



Press Release – Under Embargo until 14<sup>th</sup> November

## West Somerset Food Cupboard Delighted to Receive The King’s Award for Voluntary Service

The West Somerset Food Cupboard, based in Minehead, have just been awarded The King’s Award for Voluntary Service. This is the highest award a local voluntary group can receive in the UK and is equivalent to an MBE.

The West Somerset Food Cupboard is one of 262 local charities, social enterprises, and voluntary groups to receive the prestigious award this year. Their work, along with others from across the UK, reminds us of all the ways fantastic volunteers are contributing to their local communities and working to make life better for those around them.

The King’s Award for Voluntary Service aims to recognise outstanding work by local volunteer groups to benefit their communities. It was created in 2002 to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II’s Golden Jubilee and, following his accession, His Majesty The King emphasised his desire to continue the Award.

Representatives of the West Somerset Food Cupboard will receive the award crystal and certificate from Mr Mohammed Saddiq, Lord-Lieutenant of Somerset, in the next few months. The West Somerset Food Cupboard has been providing emergency food from the Parish Church of St. Michael the Archangel, Alcombe since 2007. The food is donated by local people, checked, and packed by volunteers, and distributed either by a local agency supporting someone through a particular challenge, or directly by a member of the team.

In addition, in May 2022, the Local Pantry was established. The Local Pantry is a membership scheme formed through a partnership agreement with supermarket surplus charity Fareshare South West and Somerset West and Taunton Council’s Local Pantries initiative. The team of volunteer’s sort deliveries and stock the pantry, and welcome members every Tuesday, assisting with their weekly shop – all for £3.50 per member.

Katrina Midgley, Chairperson, West Somerset Food Cupboard, comments, ***“It is such an honour for our organisation to receive The King’s Award for Voluntary Service. This award recognises the commitment and hard work of the incredible team of volunteers we have at the West Somerset Food Cupboard. Their dedication enables this service to operate in our local community, ensuring that nobody in West Somerset needs to go hungry.”***

Ali Sanderson, Operations Manager, comments, ***“We have 54 volunteers in a range of roles and are so grateful to each and every one of them for generously giving their time and supporting the West Somerset Food Cupboard. They are the reason we are able to function each week, and support those in need in our local area. A huge thank you to all our volunteers and well done on receiving this prestigious award!”***

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## Notes to Editors

### About The King's Award for Voluntary Service

1. Lord-Lieutenants represent the monarch in each of the UK's ceremonial counties.
2. This year there are 262 recipients of The King's Award for Voluntary Service from across the UK and Channel Islands.
3. More information on the recipients and the Award can be found at <https://kavs.dcms.gov.uk/>
4. Full details on how to nominate are available at <https://kavs.dcms.gov.uk/>
5. Nominations for the 2025 awards will open on the 1st June 2024.

### About The West Somerset Food Cupboard

#### Emergency Food Parcels

West Somerset is ranked as within the worst 20% for food affordability across England. West Somerset Food Cupboard has seen a year-on-year increase of 20% in the number of emergency food parcels it has distributed so far this year.

#### Local Pantry Scheme

In May 2022 the West Somerset Food Cupboard launched a Local Pantry in partnership with Somerset West and Taunton Council and Fareshare South West. The Local Pantry offers affordable access to fresh, chilled, frozen, and non-perishable surplus food that would otherwise perish. The Local Pantry has 40 member households and holds a lengthy waiting list. The surplus food distributed has created 20,000 meals.

#### Donations

If you are interested in making a one-off or regular financial donation to the West Somerset Food Cupboard, please visit our website for more information and to find out how you can help.

[www.wsfoodcupboard.org.uk/donate/](http://www.wsfoodcupboard.org.uk/donate/)

### Media Contact

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