

Changing the Story

Irish charities supporting communities through sharing surplus food



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Key words (a-z)	Explanation
Empower	To give someone more control and power over their situation.
Food sharing	Sharing good food for free or low cost, instead of wasting it.
Foodbank	A non-profit, charitable organisation that shares donated or surplus food with people in need.
Social enterprise	Businesses that work to improve the lives of people.
Social supermarket	A shop that sells food more cheaply than retailers to those who are living on low-incomes or experiencing poverty.
Surplus food	Good food that, if not used soon, will go to waste.
Sustainable	Something that can continue for a long time without having a harmful impact.
Wrap-around services	Additional services to support a person's wellbeing like counselling and financial advice.

Feed Cork

Keeping dignity at the heart of food support



Keeping dignity at the heart of food support

How Feed Cork’s approach to food donations makes sure there is dignity for its members.



Overview

Feed Cork started in 2017 as a ministry outreach project by Cork Church. It aims to reduce food poverty in the local community by helping individuals and families who are struggling to afford good food. Every week, the Feed Cork centre provides more than 150 well-balanced, nutritious food baskets to individuals and families in need.



The centre has been set up in a way that creates a welcoming and private experience for those who use the service. The centre is open Wednesday and Thursday 10.30am to 12.30pm.

Feed Cork provides people in need of help with a choice

Members can choose their food items. There are different basket sizes for individuals, families and students.



Impact of choosing own food

Choosing their own food items helps people to feel in control, at a time when they have less options. This model, which is like shopping in a store, makes sure people have dignity when they need support. It also helps to remove any feelings of shame.

Feed Cork's appointment system offers privacy to members

Feed Cork redesigned the rooms in its centre to create a more welcoming space. Each room has its own purpose and follows on from the previous one, taking people on a journey through the centre. A person coming to Feed Cork for food will book an appointment and on arrival is welcomed without having to wait in a queue.



They begin in the centre's community café, where they can have tea, coffee, juices and baked goods – all surplus food and free-of-charge. They move on to the foodbank at the appointment time they have chosen. It is laid out like a supermarket, and members can choose the items they want in privacy.



Provides dignified and inclusive model

Members can choose their food items. There are different basket sizes for individuals, families and students.

Feed Cork supports connections through the community café

A person coming to Feed Cork can meet and chat with others in the community café before their appointments. This can positively benefit their mental well-being. While the café serves as a waiting area before going into the foodbank, it is also a space where people connect with each other. The café volunteers make sure that everyone has a chat and feels welcome.



Welcoming space connects people

The welcoming space in Feed Cork's community café creates a feeling of connection and belonging and helps people to build social networks.

Feed Cork

removing stigma of food support

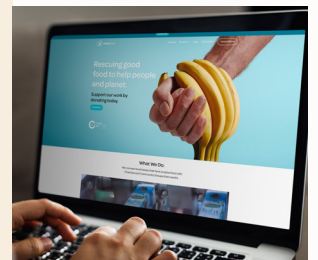


Set up in 2017

Feed Cork was set up by Cork Church in 2017.

Sharing surplus food and avoiding waste

Feed Cork uses surplus food that would otherwise have been wasted. Since 2017, they have got most of their food items from their local food sharing organisation, FoodCloud. Surplus food donations are collected from FoodCloud's Cork warehouse. Donations are also collected from local retailers, like Tesco and Aldi, in partnership with FoodCloud.



Getting volunteers

Feed Cork has always had a strong team of volunteers. At the beginning, most of the volunteers were members of Cork Church. However, more volunteers were needed, so Feed Cork linked with a local volunteer centre.

This worked well over the years and now there is a volunteer waiting list. Feed Cork also counts on support and volunteers from business partners.



Emergency situation inspired change

During and after the COVID-19 pandemic, more people used Feed Cork's services. There were long queues of people, right around the building. This inspired Feed Cork to redesign the centre and start using an appointment system.



Community impact

Feed Cork has supplied more than 40,000 food baskets since 2017.

Funding and growing through partnership

Feed Cork is funded mainly by denotations. Feed Cork has also partnered with Tesco and other companies to help grow further. These partnerships helped with:



advertising the foodbank services



surplus food donations



getting a refrigerated van for food transport

Challenges for Feed Cork

“The booking system came out of COVID and was set up to avoid the need for queuing. It now works better and provides a more dignified experience for the user. However, it still can’t be accessed by everyone... We are currently working on it. It is very important to focus on fairness and make sure the last person has the same experience as the first. We’ll keep pivoting until we get it right!”

Appointment system helps avoid queues

Feed Cork is a flexible organisation. They want to respond to the needs of the community. They set up an online application system to allow people wanting to come to Feed Cork to book appointments. This enables the service to run smoothly in a way that offers dignity to its members.

Feed Cork has challenges in getting funding that will let it develop and grow. However, the team is confident that they will achieve this and push forward with its message of dignity and fairness.

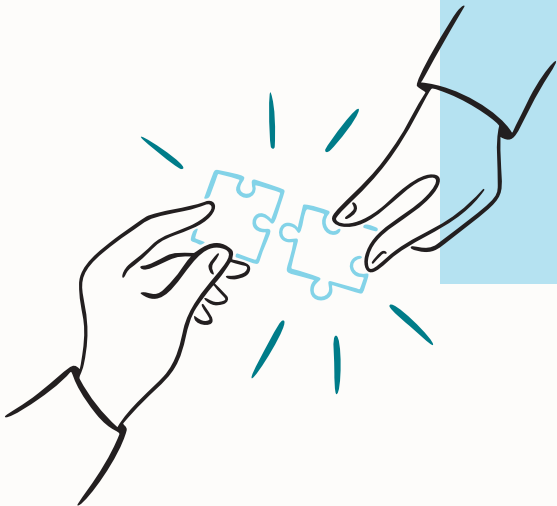


Taking steps – what you can learn from Feed Cork

Get in contact with FoodCloud

As a charity partner to FoodCloud, FoodCloud can support you to:

- **Organise and collect good food that otherwise would be wasted**
- **Connect you with other local organisations involved in food sharing.**



We can also provide resources and education tools to help you start your food sharing project. We will make sure your project includes everyone in the community working together for a world where no good food goes to waste.

Further information and resources:

[foodcloud](#) ↗

[feedcork.com](#) ↗

