at Unit 20 as well as at St Luke's
- Trussell Trust support would help us have a platform to policy and decision makers in Government to demonstrate the real impact of welfare cuts etc on families
- There will be one central system for people to come through so we will know who is coming in advance
- We can really focus on the pastoral support we offer to people and worry less about where we will get food from to feed people

People raised some questions and concerns – these are issues that will be explored further over the coming months

- How will it be funded after the first year? ***The ongoing costs are around £360 per year. This costs will have to be met by Unit 20 and its partners along with running costs for the Unit. This might be done through applying for other grants to split between everyone***
- Will people from our churches be expected to give their donations to Unit 20? What about when people give donations of money to Food for thought to be spent in our churches? ***There will be a significant period of transition when our project will probably need to run alongside Unit 20 whilst the systems are established etc. it is unlikely that Unit 20 will be able to meet all the demand we are currently getting at first. Churches will need to think about their contributions at some point – we will need to be thinking about the bigger picture – if we give our harvest collections to Unit 20 what are we getting back in return? If we share there is greater opportunity to ensure everyone who needs to be fed, gets something. Our financial contributions might go towards the annual fee or enable us to provide stronger support and wrap around care***
- What about the ongoing costs to St Luke's? We lost out on the City Council funding? There is an assumption we can just keep doing this for free but its getting bigger. ***If that's a concern St Luke's PCC need to raise that through Team Council reps.***
- What about the data for the one central system and providing internet access for people to access online advice etc. Will we have to provide that? ***This already***

happens now, mostly through the CDW – we register people and keep a spreadsheet. We use mobile internet when we need to. There's no reason that should change

- Will we have to stop doing things like Christmas Day lunch and trying to provide extra luxuries at Christmas? ***This partnership is not about stopping us doing anything, if the immediate need of providing food is met we can concentrate on doing other things to enhance this to make a real difference to people's lives. There's no reason for us to stop doing Christmas Day lunch or providing community meals etc***

Next steps – to minimise costs, anyone who gives us a mobile number or email address will receive notification of when these updates are published and due to be displayed on Church noticeboards. They will also be put on our website. If they don't appear please ask your clergy or contact the CDW. Anyone interested in pledging to support the Food for Thought project or finding out more can contact Tracey Rawlins CDW on 07476305947 or wyth_anglicandevlopment@yahoo.com

The next update will be circulated before Christmas 2015

INFORMATION ON OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

WCHG – Wythenshawe Community Housing Group is the umbrella organisation of Willow Park and Parkway Green – the two main registered social landlords in Wythenshawe that council-owned housing stock was transferred to.

REAL FOOD WYTHENSHAW – A community food growing and education project funded by Big Lottery

WYTHENSHAW FOOD POVERTY GROUP – A group of people interested in working together to address food poverty in Wythenshawe in a co-ordinated way

Minutes of this meeting will be available with future updates

JONAH GROUP – After a year of preparations, a new ecumenical forum, called the Jonah Group, has been established earlier in 2015 involving all the Christian churches and communities within the Wythenshawe area. Working together on social justice, faith, prayer and other activities, the forum seeks to bring together the denominations in ministry and mission. The Wythenshawe Team Ministry, is an active member of this. If you would like to know more about how you can be involved please speak to anyone of the Team clergy. (this should be a standing item on PCC agendas)