



**WELLSPRINGS
TOGETHER**

Feeding Bradford & Keighley Network Meeting 24th Jan 2022

Topic: Transforming Lives

Transforming Lives

Sometimes we feed people and don't find out much more about them, other times the support be that advice, help with housing, encouragement to eat more vegetables, a kind word and growing trust or a volunteer opportunity can have a huge impact on a person's life. The start (or the next stage) of rebuilding themselves from a crisis or unsustainable situation. We hear from some of our members' projects.

Unfortunately, Clare has had to cancel this morning and is unable to tell us about her work.

Debbie & Colleen (Immanuel Project)

The Immanuel Project has been operating for 12 years and is currently serving 250 meals per week over 2 days. They also run wellbeing sessions which can include craft activities, sporting activities, church services etc, and about 80 guests per month attend. During Covid, these sessions were supported by the Council and other agencies which was great for relationship building.

Colleen has been volunteering at The Immanuel Project since April 2021. Not only has this been a great help to the Immanuel Project, but it also was beneficial for her own recovery from addition problems, she was getting help from Bridge. It has really help to have some structure in her life and feel like she is doing something useful giving something back.

Immanuel is encouraging guests to help and engage, building relationships. Even giving someone the task of wiping down tables can help with self-esteem and be something that can be built on.

Colleen was thanked by all for being brave enough to tell her story.

Josie (Bradford Central Foodbank)

The Trussell Trust is supporting the foodbank financially to have a housing & benefits adviser in every session, they also got weekly CAP debt advice and can access fuel grants if people have had debt / money advice. They're currently doing lots of budgets with people and are hoping to recruit a person to do this 1 day per week. They are also planning to start a job club.

This is building too on the work that Feeding Bradford and Keighley (via Feeding Britain) have done with the foodbank via the Pathways out of Poverty programme which has now come to an end.

Food is a really good starter for people to come through the door, this can then be used to get to the bottom of the problem.

Duncan (Fountains Church Bradford)

Fountains Church is hosting a multi-agency drop-in on Thursdays, this includes HOP, the Council etc. Through those, they have managed to get people into housing. Signposting alone is good but limited, it is much better to have agencies in the same room. The Bridge are also working with Fountains, hopefully this partnership is helpful for both sides. (this was clarified – Bridge use their space for running groups – but this has built relationships and helped get their clients through the door)

Graham (Bradford Metropolitan Foodbank)

Bradford Met offer food through 3rd parties. They are pleased that more and more agencies are enabling people to become more self-sufficient rather than just dishing out food. The estimate is that there are currently 2.1 million people deciding whether to heat or eat. This could increase even more in April with energy prices rising. The dilemma is that it is important to do more than just feed people, however more and more people need feeding.

Ian (Bradford District Credit Union)

Nearly 50 people have now signed up through pantries and are saving regularly. BDCU have even employed a worker to deal with FoodSavers.

In some cases, people who haven't got a bank account are having their benefits paid into other people's accounts. This can lead to the situation that the account holder is spending this benefit money and the person entitled to it has no rights to claim it back.

Juli (Inn Churches)

Currently aware of 17 pantries around Bradford District, 8 of those are connected with the Credit Union. This has led to a behaviour change – people are now thinking about saving which is fantastic. All pantries are now registered with Healthy Start vouchers, which can really help individuals. This is going quite well, but it looks like there's a perfect storm coming in April, they are trying to get people better supported before April.

Updates from the Network

Healthy Start Vouchers

National government welfare scheme for families with children under 4. 2 parts to the scheme: vitamins and food vouchers. Vouchers (means tested): can be used towards pulses, milk, fruit, veg, stage 1 infant formula. Providers of these can become an approved retailer. People who are not online should speak to their midwife / health visitor. Vitamin scheme: free for all pregnant women plus babies born in Bradford District. Currently there is a limited uptake for these schemes, please can people promote to their clients.

Vouchers will move to digital only from 1st April, which might cause issues with retailers who don't understand the system or can't take the right electronic payments, and families having to re-apply. The digital card needs to be used in chip & pin machines. Unsure what the plan is plan is re retailers that haven't got machines.

Feeding Britain is offering to existing pantries & social supermarkets that accept vouchers that they subsidise the purchase of chip & pin machines so all retailers can access.

More details on Healthy Start vouchers <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>

Uniform Savers

Scheme launched in November. If people agree to save £10/month they get £100 into their account by August. Link to T&A article

<https://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/19862369.new-scheme-help-parents-school-uniform-costs-bradford/> and for more info, Credit Union website

<https://www.bdcu.co.uk/UniformSavers>

Pantries

Feeding Britain is supportive of the growing number of foodbanks that are seeking to embrace pantry models.

Advice in Food Settings – Pathways out of Poverty

This was a very successful scheme but has come to an end. If any food setting would like to continue with this, Feeding Britain would be happy to support. Trussell Trust are seeking their own funding for this. Contact Cathy cathy.henwood@wellspringstogether.org.uk

Council funded food

Funding for this has now been received and orders have started to come through. It is ok to encourage organisations to apply for funded food. This funding is until the end of March for foodbanks and pantries to support the extra uptake of food. If you would like to apply get in touch with Gary gary@innchurches.co.uk It is for foodbanks and for low cost foodstalls / pop-up pantries

Update on Hosting of Feeding Bradford & Keighley

Cathy is employed by Wellsprings Together, but Feeding Bradford & Keighley is semi-independent. Wellsprings Together have had a strategic review and no longer feel that it is part of their future direction to host Feeding Bradford & Keighley, therefore we're looking for a new home. In the past we have explored whether FB&K could be an independent charity but this is not really viable with a lot of administration for a one employee team. We have had different offers for a new home for FB&K and have had discussions with these potential hosts. It looks that Inn Churches seems the best fit and Inn Churches is now exploring this in depth with Wellsprings Together, and the Inn Churches Board need to be happy with this. If all goes to plan, it is hoped that by the end of March FB&K will be hosted by Inn Churches. It is anticipated that Inn Churches would be the umbrella organisation but Feeding Bradford & Keighley would remain semi-independent. Thank you to Wellsprings Together for hosting the network so far and thank you to Inn Churches for offering to host.

AOB

Food for health not wealth webinar

On Thursday 27th January. Inn Churches is trying to get other organisations involved, including Rotary. There are 9 rotary clubs in Bradford District who are also supporting food. So far there are over 200 people signed up to webinar, including some from other countries. There are lots of speakers, including Andrew (Feeding Britain), Gareth (FareShare), Tess (FoodSavers Network), Jamie's Ministry of Food, nutritionists, etc.

Daz – charity event on 31 July, Shipley

Daz is putting together a charity event in Shipley on 31st July. This is to support some foodbanks. He is experienced in putting together gigs and will contact Cathy to sort things. Recommended actions are to have eg donation boxes at the venue a couple of days before the event, and have somebody from a foodbank at the event who could talk to people about how foodbanks work.

Dates for next network meetings

- Monday 25 April
- Monday 18 July

We're hoping that these meetings can take place face to face, tbc.