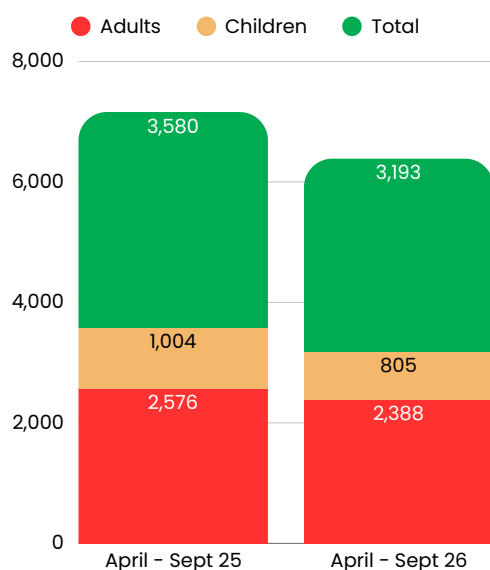


BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Gateshead Foodbank: Six month update



In the first six months of the financial year, from April to September 2026, Gateshead Foodbank provided emergency food parcels to **3,193 people** – 2,388 adults and 805 children.

This is a reduction compared with the same period last year, when we provided food parcels to **3,580 people** – 2,576 adults and 1,004 children. Overall, this represents 387 fewer people needing support, including 199 fewer children.

This reduction is encouraging and reflects, in part, the hard work of our Financial Inclusion Team at Citizens Advice Gateshead, with whom we work in partnership. The team supports people with issues including rent arrears, benefits claims and debt, helping to address some of the underlying financial difficulties that can lead people to need the Foodbank.

However, the need for our services remains. Many households continue to face significant financial pressures, and the coming winter will bring additional challenges as household energy costs rise and many people struggle to afford the essentials.

At the same time, Gateshead Foodbank is experiencing a reduction in food and financial donations, as well as grant income. As a result, we have made the difficult decision to reduce the amount of food we provide and to limit the toiletries available, in order to help ensure that the Foodbank can continue to support people in need in the future.

We therefore rely more than ever on the generosity of our supporters. **Donations of food and money are both vital in helping us continue our work.**

Working Together to Ensure Universal Credit Meets the Cost of Essentials

Gateshead Foodbank and Citizens Advice Gateshead have joined forces to submit evidence to the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for *Ending the Need for Food Banks* inquiry into how Universal Credit levels are decided.

Our submission included local data, case studies and voice notes from people who have used Gateshead Foodbank, answering the question:

“What impact is the current approach to setting Universal Credit levels having on the adequacy of support?”

The evidence clearly shows that **current Universal Credit levels do not cover the cost of essential living**. The personal experiences shared through the voice notes bring the statistics to life, showing the real impact of inadequate income on people's everyday lives.

A huge thank you to everyone who shared their experiences. Your voices have helped make this report powerful and ensure that the reality of living on Universal Credit is heard.

We hope our evidence will help build the case for an independent, fair and transparent process for setting Universal Credit, based on what people actually need to afford the essentials.

Diane Kindred
Local Organiser

A Prayer for Gateshead Foodbank

Loving God, as autumn comes and the days grow colder, bless all who come to Gateshead Foodbank seeking help and hope.

Give strength to those facing hardship, generosity to those who give and compassion to all who serve.

May every parcel shared be a sign of dignity, kindness and love and may no one in our community feel forgotten or alone.

Amen.

Cereal Box Challenge: Every Box Makes a Difference

Our shelves need a little boost, and we need **YOUR** help!

We are inviting schools, churches and community groups to get involved with our **Cereal Box Challenge** this year. It's a simple way to make a big difference to local families who may be struggling to put food on the table.

Cereal is one of the items we regularly need to keep our food parcels stocked and to make sure local families have access to a good breakfast. A box of cereal might seem like a small donation, but **when lots of people get involved, those boxes quickly add up and help us make sure local families have access to a good breakfast.**

Why not get your school, church or community group involved and see how many boxes you can collect?

Every box makes a difference, and every donation helps us support people in our local community. For more information or to get involved, please email: **info@gateshead.foodbank.org.uk**

Together, we can fill our shelves and help fill breakfast bowls!



Oktoberfest and Community Spirit at Firebrick Brewery

Firebrick Brewery is a microbrewery in Blaydon, inspired by the history and culture of the North East of England.



The brewery offers a variety of beers, from black lager to witbier, with names and labels that celebrate the region's heritage, including Tyne 9, Trade Star and Pagan Queen.

Throughout the summer, Firebrick hosts a summer party every other Saturday at the brewery. On 26 September, they took things a step further with a fantastic Oktoberfest celebration.

Guests enjoyed an oompah band with a musical twist, steins filled to the brim with great ales, traditional lederhosen and fantastic food, creating a brilliant Oktoberfest atmosphere.



The celebrations also had a strong community focus. Firebrick Brewery held a collection for Gateshead Foodbank, collecting over 50 kilograms of food donations plus a cash collection to support local people in need.

A huge thank you to everyone at Firebrick Brewery for hosting such a fantastic event and for supporting Gateshead Foodbank. Thanks also to everyone who attended, donated and helped make the day such a great success. They included our very own volunteers, Jo Moody and Rachael Bradley, shown here getting into the Oktoberfest spirit.

An Afternoon Together

One Friday in September, some of our volunteers from the central Gateshead Friday team, along with our Deputy Manager, Poppy Brown got together for a lovely afternoon tea at The Vermont Hotel in Newcastle.

A huge thank you to Tee, one of our amazing volunteers, for organising such a lovely afternoon! It was a wonderful opportunity to take a break, enjoy some delicious food and, most importantly, spend time together outside the Foodbank.



Volunteering with Gateshead Foodbank isn't just about supporting the people who come through our doors. It's also about being part of a team, meeting new people, building friendships and creating a strong sense of community.

Latest Supermarket Collections

We held our latest supermarket collection at Morrisons, Birtley in September. Thank you to Morrisons for their support, to our volunteers who supported the collection and to Morrisons customers who kindly donated food. We were able to collect a total of **242 kilograms of food**.

Our next collection will be at **Morrisons in Blaydon on Tuesday, 13th October** from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Please come along to support your local Foodbank and to meet our volunteers where you can hear about our work supporting Gateshead residents who are going hungry.

We are looking for donations of **tinned meat and fish, long life milk and juice, rice, pasta, noodles, tea, coffee and toiletries**. One small addition to your shopping can make a real difference.

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

Shinu's Skydive for Gateshead Foodbank

In our last newsletter, we reported on Shinu Yohannan, who was due to take part in a 14,000-foot sponsored skydive in support of Gateshead Foodbank on 15 August.

Shinu successfully completed the skydive as planned, raising an **incredible £1,440**, including Gift Aid.

Reflecting on the experience, Shinu said:

"I wanted to challenge myself and do something completely outside my comfort zone, but most importantly, I wanted to raise money for Gateshead Foodbank. Knowing that the skydive would help raise money for people in our local community gave me the motivation to take it on.

"I was definitely nervous, especially when I was standing at the aircraft door at 14,000 feet. There was a real mix of nerves and excitement. But once I jumped, I was able to relax and enjoy the experience. The freefall was absolutely amazing.

"Afterwards, I felt a huge sense of achievement and was really pleased that I had gone through with it. The support from my family, friends, colleagues and everyone who donated made the experience even more special. Reaching the fundraising target was particularly rewarding.

"A huge thank you to everyone who helped make the challenge possible. Together, we can help ensure that no one in our community faces hunger alone."

