

Thank you for your interest in working at the West Somerset Food Cupboard (WSFC)

In this pack you will find:

- Some background information on WSFC
- Information on Emergency Food provision
- Information on The Local Pantry
- Information about working for WSFC
- Job Description and Person Specification

1. ABOUT THE WEST SOMERSET FOOD CUPBOARD

Established in 2007, as a church project, the objective of the WSFC was simply to ensure that no-one in West Somerset need go hungry. Anyone in need could access an emergency box of nutritionally balanced food which would help to feed a family of four for three days. Since its inception, more than 17,000 food boxes have been distributed to local people experiencing food insecurity, with over 5,000 in 2023.

In 2021 the church explored possibilities for developing the work. As a result, in early 2022, a new West Somerset Food Cupboard charity was established with a new team of trustees and new projects, including The Local Pantry, were set in motion. Governance of the WSFC is the responsibility of Trustees. A Team Leader and a Local Pantry Co-ordinator are employed on a part-time basis to organise the collection, sorting and distribution of emergency food and to run The Local Pantry on a Tuesday every week. A team of around 50 volunteers support the WSFC for 2 – 3 hours each per week or fortnight. A rota is put together every month to support this.

2. EMERGENCY FOOD PROVISION

Non-perishable food is donated through collection points across the area, including churches, community halls and local shops and supermarkets. There is a donation drop-off point at the side entrance of the church. The greatest volume of weekly donations is collected in two shopping baskets in Tesco Minehead, one of which is sponsored by FareShare UK. These donations are collected by WSFC volunteers twice a week and brought to the church where they are sorted and packed on Monday and Thursday mornings. Food parcels are collected and distributed by partner agencies as part of their package of support. The Church is not used as a food collection point for individuals in need. There are several reasons for this way of working:

- We avoid creating dependency and instead strive to support personal dignity, actively helping people to not need emergency food in the future. Experience has shown that encouraging people to engage with a support organisation such as the Advice Centre, Home-Start, Hope Centre, Village Agents etc, and to receive food boxes as part of that package of support rather than separately from it, is more likely to help them get unstuck than just repeatedly providing free food. We don't formally refer people on to these organisations, insist on a self-referral or give advice; we just encourage, signpost and support access to them.
- Each of our partner agencies has specialisms that we don't have. For example, the advisors at the Advice Centre know the best way to fill in the forms relating to Universal Credit and PIP, so it would be unhelpful for non-specialist volunteers to become involved with that. But while specialist advisors are helping people access the finance that they are entitled to, we supply the food that takes some of the financial pressure off.
- We are a small organisation run largely by volunteers for just a few hours a week. The Church premises from which we operate are not staffed for much of the week, and when they are it is often by a lone worker or volunteer. Our lone working procedures cannot currently make it safe for the Food Cupboard to become a publicly available collection point for self-referrals.

3. THE LOCAL PANTRY



As well as the emergency food provision, the WSFC operates a Local Pantry every Tuesday. This is a membership scheme in partnership with FareShare South West. We receive a weekly delivery of fresh, chilled and non-perishable supermarket surplus food which is divided up and shared between the 40 members who collect their food on Tuesday afternoons for a weekly fee of £4.00. Members can expect to take home around £30 worth of food each week. Anyone who lives within 15 minutes travel time of the Local Pantry can apply to join.

As a handler and provider of fresh and chilled food we must meet stringent food safety requirements. Training is provided. We currently have a 5 Star Food Standards Agency Food Hygiene rating.

4. WORKING FOR THE WEST SOMERSET FOOD CUPBOARD

We ask that you:

- Be positive about and support the ethos and work of the WSFC.
- Operate within the policies and procedures of the WSFC.
- Act responsibly and within the law.
- Value and respect the rights, dignity and confidentiality of food recipients.
- Work positively in partnership with other members of the team and our partner agencies.
- Let us know if you are having any problems or if you have any complaints, concerns or feedback.

In return, we will:

- Introduce you to how our organisation works and your role within it.
- Offer training and support for your role.
- Reimburse agreed expenses.
- Strive to resolve any concerns fairly, reasonably and in a timely manner.
- Treat you fairly, respect and listen to your feedback, and keep you informed of changes.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect your health, safety and welfare.
- Encourage a positive and supportive employment experience.

5. JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

These are provided as part of this job pack.

If you have any queries, wish to visit the WSFC or would like to have a chat about the advertised role, please contact us on: foodcupboardws@outlook.com

Thank-you for your time.