2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Still here, still needed after all these years... it's just not right

Our long-term goal remains the same – to end the need for food banks

by Trevor Jones, Chair of Trustees

Looking back to 2012 when the local churches first began thinking about setting up a food bank, the resounding question at the time, widely shared, was: "Do we really need one of these in somewhere like Purley?"

Sadly, the answer then was "Yes" – and today, 13 years and 400,000 meals later, it is an even firmer "***YES***".

This is underlined in a message we received recently from a ticket partner:

'Thank you so much for helping [this family] when they needed it. Your work is really crucial at this time for many of our families. We are eternally grateful for all you do.'

Continued on page 2

- **40,000+** meals provided in 2024/2025
- **400,000+** meals provided since 2013

Our long-term goal is still the same: to end the need for food banks

☛ *Continued from page 1*

People are referred to us for many different reasons: some are in between jobs, have health conditions or are caring for relatives and children; others are in work that's insecure or doesn't pay enough to live on.

And it is why the Food Hub has signed up to the **Guarantee Our Essentials (GOE)** campaign launched by among others Trussell, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and IFAN, the Independent Food Aid Network.

In short, its long-term goal is to end the need for food banks.

As we know, the social security system is a safety net for people who can't afford the food they need for themselves and their family, yet right now for many it doesn't provide enough to cover the cost of life's essentials.

The GOE campaign advocates an increase in the basic rate of Universal Credit for a single person from the current £92 a week to £120. Supporting it is one way we can live out the Bible's urging to **act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God** (Micah ch6 v8).

The campaign **calls for a just society** by making sure everyone has enough money to afford the essentials, it **shows mercy** by protecting people from hunger and poverty, and it **reflects humility** by giving people dignity so that in time they will not need to turn to a food bank.

In June 2025 I attended a GOE mass lobby of Parliament (*below*) on behalf of the Food Hub with Steve Hunt, hoping to put the campaign's case direct to our Croydon South MP, Chris Philp. Unfortunately, it was a very busy day in the Commons for the Shadow Home Secretary – he sent his apologies, and so we have invited him to meet us at the Food Hub.

LOOKING BACK

Between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025 the Food Hub provided food to 4,476 people - equivalent to 40,284 meals.

Overall this was a decrease of 11.86 per cent in meals provided on 2023/2024, which all of us at the Food Hub strongly welcome. While it is too early of course to detect any long-term downward trend, it is a step in the right direction.

During the year also, the Food Hub donated a total of £53,724 to our eight partner organisations (see page 4). We supported them with regular monthly cash donations and, thanks to some very generous donors, were able to share additional amounts with them too. We also regularly shared food and other essential items surplus to what we needed for our own clients.

LOOKING FORWARD

The Food Hub is in a strong position financially and while we remain so, we will continue to support others in need where we can. In 2025/2026 the Trustees are pleased to maintain the support for our eight partners at the same level as 2024/2025, to be reviewed in November 2025.

Currently, like many other food banks, we are seeing a fall in both cash and stock donations and so are having to spend more ourselves on food for clients and toiletries and household essentials.

THANK YOU

I thank the Trustees, Management Committee and every one of our simply amazing volunteers and supporters for your fantastic service and donations in getting food on the table for those in our community going through tough times.

We thank God for his blessings and for being able to share these blessings with others. I say again what I have said in recent years:

We will be here for local people in food crisis for as long as we are needed.

⇦ GO TO PAGE 1

Thank you to all our volunteers and supporters – you bring so much

by Louise Willmer
Chair of Management Committee

As Management Committee Chair and an active participant in several aspects of the Food Hub's work, I am uniquely placed to see close up what makes the food bank tick.

It starts with the Management Committee and I thank each one for their commitment and support: **Brian Gibbs, Helen Harris, Jean Ludlow/ Salli Ransom, Ros Shepherd and Joanna Walker**.

In particular I thank **Jean** who stepped down as Administrator in April 2025 after working tirelessly for six years.

The role is demanding and time-consuming, so we were delighted when **Salli** offered to take on the role as well as volunteer co-ordinator. Thank you, Salli.

I also thank our wonderful 100-plus volunteers who give so many hours of their time to ensure the Food Hub runs smoothly. They include:

- Our **sorters and shelf-fillers** who each Monday collect together all the donations, check for any damage, date-label them, and then refill our shelves.
- Our Wednesday and Saturday **team leaders** who produce bespoke picking lists of the food and toiletries needed for the following day's clients, as well as buying the morning's bread, baby milk, etc, and setting up and overseeing the session.
- Our **packers** on Wednesdays and Saturdays who pick the items from the shelves and pack the food bags, adding the bread and some welcome extras from our rummage box.

- Our cheerful **drivers** who come in all weathers, some twice a week, to deliver food parcels to clients – not always an easy task.
- Our dedicated **data inputters** who key-in basic client details onto the laptop database and for stock control purposes, the items we give out.
- Our **client support volunteers** who offer help and advice to clients, including support with moving on to one of our local Food Stops.
- And not forgetting others who **collect shoppers' donations from supermarkets, produce volunteer rotas and the monthly food list and newsletter, and update our website and social media**.

Thank you all for the essential part(s) you play in the Food Hub's life day by day.

We continue to support students from the 16-19 Pathway Project at Waddon College on Mondays as well as occasional food distribution sessions.

We also have three other young people who with their support workers/ relatives make up kitchen packs, bag soap and create treat bags (the latter always the most popular!).

I am grateful for the support our regular volunteers give them – in some cases it's the only respite their parents get.

Very big thanks are also due of course to our faithful legion of **donors and supporters** who have so generously responded to our stock shortfalls in recent months.

I end my report as I did last year:

Thank you EVERYONE so much: volunteers, donors and supporters alike – we could not exist without you.

⇦ GO TO PAGE 1

Increased support for partner organisations

The Trustees met six times during 2024/2025 and continued to meet in person whenever we could. We were pleased to be able to give increased financial support to our partner organisations:

Croydon Refugee Day Centre	£ 4,540
Fieldway Family Centre, New Addington	£ 5,985
Happy Baby Community	£ 6,380
Nightwatch	£ 3,900
Old Lodge Lane Baptist Church Food Stop, Purley	£ 12,073
Renew 23 (Purley & Kenley Churches Together)	£ 2,898
St Francis Food Stop, Monks Hill, Selsdon	£ 9,765
The Vine Foodbank, New Addington	£ 8,183
TOTAL	**£ 53,724**

Overall, this was an increase of £7,830 on 2023/2024. The individual amounts were made up of monthly donations plus extra funding from some very generous supporters including **Croydon NEU (National Education Union)** and **South London Harriers** running club.

We will continue to provide money support to our partners in 2025/2026 but at the same level as in 2024/2025 – ie, not taking into account the current food price inflation. "This was not an easy decision," said **Trevor Jones**, Chair of Trustees, "as many organisations are facing challenging times with increased demand and falling donations.

"However, we need to be careful stewards of the funds we are entrusted with especially if we want to continue to support our partners. We will review the support in November 2025 and share any unexpected donations."

KEY ACTIONS

▶ Increased our reserves by £10,000 to £50,000, to be reviewed annually.

▶ Agreed that our Client Support Volunteers must have at least a basic DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check completed under the name of, and paid for by, Purley Food Hub. They all have DBS but from other organisations, and the Trustees considered it best practice that they have DBS under the Food Hub's name.

▶ Agreed to pay for basic white goods for Food Hub clients housed by London Borough Croydon in empty flats, in partnership with Croydon Nightwatch and Emmaus.

▶ Set aside sufficient funding for the Food Hub's 2025 *Come Dine with Jesus* and *Toys for Joy* Christmas projects with Purley and Kenley Churches.

▶ Agreed extra funds to Old Lodge Lane Baptist Church Food Stop for its Christmas Hampers project.

▶ Began the process of ensuring we have all the policies required by the Charity Commission.

Nick – Trustee and volunteer

I have been a Trustee for six years and feel honoured to be part of the team, *writes Nick Pannell*.

As well as having a Trustee's oversight role, I regularly volunteer at the Food Hub on Wednesdays inputting data, together with my wife Lesley, a packer and bag finisher.

We are also part of the Client Support Team. Many people we meet need big items like fridges, washing machines and cookers, and we have helped them to move these in. We find all this stimulating and worthwhile, way beyond the basic help with food.

One client was moved at very short notice into a newly decorated flat but had to sleep on the floor. There was no bed, cooker, table or chairs – nothing. And he had been there for several weeks before we met him.

All that the housing agency representative was interested in, however, was whether he could pay the rent. We were able to source all of the above and the Food Hub paid for their installation. Sadly, this is not an untypical case.

⇦ GO TO PAGE 1

Most people we support never thought they'd need a food bank

Emergency food provision across the UK remains extraordinarily high, with close to three million parcels being provided in 2024/2025.

Provision rose sharply over the last five years and is two and a half times the level seen a decade ago.

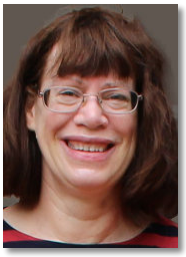
These are the findings from Trussell's most recent statistics. There is no doubt that there is a crisis and food poverty is now becoming normalised. The highest impact of rising prices is on people with low, fixed incomes.

Nearly all the clients we meet have significant physical and/or mental health problems that prevent them from working, and many have little visible family or social support.

Most of the people we support never thought they would need a food bank.

Client L was self-employed and had to give up her business when she was diagnosed with cancer – she has debt, her gas and electricity have been turned off and she can't afford food. She has no family or other support. We have made an urgent safeguarding referral for her.

by Julia Lee
Client Support Team Leader



We have countless stories like these. Week after week we find people stuck in very poor housing, without much help, struggling to get by.

We are delighted when we have good news – for example **J**, whom we found living in a small poorly converted garage, is now safely housed in a one-bedroomed flat.

But this is the exception rather than the rule – some clients are still in temporary accommodation after several years.

And we are increasingly seeing people from other boroughs being given poor-quality temporary accommodation in Croydon, sometimes without any furniture or support.

Our small team of Client Support Volunteers talk to clients when they deliver food to them, or phone them, listening to their issues and concerns.

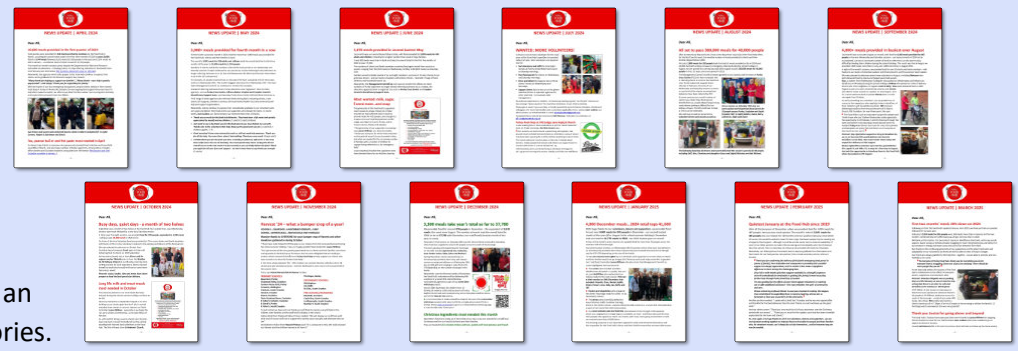
We refer or signpost them to organisations that may be able to provide expert advice and help. These include the Citizens Advice in Croydon, Purley Cross Centre, Christians Against Poverty, GP social prescribers, Shelter and Crisis Skylight.

We are always looking for volunteers to join us. If you can spare a few hours a week, and are able to drive food to clients, please contact me at pfh.support2@pfoodhub.org.uk.

No special qualifications needed, we will train you, and it is a really practical way to make a difference and contribute to the wider work of the Food Hub.

Monthly mailshot means a regular *Update* for all

At the beginning of every month our *Update* newsletter is emailed out to more than 800 supporters, donors, volunteers and partners. These are the front pages from 2024/2025. Click on an image for that month's stories.



⇦ GO TO PAGE 1

The things people say

"Nobody wants to have to use a food bank, and no food bank team wants to be needed because their fellow citizens can't afford food.

Sabine Goodwin, Director, Independent Food Aid Network

"I have now returned to work so will not need help any more. You were there when I had nothing. Thank you.

Young man

"Your support has been SO appreciated as things have been difficult recently. My kids will miss unpacking to see what we have been given, especially the sweets lol!

Mum on behalf of her family

"Thank you for the great volume of food you passed on today. I couldn't get it all in my car and your volunteers got the rest to us. What a team!

Dave Lewis, Old Lodge Lane Baptist Church Food Stop

"It's really sad there are so many people who rely on the Food Hub but it's also good there is somewhere if they need help.

Year 4 pupil from New Valley Primary School

Income & Expenditure for the year ended 31st March 2025

The main feature of the financial picture in 2024/2025 was a downward trend in both income and expenditure. Food and money donations were down 9.6% on the previous year and our total expenditure fell by 1.9%.

For the second year running, expenditure exceeded income, and as a result our end-of-year bank balance was again lower than the previous year. Despite this, our reserves remain healthy. We were able to increase our support for partner organisations by 17.1% over the year and we intend to maintain a similar level of support in the current financial year.

	2024/2025			2023/2024		
	General	*Christmas**	***Total***	*General*	*Christmas**	***Total***
Income	**£**	**£**	**£**	**£**	**£**	**£**
Grants and donations	72,915	6,781	79,696	89,943	6,318	96,261
Food for distribution	128,471	-	128,471	135,537	-	135,537
Interest	2,702	-	2,702	1,534	-	1,534
Allocation to Christmas	(12,681)	12,681	-	(16,183)	16,183	-
Total income	**191,407**	**19,462**	**210,869**	**210,831**	**22,501**	**233,332**
Expenditure						
Food and gifts to clients	129,253	19,462	148,715	146,488	15,859	162,347
Support for partner organisations:						
Food	1,957	-	1,957	3,599	-	3,599
Grants	53,724	-	53,724	44,120	-	44,120
Food Hub running costs	22,128	-	22,128	20,904	-	20,904
Total expenditure	**207,062**	**19,462**	**226,524**	**215,111**	**15,859**	**230,970**
Net income/(overspend)	**(15,655)**	**-**	**(15,655)**	**(4,280)**	**6,642**	**2,362**
Reconciliation of funds						
Brought forward	172,421	20,000	192,421	176,701	13,358	190,059
Carried forward	**156,766**	**20,000**	**176,766**	**172,421**	**20,000**	**192,421**

** The Christmas Fund supports projects to provide food vouchers and toys at Christmas.*

Grants & donations	2024/25	2023/24
Individuals	54,320	60,031
Local organisations	5,992	18,060
Churches	4,943	2,754
Other organisations	1,097	500
Fundraising	55	192
Gift aid	7,497	8,406
Christmas	5,792	6,318
Total	**£79,696**	**£96,261**

Running costs	2024/25	2023/24
Insurance	1,916	1,842
General running costs	603	593
Carrier bags	1,949	1,698
Storage boxes	595	1,276
Printing & publicity	513	397
Computers & phones	1,835	1,036
Bus tickets	1,593	1,055
Pest control	847	816
Depreciation	874	1,165
Room hire	9,923	9,079
Donation collection charges	1,480	1,947
Total	**£22,128**	**£20,904**

⇦ GO TO PAGE 1

2024/2025: Our Year in Numbers

86,898
food & other items provided to clients included:

6,803 veg & potatoes
5,342 ready & plain meat meals
4,133 milk
3,589 fish
2,616 toothbrushes & toothpaste
2,297 pasta & rice
1,025 coffee & hot chocolate
854 sanitary wear
473 vegetarian meals
76 baby formula

40,284
meals provided – 3 meals a day for 3 days for each person

4,476
clients & family members received food, including **1,778** children (**552** aged under 5)

60 ticket partners referred clients

8% of clients referred by Purley Cross Centre

1,611 food parcels provided = 4.25 average per client

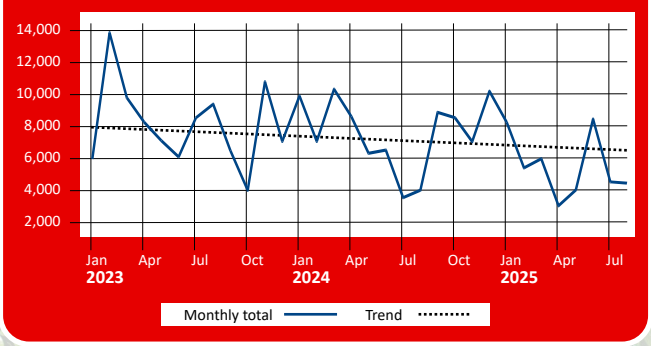
470 people received 4,230 meals in our busiest month, July 2024

234 Aldi gift cards issued for food for Christmas meal as part of *Come Dine with Jesus* project

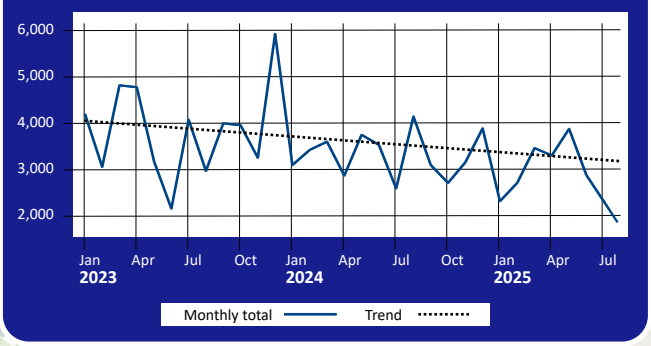
21% decrease in parcels delivered compared to 2023/2024

11.86% decrease in meals provided compared to 2023/2024

Items donated Jan 2023 - Aug 2025



Meals provided Jan 2023 - Aug 2025



⇦ GO TO PAGE 1

Welcome to guest speakers at our AGM

Elizabeth

Leo

Charlotte

Three women who share a commitment to combating food poverty are guest speakers at the Food Hub's AGM on 2nd October, 6.30 for 7.00pm, at Christ Church, Purley. They are:

- **Elizabeth Maytom MBE,** Project Manager, Lambeth & Croydon Foodbank
- **Leo Cardow,** Manager, Purley Cross Centre
- **Charlotte White,** Member Support & Policy Officer, IFAN (Independent Food Aid Network).

Trevor Jones and **Louise Willmer** will report on the Trustees' and Management Committee's activities in 2024/2025 and discuss current plans, and treasurer **Joanna Walker** will report on the Food Hub's finances.

About Purley Food Hub

The Food Hub is an emergency food bank run by the churches of Purley and Kenley since 2013 to provide food to local people in crisis.

We are based at Purley United Reformed Church, next to Purley Hospital. We operate a home delivery service, packing the food parcels on Wednesday and Saturday mornings and delivering them to clients' homes in Purley, South Croydon, Coulsdon and Waddon.

Clients are referred by agencies including Croydon Council, GP surgeries and mental health services. Food is generously donated by churches, schools, supermarkets, businesses and community organisations and many families and individuals.

Each month we publish a list of the food, toiletries and other items most needed for our clients, which we post on our website purleyfoodhub.net.

To contact Purley Food Hub you can:

* **Email us at purleyfoodhub@gmail.com**
* **Phone or text us on 07546 635295**

Purley Food Hub, 906 Brighton Road, Purley, Surrey CR8 2LN.
Registered Charity no. 1152807. Company No. 08557885

And finally...

Every tin, jar, packet and pound we receive makes a real difference to someone going through hard times.

So a huge thank you to our many donors and supporters whose kindness gives them a ray of hope.

During 2024/2025 you provided:

- **89,044 food and toiletry items**
- **£79,696 in money donations**

THANK YOU, ONE AND ALL.

Follow us on social media