

## Lived Experience Panel 18<sup>th</sup> August 2025

On the 18<sup>th</sup> August, we were extremely excited to hold our first lived experience panel at St Elizabeth's Church as part of our project with Your Own Place to hear the voices, opinions and experiences of people in our community who have been impacted by food poverty.

The morning proved to be a great success with the panel extremely engaged and we explored:

### **How Norwich Foodbank is integral to the community**

1. Without the foodbank there's no baseline for grass roots, who fill gaps in services
2. It is important to have a place for emergency food and people's perceptions are changing about foodbank use – people are more accepting of using it.

### **What is causing people to need emergency food**

1. Since covid and the Ukraine crisis, food prices have soared and wages are not matching this.
2. Shrinkflation and food doesn't stretch as far now.
3. Lack of community and life post covid is challenging with new estates having no community spaces
4. Increase of neuro divergence and lack of early support
5. Low/ fixed incomes
6. Lack of a chain/ umbrella package of support in Norfolk.

### **What good things are already in place**

1. Intensive support services
2. Lots of different food places
3. Budgeting and debt courses

### **What needs to change?**

1. More 1:1 support to help people through the whole process and join up services
2. A journey map so stories are not shared multiple times
3. Getting the right person for support the first time
4. Life skills taught in schools
5. More early support if you do not have children
6. Services under one roof.
7. A clearer directory of support.

We will be holding our second group in September with the aim to then begin to shape a project for change. If you have a passion for campaigning and would like to be part of the panel, please contact Jon. (Jon@norwich.foodbank.org.uk)