**Community food services**

A quick introduction to different types of community food services in South Oxfordshire

* Food banks, food larders, community fridges are all examples of community food services
* Community food services provide free or subsidised food for the community, and some may provide cooked meals
* Stock usually includes non-perishable foods, fruit, and vegetables. Food banks often stock toiletries and cleaning products
* Most receive donations from community members or local shops who have surplus food nearing use-by or best-before-dates. This can be arranged directly, or through schemes like [**Fareshare Go**](https://fareshare.org.uk/getting-food/) and[**Neighbourly**](https://www.neighbourly.com/)
* Food larders and community fridges can also serve as social spaces that enable people to connect to their communities
* Community food services are usually managed by voluntary and community organisations
* Community food services usually have volunteers who can signpost residents to other support services if necessary, e.g. mental health, debt and financial advice etcCommunity food services are usually located in community buildings such as churches and community centres
* Community food services have a variety of aims such as reducing food insecurity and food waste

**A closer look at the different community food services:**

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| **Food banks:**  provide emergency food to residents in need, they are only a short-term solution for people in crisis | **Food larders**:  are membership schemes, open to anyone, members can access food at a more affordable price | **Community fridges:**  are community generated food sharing programmes which are food waste reduction focused |
| **Who can access Community food services?** | | |
| Anyone referred by a professional agency can receive food from a food bank | Anyone who wants to save money and reduce food waste can access food from their local food larder | Anyone can access food from their local community fridge, there are no sign-up or membership fees |
| **How much food is provided?** | | |
| Each food voucher allows a minimum of three days’ worth of food for the entire household | Members can pick up maximum of 10 non-perishable food items per week, and fruit and veg | Depending on what stock has been donated by local businesses and the wider community, residents can take their fair share |