






# Your Local **PANTRY**

Opening a Pantry:  
what's involved?



 [www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk](http://www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk)  
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**“ The Pantry is such a great idea! I can choose the items that I want and need from a wide range of goods. I also feel proud that I’m able to make a contribution for my shop by paying my weekly subscription. It’s like being part of a food club! ”**  
Pantry member

**“ When I was made redundant I began to really struggle to make ends meet and food came second to paying my bills. The Pantry has been a real help in a difficult time, giving me access to an affordable supply of good food. The volunteers that work there are so friendly and helpful making my weekly shop something I look forward to. ”**  
Pantry member

# The history of Pantries

The idea for the ‘Your Local Pantry’ project began in 2013 when Stockport Homes Group noticed a significant increase in the number of people relying on emergency food supplies to feed themselves and their families. They wanted to develop a scheme that would help people before they reached crisis point, offering them the support of a reliable and good quality food resource at minimal cost.

FareShare Greater Manchester was a key early partner, and Penny Lane Pantry opened in August 2013.

In 2014, Church Action on Poverty was conducting research into the ‘Poverty Premium’, looking at community-based initiatives that would help people avoid the unfairly high prices that people on low incomes face for everyday essentials. Your Local Pantry emerged as the best way of ensuring access to affordable food and creating community hubs where people could access wrap-around, holistic support.



A partnership between SKYlight (the charitable arm of Stockport Homes Group) and Church Action on Poverty was formed to develop a social franchise, enabling Pantries to open across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. We offer a tried and tested plan, with an undergirding values-based philosophy to help low-income families avoid crisis and to help tackle the current cost-of-living emergency.

An article by Patrick Butler in The Guardian generated a lot of interest in the model. The network grew rapidly during the Coronavirus pandemic due to funding from various sources.

In September 2022, Your Local Pantry announced a partnership with the Co-op. Funded by Co-op Members, the partnership will see the Your Local Pantry network triple within three years from 75 to 225 Pantries across the UK, with the addition of 150 new Pantries, creating almost 650,000 visits by July 2025.





# Frequently asked questions

## What are Local Pantries?

Local Pantries are places that soften the blow of high living costs and bring people together around food. Pantries strengthen communities, foster friendships, loosen the grip of poverty and contribute to healthier, happier lives.

Everyone should have ready access to good food, and everyone values community. Pantries are a win-win solution.

Each Pantry has a defined geographic area, and local residents can become members. Members pay a small amount each week, and in return, they choose at least 10 items of food or other groceries, worth many times more.

Pantries are laid out like shops, and members choose their own items from a wide selection, including fresh, refrigerated, frozen and long-life foods.

Each Pantry is run by a local organisation. Pantry hosts include community groups, charities, churches and local councils.



## **What makes Local Pantries special?**

Several things – but here are three...

Firstly, the local membership model is really conducive to new relationships and friendships. Seeing people week after week, getting to know one another and discussing local issues with each other generates real power, camaraderie and togetherness. As a result, many Pantries become springboards for new ideas that further strengthen communities.

Secondly, the element of choice is really important. It can be very hard to feel dignified and positive if you are receiving a pre-packed parcel that someone else has chosen. We all have things we do or don't like in our shopping and are all accustomed to being able to make those choices. The Pantry approach recognises how important that is.

Thirdly, Pantries are positive, upbeat, happy places – the friendships that form, the ongoing financial boost, and the chance to be part of a forward-looking group all help to propel communities onwards.

## **How much do members save?**

A Local Pantry member who attends every week can save in the region of £1,000 a year on their groceries.

Each Pantry sets its own weekly contribution amount, and not all members attend every week, so precise savings vary.

## Where are Pantries at the moment?

There are Pantries in all four nations of the UK.

There are particular clusters in Edinburgh, Merseyside, Greater Manchester, the West Midlands and South Wales but we are ready to support openings anywhere in the UK!

See a full list of current locations at

**[www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk/pantry-listings](http://www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk/pantry-listings)**

## I'm interested in opening a Pantry.

### What should I do?

If you are an individual, the best starting point is for you to talk to a local organisation that you think would be a good Pantry host. They need to be based in the community, with the physical space to host a Pantry.

Once you've done that, or if you are already part of a local organisation, let us know – we'd love to chat! Just head over to our website enquiry form:

**[www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk/start-a-pantry/pantry-enquiry-form](http://www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk/start-a-pantry/pantry-enquiry-form)**

## Where does the food come from?

A lot of the stock at Pantries comes via diversions in the national food supply chain, such as surpluses from producers or big retailers. The national charity FareShare redirects those back into Pantries and other community-focused initiatives. We also work closely with other suppliers like HisChurch.

Pantries also work with smaller local suppliers and producers and can also use the money collected from memberships to buy additional stock when needed.

# Why Your Local Pantry?

In 2021 we asked members what's important to them about their Pantry...



**EVERY** member said that saving money on the weekly shop is important



**97%** said that increasing the amount of fresh and healthy food eaten in their household is important



**86%** said increasing the overall amount of food eaten in their household is important



**98%** said tackling food waste is important



**96%** said increasing the variety of food eaten in their household is important



**85%** said making friends with others in their local community is important



**97%** said knowing that their Pantry belongs to the local community is important



**95%** said that being a Pantry member had improved their financial situation



**71%** said having the opportunity to volunteer at the Pantry is important



# Your Local Pantry franchise

The Your Local Pantry franchise package includes the following:

Pantry Handbook	A comprehensive manual giving step-by-step instructions to guide you through setting up and operating a Pantry.
Pantry management software	A bespoke volunteer, operations and stock management system enabling automated processes and comprehensive reporting.
Procedures and templates	Documents relating to day-to-day Pantry operations and performance management.
Marketing materials	Personalised PDF templates of literature and operational materials including membership forms and flyers.
Website	Advertising of each Pantry site, good news stories and key messages via <a href="http://www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk">www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk</a>
Set-up and development support	One-to-one support from a dedicated Development Officer, including help with site appraisals, contacts and initial set-up.
Training support	Advice and guidance from the Development Officer, and shadowing opportunities at existing Pantries.
Annual conference and networking opportunities	Ongoing communications across the Your Local Pantry network.

## Fee structure

- **Franchise purchase fee: £2,000**  
Includes all elements listed above
- **Annual franchise fee: £500**  
Billed at the end of every 12 months  
Includes ongoing software and website licences, updates to the handbook and other marketing materials, and ongoing training, development and networking opportunities.

# Contact us

If you are interested in setting up a Your Local Pantry franchise, please contact the Your Local Pantry team on

[info@yourlocalpantry.co.uk](mailto:info@yourlocalpantry.co.uk)

**“ When I’m struggling with my money, I know I can rely on it to get enough groceries in, and I can more easily get healthy things now. I go every Monday, without fail and it saves me sometimes £45 a week, because not only am I saving on what I do get but I am also not going to the shops as often and buying more stuff. ”**

A Pantry member and volunteer in Edinburgh






**“ I go every week, so in a month I pay £14 but I must be saving well more than treble that, and when I sit back at the end of the year, gosh, it has helped me so much – not just financially, but also having the connection and social contact with people, that’s a massive benefit. I can’t speak more highly of it. ”**

A Pantry member in Leeds

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Join the network!



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