



FEBRUARY 2022

# CHAT NEWS

*CHAT believes that everyone is entitled to decent, secure and affordable accommodation - somewhere to call 'home'*

## Expensive Basics

On 19th January, Twitter exploded as former foodbank user and campaigner against poverty, Jack Monroe, tweeted about the reported rise in inflation, "*Woke up this morning to the radio talking about the cost of living rising a further 5%. It infuriates me the index that they use for this calculation, which grossly underestimates the real cost of inflation as it happens to people with the least. Allow me to briefly explain...*". Jack went on to explain how the price of the cheapest ranges in supermarkets have increased by much more than 5% - basic rice has increased by 344%, bread by 29% and pasta by 141%! Jack compares this with a luxury ready-made lasagne – if it had increased by as much as the rice it would now be £25.40, but it remains at £7.50. It is no wonder people are struggling.



Across the UK there are around 1,300 McDonald's branches and at least 2,000 food banks and on a local level the foodbanks in Mid Devon are struggling to keep up with demand. We are grateful to Tiverton Town Council, Devon Community Foundation and others who contribute to the running costs of the foodbank, along with the many who make donations of food. The national picture is concerning (you cannot avoid headlines about food poverty and rising fuel prices) but the local situation is equally shocking. In our foodbank we have seen the demand increase by 225% between Dec 2019 and Dec 2022 (not including the 300 family booster packs we have been able to give to families identified by schools as needing some extra help) This December alone we gave out over 10 tonnes of food - 47 crisis packs, 87 monthly booster packs and 300 school booster packs.

However, at CHAT we also want to look at the underlying issues and not just provide a 'sticky plaster'.

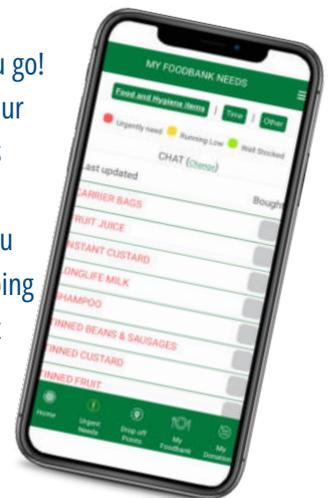
While the cost of living rises, fuel cost increases, unemployment rises and the ongoing effects of the pandemic continue to impact our community, we sadly expect this high level of foodbank use, but we are also committed to helping people further where we can. We are thrilled to be able to open in the mornings for drop in support and advice after nearly 2 years. As we move forward we will continue to look for creative ways to help those who are 'just about managing' to avoid dropping into debt, and help with housing and tenancy support for those who need help to remain where they are. Thank you for your support, and if you want to partner with us further please do get in touch.

**"...basic rice has increased by 344%, bread by 29%, pasta by 141%..."**



**This 'simple to use' app allows donors to receive updates on the food requests for CHAT's foodbank, thereby ensuring all your donations are as relevant and current as possible.**

Download the app and away you go! As you enter the supermarket your phone 'pings'; this then provides you with a list of items of the current shortages from which you can select items to donate, popping them into the donation box at at store. CHAT is then alerted to your donation making it easier to track items needed.



**Tackling homelessness, avoiding evictions, bringing hope.**

## The Gift of Shelter

CHAT has been chatting to a local entrepreneur, Gary Millar, who passionately believes in the best building options for our planet. He has started to manufacture accommodation Pods that could be used by Rough sleepers and vulnerable families. He would also like to use the opportunity to retrain people in this build process. His supply chain partners are willing to participate in this training. All pods will be PassivHaus Plus Energy Autonomous units, built "correctly" and the right way due to the Climate Emergency.



If you want to make a lasting benefit to help those in Mid Devon please think about leaving a gift in your Will and potentially CHAT could own our own POD one day!

## A Future Gift

CHAT has been operating for 26 years & we would love to say that our job is done, but far from it – COVID-19 has shown that we are the trusted support that people in urgent need turn to. If you wish to make a lasting difference to those who are struggling, for all sorts of reasons, then please consider leaving a gift in your will. We ensure that we treat all gifts of this type in line with the donor's wishes.

If you feel able to leave a gift in your will, commit to a legacy, to support those most in need, who fall through the gaps, something that you choose, please do contact: [mark.bailey@chatmid.co.uk](mailto:mark.bailey@chatmid.co.uk) or 01884 255606 and we can chat more.

## Givers of Hope

Our amazing 'Givers of Hope': 174 regular givers give us a donation every month. By donating money you will be helping local people with anything from food to the support and advice to deal with their housing, tenancy or debt & money issues.

CHAT truly values these regular donations as they help guarantee an income source alongside all the other income sources that we use like grants and trusts.

**"Regular giving makes a big difference...please join 'Givers of Hope' and be as generous as you can."**



Jackie, Bishop of Crediton said "Regular giving makes a big difference to what CHAT can do, and if you are wondering how you can support people who are most in need right now, then please join 'Givers of Hope' and be as generous as you can." By donating, you will help those that are struggling to make ends meet, right now, here locally in Mid Devon.

More information at <https://chatmid.org/donating/>

**Saturday 12th February**

**10am - 2pm**

**St. George's Extension, Tiverton**

Donations gratefully received.

If you have any school uniform that your children have outgrown please bring along and take any you need.

**School  
Uniform  
Giveaway**



**Thank you!**

**"Collected some supplies from you last week. Wanted to say a massive thank you yet again. Can't say how much your support means to me and I hope when things are a little easier for me I can support others in the same way you have me."**

**Tackling homelessness, avoiding evictions, bringing hope.**

## Incredible Dedicated Volunteers

**We want to thank our volunteer Debt and Money Advisors (Andrew, Alan, Heather, Stephen, Mike, Bob, John, Peter, Stephen, Peter and Catherine) who are an integral part of our Support and Advice Team alongside Pat and David, who deal with the mountain of paperwork that comes with each client.**

Mike shares "I have been a volunteer at CHAT for 18 months as a debt advisor. During this time I have been made to feel part of the team and of use to what CHAT is doing in the community. Over the next few weeks a number of budgeting workshops are being run with the aim of helping clients have a better understanding of how to make the most of their money and I am looking forward to being involved in this. Volunteering with CHAT is certainly worth considering!"

This year we have seen a 46% increase in people requesting our help with their debt and money problems and we would love to hear from you if you would be interested in being part of the team. All training is provided and you can find more information and complete an expression of interest at <https://chatmid.org/volunteering/>



**CASH SMART  
CREDIT SAVVY**

**Chat about spending?  
Want to share tips and ideas?**

**Tuesdays 2-4pm**

**Starts 15th February**

**St. Georges Extension,  
Becks Square, Tiverton**

**Savvy Spending  
Help with Bills  
Savings  
Credit & Loans**

*Limited Spaces.  
Contact CHAT to book your free place.  
[www.chatmid.org](http://www.chatmid.org)  
(Sessions follows Covid guidelines)*

## Christmas Gifts

**Thank-you to one & all for all your extra support at Christmas time – we were incredibly busy with many Christmas Booster packs being distributed to families in need.**

The list is rather large so will not mention specifics but some general thank-you's include a set of Christmas trees, a Christmas Tree Festival, many schools, and many supporters took on the reverse Advent calendar challenge, as well as those of you who took part in some Carol singing in aid of CHAT – thank-you to you all.



**amazon**wishlist

If you use Amazon – please check out our wishlist - <https://tinyurl.com/CHAT-amaz>, you will find our most needed items. You can help us by purchasing items for homeless people & those we help into accommodation.

Also if you are a regular Amazon shopper, please consider using AmazonSmile. Just choose CHAT, then the retailers will give us a small donation every time you buy something. We've received £581.16 so far - just from people naming us as their charity to support!

*Thank you for your support.*

**amazon**smile

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## CHAT Charity online auction

We are holding an online Charity Auction from late March, through to Easter Monday, 18th April. Once we go live it will be very easy to place a bid on the item of your choice via the Jumblebee website.



If you feel you may be able to offer anything for the auction (for example a new gift, a collectable, pledge of skills, a meal, plants, vegetable box etc.) please do contact us at [events@chatmid.co.uk](mailto:events@chatmid.co.uk).

We already have an Electric scooter, England football shirt, tickets to Eden, London Zoo family ticket and a very special Balvenie Single Malt Scotch Whisky.

This is a great opportunity to show your support for CHAT and we will keep you posted with links on our website and facebook page.



### Volunteer opportunity!

Do you have a few spare hours? We are looking for a short time Volunteer Event Fundraiser, for two months to help us run the online charity auction.

For more information please contact [mark.bailey@chatmid.co.uk](mailto:mark.bailey@chatmid.co.uk)

# goodbox

**We are looking for local businesses to host our online card donating machine for a month at a time.**

Big thanks to Liznojan Books as well as Reapers Healthfoods for being our first two hosts and currently you can find it at Mrs Gills Country Cakes.

The machine has a battery life of about 6 hours, so ideally needs a plug. It can also be used remotely at events & we can download the donations afterwards.

If you are a local business and interested in hosting our Goodbox, or are hosting an event in aid of CHAT email [mark.bailey@chatmid.co.uk](mailto:mark.bailey@chatmid.co.uk)

*Our new online Card donating machine*



[www.liznojanbooks.co.uk/](http://www.liznojanbooks.co.uk/)  
[www.reapershealthstore.co.uk/](http://www.reapershealthstore.co.uk/)  
<https://www.countrycakes.co.uk/>

## Piano Playing Calvin!

In our last newsletter we mentioned 10 year old, Calvin, who was raising funds for CHAT, playing the piano at Tiverton Farmers Market.



Calvin raised a fantastic £512.59, many thanks to him and all who supported him. Thank You!

## Success at Uffculme Show

The Annual Uffculme Show and Country Fair is organised by Exe Valley Rotary.



Rotary



This year's fair held, in September 2021, was a great success and very many thanks to Exe Valley Rotary who gave us a donation from the proceeds.

We are always happy to speak to any local group and our CEO is pleased to be visiting Exe Valley Rotary in February. Please email [events@chatmid.co.uk](mailto:events@chatmid.co.uk) if you would like to have a CHAT speaker.

### CHURCHES HOUSING ACTION TEAM (MID DEVON) LTD.

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 @CHATMidDevon

Member of

**advice UK**

**cma**  
Freedom from debt  
Hope for the future



Homeless Link  
Member