



**Volunteer
Award
Edition**



FareShare Slices

A healthy slice of FareShare volunteer news

Issue 14
Autumn 2022

 **FareShare**
fighting hunger,
tackling food waste

Hello.

Welcome to the Volunteer Awards edition of FareShare Slices – which is all about celebration!

In September, we celebrated the inaugural FareShare Volunteer Awards. It was a delight to have more than 500 people across the FareShare network join each other in a hybrid event, with each regional centre hosting a local event and virtually joining the awards ceremony hosted from London. 32 winners were awarded across 10 award categories. There was plenty of food, fun and festivities enjoyed across the Network. Read more on page 4.

In this issue we meet some of our incredible award winners. Tricia, from FareShare Cymru, who was awarded highly commended for the Admin Volunteer of the Year for sharing delicious recipes with charities based on food in the warehouse (pages 8-9). Sue and Gareth from FareShare Yorkshire, who were awarded highly commended for Driver of the Year, share their story about volunteering together (pages 10-11). Maureen and Robin from FareShare Northern Ireland, who were highly commended for the Leadership in Volunteering Award talk about how Robin was roped into volunteering - and has never looked back (pages 12-13).

We catch up with St Mary's Care Centre in Merseyside to find out how food from FareShare makes all the difference (pg 14). Plus more.

This is your magazine, so if you have a story to share please get in touch.

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Cover: Beth and Siobhan, FareShare Northern Ireland
Jackie and Ken, FareShare Kent
Steve and Dave, FareShare Hull & Humber



This magazine is printed on 100% recycled paper



Elise Taylor

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New charity survey shows need for cost of living crisis support

FareShare has just released a new survey of our charity network that reveals the growing impact of the cost of living crisis. The results are stark.

90% of organisations have seen an increase in demand since January, with nearly the same amount worried that they won't be able to keep up with demand in the months leading up to Christmas.

The majority of charities, over 3 in 4, say that accessing more food would be the most useful thing to help them deal with the crisis.



The work we are doing across the UK is helping charities provide a lifeline, and volunteers are at the forefront. In the coming months it will be crucial that we keep working to get more good food to those in need at this difficult time.

Learn more on our website.
www.fareshare.org.uk

FareShare and Tesco win Charity Times Award

FareShare's longstanding partnership with Tesco has been recognised at the Charity Times Awards last month.

The Corporate National Partnership with a Retailer award was awarded to FareShare for our work with Tesco, which in the last year

includes the innovative Buy One to Help a Child (BOTHAC) campaign and the bi-annual Food Collection.

The Corporate National Partnership with a Retailer award recognises the active involvement of a retail organisation directly



through a partnership with a UK-registered charity, which has had a quantifiably positive impact on the charity in the last year.

Simply the best - 5 years volunteering with FareShare

Congratulations to volunteer driver John Parish from FareShare East Anglia who completed 5 years of volunteering this August. John has been with the regional centre in Ipswich since it opened in 2017.

He has built up a fantastic rapport with the charities he delivers to. John always has a smile on his face and a joke at hand. He really is simply the best. Thank you John for all your support and dedication.



The picture shows John (central) Sue Stenson, Les Rogers, Theresa Dunningham and Debbie Blacker

Volunteer Award Winners

Admin Volunteer of the Year	Winner: Beth Brownlee Highly Commended: Sarah Mashford Highly Commended: Tricia Lowe	Northern Ireland Sussex Cymru
Driver of the Year	Winner: John Harper Winner: Steven Sorenson Highly Commended: Terry Thompson Highly Commended: Gareth & Sue Lowham	Sussex Hull & Humber North East Yorkshire
Driver's Assistant of the Year	Winner: Bob Brown Highly Commended: Volunteer Highly Commended: Andrew Lawrence	Southern Central Greater Manchester Thames Valley
Fundraising Volunteer of the Year	Winner: Denzil Le Roy Highly Commended: Tom Lawton	South West (Bristol) Sussex
Leadership in Volunteering Award	Winners: Graeme Hirst & Jane Whichello Highly Commended: Jill Dickinson Highly Commended: Maureen & Robin Maxwell	Thames Valley South West (Bristol) Northern Ireland
Regional Centre Volunteer Team of the Year	Winner: East Anglia Highly Commended: Saturday team (Rana Al-Halabi, Samah Rashed, Hoida Esmail, Hamzah Hareth, Hazem Hareth and John Freeman) Highly Commended: Lancs & Cumbria	East Anglia Greater Manchester Lancashire & Cumbria
The Bright Idea Award	Winner: Chris Jupp Highly Commended: Nick Turner	Sussex Greater Manchester
The Rising Star Award	Winner: Debbie Guest Highly Commended: Volunteer Highly Commended: Sam Azin Highly Commended: Oli Helstrom	Greater Manchester South West (Plymouth) Northern Ireland Thames Valley
Warehouse Assistant of the Year	Winner: Jean Taylor Winner: Volunteer Highly Commended: Chris Stone Highly Commended: Andrew Igbinedion Highly Commended: Paul Flynn Highly Commended: Ken & Jackie Smith	Lancashire & Cumbria Thames Valley South Midlands Northern Ireland Merseyside Kent
Volunteer Manager of the Year	Winner: Siobhan Rocks Highly Commended: Liz Lauder	Northern Ireland Greater Manchester



Richard, Jane and Graeme, FareShare Thames Valley



John, FareShare Sussex



Above: FareShare East Anglia

Jean Taylor, FareShare Lancashire & Cumbria



Jill Dickinson, FareShare South West (Bristol)



Sarah, Emma & Chris, FareShare Sussex

Congratulations to all our award winners, and a huge thank you to each and every volunteer for your incredible contribution and dedication to supporting vulnerable people in need.

The FareShare Volunteer Awards took place in September, celebrating our valued volunteers across the FareShare Network, and recognising exceptional volunteer contributions.

It was a delight to have more than 500 people across the FareShare Network join each other in a hybrid event and share in each other's celebrations.

Each regional centre hosted a spectacular celebration for their volunteers – with many sites decking out their lunch rooms, ordering in delicious food and watching the awards on projectors. Some sites even hired venues, with FareShare East Anglia hiring an amazing space, a nearby orangery, which really put on a show for the volunteers. FareShare North East hired an entire café, and FareShare South West hired an event space and a fabulous chef who normally caters on film sets for the likes of Angelia Jolie and Robert Downy Jr! FareShare Northern Ireland made the most of everyone being together by going bowling after the event.

The highlight of the day for many was hearing inspiring volunteer stories, meeting volunteers from different days, seeing other Regional Centres and feeling part of the wider FareShare network. But most of all, it was a chance for volunteers to reflect on how far they've come and share in each other's celebrations.

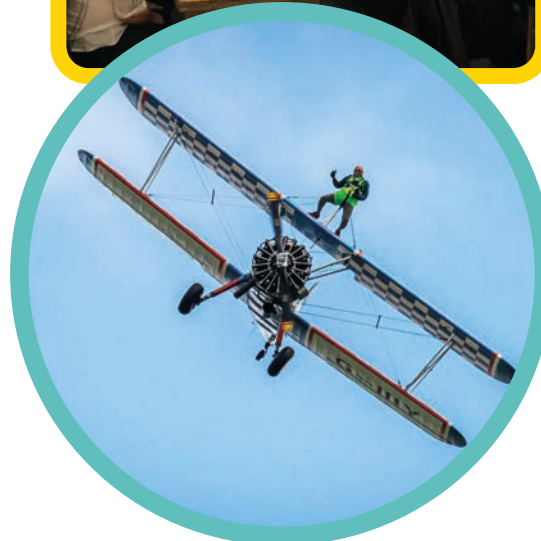
Thank you once again for your hard work, innovation, and care that you continue to give to FareShare and the people we support together.



Sam,
FareShare
Northern
Ireland



FareShare,
North East



Denzil, FareShare South West,
taking fundraising to new heights



FareShare Greater Manchester



Andrew, FareShare Northern Ireland



Gary, Paul and Anita, FareShare Merseyside



FareShare South West, Bristol



FareShare UK



FareShare SouthWest (Devon & Cornwall)



Celebratory cake



FareShare Cymru

Volunteer Awards: Tricia Lowe

How does it feel to be the joint highly commended winner of the Admin Volunteer of the Year award?

I was really pleased and proud that what I have contributed to FareShare has been used and enjoyed by the Charity Food Members (CFM's). I haven't had a lot of contact with them directly, but I do receive feedback through the staff at FareShare who tell me that it has been useful for them.

How long have you been volunteering at FareShare and why did you decide to start?

Since the beginning of the year. The reason why I started was because I had more time and I wanted to do something for a charity. I've had a varied career where I was a lawyer, family mediator and about 5 or 6 years ago I trained as a nutritional therapist because I have always had an interest in food and healthy eating. When I was looking for a charity, I tried to find something that would utilise those skills

Did you have any initial reservations about volunteering?

Not really because I think FareShare were very accessible. In fact, I heard Lindsay Boswell on the radio talking about the charity and I remember thinking, that sounds like the sort of place I would love to help at. I then found FareShare online and the process from there was very accessible. It's all been very friendly and welcoming.

What does your role involve?

I started with admin tasks, where I help with logging the food and working out what food should go to different CFM's. This really helped me get a feel of the warehouse. I then suggested to the team that I could help with finding recipes that were easy and economical with the basic ingredients we had in the warehouse to go out to the CFM's.

Tell us a little more about the recipe idea

It is so easy to presume that people know what to do with these ingredients. There are some that are a little bit unusual for a lot of people. We know what to do with items like carrots and potatoes, but for courgettes

and aubergines they are a little bit different, so I just wanted to find recipes that were healthy, easy and accessible. Since the energy crisis, we have also been looking at finding cheaper ways people can cook the food, so rather than a stew, we would think about using slow cookers or microwaves, trying to make sure foods are still as tasty as possible without using loads of power to cook.

What do you enjoy most about volunteering with FareShare?

I like the fact that I am meeting new people. The staff and the volunteers are really committed to the project, and I find that really inspiring. They all work so hard and really want to do their best to make a difference and help people. You feel you're really part of a team very quickly.

Have you learnt any skills since volunteering with FareShare?

I've learnt how to pack a pallet! I'm hoping that I will be able to go out in a van soon. I've found that I am doing things I use to do previously before but adapting it to suit different audiences.

How has volunteering made a difference your life?

It's given me a sense of purpose to know that I am doing something that is useful to others.

What has been your memorable experience so far?

It's been interesting to see how big a fridge can be

when you're having to load and pack food. It makes you realise the great amount of food that FareShare deal with every day.

What would you say to someone who was thinking about joining FareShare as a volunteer?

I would say definitely do it. You will find it very worthwhile; it offers a

sense of purpose. What FareShare are achieving is so important especially in today's economic situation. It's just such a great charity. Not only is it giving out the food but it's also saving the waste as well which is so important. It ticks a lot of boxes. Personally, you get out as much as you put in. In terms of a charity, it couldn't be a better one.



Volunteer Awards: Gareth and Sue Lowham

How does it feel to be a joint highly commended winner of the Driver of the Year award?

Gareth: It was so unexpected to be honest. We didn't anticipate that happening. We are very proud, privileged and honoured to be recognised for the contribution we have made in the reasonably short time we have been at FareShare.

How long have you been volunteering at FareShare and why did you decide to start?

Gareth: Two years. I was looking for an outlet for us to make good use of our time, having had the good fortune to retire early from full time employment. We retired on the Friday and on the Saturday morning I came across FareShare through typing 'volunteer van driver' on the internet. I then filled out an application and the rest is history.

What does your role involve?

Gareth: Primarily we both applied for the van driver and driver's assistant role, but we are involved in much more.

Sue: Gareth gets heavily involved with repairing the vans. Both of our backgrounds are in automotives, but Gareth worked in the body repair sector all his life so when vans get dents and things like that, he tends to put them back together which obviously is a huge benefit to the organisation.

Gareth: We both worked in insurance claims, so we have a broad understanding of keeping vehicles road worthy in a cost-effective way. This was an element I was keen to support FareShare Yorkshire with. When a van is not available it put an incredible amount of pressure on the organisation. We appreciate that brand awareness is important and we know we have limited funding to repair things, it just gives us another opportunity to utilise our skills and provide a benefit.

Sue: I help to allocate some of the foods that might be harder to redistribute so that it doesn't go to waste and help with providing recipe ideas to the Community Food Members for ingredients that people may not be familiar with such as celeriac and fennel.

How do you find working together as a team?

Gareth: Sue and I have worked together for 12 years. We worked in full time employment together. I was responsible for body shop supply and our expert engineering function. Sue was responsible for the customer service experience at those body shops and for the daily engagement with the repair centres.

Sue: The answer is we are a terrible team :)

Gareth: Many of the CFM's we have been to regularly haven't realised we are a husband-and-wife team. We keep our professional and personal lives separate on the day.

What do you enjoy most about volunteering with FareShare?

Sue: Strangely not getting paid. That element of when you work for a living, what you get paid gives you your value. When you volunteer, the appreciation that you get gives you your value. You can also go on holiday when you choose, and never have a load of emails waiting for you. It's just a very different mindset with

volunteering than it is from paid employment.

Gareth: I would agree. When I speak to people about what we do, they wonder why we want to get back into work if we have retired. I say it's because I can and because I want to. It's not because I need to, or that we need the income.

Have you learnt any skills since volunteering with FareShare?

Sue: Manual lifting and handling.

Gareth: Food hygiene training. I am about to commence some forklift truck training too. The understanding of the charity has been a massive eye opener for both of us to what food poverty looks like in this country and how it is supported. The sheer number of companies that are involved in this operation that you don't hear about on the news. The scale of it all is just enormous.

How has volunteering made a difference your life?

Sue: We would have been very lost without it during the pandemic because who retires in the middle of a pandemic. The plan was that you retire and go on a massive holiday and then you come back and think

I don't have to go to work tomorrow. Obviously, we couldn't do any of that, so it kept us busy and allowed us to leave the house which was good. It's also given us a lot of structure as we still have a lot of downtime to ourselves. It presents the realisation that you do need a purpose in life. You do need a reason to get up every morning.

Gareth: We dread to think what we might have been like if we hadn't had done this. I'm doing nearly as many miles as I did in my full-time employment, it's just the new desk is a dashboard of a Peugeot boxer van.

What has been your memorable experience so far?

Gareth: The award.

Sue: The whole thing really. **Gareth:** Seeing how our experience has evolved. We initially did two days, from 8am – 12pm and then we would go home, until we started to build rapport with the volunteer managers. Our latest volunteer manager has been very engaging. Everyone at FareShare is appreciative. Every day that we go in and leave, there is an appreciation that we are there. It is genuine and not just ticking a box.

What would you say to someone who was thinking about joining FareShare as a volunteer?

Sue: Absolutely do it.

Gareth: Do it.



Volunteer Awards: Maureen and Robin Maxwell

How does it feel to be joint highly commended winners of the Leadership in Volunteering award?

Maureen: We are absolutely delighted; we really didn't expect it. Robin and I both enjoy coming here and doing what we do, and this is our small way of playing our part in the vital work that FareShare do. I love to see the food that would have been wasted being distributed and feeding so many people.

How long have you been volunteering at FareShare and why did you decide to start?

Maureen: We have been volunteering for over three years now. Even when I was working, I was always interested in volunteering but couldn't find the time with so many things always happening. I said as soon as I retired that was what I was going to do. I am very passionate about children's charities, and I knew the food from FareShare was helping children so that was my motivation.

What does your role involve?

Maureen: We are generally on the warehouse floor packing the orders to go out and involved in training new volunteers. We also offered our help with training new placement students that we have been lucky to have here. They were very keen and interested in FareShare, so we have been involved in introducing them to the company and explaining how it all works. I've really enjoyed working with them as they were so enthusiastic, it was lovely to see their hunger for it.

Did you have any initial reservations about volunteering with FareShare?

Maureen: No not really. I thought it would be something I would find interesting and enjoy making up the orders to go out. During the pandemic, Robin and I were lucky enough to go out in the van to the charities and community groups, so we were able to see the other side of things and where the food is delivered to which is very interesting. I think it is very important for people to see that.

How do you find working together as a team?

Maureen: It's worked out well. I had my reservations about it at the start because initially it was just myself that was going to volunteer, but Siobhan being Siobhan talked Robin into it and that has been the really big surprise. He has loved it, really, really loved it. He was retired for quite a while and wasn't really looking for anything else to do as he was quite happy with how things were, but he has loved doing this since we joined the team here.

What do you enjoy most about volunteering with FareShare?

Maureen: The different types of people that you meet who are all giving their time so freely. I think it's lovely to see that people are so happy to come and give their time and to see all the work that they do because it is hard work, but people are doing it with a smile on their face. You certainly don't need a gym membership; this is all the workout that you need.

Have you learnt any skills since volunteering with FareShare?

Maureen: We have done the manual handling training, the hygiene training, plus I think I'm an expert at packing now. I just enjoy it all.

How has volunteering made a difference your life?

Maureen: I feel now that instead of just retiring and sitting in the house and doing nothing, it's a very worthwhile experience to come in two days a week and know that we are helping to make a difference. We are only a very small part of a large operation, but we know we are helping to make a difference and we get great satisfaction from that.

What has been your memorable experience so far?

Maureen: I enjoy doing the orders, but I think going out in the van at the time of the pandemic. Just the fact that despite what was happening, we were able to carry on and make sure those supplies still got out to the people who needed it the most. I think that was the best part.

What would you say to someone who was thinking about joining FareShare as a volunteer?

Maureen: Do it, do it, do it, start tomorrow. I honestly really do enjoy it, it's great to be able to come here and help. As people get older, they don't always have their health and strength, I'm just glad that I do and I'm happy to come here and volunteer.



St Mary's Care Centre, Merseyside



Social support with a hot meal at St Mary's Care Centre

St Mary's Care Centre has been providing day care for older people in the community since 1986, beginning as a church luncheon club and evolving to include breakfasts for patrons. "Many of our visitors have Alzheimer's or dementia, and some have physical disabilities that restrict them from getting out and about. So being able to come to St Mary's allows them an opportunity to socialise and enjoy a day out." said centre manager, Justine Kelly.

In the early '90s, Knowsley Council began to support the care centre, providing funding that allowed them a small staff of five — as Justine explained: "We're really grateful

for our council funding. It goes a long way to cover staff wages and bills and things to keep the centre running. But thanks to FareShare we've been able to expand beyond only offering the luncheon club."

Providing nutritious options for vulnerable people

St Mary's Care Centre has been receiving FareShare deliveries for five years. "It's allowed us to provide breakfast in the morning as well as the luncheon, which is really popular. Plus, we can offer more choices."

This is a great addition to the centre's offering, especially in relation to those with Alzheimer's or dementia: "Many of our visitors live by themselves and some don't have care going in sometimes, so they can forget to eat. We can make sure they're getting food and actually eating regularly."

Combatting the cost of living crisis

One of the surprising benefits that comes from increasing the meals

offered is the financial impact on visitors' utilities costs, said Justine: "I know that many of our guests are concerned about the increase in energy costs right now. And when they come to the centre they talk about turning off their televisions and heating more, trying to save more. So when they're here with us, they're not spending on their utilities at home, not watching television as much, and so that is going to be a big impact for them. Especially anyone on limited income, like a pension or benefits."

Looking to the future, Justine is hopeful that the centre will be able to expand to provide more entertainment and social functions to follow the meals: "It would be great to incorporate some fun games for our guests to enjoy after their meal, like bingo. This is something we're thinking about doing thanks to our FareShare deliveries, which free up some of our budget. We don't have to spend so much on food, so we can explore other ways to use that money to help the community."

Saving time by driving to a greener future



What if I told you that we could save our volunteers and staff time, use less fuel and create less greenhouse emissions, while delivering the same food to the charities we support? You would probably ask why aren't we doing this already?

Thanks to Roy Olowu, FareShare UK's Operations Efficiency Manager, this is now becoming a reality. A pilot launched at FareShare North East in April 2022 to test out a new route optimisation software.

The pilot delivered some impressive results:

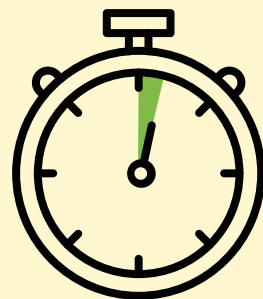
- Route planning for the site fell from two days a week, to just 2 hours a week.
- The number of delivery vans required reduced by one third.
- There was a saving of 20% on mileage and fuel.

The technology also allows for paperless vehicle checks and despatch notes for deliveries by using a hand held device. This led

to a reduction in physical paperwork and data entry at FareShare North East. Detailed training was provided to staff and volunteers before the system was implemented to ensure everyone was confident in using it.

We are now inviting more regional centres to implement this new system. If you're keen for your site to adopt this exciting new technology, please speak with your sites route planner, and they can contact Roy for more information: roy.olowu@fareshare.org.uk

1 minute with Terry Thompson



Terry Thompson
FareShare,
North East

What do you enjoy most about volunteering at FareShare?

The friendly contact with all the other volunteers at the depot and meeting and building relationships with them and the organisations we deliver to.

What has been your highlight of volunteering at FareShare?

The highlight of my volunteering at FareShare has to be the award of Highly Commended in the National Driver of the Year section of the Annual Fareshare Awards.

Which living person do you most admire and why?

The living person I most admire is Sir David Attenborough. His decades of commitment to conservation and his ability to deliver great televisual programmes is beyond wonderful.

Which talent would you most like to have and why?

The talent I would most like to have is the ability to make people laugh. If I have a joke that I think is really funny, I can't tell it without bursting out laughing at what I know is coming!

What do you consider your greatest achievement and why?

I would consider my greatest achievement to have had the privilege of being married to the love of my life for 51 years and having had 3 wonderful sons.

Where would you most like to live and why?

I would most like to live somewhere that is warm all the year round not just 3.5 weeks of the year!

What's your favourite thing to have on toast?

Raw black pudding and beans.

What's the most interesting food you've ever seen in the warehouse?

Sharron Fruit (which I thought were dull tomatoes!)

Which fictional character would you most like to meet in real life and why?

Sherlock Holmes. He would be fascinating to talk to but I would have to ignore his opium smoking and his violin playing!

What is the most important object you own and why is it important to you?

A photograph of myself meeting the late Princess Diana. The reason for its importance to me are, I think, obvious.

How do you take your tea?

I don't drink tea, it is coffee all the time for me!