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Although the coronavirus pandemic continues to affect all aspects of life, June-August 2020 did see an easing of lockdown restrictions allowing the population more freedoms. Some businesses have reopened which, in turn, has resulted in employees returning to work and shielding restrictions were lifted on 1st August, allowing vulnerable people the opportunity to venture out more often. But there are still many people on furlough, coping on benefits for the first time, facing redundancy or hesitant to venture far from home. This update examines the Food Bank figures for June-August 2020 to gauge the ongoing effect of the coronavirus pandemic on Berwick-upon-Tweed's population.

Figures in this report are from Food Bank statistics collated during the period running from 1st June until 31st August, 2020.

41% increase in number of food parcels issued.

238 food parcels were issued during June-August 2020, an increase of 41% in comparison to the same period in 2019 when 169 food parcels were issued.

June 2020 saw a 90% increase in the number of adults receiving support from the Food Bank compared to June 2019, but encouragingly this figure drops to a 36% increase for August 2020 vs August 2019.

341 adults supported during June-August 2020

61% decrease in the number of homeowners supported

Perhaps reflecting research showing deprived sections of the community are being more adversely affected economically by the pandemic than the more affluent sectors, our statistics show that there has been a decrease in the number of homeowners accessing the Food Bank during June-August 2020 vs 2019.

During 2019 a total of 596 food parcels were issued, with 408 of those issued in the period January-August. Figures until end August 2020 show a 54% increase in demand with 630 food parcels having already been distributed.

54% increase in the number of food parcels issued 2020 YTD



90% increase in the number of children nourished.

During June-August 2020, 175 children received essential nourishment from food parcels supplied to their parents or carers. This is an increase of 90% on the same period in 2019. Through the help received from the Food Bank, child health and development has been supported.

During times of crisis people often don't know where to turn for help and advice. As well as providing food support and benefits advice, The Community Trust acts as an information hub, helping people access help and advice. This service has been particularly well received during the pandemic.

Information
&
Advice

Furloughed and
Shielding Residents
Supported

The Food Bank service is available to all and coronavirus crisis has highlighted how essential the service is. From supporting those with underlying health issues, people suffering from unexpected income shocks and the self employed who've been unable to generate income, all members of the community are eligible for support during times of need.

Throughout lockdown the Food Bank ran a daily delivery service allowing all customers to stay safely at home, which was especially important to the more vulnerable and those shielding. As restrictions have been lifted, most people are able to collect parcels, but we have maintained a weekly delivery service for those needing continued support.

Delivery
Service

Safeguarding
&
Referrals

When Food Bank customers require additional support to help them through difficult times The Community Trust, as part of a multi-disciplinary panel which works to identify needs and safeguarding issues, can refer vulnerable customers to organisations offering specialist services, ensuring that additional support is accessed and potential harm minimised.

As the pandemic continues, the Food Bank remains open offering support to all, including isolated and vulnerable households throughout town and the wider area, not only with food support but also with advice about living in the new normal and easing back into society following shielding.

Supporting
the
Community



