

BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

A BIG EVENING TO CELEBRATE: THE VOLUNTEER THANK YOU EVENT AT GATESHEAD FOODBANK

At Gateshead Foodbank, we're lucky to have over 100 dedicated volunteers who regularly give up their time to help - whether that's in our warehouse where we process and store food donations, driving our vans collecting donations and delivering food to our three distribution centres or in one of the distribution centres, where we provide emergency food parcels to Gateshead residents facing food insecurity.

The role of volunteers at Gateshead Foodbank cannot be overstated. They are the lifeblood of the Foodbank.



To celebrate our amazing volunteers, we held a social evening at the end of September at Gateshead Masonic Hall. The event was a chance to say thank you and to recognise everything our volunteers contribute to the Foodbank.

The evening was also a chance to bring together different teams in one space to share stories, make connections and to see each other beyond roles.

The evening featured a "Guess the Volunteer" competition from baby and childhood photos, quizzes, games to build the highest statue from pasta and marshmallows, a delicious buffet and fantastic live music from the talented band, Replay.

A huge thank you to everyone who helped organise the evening and to all who attended. Your enthusiasm, support and generosity made it a truly special night.

**Find us at: <https://gateshead.foodbank.org.uk/>
e: info@gateshead.foodbank.org.uk t: 07496 840 720**

A Huge Thank You to Our Amazing Community!



We're truly grateful for the continued support, feedback, and enthusiasm from our community. Every message, share and contribution helps us grow stronger. Thank you for being an essential part of our journey!

We've been absolutely blown away by the generosity we've seen recently – from local schools, individuals and organisations all coming together to support Gateshead Foodbank.

As part of our Cereal Box Challenge and Harvest collections, we've received so many wonderful donations – plus incredible contributions towards our Christmas Hamper Appeal too!

A special thank you to Emmanuel College, Emmaville Primary, Highfield Primary, Clover Hill Primary, Winlaton West Lane Primary, Larkspur Primary, Fellside Primary, and many more – as well as Pets at Home and other fantastic local supporters.

Your kindness helps us continue supporting people in need across Gateshead, especially as we head into the busy winter season.

Thank you for standing with us – together, we're making a real difference.



An Autumn Prayer for Gateshead Foodbank

God of harvest and hope,
we thank You for the abundance of this season –
for golden fields, warm hearts, and open hands.
Bless those who give to Gateshead Foodbank, and those
who receive,
that none may go hungry in our community.
As leaves fall and days grow colder,
may kindness and compassion take root among us,
so that all may be nourished— in body, heart, and spirit.
Amen.



CHRISTMAS HAMPER CAMPAIGN

Each year, as the festive season approaches, here at Gateshead Foodbank we ramp up our efforts to bring a little extra joy to people in crisis in the local area through our Christmas Hamper Appeal. We invite donations of seasonal food items such as tins of chocolates, sweets, boxed biscuits, Christmas cake, tinned ham, jars of pickles, cracker biscuits, mince pies and other festive treats which go beyond the standard emergency food parcels. Financial donations are also welcomed and used to fill gaps or purchase items in bulk.

Volunteers sort, pack and distribute the hampers alongside the usual food parcels. In December last year we distributed 374 Christmas hampers across our three distribution sites in Gateshead, Birtley and Blaydon.

At Christmas, many families and individuals already under financial pressure face additional strain - the cost of heating, food, gifts and social commitments rises. The hamper campaign gives practical support in ensuring that people receive more than just basic emergency food, but also the little extras which help a meal feel more like a celebration. It also has an emotional impact by sending a message that you are seen, you're valued, you deserve a bit of festive cheer.

If you're thinking of supporting the campaign by donating food items, making a financial donation or volunteering your time to help pack and distribute hampers then please call us on 07496 840720 or email us at info@gateshead.foodbank.org.uk

With increased demand in recent years, we would ask that hamper items are donated early. Items arriving too close to Christmas may be held back until January due to sorting and storage constraints.

Gateshead Foodbank's Christmas Hamper Campaign is more than a food-drive: it's a community initiative to offer dignity, hope and celebration to people facing hardship. Each hamper distributed is a reminder that in the midst of struggle, someone cares.

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Supermarket Collections



One of our volunteers, Jo Moody at the Asda MetroCentre collection in October

Earlier this month, we held a supermarket collection to help ensure that no one in our community goes hungry – and the response was truly heart-warming.

Over the course of the Saturday, our wonderful team of volunteers welcomed shoppers at Asda at the MetroCentre and collected generous donations of food and essential items.

Thanks to the kindness of local people, we gathered 388 kg of food.

We're so grateful to everyone who donated, volunteered, or helped spread the word. Your generosity makes a real difference to local families facing hardship.

Every tin, packet, and pound made a real difference. Items such as tinned fruit, long-life milk, pasta sauces and toiletries were especially appreciated and will help us keep our shelves stocked for those who need support most.

We would like to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone who donated, to the staff at Asda and to our dedicated volunteers who gave up their time to make the collection possible. Your generosity and compassion truly embody the spirit of our community.

If you weren't able to donate during the last collection, there's still a chance to make a difference. Our annual Tesco Winter Collection will be taking place at Tesco Trinity Square from Thursday 27th November to Saturday 29th November.

We're looking for volunteers – even an hour of your time would be a huge help!

If you can spare some time to support us, please get in touch. Together, we can make a real difference this winter.



HELP US END THE TWO-CHILD LIMIT



Across the UK, more and more families are being pushed to foodbanks because they simply can't afford the essentials. One major cause is the Two-Child Limit – a policy that restricts Universal Credit and Child Tax Credit support to the first two children in a family. For every child after the second, families lose around £3,500 a year, placing huge strain on parents already struggling to get by.

This isn't right. Every child deserves the chance to grow and thrive – not to start life at a disadvantage because of the number of siblings they have.

Our umbrella organisation, Trussell is calling on the Government to scrap the Two-Child Limit and help lift hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty and hunger. Removing this policy would mean fewer families being forced to turn to foodbanks for support.

You can help. It takes just a few minutes to make a big difference. Please email your MP and ask them to support removing the Two-Child Limit:



Take action now: <https://action.trussell.org.uk/tell-your-mp-two-child-limit-must-be-fully-removed>

Together, we can help ensure every child has enough to grow, thrive, and have the best start in life

Changes At Your Foodbank



We have a couple of changes to announce at Gateshead Foodbank.

First, our longstanding volunteer Warehouse Manager, Rob Brotherstone, will be stepping back from organising the warehouse to focus more on our finances and accounts. Rob will still be available to lend a hand in the warehouse when needed.

Secondly, we're pleased to share that Phil Murnane, another one of our dedicated volunteers, will be moving from his role as Team Leader to take over as volunteer Warehouse Manager.

We're incredibly grateful to both Rob and Phil for their continued commitment and hard work in supporting Gateshead Foodbank.

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🎄 Gateshead Foodbank – Christmas Opening Times 🎄

As you can imagine, the run-up to Christmas is an especially busy time for Gateshead Foodbank. After much hard work and dedication, our amazing staff and volunteers will be taking a well-earned break over the festive period.

Please take note of our Christmas closure dates and re-opening times for each of our centres:

Central Distribution Centre

- 📍 Citizens Advice Gateshead
- 🕒 Last session: Tuesday 23rd December, 1:00–2:30 PM
- 🔒 Re-opening: Monday 5th January

Blaydon Distribution Centre

- 📍 Trinity Methodist Church, Lucy Street, Blaydon
- 🕒 Last session: Friday 19th December, 1:30–3:00 PM
- 🔒 Re-opening: Friday 9th January

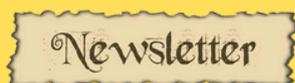
Birtley Distribution Centre

- 📍 Birtley Methodist Church, Station Lane, Birtley
- 🕒 Last session: Wednesday 17th December, 10:30 AM–12:00 noon
- 🔒 Re-opening: Wednesday 7th January

Warehouse (Team Valley)

- 🕒 Last session: Monday 22nd December, 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon
- 🔒 Re-opening: Monday 5th January, 9:00 AM

Thank you for your continued support – and a very Merry Christmas from everyone at Gateshead Foodbank! 🎅🌟



Because December is such a busy month, our next newsletter will be published at the end of January.

After that, we'll continue our bi-monthly schedule from March onwards. The January edition will include details about the number of emergency food parcels provided during 2025.

If there's any other information you'd like us to include in future newsletters, please let us know – we'd love to hear your suggestions.