



FareShare Slices

A healthy slice of FareShare volunteer news

Issue 19
Winter 2023/24



Hello!

Happy New Year! I hope this message finds you in good health and spirits, and that you had a wonderful holiday season. I wish you all the best for 2024; full of joy, peace, and prosperity.

I'd like to thank you for your time, your support and your care in making FareShare the incredible organisation that it is. As we reflect on 2023, together we supported more than 8,500 charities and community groups with food nationally. We redirected over 54,000 tonnes of surplus food to people who need it – providing communities across the UK with the equivalent of 128 million meals. Isn't that incredible. We could not have done it without you. We are determined to continue to support our community this year – and when our frontline partners need our support the most, we at FareShare will be right behind them to help.

Each year we hold our Volunteer Experience Survey and ask anonymous questions about your volunteer experience.

If you could please take some time to complete the survey, as your responses will help us improve our recruitment practices and provide a better volunteer experience.

Please complete the survey by scanning the QR code below. This survey will close on 26th January.

In this issue of Slices, we share the incredible launch of the Coronation Food Project (page 3) and we meet George Wright, FareShare's new CEO (pages 4-5). We share the outcome of the Christmas Tesco Food Collection (page 6), and the shocking findings from FareShare's Impact on Individuals Report (page 8-9), plus more.

Thank you, volunteers, for all that you do. You are the best of us.

I look forward to seeing all that FareShare can achieve together in 2024.



Front cover image: The King and Queen at SOFEA photographed with volunteers and staff.

This magazine is printed on 100% recycled paper and is 100% recyclable.



Elise Taylor

In this issue

Coronation Food Project	3
CEO George Wright	4
Tesco Food Collection	6
Safe system of work	7
Impact on individuals report 2023	8
One small step from finance to FareShare	10
Celebrating eight years of food redistribution to Lancashire and Cumbria	12
Food news	14
Fundraising news	15
Two minutes with Josh	16

Coronation Food Project

November saw the launch of the Coronation Food Project, an initiative by His Majesty King Charles III to save and circulate more surplus food to help tackle food waste and food insecurity across the UK.

the charity sector. Through the Alliance Manufacturing programme, they aim to utilise surplus and donated resources of any kind - food, packaging, labour and capacity - to produce more nutritious food to help people in need.

As part of the launch, The King and Queen visited SOFEA, our regional centre in Didcot Oxfordshire, where they met and spoke to staff and volunteers who help redistribute food to more than 120 community organisations across Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and Wiltshire.

As the UK's largest food redistribution charity, the need for FareShare has never been greater with one in five people experiencing food poverty in the UK. This is all happening while seven billion meals worth of good to eat food goes to waste in the UK's food supply chain annually.

Their Majesties also met senior figures from the food industry, both major retailers and manufacturers, who have joined forces in a historic pledge to save even more waste and generate additional food for

Through this groundbreaking project, FareShare will be working with the food industry to access more of this food to help strengthen communities in the UK, whilst reducing carbon emissions.



Theresa, Paul and Helen



Senior leaders from the UK food industry



King Charles and Queen Camilla with SOFEA staff and volunteers

CEO George Wright



It has been six months since I joined FareShare and in that time I've visited our regional centres up and down the country. In each location, I've been struck by the enthusiasm of the many people who form the backbone of our operation – our dedicated volunteers.

Hunger in the UK isn't a problem now, it's a crisis. To tackle that crisis you need people to step up and do extraordinary things.

That's what's happening at our sites up and down the country every day – an extraordinary effort by hundreds of people – like you – who give their time to ensure that good to eat food gets to charities and people in need.

I have seen the immense effort daily from all of our fantastic volunteers. Many regularly go above and beyond to support FareShare's work. Drivers cover miles in all weathers to deliver food to community centres; warehouse teams carefully pick nutritious produce to go to school clubs; and admin volunteers ensure everything and everyone is in the right place at the right time.

As the cost of living crisis continues, we are busier than ever. But it's important to take time to appreciate every one of our extraordinary volunteers. Back in October, we had the chance to celebrate the phenomenal difference you all make with our annual Volunteer Celebrations.

You may already have read some of the winners' stories in the autumn edition of Slices – they were inspirational and a wonderful occasion for everyone across the organisation to enjoy and share our appreciation.

Some 14,000 people have volunteered for FareShare in the last year. While demand for food is at an all time high, support from volunteers like you is needed more than ever to help reach those in need.

As FareShare enters its 30th year, we know there is much more to do and, as always, volunteers will play a crucial part. We recently announced the launch of the Coronation Food Project, inspired by His Majesty King Charles III. The project represents a new initiative to tackle the

environmental damage of food waste and turn it into a social good. It will provide a much needed boost to charities and people in need across the UK via the FareShare network.

2024 will be an exciting year for FareShare, and we look forward to sharing it with you.

We wish all our volunteers a happy and healthy new year.

George



Tesco Food Collection



The latest Tesco Food Collection was a huge success thanks to all of the wonderful support from our volunteers. We had the most volunteers per store we've ever seen signing up to help us collect food in Tesco stores across the UK. That's **1,620** incredible volunteers, covering **2,217** shifts!

In stores where volunteers are present, we see four times the amount of food donated so the time you dedicated to supporting FareShare has made a huge impact.

This food is needed now more than ever. The charities we supply food to have told us that things are continuing to get worse as a result of the cost of living crisis:

"The analogy I use is, if you imagine about a year and a half ago, the water level for these families was just below their chins - they were surviving. But then, fuel prices went up, food prices went up, the cost of living crisis hit and caused the water level to rise each time so their heads that were above water are now under and they're drowning basically."

Val Reid, Community for Food, Edinburgh

From everyone here at FareShare, **thank you** for your generous support and for helping us to collect vital food supplies for people facing hunger during the winter.

We couldn't do it without you.

Safe system of work

As part of our ongoing efforts to ensure volunteer safety and wellbeing, we are sharing with you the Safe Use of Roll Cages, Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). This SOP is a comprehensive guide designed to educate and inform you about

the best practices for safely handling roll cages during your volunteering activities. It covers essential aspects such as inspection of equipment, adherence to safety protocols, and proper manual handling techniques. Your safety is our top priority.

SS01 - Safe use of roll cages

Before starting this activity:

1. Always wear your hi vis and safety footwear.
2. Visually inspect cage and report any defects to your line manager.
3. Always keep walkways clear.
4. Ensure pedestrians, forklift and vehicles are properly segregated.



1. Check the route is clear and carefully push the roll cage in to position. Ensure firm grip on both sides of the cage.



2. Apply braking mechanism, if fitted. Check contents are stable. Unclip door fastener and carefully open cage doors.



3. Adopt correct manual handling techniques and avoid twisting when unloading cages. Ensure items remain stable as they are removed.



4. Seek assistance with any heavy or bulky items.



5. To move the empty cage, check the route and deactivate the brake (if fitted). Firmly grip the sides and slowly walk forwards pushing the cage.



6. At destination, apply brake (if fitted). Ensure cage does not block walkway or create a 'dead end' condition.

Stack heavy items on the bottom of the cage and lighter items on top. Cages must only be loaded to maximum shoulder height. Return cages to designated storage after use.

FareShare's impact on individuals report 2023

Through data gathered from more than 2,600 individuals, this report analyses FareShare's impact on individuals who receive food support from our nationwide network of charities and community groups.

Here are some of the key findings:

Who attends our food services

Families with children



● Survey respondents
● Percentage of UK population

Global majority backgrounds



Women



Carers



Our survey responses reflect the unevenly distributed impacts of food insecurity.

Life-limiting conditions*



Claiming state benefits



* The survey question asked about life limitations as the researchers wanted to capture people's limitations as a result of long-term conditions in addition to those with physical disability. This response rate has been compared with UK disability rates.

Percentage of UK population figures from ONS: gender, ethnicity, families, carers. DWP: disability, benefits claims.

Outcomes from attending food services

Access to healthier food



4 in 5 tried new foods



+76% ate more fruit and veg



More than half skipped fewer meals



+73% feel less financial pressure

Less financial stress

"A couple of free meals a week helps us keep warmer and keep the lights on in the winter."

Food service user, Milton Keynes

Community connectedness



+78% felt closer to their community



2 in 3 felt less lonely

Improved health and wellbeing



+75% feel better about their overall wellbeing



1 in 2 feel healthier

"It's not just food; it's family, and I feel cared for in this country - no longer alone!"

Food service user, East of England

Cost of living crisis

Many participants said the rising cost of food, alongside rising costs of electricity and gas, was leading to increasing levels of financial strain.

Many indicated that they were experiencing in-work poverty and were unable to meet the rising costs of rent and mortgages, and so had to access the foodbank to ensure that they were able to pay housing costs. Over a third (37%) of respondents were employed, making it apparent that being employed is not always enough to prevent food insecurity.

Some described situations where they were struggling to meet the dietary needs of their family members due to the impact of the cost of living crisis. For those who were struggling to meet dietary requirements, the offer of choice at the foodbank was critical.

People with no access to public funds expressed that the cost of living crisis had exacerbated an already difficult situation. Uncertainty about this was causing them to feel increasingly stressed.

One small step from finance to FareShare

FareShare's volunteers all have the shared wish to help others, but they come from very disparate backgrounds in their journey to being an essential part of a FareShare regional centre.

Martyn Ingram was an insurance broker, running his own successful company for many years. When he decided to retire, it was with a real anticipation of being able to shake off all the responsibilities that his job involved: "I loved my role, but I'd had years of pressure and stress with it, and it was great to think of not having that anymore, but still being able to contribute in some way."

Martyn, who lives just outside Southampton, retired two years ago:

"It was during the pandemic, and I was volunteering at a vaccine centre. I got chatting to a chap there who volunteered at FareShare, so I signed up online via the FareShare volunteering portal. "The process was great, it only took a few minutes and then someone got back to me and invited me down to FareShare Southern Central in Totton – it's only 15 minutes' drive from me, which is ideal."

"I didn't really mind what I did but was asked to be a driver's assistant, dropping off food to about 30 larders in the region, as well as some order picking in the warehouse, and it's been totally brilliant. Officially I work once a week but sometimes do more when I can. We allocate the food to the larders, plus other items as they come in. The people visiting the larders pay £2.50, but they will often go away with more than £80 worth of food.

"It's the people that really make it for me – both in the warehouse and the larders. There's a lot of volunteers at the larders, and they are such a nice bunch of people. I've made friends with some and we go for lunch now and then.

"You also get a lovely sense of camaraderie from knowing that you're doing some good, in your own little way, whether it be helping people in food poverty or reducing landfill. Some larders act as a community hub and the members



Martyn Ingram

roll up for an hour before and chat. They look out for each other, catch up with everyone's news, swap recipes and so on – and FareShare is helping to do that, helping to bring communities together."

Martyn says he also loves the flexibility of volunteering: "I've got grandchildren who live in the States so I'm off to visit them soon, and I always find time to follow my beloved Northampton FC. But as long as FareShare needs me, and I'm fit enough to do it, then I'll keep turning up for my shifts."

Since 2014 FareShare Southern Central has provided good quality food to charities and community organisations across Hampshire - breakfast clubs, food banks, lunch clubs for older people, night

shelters, day centres, community cafes and projects supporting vulnerable young people and those with addictions and mental health. In the last year we have provided 2.07m meals to 155 charities we support, benefiting approximately 17.83k vulnerable people.

It would be impossible to carry out our vital work without the dedication of you our volunteers.

We are always looking for new people to join us – as warehouse assistants, drivers and drivers' mates, and fundraisers. If you know of anyone that is looking to get into volunteering this year and can spare a few hours each week, ask them to get in touch at fareshare.org.uk/volunteer.



Celebrating eight years of food redistribution to Lancashire and Cumbria

Recycling Lives Food Redistribution Centre - FareShare celebrates a hugely successful eight years of charity food distribution across Lancashire and Cumbria. October 2023 marked eight years open, supporting charities and community groups with food and preventing food waste from going to landfill. Each week fresh fruit, vegetables, meats, dairy, breads, cereals and tins are distributed to help those in need across both the counties, from homeless people, children at breakfast clubs, to low-income families.

John Wilkinson & Alan (Sam) Illsley – FareShare volunteers

Sam and John have been volunteers at Recycling Lives Food Redistribution Centre – FareShare Lancashire and Cumbria, from the very beginning – October 2015, when the centre first opened. They both volunteer on a regular basis and have not stopped since.

Sam and John most recently were awarded a recognition for their long service in volunteering with FareShare in this year's FareShare Volunteer Celebrations. They also were awarded a second recognition for their teamwork as a duo and awarded 'The Perfect Pear' Award with FareShare.

Sam and John have shared a bit of history and their experience volunteering..... Sam and John first met in 1974 whilst both serving with the British Army in west Germany and have been good friends for nearly 50 years. When FareShare

Lancashire opened in October 2015, Sam and John were first to take up the opportunity to volunteer.

"The centre opened as an empty warehouse and Sam and I were there at the start to help build up the warehouse to what it is today, from an empty shell to a thriving enterprise".

Sam and John both come from a military background and, just as important, their military humour.

"The sense of helping our local community, keeping the old grey cells ticking over, and when you are loading full trays of potatoes, squash and bananas – it's a free gym workout".



John Wilkinson and Alan (Sam) Illsley

“Since joining FareShare, both Sam and I have been drivers, worked in the warehouse on goods in and stock rotation and for the last couple of years as stock pickers. Sam and I are well in to our 70’s and look forward to the younger generation taking over.”

“The time spent volunteering is down to the individual and Sam and I volunteer Tuesdays and Thursdays, more shifts on the run up to Christmas.”

“There are benefits of volunteering with FareShare– training, most important life skills and being part of a great team”.

Sam and John.

Celebrating a hugely successful eight years of charity food distribution in Lancashire, it also marked six years of delivery into Cumbria in October 2017 after expansion enabled the Food Redistribution Centre to support charities and community groups in the area. A delivery model was put in place for this expansion, starting with the one delivery van.

Julian Norton - Food Redistribution Centre Driver, was the first to be behind the wheel of the FareShare van delivering food to charities in Cumbria as a volunteer from October 2017. Passionate about FareShare’s work in addressing the issue of food poverty, Julian was keen to get involved and support the process of food redistribution.

“When the expansion into Cumbria happened, delivery runs started with delivery to local collection points (LCP) in Cumbria, the first being in Cleator Moor. I’d drive from the warehouse in Preston to Cleator Moor, park up and several charities and community groups came to



Julian Norton

the van to collect the food. Another LCP was set up not long after in Penrith and then another LCP in Carlisle - that soon filled three days a week. The number of Cumbria charities and community groups soon increased and van routing to deliver to more areas of Cumbria happened. Over five days a week, completing 250 mile round delivery runs a day, food is delivered to charities and community groups - is humbling and most rewarding of jobs”.

Julian

Together, FareShare Lancashire & Cumbria 8 years on support over 130 charities and community groups across both counties. To what was a small operation, is now huge.

Food News

Asda 10 Year Celebrations

Back in November, we celebrated 10 years of our partnership with Asda which in that time has enabled us to redistribute over 30 million meals supporting over 7000 charities in the UK.

Celebrations included a virtual webinar which highlighted how food is making a difference in local communities across the UK.

We hosted an in-person event at Asda's head office where we held a live Ready Steady Cook demonstration between FareShare Yorkshire's Chris Clyburn, Chef at FullCrumb Kitchen which supports local individuals and community groups to get the best out of the surplus food available and Richard Allen, Chef Tutor at NEET Eats, one of our charities in Shipley West Yorkshire which provides its team members who have learning disabilities with a holistic approach to growing food, understanding how to use it and translating that into nourishing meals.

The meals cooked on the day for Asda staff to sample were a delicious Vegetable Minestrone and Vegetable Biryani. We also had an exhibition stand along with NEET Eats to explain to Asda staff more about we do and how our partnership is making a difference to communities every day.

During the 10 years of working together, Asda has also generously donated over £13m to FareShare to help get food to people who need it most.

We are so thankful to Asda and look forward to seeing the impact of the next 10 years.



Meals, milestones and more

During Christmas, **Marks and Spencer** and supplier **2 Sisters Food Group** donated over one million meals to families in need which included tasty dishes such as Chilli Con Carne & Rice and Smooth Tomato & Basil Soup.

Sainsbury's gave a generous Christmas donation of £650,000, plus £350,000 through Comic Relief and the Evening Standard's Winter Survival Campaign.

Since 2021, **KFC** has donated over 600,000 meals to helping local communities.

The Federation of Wholesale Distributors and wholesalers and suppliers at the **Gold Awards Dinner** at Old Billingsgate in London raised an amazing £10,000 for FareShare.

The Pet Food Partnership between **Battersea, Cats Protection, Dogs Trust, RSPCA** and **FareShare** reached its one million meals milestone in November. It aims to support pet owners who are having to cut costs due to the cost of living increases, including what they spend on their pets.

Fundraising News

2023 was a busy year for FareShare's fundraisers. From the Zero Heroes that cut out waste for our Zero Waste Challenge, to those that strapped on their trainers for our 5K a Day or Miles for Meals challenges. Whether you hosted a bake sale, or sponsored our friends, our work isn't possible without you! And we can't wait to see what Team FareShare can achieve together in 2024...

Gifts in Wills have the power to shape communities for years to come

FareShare is now offering our supporters the opportunity to donate by leaving a gift in their Will, allowing them to continue supporting our mission beyond their lifetime.

A Will is a legal document that sets out a person's final wishes in writing, including what will happen to their money, property, investments and possessions after they pass away.

Leaving gifts in Wills allow supporters to continue supporting our fight against food insecurity and food waste in years to come, whilst enabling us to plan ahead.

They ensure we can direct funds to areas of work where it will be most impactful in the future, creating greater stability for the charities and community groups we support.



Find out more about Gifts in Wills by visiting our website and downloading our free Gifts in Wills guide: fareshareuk.com/GiftInWills.

New year, new challenge events

Looking for a challenge to kickstart your year? Whether you're looking to sign up for your first marathon, seeking a rush of adrenaline, or simply want a family-friendly fun day out — we've got plenty of new challenge events for you.

Join Team FareShare today to start raising money to get food to the vulnerable people that need it most. Check out the latest opportunities and sign up now: fareshare.org.uk/challenge-events.



Two minutes with

Josh FareShare Yorkshire
volunteer



What are your top three favourite foods?

Meat feast pizza, chicken korma curry and carbonara.

If you could travel to anywhere in the world tomorrow, where would it be?

Cape Town, South Africa.

What is your favourite colour?

Red.

If we asked you to sing one song, word for word, what would you pick?

Shawn Mendes - In My Blood.

What is your favourite season?

Summer.

What is the first word that comes to your mind when we say 'FareShare'?

Grateful.

How long have you been at FareShare Yorkshire?

Five years.

What is your favourite catchphrase or saying?

'Fantastic'.

If you had to set yourself a food challenge, what would it be?

Eating less treats or sweets.

Scenario: You have to cook your best dish for the whole of FareShare Yorkshire, what are you going to be cooking?

Carbonara.

If you could learn to do anything that you don't already know how to do, what would you pick?

Juggling.

What is your favourite memory from FareShare Yorkshire?

Making new friends and coming out of my shell.