

well
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OXFORD MUTUAL AID



Oxford Mutual Aid provide food parcels to struggling members of the community. They received £5,000 from Well Together which has increased their ability to serve 50 more food insecure households on a consistent basis.



Oxford Mutual Aid provides food parcels to food insecure households on a weekly or one-off basis. These food parcels contain a basic amount of nutritious food which can provide them with a healthy base alongside supplementing any additional needs. This model was initially developed in response to food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic and the organisation has continued its work due to its ability to support communities in areas which are sometime referred to as “hard to reach”.

Alongside this work, the organisation has been engaged with research on the importance of self-selection to reduce the barriers to entry within the mutual aid and food bank space.

HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND LOWER WASTE

The organisation has been able to collect and store food with the aim of providing it to members in need within the local community. Much of the stock is comprised of donations from local supermarkets and shops, with an emphasis on reducing food waste. An example of this would be an over order of certain seasonal stock items which has underperformed expectations and face the possibility of being taken off the shelves to become food waste. OMA provides a conduit for redistributing this food and thus contributing to a healthier, happier and less wasteful community.



REDUCING BARRIERS TO THOSE IN NEED

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The core ethos of Oxford Mutual Aid is centred around the concept of accessibility. This causes their work to centre its approach to ensuring the entire process (from application to reception of food) is as easy as possible for the person in need. The organisation is comprised of a senior leadership team, alongside a host of volunteers who are all engaged with facilitation, food storage, as well as creating and delivering food parcels. Additionally, this level of accessibility can help to tackle the mental health of issues associated with food insecurity. Through providing households with a consistent supply of basic food, the organisation can help alleviate the additional stresses someone may face when having issues regarding planning their next meals.



One of the most interesting parts of the community organisation is its ability to provide evidence of the changing needs within different communities in Oxfordshire. Their work alongside the Well Together programme has been primarily focused to supplying 50 food insecure households with food parcels on a weekly basis. However, an additional function of the organisation is to provide emergency 1-off food packages as per request. A consequence of this is its ability to provide additional insight to areas which are facing higher levels of food insecurity.

“I am just coming to thank you for your help when I needed food because I was out of work. Fortunately, I got a job and managed to organise my life again so I won’t need donations anymore so you can help other people. And as a thank you for all the help you gave me, I want to be able to give back a monthly fee to help you with this wonderful work.”

“Before you came along, it’s like I felt forgotten by the government. You have treated me with such care, dedication, and understanding, and you have made me feel heard and cared about. And the meals on a Thursday have been so delicious!”



[Oxford Mutual Aid](#)