

COLC Report February 2025.

The Pantry has had a busy month with many new customers coming forward. Sadly, there are many stories of unexpected redundancies and illness which are impacting people's lives at the present time. There has been some discussion amongst the volunteers that there could be a knock-on effect from the Southwold Food Bank no longer opening as often as previously and therefore not giving out as much food as they have done previously, but this is only conjecture. The new Tuesday afternoon opening is building its own customer base and we have noticed that we are getting new customers who have not been able to come on Fridays as well as customers who also regularly visit on Fridays.

We have been fortunate to recruit several new volunteers, which takes some pressure off those who had been giving a lot of time to cover both days. Hopefully, these new volunteers can give time spread across both days.

We have been considering trying to raise funds to purchase another freezer to augment those which we have. The reasons are two-fold. Firstly, we need to freeze more foodstuffs in order to prevent waste and secondly, it cannot be good for the machinery to have fridge and freezers crammed full of packages and bags. I have approached Southwold Town Council as a possible donor to help fund the new purchase and Sole Bay Care Fund and have received a donation from Blyth Valley Rotary of £250.

The building work at the Village Hall had very little impact on the running of the Pantry. The replacement windows have finally gone in, which means we will be able to ventilate the Pantry, particularly in the summer months, but there does not appear to be a definite decision on whether the RPC should pay the whole amount of the window replacement or whether the RVHMC should pay some of the total cost from their budget.

We look forward to the next Coffee Morning/Soup Lunch, when we will again give whatever milk, bread and pastries we can to supplement the VHMC's offerings.

LC.