

### A note from the Chairman

It is a privilege for me as Chairman of Dunstable Foodbank to welcome you all to the first edition of this newsletter, which we hope to publish quarterly in future!

I have been involved in the work of the Foodbank since its inception and been the Vice Chairman of the Board for the past seven years.

We have all been living through the most challenging of times and I am proud to be part of an organisation which has made such a difference to the lives of so many families in Dunstable and the surrounding villages. So, on behalf of the Trustees I would like to say a heartfelt 'thank you' to you all for your time, effort and hard work, which has been such a blessing to our community.

May God bless you and strengthen and keep you as we look forward to the future.

*Clive Cook*

*Chairman of Dunstable Foodbank*

### A Season of Change

It's harvest time, and Autumn is always a season of change. As many of you will know, these past few months have seen a lot of changes in our Foodbank – with the sad passing of Dunstable Foodbank founder Alan Sutton, and of Dorothy Harman who served faithfully as an administrator in the Warehouse. We celebrate the lives of both Alan and Dorothy, and continue to keep their families in our thoughts and prayers.



*Alan was the founder of Dunstable Foodbank: an amazing man who worked tirelessly to make a difference in the lives of so many. A donation was made from Dunstable Foodbank in Alan's memory, towards sending*

*'Alan the Ambulance' to a community in rural Africa; a project supported by Alan's family and church community.*



### Safeguarding

Safeguarding is important to us at Dunstable Foodbank. The work we do often means that we are in contact with vulnerable adults and children so it's essential that all volunteers understand what to do in the event of a concern or a disclosure. A copy of our Safeguarding Policy is available at each Distribution Centre and training has taken place throughout October. If you missed this, please talk to your Team Leader / Manager to find out what Safeguarding training requirements are required.

### Details of Foodbank Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs):

- **Ricky Turner (DSL & Foodbank Trustee): 01582 528485**
- **Stephen Brevitt (Secondary DSL & Foodbank Trustee): 01582 606031 or 01582 602215**

You can also contact Ricky and Steve at [safeguarding@dunstable.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@dunstable.foodbank.org.uk) if you have any queries or safeguarding concerns related to Foodbank.

More recently, Jemma Watkeys has taken over the role of Operations Manager, following in the footsteps of Mike Pittam, who retired from the role after 7 years! We can't thank Mike enough for his dedication and the incredible work he has done over the years to advance the work of the Foodbank in Dunstable, Houghton Regis and the surrounding villages – we wish him a fun and restful retirement!



*Pupils from Edlesborough Primary Academy made cards to donate along with their Harvest food donations!*

### Harvest Donations & Collections

Schools and Supermarkets have been donating generously over the last few weeks as Harvest festivals and collections have been underway! We've been blown away by their support and are incredibly grateful. Many of our volunteers have spoken at local schools and community groups as part of local Harvest events, and our Van has been making the rounds to pick up boxes and crates of donations for our Warehouse volunteers to weigh, date, sort and pack in to boxes ready to be given out to those in need in the coming weeks! It's been a busy few weeks!

One group of pupils even visited our Warehouse to drop off their donations and helped us by dating and sorting each item! A huge thank you to everyone who has given, collected, dropped off, sorted and helped in *any* way through this Harvest season! We couldn't do what we do without our brilliant team of Warehouse volunteers – we appreciate you all!



*Thank you to the staff & customers at B&M who donated around 1000 boxes of Maltesers for us to share with our clients over the weeks leading up to Christmas!*



### Did you know...?

**Dunstable Foodbank has given out over forty tonnes of food so far this year, feeding more than 1700 adults and almost 1500 children since January 2021.**

We know that we are incredibly privileged to be able to support our local community in this way, but wouldn't it be great if people didn't need help from a Foodbank? Many of our voucher-referral partners, such as Citizen's Advice and the Salvation Army, are supporting clients with advice and help regarding the circumstances that led to them needing food support in the hope that one day, they won't need to rely on a Foodbank like ours. **Isn't it great that we can offer more than food? Perhaps we can offer hope, too?**

### Distribution Centres

Throughout the pandemic, all three of our Distribution Centres have remained open, following guidelines and restrictions to keep both our volunteers and our clients safe. St Augustine's and Christ Church are once again able to serve refreshments to our visitors, and the team at New Life are very much looking forward to the New Year, when hopefully they will be able to welcome people in for teas and coffees again, too. Our amazing volunteers in each Centre do more than just give out food parcels - they also signpost people to support agencies to make sure they are getting the help they need; offer a listening ear; make excellent cups of coffee; make emergency delivery runs; provide clients with 'extras' when they're available, such as toiletries, SIM cards, fresh fruit & vegetables and at times, even clothes! Our team of Delivery Drivers have also worked incredibly hard throughout the pandemic, picking up food parcels from the DCs to deliver food to clients who can't reach one of our Centres. Our DC and Delivery volunteers really are a wonderful bunch and are a blessing to our organisation.

Thank you!

### Soup, Glorious Soup!

Recently, we've had a surplus of certain items in the Warehouse (soup and pasta to name a few!). If we can't get through this surplus quick enough, we do our best to make sure that it can be passed on to families who need it, before it reaches its best before date so that it doesn't go to waste. That's why, over the last few months, our Warehouse Team has arranged for excess stock to be shared with other food providers who need it, such as Euston Foodbank, Northampton Foodbank, Leighton Buzzard Foodbank and other contacts in surrounding areas who are working to support Afghan refugees. We know it's important to give freely as we received to help those who need it most. It's a team effort and we love that!

**Our Warehouse is busy with stock coming in and going out, all the time! At the moment, current stock levels weigh equivalent to around 15,000 meals!**

**(You'll be glad to hear it's not *all* baked beans!)**



### Items we currently need:

- Tea
- Sponge puddings
- Pot Noodles
- 500g bags of sugar
- UHT Milk
- Fruit juice

### Village Carnival



For many years now, St. Mary's Church, Eaton Bray with Edlesborough has held a village carnival on the Green in Edlesborough. Despite Covid restrictions and a change of date, this year was no exception with many people from local villages and beyond turning out to enjoy a day full of fun!

The Carnival this year, with the theme of 'Heroes', chose to donate a proportion of the money raised to Dunstable Foodbank; £1600 has been gratefully received by the Foodbank and will go a long way to helping the Foodbank achieve their aim of helping those in our community in their times of need. We extend our thanks and appreciate to the carnival committee for this generous donation.

## Citizens Advice Project

Over the last 12 months, we've been running a project with Citizens Advice, grant-funded by the Trussell Trust. The grant has enabled Citizens Advice to employ a dedicated Foodbank Adviser to offer our clients advice and support for the circumstances that led to them needing food support. Throughout this year, 177 individual clients have received support from Citizens Advice through a direct referral from volunteers in our Distribution Centres. We're so grateful for the specialist support that Citizens Advice can offer to help every person we refer out of food poverty. We're also excited to announce that the Trussell Trust have offered to extend the grant meaning that we can continue the project for a further 3 years! A copy of our 12-month report is available for those who wish to read it; please let your Manager know and we can get a copy to you!

*A generous person will prosper;  
whoever refreshes others will be  
refreshed.*      **Proverbs 11:25**

### Dunstable Foodbank Key Contacts:

Clive Cook, Chairman of the Board of Trustees

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Jemma Watkeys, Operations Manager

[jemmawatkeys@dunstable.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:jemmawatkeys@dunstable.foodbank.org.uk)

Mick Freeman, Treasurer

[mickfreeman@dunstable.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:mickfreeman@dunstable.foodbank.org.uk)

Mick Hodsdon, Warehouse Manager

[warehouse@dunstable.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:warehouse@dunstable.foodbank.org.uk)

Ricky Turner / Stephen Brevitt, Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Lead

[safeguarding@dunstable.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@dunstable.foodbank.org.uk)

**DUNSTABLE FOODBANK**  
**HELPING LOCAL**  
**PEOPLE IN CRISIS**

## Other ways to get involved:

- **Voucher administrator at New Life.**  
We're looking for a volunteer to help at our New Life DC on Mondays (1:30-4pm) & Wednesdays (9:30am-12pm). The role includes talking with Foodbank clients and processing vouchers using our online system. Please contact Jemma to find out more.
- **Delivery Drivers, January – March 2022.**  
If you would like to be on the rota to help deliver food to clients who are unable to reach one of our Centres, please let Jemma know before Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December.
-  **Join our Facebook group –** search for 'Dunstable Food Bank & Surrounding Villages' and join the page to receive updates. Share the page with friends, family and neighbours to spread the word about Dunstable Foodbank!

**If you know of someone in need of emergency food assistant,** feel free to pass on the number for the Foodbank Adviser at Citizens Advice: 07367 457834 – where they can receive specialist advice and support along with a foodbank voucher if required.

Dunstable foodbank is run in partnership with local churches, facilitated by Dunstable Foodbank.

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