



## **Larder report : May 2020 - Covid19 gets serious!**

April demand was three times greater than any previous April; the first half of May is even busier - see:- [www.exmouthlarder.co.uk/news/updatestatstxt.htm](http://www.exmouthlarder.co.uk/news/updatestatstxt.htm)

The good news is that donations of food and cash have also increased hugely so that our "reserves" have not been tapped into - yet!!

More than 80 people have offered to volunteer, either sorting and packing or delivering. This has enabled several teams to be put in place which are able to keep abreast of demand while self-distancing, even though the need has switched almost entirely to delivery - the only complaint is from would-be volunteers who have not (yet) been called upon ..... I am sure their time will come!!

The "old guard" - the volunteers who worked in The Larder for years but retired due to age or health problems - have played an absolutely vital part, creating a culture and a simple but effective way of working. Things are much changed to work with "social distancing" but the essential steps in the chain are the same.

Great credit is due to Ian Margeson, previously Friday team leader, and to Shirley Newcombe, previously deputy Monday team leader, for bringing the present teams together. Andrew Cutler, our Exmouth Salvation Army mission manager, has also played a key part in allowing and organising a very different use of the hall, including key control points for hand sanitization etc.

The future is uncertain; victory by the medics over the virus will surely be followed by a very different world in which many jobs will have disappeared. People who had good jobs with excellent prospects will no longer be needed, and the heavy demand on all foodbanks will continue. One cannot imagine social distancing ceasing to be an issue until there is a reliable vaccine or curative remedies for the virus; these will only be trusted when they have been tested over a period of time, maybe years!

So we are surely facing a brave new world in which The Exmouth Community Larder will never return to its old way of working. We all remember the bottleneck of volunteers rushing to and from the stockroom and the crowd waiting for packages to be organised - that won't work with social distancing!!

We do miss the old friendship and comradeship, but that will have to restart with social gatherings when we can - which is also true for all churches and clubs!!

Meanwhile, great thanks go to the current team of mainly new volunteers who are keeping The Larder going, and thanks to the donors who give them the supplies, working together to provide food to those who are in need, whatever the cause!

More details on the website, just updated with some pictures!

*Anthony Bernard, Exmouth Community Larder  
[www.exmouthlarder.co.uk](http://www.exmouthlarder.co.uk), May 2020*