



At our 10th Anniversary 'Thank You' event we took the opportunity to thank past and current trustees, employees and volunteers for the energy and hard work that they have contributed over the past 10 years.

Trustee Louise Taub said: "Our thanks go to everyone who has played a part in ensuring the Food Bank has been able to give help to those in need over the past 10 years."

In our 10 years of supporting those in need in BS, we've fed just over 14,000 people



We welcomed around 40 guests who have supported us in the past. They joined us at the Methodist Church, where we are based, to enjoy a ploughman's supper and Food Bank-themed quiz to celebrate the anniversary. Some ex-volunteers also took the opportunity to look at the refurbished and extended premises.

Chair Bill Macdonald talked about the changes which have taken place since the foundation of the Food Bank in 2013, particularly how the Covid-19 pandemic affected its operation.

We were delighted to be able to thank many of the original Trustees including the founding Chair Cllr Mione Goldspink and original co-ordinator, Calvin Horner. Our thanks too to Mullucks for sponsoring this event.

Our former Deputy Chair Norma Symonds also attended having decided that the Anniversary was the right time to stand down as a Trustee. She said: 'The Food Bank is brilliant - I have seen it grow from a few tins in my garage to a very professionally run food bank, thanks to the generosity of the people of Bishop's Stortford and I know that I leave it in very safe hands.'

We wish to recognise the time, support and donations provided by so many to BSFB during the last 10 years—we wouldn't still be here without you!

An update from our Chair of Trustees—Bill Macdonald



I would like to say a huge thank you to all our wonderful volunteers and our many supporters in the community who keep the Food Bank going. Despite the ever increasing demands on us, I am pleased to say that in our ten year history we have never had to turn anyone away empty handed. This is entirely due to the food, money and volunteer time freely given to us – something that I feel incredibly grateful for!

A lot of the effort to make sure the Food Bank works efficiently is carried on behind the scenes by our hard working Trustees. In particular, I would like to single out Norma Symonds who has recently retired from her role as Deputy Chairman. Norma was involved in the Food Bank from its very beginning, and her commitment to those in need is truly awesome. I would like to thank her for everything she has done for the Food Bank over the years.

One issue that concerned the Trustees for some time is how people in need can be supported and advised more effectively. Rather than simply dealing with the effects of food poverty (by giving food to them) we wanted to look at ways we could help them overcome some of the background problems which have led to their crisis. Whilst lack of financial security will always be a problem when salaries and benefits are just too low to meet someone's needs, lack of good quality advice can often make things worse. This is why I am pleased to say that we are currently in discussions with East Herts Citizens Advice with a view to having a CA adviser based at the Food Bank - available to all our clients.



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It's a sad fact that more and more people in our prosperous town are dependent on charity to feed their families and heat their homes. Bishop's Stortford is not unique in this regard, and through our membership of IFAN (the Independent Food Aid Network) we hear of many similar (and often much worse) tales of genuine hardship across the UK. IFAN is one of the few organisations that actively campaigns for its own abolition, and I for one look forward to the days when things are ordered in such a way that

Foodbanks are no longer necessary!

In the meantime – thanks again to everyone that supports the work of the Food Bank.

'Looking ahead to Harvest donations'

Every year we are really grateful for the support of our local churches, businesses and primary/secondary schools for their generous donations during the Harvest season. Last year they donated tons of much needed food to the Food Bank, and their financial donations also helped us to make a difference in the local community. Trustees are available to give talks in the community/assemblies. If you would like to arrange a Harvest collection please contact Jane Towns, our Community Trustee @ community@bishopsstortfordfoodbank.com.



The annual Harvest Appeal enables us to restock the shelves at the storehouse in Matching Tye so we are ready to support people in need in the local area.

Bishop's Stortford Food Bank, The Methodist Church, 34b South Street, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 3AZ

Charity Number: 1154800



We are proud to be a member of the Independent Food Aid Network. They support and advocate for over 550 Independent foodbanks and carry out research and invite feedback to support their vision of a country without the need for charitable food aid where adequate and nutritious food is affordable to all.

We have recently worked with IFAN to produce a leaflet with signposting information to enable clients to access further support in our local area. They also provide webinars and information sharing and we are most grateful for their input and advice.



Thank you Birchwood!

We were stunned and delighted to receive a cheque for nearly £4k from fundraising events at Birchwood High School. The support really is much appreciated and the funds will be spent wisely. Thanks again.

A message from our Manager - Hana ...

2023 has been as busy as we have ever been - feeding over 2600 people between January and the end of June. We have had lots of support from the community and so we are still able to provide a full food parcel along with a voucher for Aldi.



We are now part of a new app called 'BanktheFood' where you can easily find out what we are running short of. It's a great reminder when in a supermarket, what items you can pick up!

We are working with more agencies and services than ever to make sure we're reaching as many people who need food as we can. Agencies such as Herts MIND, CGL, NHS Social Prescribing team, Intensive Family Support Team, YMCA, Family centres and East Herts Citizen's Advice to name just a few.

In June, we recruited for some new volunteers! We have around 10 new people starting over the summer, ready to get going for Harvest and for our busiest time of year - Christmas.

We are busy working on our Reverse Advent Calendar ready for November and we are looking forward to working with Tesco again in December to collect much needed items!



A fun community day, raising awareness of the Food Bank in Bishop's Stortford ...



What a fabulous morning we had, joining the many other community groups in the town Carnival Parade. Volunteers gave out leaflets to the crowd, and lots of children were handed a free apple from the Food Bank trolley. Everyone had a great time, including: the tin of beans, the strawberry, the carrot, the peapod and the bottle of ketchup. Thank you to everyone involved!

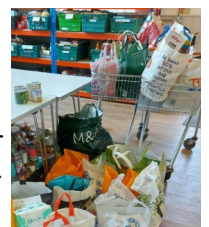


Please do remind ANYONE in need that we're here to help!

Extra funds for free? Gift Aid it!

A number of people support us by donating a regular monthly amount, either directly or via Just Giving. Others help with occasional financial donations or with fundraising events. All these donations help us meet the increasing need for our support.

If you help us with a financial donation please do consider whether you could claim Gift Aid – this allows us to collect an extra 25p for every pound donated. You can find the form on our website or ask us for more details.



#VolunteersWeek



We were delighted to spotlight a number of our volunteers during Volunteer's week and learned a bit more about why they volunteer and what motivates them. We depend on all the different skills and talents offered by our volunteers and simply couldn't do what we do without you all—to each and every one of you ...



The items we need most ...

Toilet rolls!

Sponge puddings

Tinned meat & fish

Tinned vegetables

Crisps & chocolate

Squash & Juices

Long dated cereals

Baked beans & spaghetti

Biscuits

Tea / Coffee / UHT milk

Toiletries (shampoo, shower gel, toothpaste, deodorant, sanitary products)

Nappies, baby wipes



Later in the year, keep an eye out for further information about our Reverse Advent Calendars which should be completed throughout November and delivered to the FB or to Jackson Square on a date to be notified. A list of suggested items will be shared on social media.

If you want to know more or if you want to support us but don't you know what to give ... check out



www.bishopsstortfordfoodbank.com
<https://en-gb.facebook.com/bsfoodbank/>

You'll find our Amazon Wish List there too!!

GET HELP

If you are struggling to buy food, there are a few different ways you can get a referral to the Bishop's Stortford Food Bank



Contact **East Herts Citizen's Advice** on **01920 459944**. Leave a message and someone will get in touch with you to discuss your situation and refer you to the Food Bank if you need food.

Working with another agency or service? We work with lots of local services. Have a chat with the service you are working with for a referral to us.

Give us a call and we can discuss with you what we can do to help.
Call us on 07432 785976

Give Help Get Help
bishopsstortfordfoodbank.com



More impressive local fundraising initiatives

We are truly grateful for all the support we get from the local schools, churches and fabulous community.

It was with real pleasure that Gill Turner, a Trustee, attended an assembly at The Bishop's Stortford High School to receive their latest donation of funds. It is the ongoing support from so many in our community that enable us to help those in need—thank you all so much.

If your organisation would be interested in learning more about making referrals please email Hana Hainsby, our Manager, at Hana.Hainsby@bishopsstortfordfoodbank.com

If you know of anyone struggling with food or fuel poverty, please don't let them face crisis alone. Get them to talk to one of the agencies who refer to the Food Bank or contact Citizens Advice.

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