

## 12 months of a Foodbank in Epsom and Ewell

Wow what a journey, when we gave out the first bag of food in October last year we had no idea where we would be in 12 months time. It's been incredible but also very sobering.....

### **What's happened!**

In the 12 months we have fed 1679 people, 948 adults and 731 children, prayed for 90% of them, issued 662 vouchers (401 via Epsom CAB (our biggest distributor)) opened three distribution centres, trained over 135 volunteers, collected over 26 tonnes of food, worked with over 65 local agencies, talked with 1,000's of people about the work and raised enough money to survive.

Nationally there are now over 380 foodbanks in the country and in 2012-13, 346,992 people were fed. The impact of foodbanks has been all over the media. We have had Angela Hartnett the Michelin starred chef visit our foodbank which has also featured on BBC 1, Radio 4, BBC Surrey Radio and in many other media articles.

Across the country more and more people have been fed. Over 350,000 people received three days' emergency food from Trussell Trust foodbanks between April and September 2013. This is triple the numbers helped in the same period last year. The Trussell Trust says that UK hunger is getting worse and the charity is calling for an inquiry into the causes of UK food poverty and the consequent surge in foodbank usage.

*Some say its because there are now more foodbanks?* Whilst there are now double the number of foodbanks open this year compared to this time last year, numbers given emergency food have increased threefold and well-established foodbanks across the UK are reporting significant rises in numbers helped.

### **So why do people come to us?**

65,177 people were referred to Trussell Trust foodbanks due to benefit changes between April and September 2013, compared to almost 14,897 in the same period last year.

117,442 people were referred due to benefit delay, compared to 35,597 last year.

In **Epsom & Ewell** the top 4 issues stated on the vouchers as a need for food are:

- Benefit delays – 27.5%
- Low income – 26%
- Debt – 11.5%
- Benefit changes – 11%

However the 4 issues based on numbers (eg families) of people fed are:

- Low Income – 27% (455 people)
- Benefit delays – 24% (409)
- Debt – 13% (217)
- Benefit Changes – 12% (202)

### **Where do they come from?**

The wards which have had the greatest demand have been Court ward (122 vouchers), Ruxley (75), Town (67) Leatherhead North (56), Ewell (42) Stamford (32) West Ewell (28) Tattenham (26) and Bookham South (17).

### **Distribution centres – Leatherhead & Preston**

Great news in that we started our third centre in Leatherhead on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September. It has been going very well, with great volunteers and clients regularly using the service.

We are working with agencies in the Tadworth / Preston area and are planning to launch a centre for 6 weeks starting 10<sup>th</sup> December on Tuesday mornings from Marbles Way from 10 – 12. If you can help then let us know asap. On Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November we are having a preparation day where we are sorting out the venue. If free for an hour please do say!

### **Volunteers**

Our volunteers are incredible and without them none of this would be possible. We estimate that 150 hours a week are given by our amazing volunteers. Thank you.

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If you want to become a volunteer then please get in touch. We have new roles, from transporting food and collecting food, fundraising, statistics, alongside working in the distribution centres, so if you are interested do email us at [foodbank@generation.org.uk](mailto:foodbank@generation.org.uk).

### **Training**

Our next training session is Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November, 6.30pm at the Generation Resource Centre. Please email us on [foodbank@generation.org.uk](mailto:foodbank@generation.org.uk) to book your place. Please remember that you need to do the training before you work in the distribution centre.

### **Shopping List – our needs.....**

If you are collecting or donating food then we currently **do not** need any more pasta, soup, tea, chopped tomatoes, baked beans or cereal.

We do need tinned vegetables, toilet paper, washing powder, tinned meat, juice, long life milk, tinned puddings and treats.

### **Agencies & talks**

We are now working with over 70 agencies, which is great however if you come across an agency not yet signed up, then do point them in our direction. Alternately if you would like us to visit to talk about the work then give us a call.

### **Supermarket Collections.**

We really *need your help* for the collections. The next one is at Tesco's Leatherhead on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November and Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November.

Can you volunteer for an hour, its great fun? Please let us know, any time between 8 – 6. At the end of the day we will need more help to move the collection to the office. Thanks

### **Finance (& Van)**

Fantastic news we have raised enough to buy our van and should have it by the end of November. People have been so generous whether at the Curry night where we sold 73 tickets or the coffee morning. All these events keep the project running so thank you.

A simple way for us to raise money is via Standing orders, you can download a form from the website – <http://epsomewell.foodbank.org.uk>. We will continually need to raise funds so any ideas (or gifts) are always welcome.

### **The Future**

To date we have collected and provided emergency food for over 1800 people. Our aim is to continue to help those in crisis, to expand the service we offer to include furniture and to provide a little bit of extra support to help these people out of food poverty. In order to achieve this we need to secure larger premises to accommodate our growing vision and help to raise the quality of life for all those who come through our doors! If you can help do get in touch.

Many people, too many to list here have provided us with support, encouragement, resources and food. We are very grateful, we could not have done it without you.

Thanks for all your support over the last 12 months, let's keep blessing our town.

**Jonathan & the team**