2026
ANNUAL REPORT

Our new way of working

In March 2026 we discontinued our twice-weekly home delivery service set up in 2020 in response to Covid. Clients now once again collect their emergency food parcels from us at Purley URC on Wednesday mornings.

In the year 2025/2026:

- ► we provided clients with food for **37,161 meals**
- ► you donated **72,238 items** of food, toiletries and household essentials

We long for the day we can close

by Trevor Jones, Chair of Trustees

Our ultimate hope at Purley Food Hub is to see ourselves go out of business - to be able to hang a "PERMANENTLY CLOSED" sign on the door.

No one imagined when we opened in 2013 that we would still be giving out emergency food parcels to local people in crisis nearly 14 years later. And yet maybe, just maybe, there are glimmers that things might be starting to improve.

☛ *Continued on page 2*

We long for the day we can close and hang that sign on the door

☛ *Continued from page 1*

Between April 2025 and March 2026 we provided food to 4,129 people, equivalent to 37,161 meals: a near 8 per cent reduction on the 2024/2025 figure, itself an almost 12 per cent drop on 2023/2024.

Since we switched to our new way of working in March 2026 (see below), the number of clients and family members receiving food has dropped by around half.

The Trustees will be looking into the reasons why and will present our findings in due course, but in the meantime we welcome these latest reductions as going, together, a further step in the right direction.

NEW WAY OF WORKING

As I noted a year ago at our last AGM, the Food Hub faced significant challenges as a result of planned changes at our base, Purley United Reformed Church.

We set up a working group of Management Committee and Trustees and an early meeting in November came up with several options. It soon became clear that the least disruptive and costly option would be to stay at PURC but to reorganise to operate largely from rooms 1, 2 and 3 at the back of the church. We have retained the former shelving area in the Sanctuary to receive donations on Wednesday and Saturday mornings.

The changes were agreed by the PURC Elders and Food Hub Trustees in January 2026, then due to the limited availability of our trusted builder to erect the new shelving area in room 3, we brought the changes forward to March 2026.

Unfortunately this gave limited time to consult with volunteers and ticket partners, and the Trustees and I apologise for this.

As a result of the changes, we switched from delivering food to clients' homes on Wednesdays and Saturdays to having clients come to collect their food on Wednesdays only. As I noted in the Trustees' and Management Committee's initial review of the new system, client numbers have fallen from 40-50 a week (Saturdays and Wednesdays combined) to 25 or less on Wednesdays only.

We reviewed the new arrangements in June 2026 and the working party reached the following conclusions:

- Some fine tuning is required on Wednesdays but we are very pleased to be seeing clients again in person, connecting better with the team; for a number of a volunteers this is a new experience.
- On Saturdays there is less for volunteers to do except receive donations, but we have agreed to continue like this to the end of the year, to monitor things

GUARANTEE OUR ESSENTIALS

We also welcome changes percolating through from the Guarantee Our Essentials Campaign organised by Trussell, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and IFAN, the Independent Food Aid Network, to which the Food Hub is affiliated.

In 2024 Labour called the need for food banks a "moral scar on our society" and committed to ending mass dependence on them. Since then…

Universal Credit: for the first time basic Universal Credit will see an above-inflation increase each year in this Parliament.

Debt deductions: deductions from Universal Credit have been reduced from 25 to 15 per cent.

Two-child limit: this has been removed, lifting 670,000 people, including 470,000 children, out of severe hardship.

Crisis and Resilience Fund: this replaces the Household Support Fund offering cash-first crisis payments for food and other essentials and dedicated housing payments, with debt advice, budgeting and community support to reduce repeated crises.

Meanwhile, the **All-Party Parliamentary Group on Ending the Need for Food Banks** is looking into how Universal Credit levels are decided and if the current approach is fit for purpose…with its impact on food banks.

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during the busy Harvest and Christmas periods.

- We are working towards offering refreshments to clients on Wednesdays and having someone on hand who can help them with further support. We will be reviewing the situation in October/November.

Details of our donations to partner organisations are on page 4.

THANK YOU

- to all of our amazing volunteers. We would be delighted to welcome those who previously volunteered at Saturday distribution sessions or delivered food to clients on Wednesdays/Saturdays to consider helping at our Monday sorting sessions or Wednesday distribution sessions. We do still need drivers to deliver to clients who are housebound, especially on a Saturday.
- to all our wonderful supporters for your continued ever-generous donations of money, food, toiletries and household essentials.
- to all of the Management Committee and my Trustee colleagues for your unstinting service.

Above all, we thank God for his rich blessings on the Food Hub so that we can share these with our clients and partner organisations.

A time of challenge and change for all

by Louise Willmer
Chair of Management Committee

Yes indeed, the past 12 months have been a time of challenge and change for everyone at the Food Hub, especially of course our teams of volunteers.

Yet the very smoothness of our switch from inside the church Sanctuary to rooms at the back of the building is testament to everyone's dedication.

The Management Committee warmly thank each one who gave so much time and effort in planning and carrying out the move.

It certainly wasn't light work moving our entire stock of tins and other longlife food, and it would not have been possible without such goodwill.

We are agreed that it has been a positive move, and seeing clients face to face again when they collect their food has enabled us to meet their needs more effectively.

At the same time though, we have found a reluctance by some clients to move on from the Food Hub to their nearest Food Stop with fresh food on offer. We are always concerned, especially with children, that some of our food has high salt content and isn't ideal for long term use. We will explore this more fully in the months ahead.

Fine tunings to our new operation have been made as we have gone along such as introducing a new front desk volunteer's role to greet clients, explain the process and chase up anyone running late.

We are also exploring having a client support volunteer based in the church lounge to offer advice and signposting to ensure clients are accessing all of the support that is available to them.

In view of predicted food shortages and higher prices in the autumn, it would seem our services will remain to be needed into 2027 and I would like to thank all of our loyal supporters who generously continue to give us food, toiletries, household essentials and money: without you, we would never have been able to carry on for this long.

Sometimes at one of our donation sessions, a supporter will apologise for the smallness of their donation. But our shelves have not run out. We truly appreciate every contribution, however large or small. ***Thank you all.***

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Why we weren't able to increase support for partner organisations

The Trustees met six times during 2025/2026 and our key actions are listed below, *writes TREVOR JONES*.

We were again able to give financial support to our regular eight partner organisations:

Croydon Refugee Day Centre	£3,960
Fieldway Family Centre, New Addington	£6,120
Happy Baby Community, Thornton Heath	£6,480
Nightwatch, Croydon	£3,960
Old Lodge Lane Baptist Church Food Stop	£12,125
Renew 23 (Purley and Kenley Churches)	£3,300
St Francis Food Stop, Monks Hill, Selsdon	£10,580
The Vine Food Bank, New Addington	£7,120
TOTAL	**£53,645**

Regrettably we were unable to increase the support this year to take account of food inflation. Because of falling income and rising costs, the Trustees decided to keep the 2025/2026 payments at the 2024/2025 level.

Despite generous donations by supporters, for which we are immensely grateful, expenditure has exceeded income for the past two years, so we felt it was prudent not to increase support while operating at a loss.

This was not an easy decision but we don't want to get into a position where we have to reduce support significantly. We will review payments to partners in November 2026, and continue to share any unexpected donations and consider approaches for one-off grants.

OTHER KEY ACTIONS/DISCUSSIONS

- Approved changes to the Food Hub's operation at Purley URC, subject to review, working towards welcoming clients with refreshments and the opportunity to chat, give support and pray together.
- Discussed how we can ensure key roles are filled when existing volunteers step down.
- Discussed whether we may need to hire paid help, likely a part-time Manager/Administrator. Grants may be available to help pay their salary.
- Discussed the Government's new Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) and whether it applies to the Food Hub. Agreed we are not in a position to apply for CRF funding while we are reorganising our operation but will reconsider in the future.
- Visited Caterham & District Foodbank to gain information on how the Trussell model works.
- Updated our policies as required by the Charity Commission, including a new Social Media Policy.

SITUATION VACANT

Disappointingly, as a Board of Trustees we functioned throughout the year with one vacancy. I would be delighted to hear from someone from one of the Purley and Kenley or other local churches who would be interested in joining us. Please contact me at pfhchairoftrustees@pfoodhub.uk.

A member of Purley United Reformed Church since the early 1980s, I was elected to succeed my friend and fellow PURC member Judith Johnson who retired as a Food Hub Trustee in 2020, *writes TERRY WHITTAKER*.

I was a nurse and then a primary school teacher, so it was a bit of a learning curve at first, but over the years I have taken on the Trustees' strategic and governance roles - and come to marvel close hand at the dedication of our volunteers.

I try to add to the link between the Food Hub and PURC, and during this year's changes I was involved in clearing Room 3 and relocating the Sunday Club cupboards (which required a big sort out!).

Each Trustee maintains contact with one of our partner organisations, and I visit the Happy Baby Community in Thornton Heath.

It is uplifting to see them and others doing so much to give help where it's needed, and I am privileged to be involved with a great team of Trustees.

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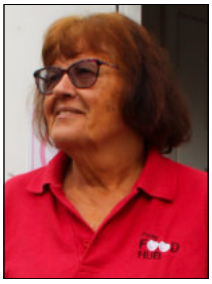
A week in the life... Salli's admin role is central to our operation

As the Food Hub's Administrator, SALLI RANSOM is at the very hub of our everyday working, central to what makes the Food Hub tick.



She is most people's first point of contact, dealing each week with dozens of emails, texts and messages from and to clients, ticket partners, volunteers, supporters and general enquirers. For Salli it is a round-the-week operation, as she describes here:

Sunday

I contact the volunteers on the rota for the coming week's two sessions on Wednesday and Saturday to gently remind them we are looking forward to seeing them. Some may say they are really sorry but they cannot make it after all so I rearrange the volunteers to suit the tasks and seek to fill the vacant roles.

Monday

I prepare the final list of clients for Wednesday and Saturday's food parcels from the ticket partner referrals I have received in the previous week. I email it by 12.00noon to Wednesday's team leader who then gets together the appropriate picking lists of food and other items ready for the bag packers to get to work first thing on Wednesday morning.

Tuesday

I let the team leader know of any urgent late referrals I have received so that emergency packs can be allocated to them for Wednesday. I contact all of the clients - usually around 20-25 - to let them know what time to come on Wednesday to collect their food, or what time their delivery driver is expected to be with them. I also send an email request for drivers to deliver to clients unable to collect because they are vulnerable or disabled.

Wednesday

I check first for any messages from clients saying they cannot come, their collection time is inconvenient, and sometimes "Thank you so much, I can't tell you what this means". Then I pass on relevant messages to the team leader.

Thursday

I receive a report from the previous day's team leader letting me know who hasn't collected their food and if there have been any other issues. For any client who hasn't collected, I contact their ticket partner to see if there is a problem we can help with.

Friday

I message the team receiving donations on Saturday to say they may have a client collecting who wasn't able to come on Wednesday, or a delivery to be made to a client because of a medical reason.

Saturday

I may be part of the team on Saturday myself, and sometimes I am team leader on a Wednesday and help with sorting donations on Monday when I'm free. Also, I draw up the three-monthly rota of volunteers for the Wednesday and Saturday sessions in my other role as Volunteer Co-ordinator.

Sunday

Sleep, eat, repeat…

I thoroughly enjoy being one of the team of volunteers with the Food Hub - and of course I love it when I receive messages from grateful clients to share with the others - such as this one:

> 'Good afternoon Purley Food Hub Team, I just wanted to say thank you so much for all you have done for me and my children. I have collected my parcel today, and I am so grateful for the kindness, care and support you have shown us. You have gone beyond providing just food - you made us feel seen, supported and not alone.
>
> Thank you also for the letter arranging support with the Food Stop. Your help with transport fare means so much to me. It shows how much you truly care about people's well-being. You have all been so kind, and I will never forget it. May God bless you and keep you for the work you do for so many families. With sincere gratitude.'

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A lifeline for disabled young adults

In recent years we are delighted to have formed a partnership with the Waddon Project which supports young people with disabilities who would struggle in mainstream education, *writes LOUISE WILLMER*.

We are joined at our Monday sorting sessions by two students who come with a member of staff to make up kitchen packs, sweet bags and washing pod packs for our clients. We also have at least three other young people (plus carers) attending for work experience.

We have seen week by week these students gaining confidence in their tasks and in working with our volunteers.

We have had several other requests from parents struggling to find work experience for their disabled young people. Sadly we have very limited space to accommodate them, and it is a matter of deepest regret that we have not been able to offer them anything.

We will continue to explore alternative ways to help these young adults in the coming year.

Income & Expenditure for the year ended 31st March 2026

We have continued to receive generous donations of food and money which have enabled us to to provide the food required for our clients. We have also maintained support to partner organisations.

It was expected that expenditure would exceed income for the year and this has led to a reduction in reserves. Despite this our overall funds still exceed our commitments. At the year end we had total funds of £150,501, represented by fixed assets, stock, debtors and cash at bank. Of this, £20,000 is set aside for Christmas Projects and £50,000 retained as reserves to support operations should income fall unexpectedly.

This is the summary of income and expenditure for the year:

	2025/2026			2024/2025		
	General	*Christmas**	***Total***	*General*	*Christmas**	***Total***
Income	**£**	**£**	**£**	**£**	**£**	**£**
Grants and donations	75,203	5,880	81,083	72,915	6,781	79,696
Food for distribution	99,521	-	99,521	128,471	-	128,471
Interest	1,773	-	1,773	2,702	-	2,702
Allocation to Christmas	(11,355)	11,355	-	(12,681)	12,681	-
Total income	**165,142**	**17,235**	**182,377**	**191,407**	**19,462**	**210,869**
Expenditure						
Food and gifts to clients	113,244	17,235	130,479	129,253	19,462	148,715
Support for partner organisations:						
Food	2,737	-	2,737	1,957	-	1,957
Grants	53,645	-	53,645	53,724	-	53,724
Food Hub running costs	21,781	-	21,781	22,128	-	22,128
Total expenditure	**191,407**	**17,235**	**208,642**	**207,062**	**19,462**	**226,524**
Net expenditure	**(26,265)**	**-**	**(26,265)**	**(15,655)**	**-**	**(15,655)**
Reconciliation of funds						
Brought forward	156,766	20,000	176,766	172,421	20,000	192,421
Carried forward	**130,501**	**20,000**	**150,501**	**156,766**	**20,000**	**176,766**

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

Grants & donations	2025/26	2024/25
Individuals	47,603	54,320
Local organisations	8,462	5,992
Churches	5,619	4,943
Other organisations	2,250	1,097
Fundraising	93	55
Gift aid	11,176	6,508
Christmas	5,880	6,781
Total	**£81,083**	**£79,696**

Running costs	2025/26	2024/25
Insurance	2,192	1,916
General running costs	363	603
Carrier bags	1,478	1,949
Room 3 fit out, other repairs	2,425	-
Storage boxes	-	595
Printing & publicity	527	513
Computers & phones	909	1,835
Bus tickets	533	1,593
Pest control	857	847
Depreciation	912	874
Room hire	10,278	9,923
Donation collection charges	1,307	1,480
Total	**£21,781**	**£22,128**

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2025/2026: Our Year in Numbers

37,161
Total meals provided

74,124
Items distributed to clients & family members

-11.86%
Decrease in food parcels compared to 2024/2025

1,587
Client food parcels provided

£27.36
Average nominal cost of food parcel per person

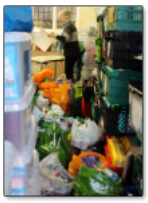
4,129
Clients and family members served during the year

1,738
Children aged 0-16 received food

471
People received food in the busiest month (October)

72,238
Food and household essential Items donated in the year

-12.67%
Decrease in donations compared to 2024/2025



28
Schools and nurseries donated Items

37
Churches donated food and money

8
Members of largest family who received food (6 visits)

8,240
Harvest items donated by local groups and residents, including 50+ churches, schools and nurseries

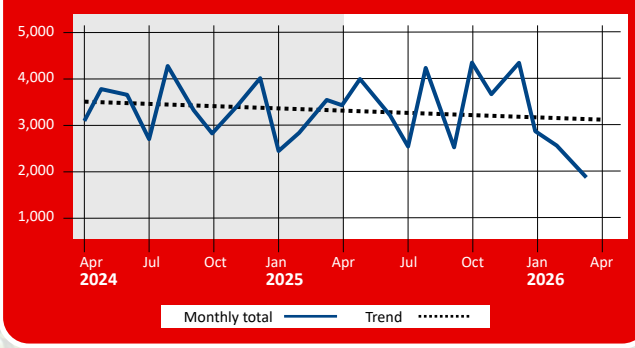
67
Ticket partners referred clients during year

365 (23%)
Number & percentage of clients referred by Purley Cross Centre

219
Aldi gift cards distributed as part of our Christmas *Come Dine With Jesus* project

61
Children gifted a toy and a chocolate selection box under the *Toys For Joy* scheme

Meals provided Apr 2024 - Mar 2026



Items donated Apr 2024 - Mar 2026

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ABOUT PURLEY FOOD HUB

435,000 meals supplied for 48,000 people in 13 years

We are a food bank set up 13 years ago by the churches of Purley and Kenley to give emergency support to people struggling to put enough food on the table for them and their family.

Since 2013 we have provided food for more than 48,000 people - equivalent to nearly 435,000 meals.

We are based at Purley United Reformed Church in Purley town centre and supply food parcels on Wednesday mornings to clients from across Purley, Coulsdon, South Croydon and Waddon.

Our clients are referred by agencies such as Croydon Council, Purley Cross Centre, mental health services and GP surgeries.

We work closely with the Food Stops at Old Lodge Lane Baptist Church, Purley, and St Francis Church, Selsdon, where many clients go on to for extra support after receiving our emergency parcels.

Food and money are kindly donated to us by local churches, schools, community organisations, businesses and supermarkets as well as by many families and individuals.

Our monthly list of the food, toiletries and household essentials most needed by our clients is posted on our website and on social media or we can email it to you direct with our newsletter.

You can contact us by:

- **Email at purleyfoodhub@gmail.com**
- **Phone or text on 07546 635295**
- **Or via our website purleyfoodhub.net.**

You can also follow us on social media:

On January 1st each year we update the main picture on our website home page with a selection of pictures from the year just gone. These are the folks in our image for 2026:

1 Packers Mandy, Lesley, Nicola and Carolyn.

2 Former volunteer Alison, aged 103, (front left) with residents and friends of Southern Oaks Purley Knoll.

3 Volunteer Lynn selects items from the shelves.

4 General Manager Rachel and Assistant Oli from David Lloyd Club off Purley Way with their newly installed donation baskets.

5 Food Hub Chair Trevor and Admin Support volunteer Steve joined a mass lobby of MPs on ending food poverty.

6 Supporters from energy support company DNV with volunteers Ian, Sarah, Jess, Andrea, Zahra, Bridget and Rachael.

7 Boys from Form 9M at The John Fisher School, Purley, on a visit to the Food Hub.

8 Cumnor House School for Girls was one of 24 schools and nurseries which donated Harvest food collections.

9 Shelf stackers Jim, June, Clive, Jackie, Kevin, Rebecca and Yvonne.