
STATES OF JERSEY



FOODBANKS IN JERSEY 2016 USAGE REPORT

**Presented to the States on 8th November 2016
by the Minister for Housing**

STATES GREFFE

Foodbanks in Jersey 2016 Usage Report

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Foodbanks in Jersey Usage Report

Background

The island has a long tradition of charitable support; this includes a number of on-island providers of basic supplies. They provide food as well as items such as clothing, cooking equipment and home supplies to people in need. Organisations that provide this support include: The Salvation Army, Love thy neighbour, Variety – the children's charity, Shelter Trust, The Grace Trust, St Helier Methodist Centre and St Vincent de Paul.

In April 2015 the UK's largest network of foodbanks – the Trussell Trust - released a report detailing the sharp increase in use of foodbanks. The Trust's 445 food banks distributed enough food in the UK to feed almost 1.1 million people for three days in 2014-15. This is a 19% year-on-year increase in foodbank use.

The UK media's reporting on the subject drew attention to the local issue of charitable food provision. Whilst local providers had noted an increase in supplies they were providing to islanders, no detailed data had been collected on the individuals receiving this support.

In 2015, the Minister for Housing met with foodbank representatives to consider how best to obtain data on the use foodbanks in Jersey.

The three principal providers of food assistance - The Grace Trust, St Helier Methodist Centre and St Vincent de Paul – agreed to participate in a pilot study, collecting usage data on their services throughout the first quarter of 2016.

Recent Initiatives

Given the increasing number of charities involved in this area, a number of initiatives were undertaken in 2015 and 2016 to strengthen communication between States departments and the charities. This included:

- **Information and networking session** – themed presentations around the support services available foodbank users and an opportunity for foodbank providers to meet with States departments and charitable support services
- **Income Support Workshops**- interactive information sessions with a specific focus on Income Support
- **Direct contact** - Direct contact with senior income support advisers to handle urgent claims
- **Training support** – Support to organisations with data collection and safeguarding matters

Methodology

From 1st January to 31st March 2016, The Grace Trust, St Helier Methodist Centre and St Vincent de Paul collected data on those who used their foodbank services.

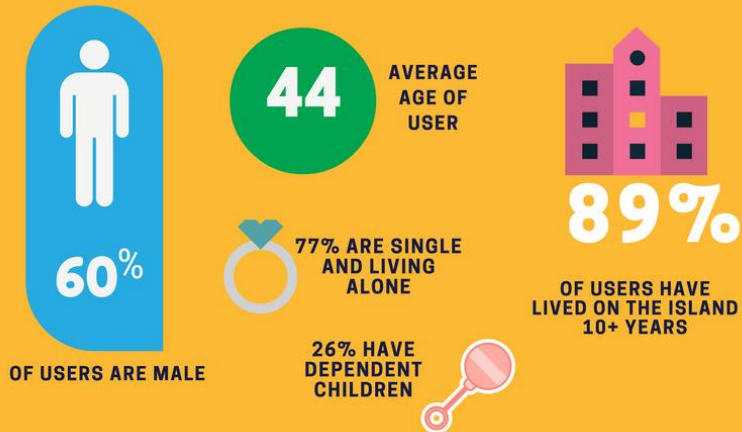
For each individual visit, a questionnaire was completed noting basic details on the individual and their reasons seeking food assistance. A copy of the questionnaire can found at [Appendix 1](#).

A very small number of individuals (<10) declined to participate in the survey.

At the end of the trial period, the data was collated (see [Appendix 2](#)) and analysed, as set out below.

FOOD BANKS

Profile of individuals seeking food assistance from the main foodbanks in Jersey



USAGE OF FOODBANKS

UP TO **180** INDIVIDUALS SOUGHT FOOD ASSISTANCE IN Q1 2016



513

SEPARATE VISITS TO FOOD BANKS FROM JAN - MAR 2016



ISSUES RELATED TO BENEFITS AND LONG-TERM HEALTH CONDITIONS CITED AS THE MAIN REASONS FOR SEEKING FOOD ASSISTANCE



Key findings: In detail

1. Usage of Foodbanks

Over the 3 month period, up to 180 individuals visited the island's three main foodbanks¹; the majority visited only once or twice, a minority of 'heavy users' visited weekly or fortnightly. This would equate to 2 in every 1000 people in Jersey. Whilst this data provides an indication of the level of *usage* of foodbanks, it cannot give us a direct indication of the level of *need* regarding food assistance on island. It is also important to note that the foodbanks have different policies on the number of times an individual can receive food assistance.

Key figures

- **Up to 180 individuals** visited foodbanks in the first quarter of 2016
- This resulted in a total of **513 visits**, which is an **average of 3 visits per individual**.
- The greatest frequency of visits by an individual was 12; however the majority - **61% of individuals** - **only visited the food provider one or two times** during the 3 month period.

2. Profile of users

Users were more likely to be male, born in Jersey, aged 35-54 and single with no children.

21% of users were of Portuguese/Madeiran nationality and less than 1% were born in Eastern Europe. 11% had lived in Jersey for less than 10 years, the remainder (89%) were born in Jersey, or had lived in the island long enough to gain an 'entitled' status for work and housing qualifications. Over three quarters were single, and only a quarter had dependent children.

Key figures

Age & gender

- **60% of users are male** (and **40% are female**)
- **50% are aged 35 to 54** and **5% are over 65**

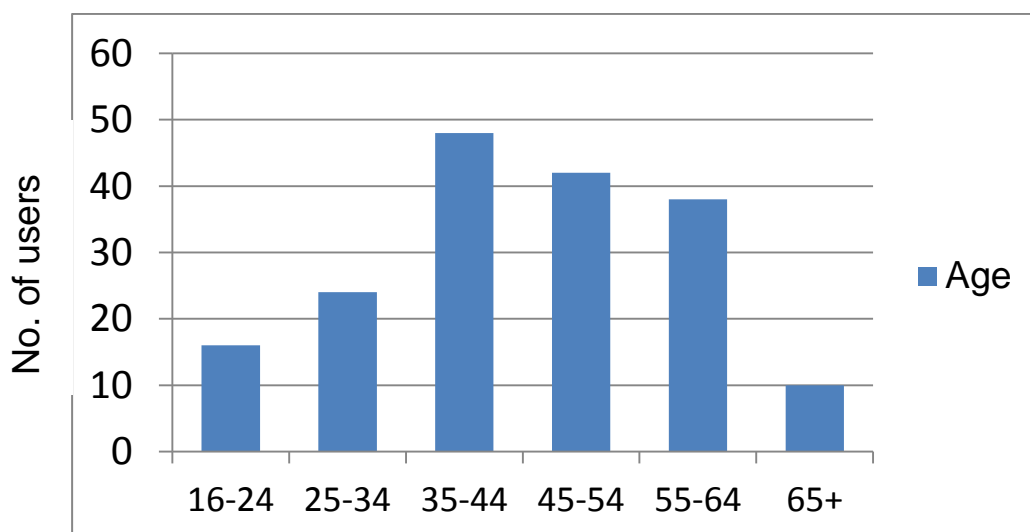


Figure 1 – Age

¹ There may be some individuals who visited more than one foodbank during this study and therefore have been 'double counted'. Analysis of the source data estimates that a maximum of 12 individuals may have been recorded at more than one foodbank during this time.

Place of birth and length of residence

- **55%** were born in Jersey
 - This compares to 50% of the population as a whole²
 - Foodbank users from the British Isles and Republic of Ireland, Eastern Europe and the rest of the world are underrepresented in foodbank use, compared to the rest of the population.

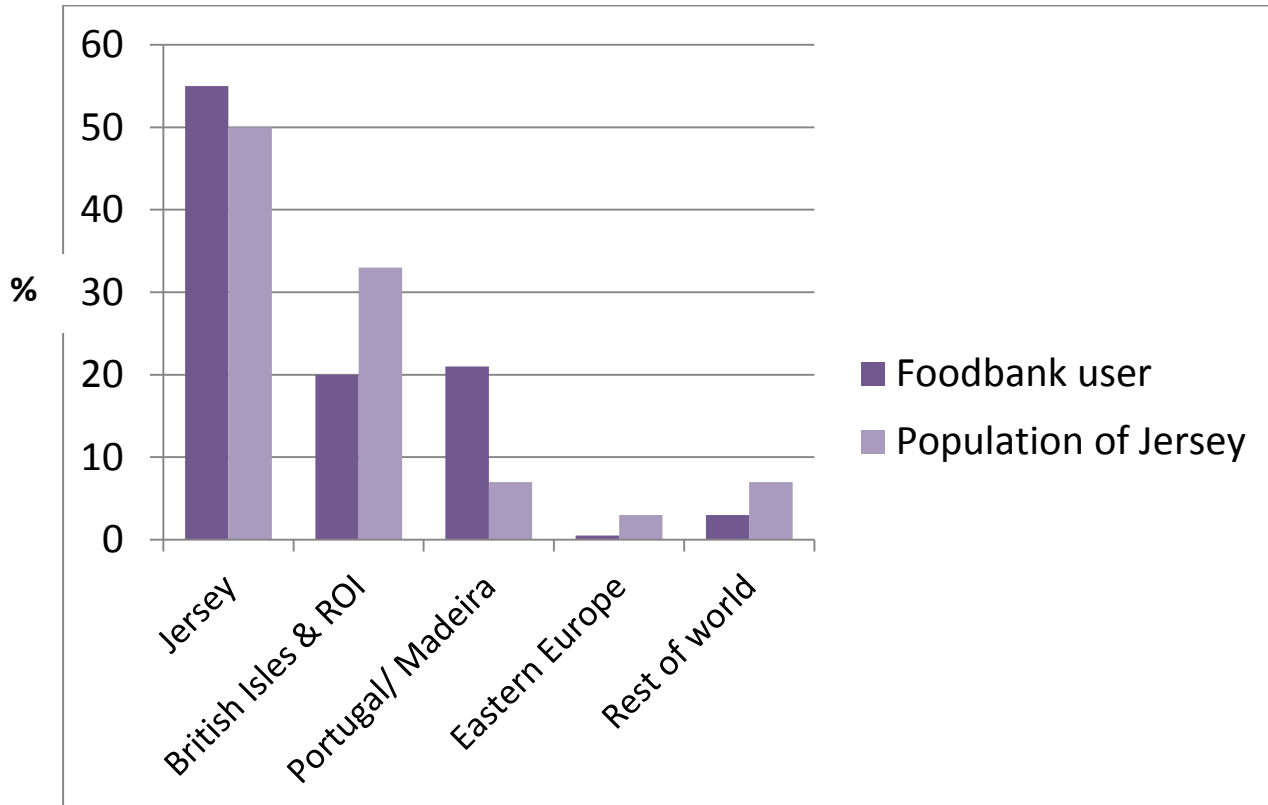


Figure 2 - Place of birth

- **11%** have lived in Jersey for less than 10 years
 - This compares to 13% of the whole 16+ population in the 2011 census

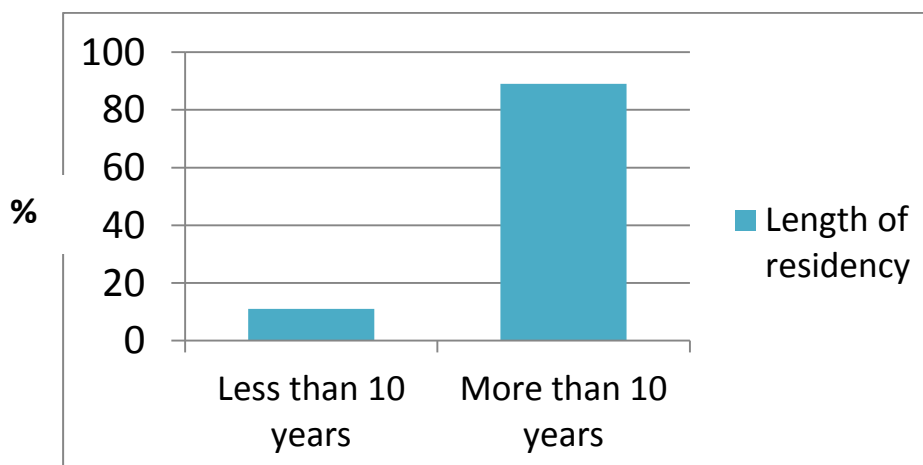


Figure 3 – Length of residency

² Based on figures from the 2011 Census:

<http://www.gov.je/Government/Census/Census2011/Pages/2011CensusResults.aspx#anchor-2>

Family status

- **77%** are **single**, whilst **23%** are **cohabiting** with a partner
- **26%** have **dependent children** living with them, whilst **74%** had **no children living in their household**

3. Reasons for seeking food assistance

Many users (30%) did not state who had referred them to the service. Of the 70% that did, most referrals came from the Citizens Advice Bureau.

The single most common reason cited for seeking food assistance was having a long-term health condition. Other reasons included general low income or a reduction in the level of benefits received.³

Key figures

- The three main sources of referral to the food providers were:
 - Citizen's Advice Bureau (44%)
 - Friends/family (32%)
 - A church/ church-related organisation (10%)
- **29%** said that a **long-term health condition** was one of the main reasons for seeking food assistance
- **26%** said a **reduction in benefit** was one of the main reasons for seeking food assistance
 - Anecdotally, some of the foodbanks report that service users feel that changes to Long-term Incapacity Allowance (LTIA) payments has played a role in their seeking food assistance.⁴
- **23%** said that **low income** was one of the main reasons for seeking food assistance

Further support

- **18%** said they wanted support **looking for work**
- **17%** said they need **someone to talk to**
- **6%** said they would like support with **managing their money**

³ Respondents were asked to select 'one only' for main reason for visiting. Some respondents selected more than one option. The majority of these can be grouped into 2 main categories:

- i. 'A long-term health condition' + one or more other reasons.
- ii. 'In debt' + one or more other reasons.

⁴ Summary of changes to Long Term Incapacity Allowance as of October 2016: There have been no structural changes to the LTIA benefit, although awards are regularly reviewed and the percentage of an individual award can go up or down. From January 2016 a small exception was removed for people who receive both LTIA and Income Support. This had the effect of removing an extra Income Support payment worth 6% of the total LTIA award. For a very small number of people on the full rate of LTIA, this resulted in approximately £12 less Income Support a week. The majority of people who experienced a reduction saw their Income Support payments reduce by around £6 a week. There was no reduction in the value of the LTIA benefit itself, so people getting LTIA and not Income Support would have been unaffected

4. UK data

Number of users

In the UK, the largest foodbank provider estimates that between April and September 2015 they saw approximately 298,000 unique users.⁵ Between January and March 2016, up to 180 individuals visited the main foodbanks in Jersey. However, these two figures are not directly comparable – in that neither figure represents *all* foodbank users, and they cover different time periods.

If we look at the figures in relation to the population, in the UK it is estimated that 5 in every 1000 people used a foodbank in the time period concerned.

Reasons for using foodbanks

Data from this pilot study provides an indication of the ‘main reason’ people visited foodbanks. The Trussell Trust publishes data on the ‘primary reasons for referral’. Whilst not directly comparable – the reasons for use are broadly similar.

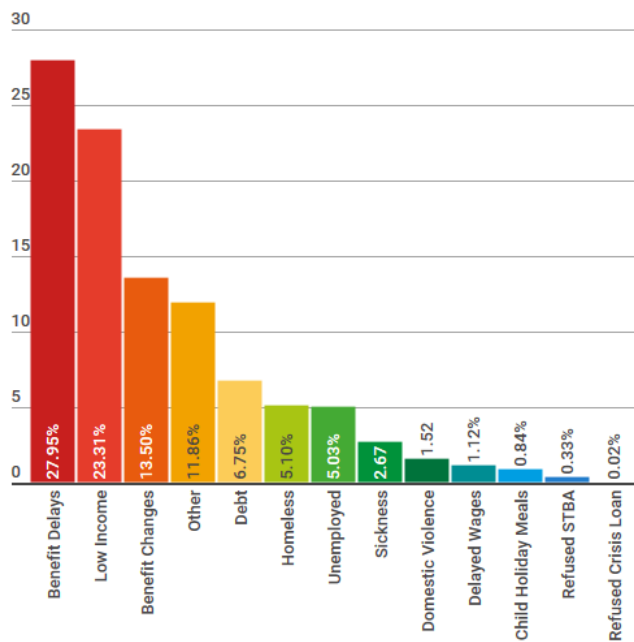


Figure 3 – Primary reasons for referral to Trussell Trust Foodbanks in the UK (2015-16)

- **Benefit-related reasons** account for **41%** of referrals in the UK
- Low income accounts for **23%** of those **seeking food assistance in the UK**
- **3%** cite “**sickness**” as the reason for referral.
 - However, UK research indicates that foodbank use is **higher in areas** where there are **more people** who are unable to work due to **long-term sickness or disability**.

⁵ <https://www.trusselltrust.org/2015/11/18/uk-foodbank-use-still-at-record-levels-as-hunger-remains-major-concern-for-low-income-families/>

Summary

The information provided by this pilot study highlights the profile and prevalence of foodbank use on the island. The data show that individuals seeking food assistance are more likely to be male, born on the island and single with no dependent children.

The data reveals that there are a range of individual circumstances which lead to the use of foodbanks. Many individuals have long-term health issues and a significant number of visits are associated with a change in the level of Social Security benefits paid. This can follow a change of circumstances in the household or because a job seeking sanction has been imposed, or because of changes to benefits paid. From this initial survey, the use of foodbanks appears to be lower in Jersey than that recorded in the UK.

In order to better understand the picture of those visiting foodbanks on the island, it is recommended that the data collection is repeated during the first quarter of 2017. This will provide comparable results, and allow for analysis of year-on-year change – including any increase or decrease in use.

The results of this survey are also of use to policy development in other areas, including the Disability Strategy and Building a Safer Society Strategy.

Appendix 1 – Questionnaire

Food Assistance Data Collection Form

Date _____

Are you?

- ¹ Male
² Female

What age are you? _____

Where were you born?

- ¹ Jersey
² British Isles* or the Republic of Ireland (* including England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, other Channel Islands, Isle of Man)
³ Portugal or Madeira
⁴ Eastern European

If elsewhere, please specify: _____

What year did you move to the island? ¹at birth or year _____

Are you living as part of a couple?

- ¹ Yes
² No

Do you have dependent children living with you?

- ¹ Yes
² No

If you do have dependent children living with you, how many? _____

Who referred you to our organisation? Please specify _____

Do any of the following situations apply to you? (select as many as appropriate);

- I am waiting for my benefit to be approved I have a low income
My benefits have been sanctioned My wages have been delayed / changed
(temporarily stopped/ reduced)
I do not qualify for benefits I am recently unemployed
My benefit has recently been reduced I have a long-term health problem
I am in debt

Please tick which best describes why you are seeking food assistance (select one only);

- ¹ I am waiting for my benefit to be approved I have a low income
² My benefits have been sanctioned My wages have been delayed / changed
(temporarily stopped/ reduced)
³ I do not qualify for benefits I am recently unemployed
⁴ My benefit has recently been reduced I have a long-term health problem
⁵ I am in debt Other

If 'Other', please specify:

Would you like information on any other organisations that may provide further support?

- ¹ How to manage your money ⁶ Looking for a place to live
² Looking for work ⁷ Need somewhere safe to go

³ Managing alcohol or drug addiction

⁴ Help with child care or concerns

⁵ Help with someone you care for

⁸ Need someone to talk to

⁹ Other

If 'Other', please specify: _____

Recurrence this year: _____

Appendix 2 – Data tables

Individual visitors

Organisation	No. of individuals visitors
Grace Trust	97
St Helier Methodist Centre	48
St Vincent de Paul	35
TOTAL	180

Number of visits

Organisation	Total No. of visits
Grace Trust	252
St Helier Methodist Centre	67
St Vincent de Paul	194
TOTAL	513

Gender

Organisation	Male	Female	N/A ⁶
Grace Trust	64	30	<5
St Helier Methodist Centre	22	24	<5
St Vincent de Paul	19	16	
TOTAL	105	70	

Age

Organisation	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	N/A
Grace Trust	11	12	26	21	23	<5	
St Helier Methodist Centre	<5	10	16	10	7	<5	
St Vincent de Paul	<5	<5	6	11	8	5	<5
TOTAL	16	24	48	42	38	10	

Place of birth

Organisation	Jersey	British Isles & ROI	Portugal/Madeira	Eastern Europe	ROW
Grace Trust	63	20	13	0	<5
St Helier Methodist Centre	27	12	7	0	<5
St Vincent de Paul	9	<5	18	<5	<5
TOTAL	99	36	38	1	6

⁶ N/A – Not Available

Lived on island since birth

Organisation	Jersey since birth
Grace Trust	63
St Helier Methodist Centre	26
St Vincent de Paul	9
TOTAL	98

Length of time on island

Organisation	0-5 years	6-10 years	11-20 years	20+ years	N/A
Grace Trust	5	<5	13	73	
St Helier Methodist Centre	<5	<5	7	36	
St Vincent de Paul	<5	<5	7	20	
TOTAL	11	8	27	129	<5

Length of time on island

Organisation	<10 years	>10 years	N/A
Grace Trust	9	86	
St Helier Methodist Centre	5	43	
St Vincent de Paul	5	28	<5
TOTAL	19	157	

Cohabiting

Organisation	Single	Cohabiting	N/A
Grace Trust	78	17	<5
St Helier Methodist Centre	37	11	
St Vincent de Paul	19	13	<5
TOTAL	134	41	

Dependent children

Organisation	Yes	No
Grace Trust	18	79
St Helier Methodist Centre	17	31
St Vincent de Paul	12	23
TOTAL	47	133

Referral source

	Grace Trust	Methodist Centre	St V de P	Total
Friend/ family	36	<5	<5	40
CAB	8	46	<5	56
The church	7		5	12
The Bridge/ Brighter Futures	<5		<5	4
Probation	<5			4
Social Security	5		<5	6
Food provider	<5		<5	4

Current status

	Grace Trust	Methodist Centre	St V de P	Total
Awaiting benefit approval	7	7	5	19
Benefit sanctioned	15	8	<5	25
Don't qualify for benefits	6	<5	10	19
Benefits reduced	35	21	8	64
In debt	30	34	9	73
Low income	38	12	8	58
Wages delayed/changed	0	<5	0	2
Recently unemployed	19	15	9	43
Long-term health condition	52	26	13	91

Main reason(s) for visit⁷

	Grace Trust	Methodist Centre	St V de P	Total
Awaiting benefit approval	<5	<5	5	11
Benefit sanctioned	8	6	<5	16
Don't qualify for benefits	<5	0	9	13
Benefits reduced	17	7	7	31
In debt	15	9	<5	28
Low income	29	<5	9	42
Wages delayed/changed	0	0	0	0
Recently unemployed	13	6	4	23
Long-term health condition	37	6	10	53
Total	127	40	50	217

⁷ Respondents asked to select 'one only' for main reason for visiting. Some respondents selected more than one option. The majority of these can be grouped into 2 main categories:

1. 'A long-term health condition' + one or more other reasons.
2. 'In debt' + one or more other reasons.

Further support

	Grace Trust	Methodist Centre	St V de P	Total
Money	<5	6	1	11
Work	18	9	5	32
Addiction	<5	<5	0	4
Childcare	<5	<5	<5	7
Carer	<5	<5	<5	4
Accommodation	<5	<5	<5	7
Safe place	<5	<5	<5	4
Someone to talk to	21	5	5	31
Other				0
Total	54	29	17	100