



## **Larder report : March 2020 - CoronaCrisis!**

The Coronavirus has changed all our lives; the workings of the Community Larder are no exception. The Salvation Army hall has been re-arranged to allow a small team to keep well distanced while sorting food and organising deliveries.

Many of our long standing volunteers have had to step back due to age or underlying medical conditions, including close relatives of some younger members of the team. Meanwhile, publicity has generated no less than 70 new volunteer applications, including many offering to act as delivery drivers.

To maintain safe working distances, Monday and Fridays have been rearranged so that a morning team, without any visitors present, can sort arriving donations and prepare packages for delivery, with a skeleton team from at the usual time to help anyone arriving to collect food. We now push everyone to receive a delivery, but of course there are always a few who have no firm address, so they have to collect.

The Larder is now providing food to anyone who needs it, on the basis that those who are isolating or "shielding" and would normally buy their own, will be generous donors when all this is over!! Demand has obviously increased dramatically!

To cope with the extra demand, we have a session on Wednesdays, sorting food and preparing deliveries for a team of delivery drivers. If the need grows, this is a pattern that can be repeated on other days and times to keep abreast of the need!!

Donations of cash are coming from everywhere - we had one donor in London, who lived in Exmouth years ago, knows foodbanks are short and sent a bank transfer!

Now that panic buying is over, we are mostly able to convert money donations into supplies, and the usual donation boxes in various stores are once again being filled. Of course we miss the many church collection points, but they have become cash donors. We started the crisis with really good reserves - tinned soup, beans, meat and of course cash; and hope they will be replenished when we are back to normal!

We have been supplying about 50 packages a week, mostly delivered, feeding maybe 100 people - but this will surely increase significantly as the crisis continues.

The generosity of donations and people offering to volunteer is very humbling. Our next task is to have more of our new volunteers so well trained on the job that we can to expand and maybe fill gaps if any of the present team need to "isolate"

**THANKS TO EVERYONE FOR NOT ONLY KEEPING THE LARDER GOING,  
BUT MAKING IT FIT FOR PURPOSE IN A VERY DIFFERENT NEW WORLD!!**

**We are not measured by the problem, but how we rise to solve it!!!**