

Helping Local People in Crisis

Welcome to our Spring update! Christmas feels long gone, but we want to thank all of you who made it possible for us to support so many people over Christmas. Since then many of you have also generously donated easter eggs and brought extra joy to children during their school holidays.



Foodbank News

The Mayor and Mayoress visit



We were delighted to welcome the Mayor and Mayoress of Basingstoke to our foodbank centres throughout December and to be able to show them the 'behind the scenes' at our warehouse earlier this year.

Mayor Cllr David Leeks and Mayoress Amanda joined each of our centre teams to speak with both clients and volunteers and to hear about the work we do.



Joy across Basingstoke - Christmas Hampers



This Christmas we provided hampers to approximately 1200 households and with the average of people per household at 2.5, over 3000 people received Christmas treats this way. Thank you everyone who got involved, in donating items, organising collections and volunteering your time to pack and deliver the hampers. It has meant so much to many people, in the words of one recipient - *"Thank you all to you and your team!! ❤️ We hope you all have a merry Christmas and thank you for making ours that extra special by receiving our hamper. We cant stress enough how much we appreciate your help here! Many thanks to you all ❤️ Have a wonderful Christmas everyone and thank you for all your hard work making it special to so many this year"*.

Updates

Lunch and Learn

Last month we partnered with Andover Mind to pilot Lunch and Learn, a short course for foodbank clients focusing on managing anxiety.

“Lots of information about anxiety, good to share experiences and listen to others in the same boat”

Run by Daisy and Debbie, the course was held over three lunchtime sessions. They provided an informal environment for clients to develop and explore an understanding of anxiety and its effects. Participants also learned approaches to help manage their anxiety and time was spent thinking about improving confidence, increasing self-esteem and setting healthy boundaries.

The course was well received and we are hopeful to be able to work with Andover Mind to offer more in future.

“It was clear, easy to understand and friendly”



Daisy and Debbie from Andover Mind ran the Lunch and Learn course

Give Today



We now have a Give Today page!

GIVE TODAY

To make donating food to Basingstoke Foodbank possible for those of you who prefer to shop online, we have joined together with Give Today. Just head over to our page by visiting www.givetoday.co.uk/basingstokefoodbank or using the QR code and choose from a range or bundles and products that will be delivered directly to our warehouse.



Waitrose Collection Event 22nd March

This March we held our first ever Waitrose Collection Event, with volunteers chatting to Waitrose customers and handing out foodbank shopping lists. Waitrose customers donated a very generous 300kg that morning - equivalent to 695 meals!



2023 Stats

During 2023 (January – December inclusive) the number of vouchers we fulfilled increased by 17% compared with 2022, with the overall number of people fed being 7817. The biggest spike compared to 2022 was in March 2023 with 363 vouchers issued compared to the previous year's 218, whereas numbers were similar to 2022 towards the end of the year.

The weight of food distributed over 2023 increased by 17%, which is in line with the increase of vouchers fulfilled. For the first time in our 12 years as a foodbank, we gave out more food than we were donated which we believe is due to the increase in the cost of living and everyone feeling the pinch. We are especially grateful for all the donations we continue to receive in these hard times.

Introducing a Foodbank Centre

Sarum Hill

My name is Suzi, I am one of the volunteers with the Basingstoke crew, volunteering at the Sarum Hill branch.

Our team consists of a number of dedicated folk most of whom have experienced hardship of one kind or another during the course of their lifetimes and want to give back in some way. One of the ways this is achieved is to come to Foodbank on a Thursday morning. We are all Christians, but we will help anyone so, it doesn't matter what background.

Many people think that Foodbank is just about food, but how wrong that is! Foodbank provides many opportunities for anyone referred to the service, not just them but their families and loved ones too.

I'm part of the signposting team, we have comprehensive folders, stuffed full of useful, vetted organisations, who are willing and able to support anyone through life's tough times, which can be anything from debt management, support with mental health, to gambling, loan sharks and housing through to child care and free stuff, literally for anyone who is struggling. We can even refer clients for Community Coaching support, if they need someone to support them one on one to meet their goals.

We encourage people to come and ask about signposting if they need help with anything other than food. They can come and have a cuppa and a look at what help may be available to them as well from our resources.

We also have a dedicated free drop in Citizen's Advice on site for foodbank clients looking for advice on benefits or financial difficulties.

**Our Sarum Hill Centre is open
Thursday mornings 10.30-12.30 at
Hope Community Church,
Sarum Hill, RG21 8SR**



The Sarum Hill Centre Team

Facebook

Follow us on facebook for regular updates info and more!

Each week, we aim to post relevant and informative information on local support available, answer common Foodbank FAQs and provide updates on the items we most need at the moment. If you are able to follow our page and share our posts it will help us to get this information out to the community.

Sign up to our Foodbytes mailing list by visiting our website at basingstoke.foodbank.org.uk or by scanning here:

