

Press release 4th January 2024

Pulborough Community Pantry to open after donations and volunteers step forward

A volunteer-run Community Pantry that seeks to reduce food waste is opening in Pulborough Parish Council's premises next week (January 9). The pantry will open every Tuesday from 0900 to 12 noon offering free food and sanitary products to the community.

The idea was launched just months ago after the village's community wardens Ross Phillips and Louisa Hull raised concerns about supermarket food that goes to waste.

Pulborough Parish Councillor Kevin Lee offered to set up the community pantry and the Parish Council agreed that space at the back of the Sports and Social club could be used and approved other financial and administrative support.

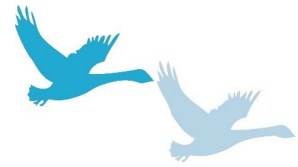
“There's been a huge willingness to muck in and help to get this to happen. Everyone is welcome to pick up food from here without needing food vouchers. Our primary purpose is to reduce food waste, which is a feature of the Parish Council's Climate Action Strategy, and of course if it helps people who need some support that's great too.” said Cllr Kevin Lee.

Sainsbury's in Pulborough and Billingshurst, Lidl in Billingshurst and UK Harvest in Chichester have agreed to supply unused food stock to the pantry and donations from the public have helped to pay for food and hygiene products for those who need them.

Money was raised to help launch the initiative at a Christmas Fair with private donations as well as financial support from Cubbit and West and LMC Auto Services who are also providing ongoing sponsorship. Local businesses Howdens donated kitchen units, Lakers Builders Merchant supplied various building supplies and builder Craig Bushell fitted new windows bought by Pulborough Parish Council. Resident Charlotte Hamilton has led the essential health safety work to ensure the facility fully complies with regulations.

PPC Chair Councillor Len Ellis-Brown led renovations work over Christmas with a group of volunteer helpers. He said:

“It's important for our community that we show the engagement and commitment of the Parish Council in supporting our village and all its residents.”



A team of 30+ volunteers has already signed up to support the initiative after a shout-out by Cllr Lee's wife Maria who says more volunteers are needed:

“We've received so many offers of help which means we can get started but we'd love even more volunteers as there's a lot to do on a weekly basis.”