

Food banks struggling – here's what they need

FOOD BANKS IN SCOTLAND STRUGGLE TO KEEP UP WITH RISING DEMAND AS DONATIONS FALL

Food banks in Scotland are preparing for their most challenging Christmas yet as they struggle with rising demand and dwindling public donations, new research shows.

According to a survey by community giving platform Neighbourly – which Aldi partners with to distribute surplus food from its stores – 68% of food banks, charities and community causes in Scotland are worried about having enough food to support people this Christmas time.

Neighbourly polled more than 600 food banks and community causes nationwide and found that 89% in Scotland expect this Christmas to be their busiest yet, with more people than ever needing their support.

However, the survey also revealed that 71% of food banks in the region have witnessed a drop in donations in recent months – with the fallout of the pandemic and rising cost of living continuing to impact contributions.

On average, food banks in Scotland expect to see a 36% increase in demand over the next three months, with organisations in the area currently supporting an average of 203 people a week. More than 67% say they've already experienced an increase in demand since the summer.

From tinned foods to festive treats and toiletries, the research also revealed a list of the items that are most

needed by food banks over the festive period to help guide supporters. Shoppers can donate food to local charities, food banks and community groups via the community donation points in Aldi stores nationwide.

Mary Dunn, Managing Director of Corporate Responsibility at Aldi UK, said: “Christmas can be a particularly busy time for the local charities and organisations we support, but this year is set to be more challenging than ever.

“As part of our Christmas campaign with Kevin the Carrot and Marcus Radishford, we have committed to donate 1.8 million meals to good causes in the lead-up to Christmas – and we know that our customers in Scotland want to help too. If you feel you are in a position to help, your donation could make all the difference to food banks this Christmas.”

Steve Butterworth, CEO of Neighbourly, said: “The findings of our latest survey highlight that the continued impact of the pandemic, combined with increased inflation, is being very much felt by communities up and down the country, with charities and local causes feeling the effects too. We’d encourage anyone who is able to give back in the coming weeks to do so.”

Aldi works with Neighbourly to donate surplus food from stores throughout the year.

Top 15 most in-demand items this Christmas

1. Tinned food
2. Festive treats
3. Toiletries
4. Tea/coffee
5. Biscuits and snacks
6. Breakfast cereals
7. Juices and soft drinks
8. UHT milk
9. Laundry and cleaning products

10. Dry packaged food
11. Rice and pasta
12. Gift items
13. Cooking sauces
14. Children's toys, crafts and games
15. Sanitary items

