

Wednesday 22 November – The Old Bath House and Community Centre AGM

Report from Hel Innes

Wolverton Community Fridge

Wolverton community fridge is now in its sixth year of operation and shares over a tonne of food every week with over 130 regular visitors on a Wednesday evening at 6pm and Saturday lunchtime from 12.30. The community fridge is supported by Jenni, Nadia and Laura leading the sessions and an army of over 40 volunteers that give their time adhoc to help with distributing food, social media, cleaning and tidying, sharing communications and making sure that the project continues in a fair and safe way. A special thank you to Sahira Masooth for her dedication to taking and recording temperatures, cleaning, accepting deliveries and being an ambassador for the project throughout the week.

Food Connect MK - November 2022 and October 2023:

- 225.7 tonnes of surplus food collected and shared
- Equivalent to over ½ million meals this year alone
- Shared with 9 community organisations
- 15 regular community fridge sessions
- Over 52k individual visits to a community fridge in MK
- Over 28k miles in clean vehicles (3 e-cargo bikes and one e-van)
- 6.5 tonnes of GHG savings related to transport and improved local air quality
- Maintained 7 part-time green jobs

Thank you to our Food Connect team who go over and above to ensure the service remains professional and supports our network of amazing community organisations who rely on the food they collect for community meals, cafes, coffee mornings and other amazing initiatives.

Craft Fayre

This year, 9 Sunday events took place. This has involved lots of behind the scenes admin, booking and organising hundreds of local traders and artists, to setup and feel welcome in our beautiful building. Donations from stallholders and the pop-up café serving homecooked food and refreshments and cake from the community fridge have generated hundreds of pounds for Bath House and its projects. Thank you to Angela for organising and co-ordinating these wonderful events and to Derek, Laiqa and Ant for their skills to setup, cook and washup over the year.

Warmer Wolverton

Warmer Wolverton Community Space began in January 2023 with the ambition to open the building and provide a warm and welcoming place for residents that needed help throughout the coldest months of the year. Our successful crowdfunder of over 23 supporters raised an outstanding £2490 and was matched by Coop extra funding bringing the total to £5480. Thanks to the additional funding we were able to extend the regular Wednesday and

Thursday Warm Hub sessions beyond March. Wednesday Breakfast and Rebel Fit exercise classes continue to welcome guests from 8.30-11.30 every week. Thank you to Laura for leading the project, Nadia, Jo and Sahira for continuing to support this extension of what our community fridge can provide for local residents. This project is funded to the end of the year.

Community Cookalong

Community Cookalong is our family cooking programme aimed at parents that would like to learn basic cooking skills and experience the joy that is saving money, entertaining their kids while meeting other unique local families. The results of this course have been incredible. It was funded in 2022/23 by Hubbub's Food Hub funding. With the learnings from this course MK Community Foundation have granted us funding for 2023/2024.

Of 63% of families that completed the end of trial course survey these were the results:

83% said they now cook more from scratch than they did before

83% said their children got more involved in cooking since beginning the course

89% of parents participating said they were more confident to cook meals from scratch

28% said they save money on food

56% of parents said they have increased the number of days they cook from home since taking the course

89% of families have increased the variety of meals that they now cook from scratch

72% of families have tried the recipes again at home

94% rated the teaching and volunteers 8 out of 10 or above

All participants were 80% or above likely to recommend the course to someone else

Congratulations to Mel who delivers engaging and fun sessions every week and has led the team from strength to strength. Her team of volunteers are friendly and welcoming and there are often requests from families that would like to do the course again.

Together at Christmas

Together at Christmas is in its eleventh year and has been supported by Wolverton Community Fridge and The Bath House since 2018. In Christmas 2022, Nadia and her team served up 50 hot meals to people that sat down at MK Christian Foundation. Food Connect, Wolverton Community Fridge and Great Linford Community Hub managed to share over 1.8 tonnes of food from Christmas Eve until after Boxing Day with over 80 bags of surplus food shared with Wolverton residents alone – the equivalent of a weekly shop for those that raised themselves to the challenge.

Wolverton Barn Dance

Thanks to a collaboration with Wolverton Community Fridge, Wolverton Barn Dance continues to be a regular event at The Old Bath House. Featuring local band Pinkers Spinney the organisers have welcomed dancers, families and locals to enjoy dancing, eating and celebrating the end of winter and the gifts of Autumn once again this year. Thank you to

Kate, Tom, Pat and the amazing team that make these events possible.

Eat Your Pumpkin Campaign

This year we hosted five events during half term at The Old Bath House and Wolverton Community Fridge and Tinkers Bridge Community Fridge. A pumpkin barn dance, makeover, cookalong, takeaway, masterchef and Halloween Party and taster session brought together all our food projects to save over 1.2 tonnes of pumpkins and inspire people to eat rather than waste this gourdeous Autumn fruit. The campaign was funded by a Hubbub Community Grant made possible by Starbucks.

30th Anniversary Birthday Party

In May we celebrated our community centre's 30th birthday. Thank you to everyone that helped and attended and made it a wonderful evening. The karaoke was a hit and our team have enjoyed a few adhoc evenings of silliness as a result.

Repair Café

Congratulations to Marion, Philippa and the Repair Café team. With the help of NAVCA funding via Community Action we have been able to support the team with hire costs until the end of 2023. The Repair Café team has created a thriving and successful service for local residents.

Food Cycle

Another great success story for this year is our support for Foodcycle – Herts, Beds and Bucks. Their team provide a weekly three course plant-based lunch every Friday from 12.30pm. We have been able to offer the group the opportunity to establish their project in Wolverton, build a team of local volunteers and thanks to NAVCA funding via Community Action we have also been able to support the team with hire costs until the end of 2023.

Next year...

- Community Cookalong MK is funded by MK Community Foundation until Oct 2024.
- There is interest to continue our community Rebel Fit session supported by wrap around cuppa and catchup thanks to Jo and Sahira. Guests will be asked to contribute £4 per session to cover the cost.
- In partnership with Hubbub, Wolverton Community Fridge is going to launch a small-electrical rehoming pilot called 'Tech Me Home' this January initially for three months.
- Together at Christmas has been funded by McCarthy Foundation to help people alone this Christmas Day to enjoy a hot meal and a warm welcome.
- Foodcycle are happy to continue their regular Friday lunchtime session at The Old Bath House and Community Centre.
- Wolverton Barn Dance have booked their next event on Saturday 20 April.