

# 2019

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## IMPACT REPORT

**GroceryAid<sup>®</sup>**

From factory to store we're your charity



# WELCOME TO OUR 2019 IMPACT REPORT

This year's Impact Report underlines the changing nature of the charity's work. We supported 15,784 people last year which represents an increase of 8%. Our spend on crisis grants grew significantly by over 40% to £591,000 with 92% of grants going to grocery colleagues of working age.

We continue to support many retired colleagues from throughout the industry though these numbers have declined slightly. Once again our Helpline received an increasing number of calls, up by 10%. This resource is totally free for employers and employees (as well as their partners and dependents) to access whenever they feel the need.

For the second year running employers were our primary referrer and of all people supported, 69% were of working age. In light of these trends GroceryAid has introduced new services to support our grocery colleagues including a health & wellbeing portal and workplace critical incident support. It is vital that we ensure our portfolio offers colleagues and corporate partners effective support services which meet their needs in today's world.

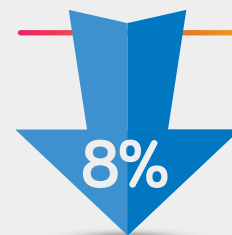
► **ANDREW HIGGINSON**  
PRESIDENT OF GROCERYAID

“ We are proud to support so many people from our industry who need help when events conspire against them. ”




# THE YEAR

£4.25M  
spent on  
welfare



decline in long  
term beneficiaries

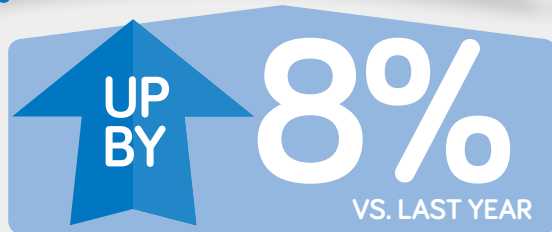
69%  
of people  
supported  
are of  
working age



2,054  
home visits in  
the last year

# IN NUMBERS

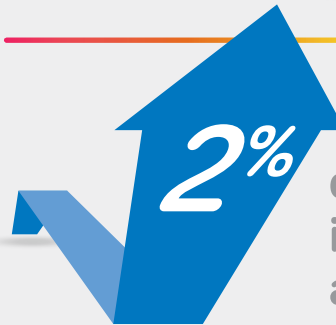
15,784



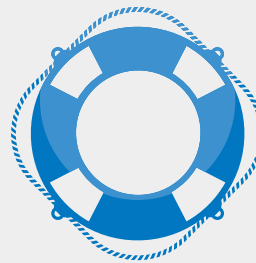
314

volunteers help us run the charity

People most commonly referred by:



overall increase in applications



43% more

spent on crisis grants

# CONFIDENTIAL SUPPORT 24/7

Last year 12,315 grocery colleagues and their immediate family members contacted our Helpline. This represents a 10% increase in the number of people needing support across a diverse range of topics, on both a practical and emotional level.

With 69% of people supported by the charity now of working age, we recognise the need to keep our services up to date and relevant. Those accessing financial support increased by 35%, clearly indicating that many people struggle to keep on top of their finances and need money management tips and advice to help them stay on track.

Legal advice is often an expense which few can afford. The 24% increase in colleagues accessing our completely free service through Law Express demonstrates that this is an essential element of our portfolio.

Reports state that one in four people in the UK will have a mental health problem at some point which keeps this topic firmly on corporate agendas.

**With this in mind we partnered with Rightsteps to introduce a new Health & Wellbeing online portal where colleagues can access a diverse range of factsheets and self-guided courses on mind, body and behaviour themes.**

**12,315**  
people contacted  
our Helpline

**10%**  
increase in  
number of  
people helped

**106%**  
increase  
in live chat  
sessions  
via website

**8%**  
increase  
in Relate  
counselling  
sessions

**24%**  
increase in people  
accessing Law  
Express support

**35%** £  
increase  
in people seeking  
financial advice

**GroceryAid®**  
From factory to store we're your charity



**Helpline**  
groceryaid.org.uk  
08088 021 122



# MYLES' STORY

Myles knew of GroceryAid having attended fundraising events during his 15 year sales career with companies such as Dairy Crest, Grace Foods and Premier Foods.

“ I could not speak highly enough of the work GroceryAid do and of the positive impact it has had on my own life. ”

**Myles**

In 2018, following a redundancy from a SME who didn't provide outplacement support, Myles contacted our Helpline to access the Renovo back to work service.

"GroceryAid, through the Renovo Work Friend programme, were really helpful as a sounding board while going through my

own personal career reboot. Access to a mentor was very useful when preparing for interviews, upgrading my LinkedIn profile and suggesting multiple approaches to find my next career move.

Years of experience in the industry does not necessarily qualify you as a specialist in job

searches. Engaging a great mentor, accessing the various web platforms that Work Friend offers, and simply having a voice at the end of the phone was extremely encouraging when the market was flat or that one particular interview just didn't go your way."

# HELPING PEOPLE IN CRISIS

According to a report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation the increasing number of families trapped in poverty is down to a complex picture of labour issues such as part time jobs, increasing private rents as well as cuts to social security, especially tax credits and housing benefits.

These trends are certainly reflected in our crisis grants programme with applications on the rise and 31% more colleagues helped in the last 12 months than the previous year.

Illness remains the primary reason cited for needing our support as people are often hit by a sudden fall in income when long term sickness results in them transferring from a salary to statutory sick pay. This is evidenced by the fact that Macmillan is our second highest referrer after industry employers.

However, an emerging trend is the increasing number of referrals from housing and local authorities, asking us to help grocery colleagues with financial grants to settle rent arrears and prevent them being evicted from their homes.

**As the industry continues to navigate through challenging times we fully expect to see further growth in crisis grant applications.**

**MACMILLAN.  
CANCER SUPPORT**

was 2nd  
top referrer

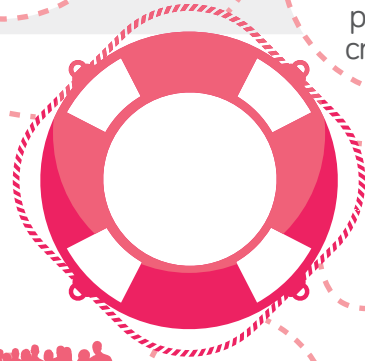
**92%**

of people receiving  
a crisis grant are of  
working age



**£591,000**

provided in  
crisis grants



**Illness**  
causes the  
most crises



**31%**

more people  
helped with a  
crisis grant



**856**

people  
supported





# NADIA'S STORY

Nadia\* contacted GroceryAid in July 2018 because she was having financial difficulties and as she had been working at a major retailer for the last 11 years, we were able to offer her support.

Sadly Nadia's husband had developed an alcohol addiction over the previous year and was no longer working. He had also failed to claim any benefits which put a massive strain on the family finances. At the time, Nadia was working with her housing association to try and ensure she could stay in her home.

GroceryAid reviewed the situation and awarded a crisis grant of just over £1,200 to settle an outstanding water bill and the rent arrears. These payments settled Nadia's debts, putting her in a much better place to focus on the future.

“ I would like to thank you very much for helping me out when I was in a desperate place a few months ago. You were a godsend and stopped me from being evicted. ”

Nadia

\* Name changed to protect identity

## LONGER TERM ASSISTANCE

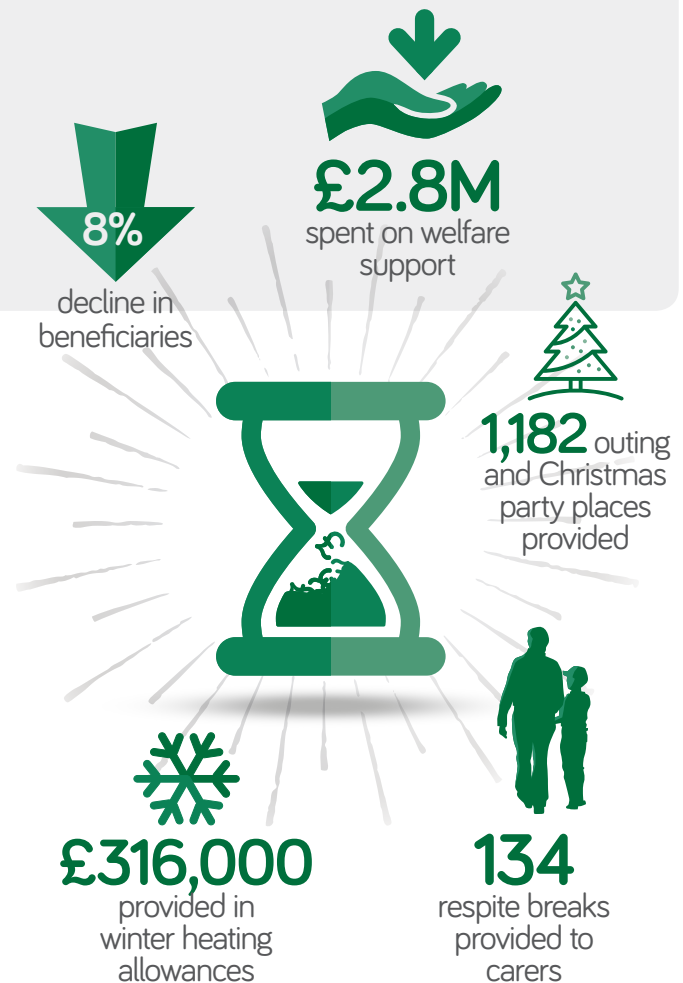
# LOOKING LONG TERM

Our enrolled beneficiaries, who receive longer term support, remain very much at the heart of the charity. Whilst our welfare spend in this area reduced, this was due to the decline in overall numbers, not the level of individual support.

Each person, whose personal circumstances hadn't changed, continued to receive their annual grant of £884 alongside two discretionary winter heating payments totalling £150 and a £10 birthday voucher.

The team of GroceryAid volunteer assessors and welfare officers carried out 2,054 home visits to review each individual's situation and make sure they were safe, warm and well in their homes. With many of our enrolled beneficiaries also caring for an ill or disabled partner, parent or child, we also provided 134 respite breaks to bring some relief from the day to day stress of their caring responsibilities.

**As we follow the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's guidance on poverty, we also provided 926 essential and mobility items to ensure our beneficiaries have all they need to maintain an acceptable standard of living.**





Nigel supporting his team, Maidstone United, in the FA Cup.

# NIGEL'S STORY

Nigel worked at Tesco for 12 years as a fresh food manager of the night shift where he first met his wife Nicola. Nigel is a real character, full of life, and it was a dreadful blow in 2005 when he suffered a heart attack and then later, a stroke.

With right side paralysis and speech difficulties Nigel was no longer able to work and his mobility declined leaving him needing to use a wheelchair. Nicola is now Nigel's 24/7 carer which means she can only work part-time.

It was only in 2018 that Nigel got in touch with GroceryAid having heard about us through a friend. Following a visit by one of our volunteer assessors, we immediately enrolled Nigel and Nicola onto our carer's programme and

“ GroceryAid is there for people who think they have nowhere left to turn. It only took three weeks from the first call to receiving support. Everyone is so helpful, it's like having extended family and friends. ”

Nigel

arranged for his broken stairlift to be replaced. We will also be providing a respite break for them in June to Hayling Island so Nigel can enjoy some sea air.



# FACING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

Whilst the number of our longer term beneficiaries has declined slightly, as we received fewer applications from the retired community, this year has seen us support an even greater number of colleagues currently working in the grocery sector.

Research from Shelter in June 2018 reported that 55% of homeless families trapped in temporary accommodation are working. This year applications for support with rent arrears have increased as a direct result of expensive private rents, the ongoing freeze on housing benefit and a lack of social housing. Through our increased awareness work with employers, we aim to get involved early when families first seek help. We provide debt advice and consider financial support to prevent eviction and, if that is not possible, can help with deposits and first month's rent to enable families to be rehoused as soon as possible.

Last year I shared our goal of providing support that was impactful, meaningful, relevant and sustainable. Reading the many 'thank you's we receive, it's clear our interventions are impactful and

make a significant difference to the lives of grocery colleagues who reach out to us for support.



**55%**  
of homeless  
families trapped  
in temporary  
accommodation  
are working

To remain relevant we continually review our services to ensure they meet colleague and corporate needs and are fit for purpose in the world we live in today. Our approach is to seek out specialists in key areas and partner with them to

deliver resources that reflect current thinking and offer evidence-based tools to achieve real results.



Our first new partnership this year was with **Rightsteps** to deliver a comprehensive new Health and

Wellbeing resource, supporting a diverse range of topics across the pillars of mind, body and behaviour. The content provided by Rightsteps' team of clinical psychologists, means we are confident of offering employers and employees up to date and proven self-guided learning designed to create long-term behavioural change at an early stage.



Our second initiative, introduced in partnership with **CiC** and funded by the **Leverhulme Trade Charities**

**Trust**, focuses on supporting grocery colleagues

“ Our increased awareness work is reaching more colleagues throughout the grocery sector. More people know they can turn to GroceryAid when they need emotional or financial support. ”

in the aftermath of a critical incident. The service provides onsite visits by professional counsellors to support individuals who have witnessed or been the victim of an accident, robbery or assault at work. The group or 1-2-1 sessions, whichever is most appropriate, provide tools and coping strategies to manage the powerful and confusing emotions that trauma can trigger. The service will help staff and managers understand human reactions to a crisis and learn more about supporting those involved.

► **MANDI LEONARD**  
WELFARE DIRECTOR



## OUR PARTNERS DELIVERING CHANGE

Our thanks go out to our partners, who help us change grocery peoples' lives for the better.



**LAW**EXPRESS  
*Legally speaking*

relate  
the relationship people

renovo

Rightsteps

StepChange  
Debt Charity

TURN2US



 **Helpline**  
groceryaid.org.uk  
08088 021 122

2 Lakeside Business Park, Swan Lane  
Sandhurst, Berkshire GU47 9DN

For more information Visit: [www.groceryaid.org.uk](http://www.groceryaid.org.uk) Email: [info@groceryaid.org.uk](mailto:info@groceryaid.org.uk)  
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