

## A note from Steve Brevitt (Major), Trustee

*Hello! Welcome to the Spring edition, isn't this a lovely season?* Even as the celebration of Easter came and went, it was possible to see signs of new life and new growth emerging in nature all around us (even the weather is doing its best to co-operate, but don't speak too soon!)

You will see from this edition that we celebrate growth and new life within Foodbank, too, with the opening of a new distribution centre based at Houghton Regis Baptist Church. Having had cause to visit the other day, I can speak first-hand of the kind and compassionate service they are offering clients who come their way. This edition clearly shows not only how busy Dunstable Foodbank continues to be, but also how generous people are in supporting what we do. While we are sad that this kind of help is needed in our community today, we are pleased to be able to do something that makes a practical difference to those in need.

Finally, this is the last opportunity I will have to greet you in this way. In July, my wife and I will be moving to Swansea in South Wales to take up new appointments there with The Salvation Army. What a privilege it has been to serve as a trustee of Dunstable Foodbank for the last 6 years and to see so much progress take place during that time. I wish you all the very best as you continue your much needed and much appreciated work.

*A big thank you to Steve for his service and dedication to the Foodbank and to the community!*



## Houghton Regis Distribution Centre Opens

In January, we opened a new Distribution Centre in Houghton Regis. In just 2 months, the new centre has provided meals for 320 adults and children which demonstrates the increasing need for support in our community. The centre, based at Houghton Regis Baptist Church on Hammersmith Gardens, runs with a brilliant group of new volunteers who have certainly hit the ground running with meeting clients, packing up food parcels and getting to know all the background information needed to run a Foodbank centre.



Official opening & the Foodbank sign is out!

(L-R) Stuart (Trustee), Tim, Keith, Pam, Hannah, Gaynor & Anne-Louise

## Meet some of the team!



Tim & Sally providing a warm welcome for visitors.



The uniforms have arrived!

(L-R) Keith, Hannah, Mary, Sally, Anne-Louise & Trish



Pam showing a comfy space



Mary at the extras table.

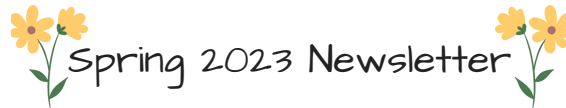
## A message from Anne-Louise, Distribution Centre Manager at HRBC

The new Distribution Centre in Houghton Regis opened its doors on 19th January and we have been going from strength to strength with new volunteers joining our team and residents of Houghton Regis using the foodbank. We have also been supported by Morrisons, the Town council and Lime Tree Academy school, all who have donated food and household items.

We are also thrilled to be part of the Trussell Trust network and the Dunstable Foodbank team, who have made us very welcome. A big thanks to Jemma who has supported us throughout and taught all we needed to know.



# Dunstable Foodbank



## Our Distribution Centres

As well as our new centre at Houghton Regis Baptist Church, our centres in Dunstable and Houghton Regis continue to feed record numbers of people. Here's a few photos of them in action!

At the Distribution Centres, clients are welcomed by volunteers and invited to have a drink whilst their vouchers are processed.

Caroline from St Augustine's shares what a typical session at a Distribution Centre involves:

The first job of the day is taking the empty boxes to the entrance hall ready for collection, having a dolly (set of wheels) makes this an easier task. Volunteers then make sure that the extras table is well-stocked for clients to choose from - the extras table is made up of a variety of foods including items that wouldn't normally be packed into a standard food parcel, some fresh fruit and veg, toiletries or other items that we have a surplus of in the Warehouse.

We are regularly accompanied by one of the Triage & Casework Assistants from the Citizens Advice Bureau so that clients can have an immediate chat with her and make an appointment for additional help. When clients arrive, they are offered a drink whilst one of our managers spends time with them, going through the details on their Foodbank voucher and very often hearing their stories.

We aim to help everyone feel at ease, supported and listened to, so we hopefully raise a smile and even share some laughter.




Dunstable Foodbank provides 3-day emergency food parcels to residents living in LU5 and LU6, who have been referred from a local support agency. Referral agency details can be found here: <https://dunstable.foodbank.org.uk/get-help/referrals>

**Opening times & locations:**

- ★ **New Life Church**  
80a Houghton Road  
Houghton Regis  
LU5 5AD  
Mon 2-4pm & Weds 10am-12pm
- ★ **The Way, Christ Church**  
West Street  
Dunstable  
LU6 1SX  
Tues 2:30-4:30pm & Fri 12:30-2:30pm
- ★ **St Augustine's Church**  
Oakwood Avenue  
Dunstable  
LU5 4AR  
Thurs 9:30-11:30am
- ★ **Houghton Regis Baptist Church**  
Hammersmith Gardens  
Houghton Regis  
LU5 5RG  
Thurs 1:30-3:30pm




**In 2022, Dunstable Foodbank provided food for 6112 people - a staggering increase of 47% from 2021. Nationally, Foodbanks in the Trussell Trust network saw a 37% increase in the same period.**





# Dunstable Foodbank

Spring 2023 Newsletter

## A visit from the Lord Lieutenant

At the start of March, Susan Lousada, His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire visited us at our Foodbank Centre at St. Augustine's Church. Susan was able to see first hand how clients receive their food parcels and gain an insight into the range of support we offer to clients across Dunstable and Houghton Regis where the need is rising. We are thankful to the Lord Lieutenant for spending the morning with us.



*"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."*

**John 15:5**



A big thank you to the team at Just Go Motorhomes and the RV Super Centre for their ongoing support this year.

Members of Just Go's staff team joined our volunteers in the warehouse throughout February to help with sorting and packing parcels. The company have committed to fundraising for us throughout 2023 as their local Trussell Trust Foodbank, and hope to donate ambient foods left by customers hiring their Motorhomes - preventing waste, and helping us to fill food parcels.

## Local donors help clients have a happy Easter!



**A donation from the new Heron Foods store in Houghton Regis**



**Seabrook Nursery collected chocolate eggs & food**



**Will from Foresters Financial, donating almost a tonne of food!**



**Easter eggs donated by the staff at Arjo**

So many people in the community have been generous over Easter, donating Easter Eggs and chocolate goodies for us to provide for clients. Individual donations as well as gifts from local and national companies have enabled us to include Easter treats with food parcels. Thank you so much to everyone who have collected, donated - we're eggstremely grateful!

**Cost of living support**  
from Central Bedfordshire Council

Central Beds Council have, once again, provided Dunstable Foodbank with supermarket vouchers and funding for top up food purchases, as part of the Government's Household Support Fund for us to provide for vulnerable people who are referred to our Foodbank for support. We have been able to bless **366 unique households** with these supermarket vouchers over the last 4 months!

**Donate Now!**

Mont Blanc!

Support Jon with his #climbforfoodbank today!

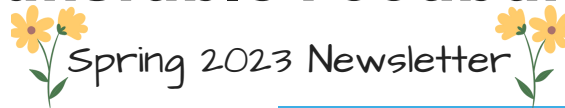
Jon Watkeys (yes, that's Jemma's husband!) is climbing the tallest mountain in the Alps, Mont Blanc, in June and wants to raise £1 for every 4,809 metres of the mountain! All money is being raised for

Dunstable Foodbank. To donate, follow the link to the official GoFundMe page: <https://gofund.me/df5d0897> or scan the QR code with your camera to go straight to the donations page:





# Dunstable Foodbank



## Supermarket Collections

*Did you know...*

Supermarket donations are a double bonus for us? As well as the food donated by the general public at the supermarket, we also get a cash grant of around 17% of the value of the weight donated from the most major local supermarkets, through the Trussell Trust partnership.

*Did you know...*

When we're running low on certain foods in the warehouse, we use the money from these cash grants to purchase foods. This year we have had to make an increasing number of urgent top up purchases.

*Did you know...*

Last year, we were supported by an amazing 86 volunteers and supermarket staff at the summer and winter collections who helped us with collecting 4.8 tonnes of food over 6 days!

## Dunstable Foodbank Key Contacts

General enquiries

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

Clive Cook, Chairman of the Board of Trustees

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

Dudley Peacham, Treasurer

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Ricky Turner / Stephen Brevitt, Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Lead

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Stuart Douglas, H&S Lead

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Jemma Watkeys, Operations Manager

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Sue Cordell, Operations Assistant

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Angela Dunford, Warehouse Manager

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

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

## What's in the Warehouse?

Our Warehouse is still currently very well-stocked with: baked beans, dry pasta & breakfast cereals.

### Current most-needed items:

- Long life milk
- Instant mashed potato
- Tinned fish (e.g. tuna, mackerel, salmon)
- Fruit juice (long life)
- Sponge puddings
- Jam / peanut butter
- Carrier bags (new or used but excellent condition)

## Other ways to get involved

### • Volunteer opportunities:

- **Fundraising Champion** The Board of Trustees are looking to recruit a new Trustee with experience of fundraising & grant applications.
- **Collecting Fresh Food** a new volunteer role, involving collecting organised donations of fresh food & delivering them straight to our Foodbank Centres. Weekdays throughout the summer.
- **Supermarket collections.** Morrisons (21st-22nd July). Tesco (date TBC - watch this space!)



If you or someone you know is interested in any of the above, please contact us on [info@dunstable.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@dunstable.foodbank.org.uk) for details.

- **Like and follow our social media pages** to receive updates! Share the page with friends, family and neighbours to spread the word about who we are and what we do:



[facebook.com/dunstablefoodbank](https://facebook.com/dunstablefoodbank)

[instagram.com/dunstablefoodbank](https://instagram.com/dunstablefoodbank)



If you know of someone who is in need of **emergency food assistance**, please encourage them to contact one of the many local support agencies we work with who can refer them to our Foodbank. Many of these agencies can also offer specialist advice and support for the challenging circumstances they may be facing. Find details for our main referral partners on our website: [dunstable.foodbank.org.uk/get-help/referrals/](https://dunstable.foodbank.org.uk/get-help/referrals/)