**Feeding Liverpool Network Autumn Briefing**

**Preparing for Christmas**

Following discussions within the Feeding Liverpool network in January, we brought together community food spaces on 17th October to discuss how our spaces can prepare for the increased demand and disrupted service times over the Christmas period. The following document outlines the suggested actions which came out of our meeting.

Feeding Liverpool are preparing by Christmas by:

* Preparing a Christmas Food Map for our website with opening times of foodbanks for emergency support
* Gathering Community Food Space Christmas opening times to:
* Communicate to referral agencies how services will be affected
* Create Christmas donations guidance as a resource on our website
* Organise another Winter Boost fundraising appeal for 6 of the largest foodbanks

To help us better communicate how Christmas is going to affect Community Food Spaces, we are asking all CFS’s to **tell us your Christmas opening times by 14th November**. Please email antonia@feedingliverpool.org

Feeding Liverpool are also going to check on the status of Warm Space funding at the next Poverty Action Group. We will also communicate to Fare Share the importance of letting groups know how their delivery schedules will change over the Christmas period.

**Community Food Spaces**

The meeting heard from The Drive who explained how last winter they used their connections with local churches, children centers and other groups to hold meetings to map their community in November. This ensured that services and care packages were not duplicated and that as many vulnerable people in the community were reached as possible.

Other suggestions which came out of the meeting were:

* Now is the time to prepare for Christmas
* When Christmas opening times are decided – inform Feeding Liverpool, email members, create posters or leaflets, and spread the word through volunteers
* Try to project the number of Christmas gifts which might be required
* Use double pantry shops, and in some cases foodbanks may accept two vouchers to cover Christmas closures
* Draw on local Facebook groups for support
* Ask the community how your spaces could provide support
* Approach organisations which may not be affected by Christmas closures such as non-Christian faith centres
* Engage Liverpool Cares for community events
* Apply to the Torus Foundation Community Investment Fund
* Ask for Torus Foundation adult cooking sessions
* Approach other organisations with volunteers who could help out

**Donations**

Various suggestions were made regarding donations.

* Corporate volunteers should be asked or required to make a donation in exchange for the volunteering opportunities
* Use virtual fundraising evenings to reach different audiences
* Raise money for vouchers (Smyths, Superdrug, Sports Direct etc) to give to families to choose their own presents
* Donor education is required to improve the type of donations received – be specific with what type of donations you ask for
* E.g. ask for donations to allow groups to run slow cooker courses

Places to source donations:

* Primary Schools (be specific in what donations you are looking for)
* Local pubs
* Radio City – toy donations
* LFC Foundation – hampers
* Police Community Officers
* Tesco Food Drive/Community Reps
* Lidl – Toys and food
* Sainsbury’s
* Mersey Care
* KIND
* Merseyside regional mosque
* Hursts

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