ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

Chair's Report . . . . . 2 & 3
Trustees' Report 3
Highlights of 2020/2021 . . . . . 4 & 5
Supporting the Food Hub . . . . . 6 & 7
In Our Own Words 8
Our Year in Numbers. 9
Financial Report 10
Management Committee's Report. 11
What People Say 11
Annual General Meeting 2021 12
About Purley Food Hub 12

Pandemic offers chance to reflect on new way forward

by Trevor Jones, Chair of Trustees

One year on from last year's report, I am reflecting on the Food Hub's journey from April 2020 to March 2021 and the difficult ride that each of us was on during these 12 months.

The first six months was a time of trial and error as we switched to delivering food parcels direct to clients' homes, and then negotiating our way through Government guidance as the country opened and closed and passed through the various Covid tiers.

At Purley United Reformed Church we moved out of the Sanctuary into rooms at the back of the church complex as the URC prepared to reopen for worship. God continued to bless us in the work we have been called to do and we never ran short of anything.

I thank all those who have been generous with food, financial support and their time and energy.

We had hoped to reopen to clients coming to the church again in early 2021, but with rising Covid cases and the need to protect clients and volunteers, we took the decision to continue with the delivery operation for the foreseeable future, with a possible return of clients in spring 2022.

THE FUTURE

As with many other organisations, the pandemic has given us opportunity to reflect on what the Food Hub might look like in the future. We have built strong links with partner organisations, chiefly **Purley Food Stop** based at Old Lodge Lane Baptist Church, and also **Monks Hill Food Stop** at St Francis Church, Selsdon, providing them with surplus food and also financial support, as well as **The Vine Food Bank** in New Addington, **Croydon Refugee Day Centre, Croydon Nightwatch, The Link** and **Happy Baby Community**.

In addition, we began to offer our own clients the opportunity to access low-cost and fresh food from the Food Stops for the longer term, with advice and guidance from our Client Support Volunteer on getting further help to reduce dependency on the Food Hub.

This kind of partnership working is the likely way forward as we slowly come out of the pandemic and focus the Food Hub on clients and families in short-term crisis. The Trustees and Management Committee plan to meet shortly, hopefully in November, to think through the future direction of the Food Hub. We will be pleased to hear the views of our volunteers, friends and supporters at our AGM on Tuesday evening 5th October, or by email to me at pfhchairoftrustees@pfoodhub.uk

⇦ GO TO PAGE 1

THANK YOU

A big thank you to the returning volunteers who took up new roles, and a sad goodbye to a few who felt they couldn't volunteer under the current arrangements. We hope they may continue to support the Food Hub however they can and perhaps return when life looks a lot more normal.

The Trustees and I would like to thank all of our supporters who donated food and money. The food stocks were maintained throughout the normally lean summer months, and the considerable generosity of financial donors has led to the Food Hub being in a very strong financial position, as can be seen from the Financial Report on page 10.

As we have been blessed, so we have been able to bless other organisations with food and finances and we plan to continue doing so for as long as we are able.

Thank you to the Management Committee members who returned in October 2020 to run the day-to-day operations, with special thanks to:

Acting Chair Louise Willmer - we are very grateful for all Louise has done and continues to do;

Brian Gibbs, responsible for IT Support, who has brought the recording of stock in and out back into control;

Joanna Walker, our Finance Officer, who does such a good job keeping the accounts on track and preparing the accounts for the Examiner; and

Jean Ludlow, our Administrator, who has been amazing in organising the clients' twice-weekly delivery schedules and dealing with the daily phone calls and emails.

Big thanks also to **Julia Lee, our Client Support Volunteer**, who has been excellent in encouraging and steering clients to other local organisations which can support them in the longer term.

Behind the scenes: packers Margaret and Debra at work in the storeroom

What we achieved in 2020/2021

The Trustees met eight times during the year via Zoom and began reviewing our required policies, including finance, safeguarding and health & safety, and developing a new policy on recruitment.

In the early part of the year we arranged how the Food Hub should operate within the Covid lockdown conditions, and under the umbrella of Croydon Voluntary Action we co-operated with other food banks and providers across the Borough of Croydon. After the AGM on 8th October the day-to-day operations were handed back to the Management Committee under the brilliant leadership of Acting Chair **Louise Willmer**.

We welcomed five new trustees: **Shade Odupelu, Annabel Wright, Terry Whittaker, Mark Dakin** and **Rev Fiona Weaver** (co-opted), each bringing skills and knowledge to keep the Food Hub running in accordance with government and Charity Commission requirements.

Sadly, **Derek Harris**, a founder member of the Food Hub who served in many roles including Treasurer, died in February 2021. We acknowledge and thank God for Derek's long and faithful service.

At this year's AGM, we say goodbye and thank you to Vice Chair **Ivanka Lennon** who was previously Chair for three years. Her passion for helping clients with less will be sorely missed.

⇦ GO TO PAGE 1

Home deliveries, yellow bins and amazing donations galore

MAY

JUNE

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

APRIL 2020

Covid lockdown rules meant that our clients couldn't come to us any more for their food parcels - so on 4th April we launched our **Home Food Delivery Service** to take the food direct to clients' homes in Waddon, South Croydon, Coulsdon and Purley. On the first Saturday and Wednesday combined, we provided food to 79 clients and 264 family members - equivalent to more than 2,300 meals. April was our second busiest ever month, with 5,022 meals provided - only 45 meals fewer than the record set in March.

MAY 2020

New supporter **Rebecca** emailed to say she had seen we didn't need more volunteers at present "so I'm thinking I could start a local collection point from home and drop donations to you once a week" from her neighbours in **Redford Avenue, Coulsdon**. She posted an appeal on Facebook and within minutes heard back from the first two donors. Pictured is Rebecca's first collection.

JUNE 2020

Our first distinctive yellow wheelie bin for collecting food donations was installed at **St Mark's Church Woodcote** by **CCMA (Croydon Covid-19 Mutual Aid)**. Big thanks to the Church Hill area CCMA WhatsApp group for their support, and to St Mark's Vicar **Rev Fiona Weaver** for helping deliver the donations to us.

JULY 2020

We were grateful to the manager and staff at **Hamsey Green Co-op** for reinstating a collection basket for customers' donations, and to the pupils and staff of **Reedham Park School**, Purley, for £200 in coins and notes after the children voted for their final fund raising to come to the Food Hub. The school closed later in the month because of falling numbers.

AUGUST 2020

A donation was received from the **grateful sister** of a client who had a food parcel delivered in the first lockdown. She arranged for a "thank you" delivery from Asda of food worth more than £100.

SEPTEMBER 2020

The **Mayor of Croydon, Cllr Maddie Henson**, popped into the Food Hub, tweeting afterwards: "I have been humbled by the tremendous volunteer work and individuals literally changing people's lives during hardship. They are truly unsung heroes."

OCTOBER 2020

Head Teacher Karen Barry, ably assisted by two of her pupils, dropped off the Harvest collection of more than 350 items from **Laleham Lea School**, Purley. She said: "We hope this helps in some small way to support the fantastic work the Food Hub does for the local community." It was one of 19 school Harvest donations we received.

⇦ GO TO PAGE 1

NOVEMBER 2020

Croydon Covid-19 Mutual Aid's **One Tin Initiative** urged local people to donate one tin of food to their local food bank. One of its yellow wheelie bins, in Sanderstead, is overseen by Louisa with her daughter Freya.

Louisa explained: "Freya visited the Food Hub with her Cubs group and wanted to volunteer, so when Covid arrived, having a One Tin bin seemed a good opportunity. We've had a fantastic response, with our bin filling up four times in 10 days."

DECEMBER 2020

At our **final pre-Christmas session** on 23rd December the morning and afternoon teams packed and delivered food parcels for 100 clients, equivalent to 900 meals.

The morning's donations filled the entire stage of the hall at Purley United Reformed Church… which the afternoon volunteers stayed on to sort - hence the before and after photos showing a full and happily cleared stage!

JANUARY 2021

On 1st January we launched our **new website**. The old site had served well but was no longer user friendly - so, with massive thanks to our designer Tom, the new site was created for easy use by clients, volunteers, donors and supporters alike, with everything to know about using and supporting the Food Hub.

FEBRUARY 2021

Through social media, new supporter **Georgia** appealed for cash contributions from family and friends. Her appeal was so successful that she and her dad did three major food shops, using our regular monthly list of most needed items and delivering multiple carloads of food and toiletries.

She said: "I promoted the idea on Instagram and WhatsApp with a suggested donation of £3, the price of a cup of coffee. I was overwhelmed with everyone's generosity and raised £420."

MARCH 2021

Our newest and youngest supporter, eight-year-old **Shayan**, a pupil at St David's School, Purley, told us he was doing his own sponsored Olympic-style triathlon, inspired by footballer Marcus Rashford. Over his Easter school holiday he pledged to undertake to swim 1,500m, cycle 40km and run 10km. In April he was back in in touch to say he had raised £2,090, comfortably beating his £1,500 target.

> ***"The morning's donations on 23rd December filled the entire stage of the hall at Purley United Reformed Church"***

DECEMBER

DECEMBER

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

Julia's casebook: working as a Client Support Volunteer

Julia and Kevin: "Everything changed with lockdown"

My husband Kevin and I started volunteering at the Food Hub in September 2019 - we had spare time on our hands after taking early retirement and wanted to give something back to the community.

We helped at the weekly Monday sorting sessions, and I packed bags or made drinks at the client sessions.

Everything changed with lockdown, and we began doing deliveries to clients' homes. It really opened my eyes to the very poor living conditions some of our clients face, especially single people in "homes of multiple occupation" - often with poor access, and problems with mould and damp.

I wanted to do more to help clients, so in December 2020 I started as a Client Support Volunteer. This involves meeting or calling clients, asking how they are doing and if there's any support they need, and signposting them to services that may be able to help.

I have worked with about 50 clients over the last nine months, with the Food Hub and at Purley Food Stop.

Every person and situation is different - some just need support for a short time to get work. But many of the people I've met have long-term physical or mental health issues preventing them working full time and relying on Universal Credit which is very hard to live on.

We are looking for more Client Support Volunteers to join the team. You don't need any prior experience - if you are a good listener, non-judgemental and can spare a few hours a week this is a real chance to make a difference. Training and support goes with the work and I have attended sessions including employability, debt management, housing, domestic violence and suicide prevention.

To find out more, please email pfh.support2@pfoodhub.org.uk

Under pressure: three brief client stories

N was facing a £600 rent arrears bill from their housing association, which they couldn't understand and couldn't pay.

I referred N to Croydon Citizens Advice which took up their case with the housing association. The rent arrears bill has been withdrawn.

G was working three jobs and bringing up four children. She had a breakdown due to the stress, couldn't work and couldn't pay her bills. The Food Hub provided parcels for a number of weeks, and I told her she could get £15-20 worth of food for £3.50 a week at Purley Food Stop. She now visits them weekly, is back in work and far more positive.

T, aged 30, had moved to Croydon and was living with his mother in one room in a shared house.

I referred him to Crisis in Croydon which is supporting him to get his own temporary housing.

⇦ GO TO PAGE 1

‘Donating food is an easy way to make a difference’

Food and toiletries arrive in all shapes and forms at the Food Hub, and we are hugely grateful for each and every item that we receive. Some of the more novel donation methods are featured in Highlights of 2020/2021 on pages 4 and 5. Here, supporters Tarun and Rita tell how they raise the cash to buy the items they bring us…

Supporters Rita and Tarun hand over to volunteers Louise and Charlotte

Our family is so grateful for the opportunity to serve the Food Hub. We got involved during the pandemic when we heard horror stories of people unable to feed their families.

People should never have to decide between feeding their family or skipping a meal themselves, such as a mother we met who endured hunger so her children could eat. Food banks such as the Food Hub are vital to ensure mothers like this do not go hungry.

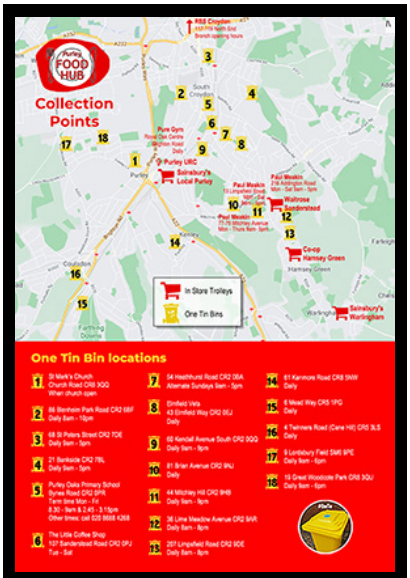
Donating food is the easiest way to make a difference to someone’s life. Mother Theresa used to say, “If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one.” So, whether someone donates one item, a shopping basket or a car boot full of food, each item will go far to stop someone going hungry.

As a family of five, we love eating out or ordering a takeaway. Now we have started foregoing a meal out and instead using that money to fill a basket or trolley with food items from the Food Hub's monthly list.

It’s probably not much but at least whatever we purchase will stop someone’s mother from going without food.

The Food Hub has brought the community, families and individuals together whilst helping them be better versions of themselves through selfless service.

By immersing ourselves in a community and surrounding ourselves with people who are dedicated to bettering the world, we in turn become better people.



Food donations can be left at Purley URC in Brighton Road on Monday mornings, or at any of the 28 dedicated collection points around our area. Full details are on our website.

CLICK HERE TO VISIT THE SITE

IN OUR OWN WORDS

Five volunteers tell what it's been like to work in the Food Hub during the pandemic, and the joy and privilege of being involved

It has been great to get involved with delivering food to clients' homes, especially as my husband Steve could join in as the driver. We've met lots of very grateful people. At first I was reticent about asking people if they would like to receive prayer, but as time went on I became bolder. Very rarely did anyone take offence. It has been a privilege to be involved.

PAULINE

Two big memories stand out for me:

- The Saturday distribution sessions in late March 2020. Huge numbers of clients came to the church as we desperately tried to process and pack their food parcels while trying to protect them and each other from this new and little-understood virus.
- Sorting a mountain of donations on 28th December. Tables had been set up all round the hall and these gradually became more and more heavily laden with jars, bottles, cans and cartons. People were just so amazingly generous.

FELICITY

Years ago I had real difficulty believing that organisations like Purley Food Hub were necessary.

Growing up after World War Two, my mother raised me on a small widow's pension and a cleaning job, all without recourse to a food bank. When I came to realise that food banks had become essential for feeding the poorest people I joined the Food Hub, organising my own church's contributions and collecting from supermarkets.

Why the elected authorities in a country as rich as ours cannot feed their people is another matter...

BILL

Bill passes donations from Waitrose Sanderstead and Sainsbury's Warlingham to fellow volunteer Charlotte

Masked up and sanitised, I spent my first morning as a packer and despatcher sorting donations and was amazed at the quantities and range. I enjoy choosing suitable items for clients. It is nice to start with prayer, thanking God for our generous donors and volunteers. It must be hard to admit that you need this type of help, but so good that we can offer a bit of respite.

SARAH

Since lockdown there hasn't been the same personal contact with clients, yet I have still been able to get to *know* some of the regulars: making sure X has a bag of flour, Y has a specific ketchup for her autistic son, Z has coconut water.

It is especially good to hear that families have been helped to move on to a Food Stop. I have been inspired by people's generosity, and greatly benefited from meeting and sharing with a group of such dedicated workers.

SALLY

⇦ GO TO PAGE 1

2020/2021 OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

48,042
meals provided at 3 meals a day for 3 days for each person

5,338
clients & family members received food, including 2,561 children

1,947
total food deliveries to clients = average of 3.3 per client

DELIVERIES

592
clients received one or more food deliveries from the Food Hub during the year

558
people received food in April 2020 , our busiest month = 5,022 meals

232
number of client referrals by one Purley ticket partner

104
families & single people received food vouchers through our Christmas projects

100
ticket partner agencies referred clients for food

36.7%
increase in deliveries over visits in 2019/20

11
people in biggest family who received food: 6 adults & 5 children

7,270
items given to other organisations to give to their clients

SUPPORTERS

124,530
items donated by churches, schools, organisations, families & individuals

379
emails, phone calls and texts received/sent in one week in April 2020 by Jean, our Administrator

201
individual supporters on mailing list to receive monthly 'Most Needed' food list

150
people - all volunteers - work for the Food Hub in one role or more

29
schools and churches donated food collections at Harvest time

28
separate collection points for dropping off food donations

PROVISIONS

106,897
food & toiletry items distributed to Food Hub clients including...

7,076
tinned ready meals & plain meat

5,912
tins of baked beans & spaghetti

4,482
cartons of milk

3,826
jars of peanut butter & savoury spread

3,312
jars of jam and honey

2,907
jars of pasta sauce

2,657
packets of biscuits

1,735
deodorants

855
sanitary wear

220
packs of nappies

100
tin openers

⇦ GO TO PAGE 1

FINANCIAL REPORT

Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 31st March 2021

Incorporating Income & Expenditure Account

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds Christmas projects	Total funds	Total funds 2019/2020	
	£	£	£	£	£	£
INCOME						
Grants & donations						
Individuals	57,790		7,511		19,194	
Local organisations	20,838				3,425	
Churches	2,200				1,787	
Other organisations	1,500				-	
Fundraising	82				1,921	
Gift Aid	10,144				1,775	
Renew 23 Wellbeing Café	-				825	
		92,554	7,511	100,065		28,927
Food donated		115,569		115,569		83,532
TOTAL INCOME		**208,123**	**7,511**	**215,634**		**112,459**
EXPENDITURE						
Food & gifts to clients		102,663	5,453	108,116		94,498
Food & grants to related organisations		18,949	2,500	21,449		5,564
Running costs						
Insurance	1,606				1,568	
General running costs	825				1,451	
Carrier bags	489				103	
Printing & publicity	535				1,126	
Computers & phones	1,324				682	
Bus tickets	-				2,032	
Depreciation	1,765				3,960	
Room hire	1,196				-	
		7,740		7,740		10,922
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		**129,352**	**7,953**	**137,305**		**110,984**
NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR		**78,771**	**(442)**	**78,329**		**1,475**
Total funds brought forward from 31st March 2020		**50,079**	**5,795**	**55,874**		**54,399**
Total funds carried forward to 1st April 2021		**128,850**	**5,353**	**134,203**		**55,874**

BALANCE SHEET AS AT	**31st March 2021**		**31st March 2020**	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	5,427		6,659	
Current assets				
Stock of food	24,300		14,872	
Gift Aid tax recoverable	5,000		-	
Cash at bank & in hand	99,476		34,343	
Net assets		**134,203**		**55,874**
Represented by:				
Unrestricted funds	128,850		50,079	
Restricted funds	5,353		5,795	
		134,203		**55,874**

Thank you for going that extra mile

The Management Committee reconvened in October 2020 and we drew up plans to start the Food Hub's transition from operating in rooms at the rear of Purley United Reformed Church back into the Church Sanctuary.

We began operating out of the Sanctuary again in June and, as I write, have now almost cleared the large hall and the room we used for delivery purposes.

On behalf of the Management team I would like to thank **Rev Russell Furley-Smith**, the Minister of Purley URC, and the Elders for their generosity in allowing us to use so much of the building, also for their sensitive understanding of the challenges the Food Hub has faced during the pandemic.

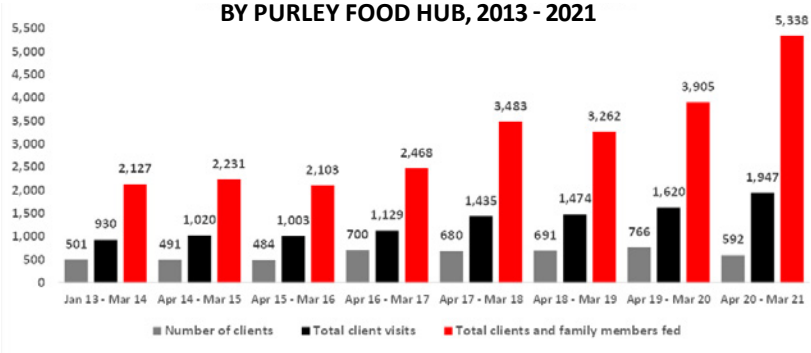
by Louise Willmer, Acting Chair of Management Committee

We have had to say goodbye to a few volunteers who have served loyally for many years, but many others who were shielding are now double vaccinated and have felt more confident to return. It is also great to see the new volunteers who have joined us to either help sort donations or play a key part in the food delivery sessions. Thank you one and all.

I would particularly like to thank **Jean, our Administrator**, who all through the pandemic has liaised with ticket partners and produced detailed client delivery sheets twice-weekly. Sometimes this involved arranging drivers for more than 30 clients a session. It is only recently that she took a short very well-deserved holiday. Thank you Jean!

A lifeline in times of crisis

SUMMARY OF CLIENT VISITS AND NUMBERS OF PEOPLE FED BY PURLEY FOOD HUB, 2013 - 2021



WHAT PEOPLE SAY

Our hard-pressed clients are so grateful for the food parcels they receive. Here are just some of the comments we have received in the past year.

One anonymous parent texted:

'Just want to say a massive THANK YOU from my boys and me for the fabulous packages... You guys do an amazing job, truly Guardian Angels.'

Elizabeth, a resident at a group home in South Croydon, wrote:

'My partner and I thank you all so much for your kindness and food parcels. Not only from us but from all the residents here. We have varying degrees of mental health and physical health issues. Life would be so much harder for us if it was not for your wonderful help. God bless you and keep you safe. Thank you x'

In October 2020 when we wrote to the Ticket Partner agencies who refer clients to us, to confirm that for the foreseeable future we would continue to deliver food parcels direct to clients' homes, several wrote back to express their thanks:

'What the Food Hub has managed to do is amazing, I am sure the volunteers are a welcome sight to those in need when they see them.'

'It is amazing you are still managing to do home deliveries - it is so important right now.'

'Well done for all that the team do - such a blessing to the community.'

'A massive thank you to the team for providing such a fantastic service.'

⇦ GO TO PAGE 1

Our AGM is on 5th October at Christ Church, Purley - and you're invited!

The Food Hub's Annual General Meeting takes place on Tuesday 5th October at 7.15 for 7.30pm at Christ Church, Brighton Road, Purley. All volunteers, friends and supporters are warmly invited.

Guest speakers are **Pastor Nick Graves**, who runs Purley Food Stop at Old Lodge Lane Baptist Church; **Julia Lee**, the Food Hub's Client Support Volunteer; and **Sarah Burns**, Head of Communities with Croydon Voluntary Action.

Two candidates are standing for election as Trustees:

Rev Lisa Fairman-Brown, Curate, Christ Church Purley. Lisa joined Christ Church in the summer of 2020. Before being called to the ministry she was a cheese expert working for a major French dairy company, and a secondary school French teacher. She is married to Chris with two sons in their 20s. She enjoys wild allotmenteering ("by which I mean it was more wild than tended!") and walking.

Rev Lisa Fairman-Brown

Rev Fiona Weaver

Rev Fiona Weaver, Vicar, St Mark's and St Swithun's Churches Purley. Fiona has been ordained for 20 years and in Purley for eight years. Previously she lived in Islington where she got involved in Christian social action. She is Chair of Trustees for Toc H and All Hallows Trust, and she loves to swim and play bowls. She has been co-opted as a Food Hub Trustee for the past year and is one of the volunteer drivers.

About Purley Food Hub

The Food Hub was set up in 2013 by the churches of Purley and Kenley to "care for the poor, love our neighbour as ourselves and, specifically, to feed the hungry". We will continue doing so for as long as required, providing food to local people in crisis and seeking to show Jesus' love in all we do and say.

To date (1st September 2021) 3,523 clients have received food parcels a total of 11,058 times from the Food Hub and we have provided food to 26,189 clients and family members. At 3 meals a day for 3 days for each person, that's 235,701 meals since we opened in January 2013.

Each month we produce a list of the food and other items especially needed for our clients and their families.
We post it on our website www.purleyfoodhub.net or we can email it direct to you if you contact us at purleyfoodhub@gmail.com

GETTING IN TOUCH

To contact Purley Food Hub you can:

Email us at purleyfoodhub@gmail.com

Phone us on 07546 635295

Visit our website at www.purleyfoodhub.net

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