

Feeding the Need

in Woking and surrounding areas

Food banks are designed to provide short-term, emergency support to local people during a crisis. They aim to relieve that immediate pressure by providing food, but also offer additional help and support to people to lessen the need to use the food bank again in the future.

In Woking, our Foodbank continues to supply food and support to those who are in need.

How our figures stacked up in 2022, against 2021:

We have definitely seen an increase in the number of referrals received from 2021 to 2022. Overall, we provided food for 27% more people in 2022 than in 2021. The cost-of-living crisis and general economy has no doubt had a knock on effect with people's ability to manage.

Referrals Jan – Dec 2021

Referrals 2184
Adults represented 3046.
Children represented 1971.
Total provision 5017

Referrals Jan – Dec 2022 with percentage increase compared to 2021.

Referrals 2673 - 22%
Adults represented 3908 - 28%
Children represented 2462 - 25%
Total provision 6370 - 27%

Christmas 2022:



In the last but one weekend before Christmas, we held a very successful special opening session on the Saturday and Sunday at The Lighthouse to enable our foodbank visitors to collect a Christmas Bag of goodies as well as a supermarket gift card voucher.

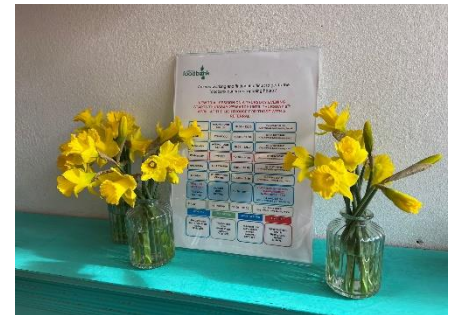


The event included hot drinks, homemade cookies, gifts and a new book for each child represented. Books were wrapped on site.

Our bookstall was kindly run by The Lionsheart bookshop in Woking and sponsored by one of our volunteers and husband.



The Brookwood Christmas Campaign ran again this year thanks to Trudi Fletcher and the Brookwood Club. £3,265 was raised by way of cash donations and Trudi will use these funds to shop for us throughout the year. 655 kilos of food were also collected from around the village.



Christmas Feedback and Highlight:

A highlight was helping a lady going through a very tough time who came to see us just before Christmas. We had that morning received a wonderful delivery from M&S, which included turkey crowns, stuffing, veg etc. The lady reacted with tears of joy, when she left with everything needed to give her family a proper Christmas. Food, chocolate treats, gifts, and a £75 supermarket gift card to buy some extra items of her own choosing.



'Thank u so much for my gifts today. Definitely wasn't expecting that amount of generosity so again THANK YOU VERY MUCH'

Changes at our Warehouse:



Our thanks to Andy Morrison, our Warehouse Manager who has left us due to a home move. Our Project Coordinator, Alison said...

'Andy joined our team as our first dedicated foodbank manager in Oct 2019. Following a large grant from Asda and made available to us via the Trussell Trust, we were able to set up our first off site dedicated foodbank warehouse at Titan storage in Sheerwater.

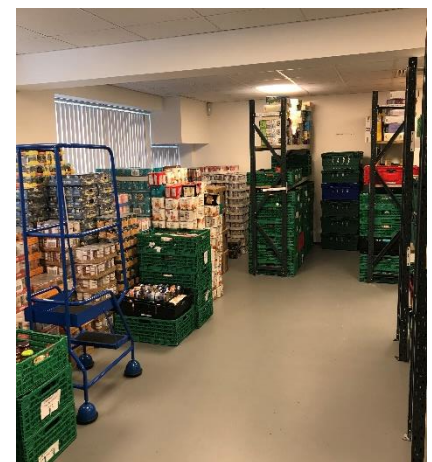


Our first dedicated warehouse space at Titan Storage in Sheerwater

This grant enabled us to rent and kit out our warehouse, purchase our van and employ Andy on a part time basis. Andy had only been in post for a matter of months when Covid hit, and he was certainly put to the test. When other people were safely staying indoors, Andy and his team were still collecting donations and making deliveries, not only to regular foodbank clients but also to many vulnerable people unable to get out themselves.

Within a year it was becoming obvious that our set up at Titan was not going to be suitable in the long term due to the increasing demands on our services.

Andy did a wonderful job looking for new premises and was instrumental in relocating us to the Lansbury Estate where we now run our storage facility.



Our new warehouse facility on the Lansbury Estate in Knaphill

Andy has been a solid rock during a turbulent time, and we will miss his calm presence keeping us afloat.



We wish him well as he relocates to Birmingham to be nearer family.

We are delighted to welcome Aidan to the team as our new warehouse manager.

Aidan has been volunteering with us for year so is well used to the inner workings of the warehouse and is already keeping our operations running smoothly'.

New trial Thursday evening session:



Following a survey carried out in the last few weeks amongst our Foodbank visitors, we are delighted to announce that we are starting a trial Thursday evening opening time at The Lighthouse. This will be for 6 weeks from Thursday March 2nd until Thursday April 6th, between 17:30 to 19:30. We asked questions to see how we could help people further, and the suggestions that came back were that our current opening sessions might be awkward for those that are working during that time.

This new session will primarily be for people that work and have a referral, but open to anyone who has a referral. We will carefully monitor the take up and let you know the outcome and if we expect to make the session a permanent addition.

Within the survey we also reiterated the other support we have available: The opportunity to request other items such as cleaning products, toiletries, baby items etc. The information about collecting food parcels from our other centres at Sheerwater, Byfleet and the Salvation Army.

Signposting and Wellbeing support:

A mention about our dedicated support workers Helen and Zahrah who offer valuable follow up support to our Foodbank visitors. A reminder that we can only offer this support if a telephone number for the client is added to the referral.

This extra support continues to be well received and with numbers of people being referred to the foodbank going up, it's more important than ever. Helen or Zahrah can be contacted by email: Zahrah at zahrah.salim@wokingcab.org or Helen at signpostingsupport@woking.foodbank.org.uk Sometimes it can be obtaining practical items to help their situation, topping up their prepayment fuel meter or just actively giving people time in listening to their problems.

Latest Feedback received:

'This is probably the biggest thank you I've given. On arrival we were greeted superbly, and all tension worry stress and stigma dissolved instantly. What a great team and we couldn't be more grateful for what you have done for us today. I was genuinely moved. Please thank all those I met today and those I didn't. A great team and super people. Thank you so much G'.

'Thank you ever so much, I am so grateful for the help and support you have done for me, I can't thank you enough for all the food. It's helped me so much. Many thanks, S'.

'I don't know where I'd be without the Foodbank, they have been so helpful. Do you know they even gave me some chocolates and daffodils when I came to collect my parcel?'

And last but by no means least...

Thank you to our amazing Volunteers who never fail to rise to our challenge.

We certainly couldn't do it without you.

