

## Larder/Foodbank report : February news update

The Exmouth Community Larder decided to change its name to Exmouth Foodbank some time ago, but in March 2020 the Coronavirus hit. It is being implemented now with a much improved website and new email addresses, although some problems have to be sorted!. Looking into the future causes us to look back into the past to grasp the overall picture!

The first lockdown in March 2020 created a surge in people volunteering and a surge in demand from people who could not get supplies, all matched by a surge in donations. Meanwhile volunteers over 70 had to step back leaving new recruits to man the fort led by a few younger previous volunteers. With so many new initiatives at that time to help people, it is easy to think wrongly of the Community Larder being driven by the crisis.

Food emergencies are not new - there have been hungry people needing help from time immemorial. Those who go back to WWII and rationing remember help being provided within each community. People who had enough shared with those that did not. The Gospels remind us "the poor are always with us" The need will continue into the future, especially as more people are relying on government support; many will fall through cracks in the system; mental health issues will expand, where support was already struggling!!

In 2009 in Exmouth, Rev'd John Graver, Minister of Christ Church, filled a spare room in the manse with food for needy families, while Tim Davies had started gathering tins in his garage in Brixington and distributing them to those in need.



**Volunteers in November 2013**

*Left to right - back row: Richard Ward, Major Steve Watson, Anthony Bernard, Bill Nash (the mayor), Tim Davies, Phil Lunt, Carole Aldersley, David Mortimer, Front row : Brenda Chanter, Chris King, Ronni Stevens, Jan Harper, Marie Corker, Jean Taylor, Judy Ring, Jo Corney, Major Ian Harris, SA Division Commander for Devon & Cornwall.*

Tim became part of the founding group in the Larder managing the stockroom, Chris Barker-Bey organised dealings with clients, Major Steve Watson of the Salvation Army did something of everything.

Rev'd Ian Pusey, a retired minister at Holy Trinity, had run a food bank since 1990 in his previous parish, serving 45-50 people a week, referred by social services. The Trussel Trust set up its first food bank in 2000 in Salisbury. This went on to create a national food bank movement, with an organised structure and paid staff, which made big news, but it was not the start of food banks or of the need, but it did create publicity and an impetus!!

The ethos of providing help in a food emergency continues, as does the need to guide people to seek help with their underlying crisis. Thanks to the generosity of the whole of greater Exmouth Community there are currently plenty of volunteers and donations.

The new committee, about to launch a new website and with the experience of the huge demands of 2020, look forward to the challenges of 2021 and beyond .....more later!!

*Anthony Bernard, Exmouth Community Larder / FoodBank  
www.exmouthlarder.co.uk, mid February 2021*