

August 2014

Welcome to the first newsletter for Foodshare

We would just like to share with you some of the fantastic things which are happening due to the fantastic support of all of you.

FOOD SERVED

Last month, we provided food to this amount of people:

Food provided	People	Meals
Homeless Meals	226	226
Foodbank	325	9,750
Sandwich Run	112	112
Community Meals	51	51
Totals	714	10,139

How amazing is that? Thank you everyone.

WHAT WE DO

We currently have four separate activities. We started the charity in 2010, doing Homeless Meals. Actually, the three course home-cooked Thursday evening meals are served to people who are homeless, isolated, elderly or disadvantaged. We also cook for people being supported by the Domestic Abuse Shelter.

On Monday and Friday evenings, the Sandwich Run provides soup and sandwiches for people who are homeless. We work in partnership with the Salvation Army, who do a fantastic job at making us and our guests feel welcome.

Throughout the week, we distribute Foodbank parcels to around 100 or so families. We distribute three carrier bags of non-perishable food, which we estimate contains around 12 meals for a family of four. We also provide a £5 voucher for fresh fruit and vegetables, to help ensure our recipients get fresh nutrients. Sainsburys have recently started giving us food that is close to its



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use-by date - largely fresh fruit and vegetables, and copious amounts of bread, to give out from our King Street Centre on Saturday mornings

Once a month, and sometimes more, we join up with Maidenhead Mosque to provide Community Meals, cooked meals for people in poverty in the community. This is where we go out into different parts of Maidenhead, focusing on meals for families with children who may be uncomfortable or unable to get to the Homeless meals.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

During a supermarket collection about a year ago, we realised that some potential donors were ignoring us because they thought we were trying to sell them kitchens.

We have since started using the following names:
The charity is called Foodshare. We still use the name Open Kitchen, but are phasing the name out to try to avoid confusion.

We used to call the service to provide non-perishable meals Foodshare. We have started to call the service Foodbank, which most people call it anyway.

COMMUNICATING WITH EACH OTHER

We are trying to improve how we communicate with each other in the Foodshare Centre in King Street.

One of our sorters, Catie S, recommended we start a new Communications Book. Please put in here any information that is important for others to know about. Please look at it from time to time, for messages from others that may be relevant to what you are doing.

Please also include any comments you wish to share with us, good or bad. We can only learn from our mistakes and improve when told something isn't right. Who better to hear these things from? Our eyes and ears and hands on the ground.



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VALUES-BASED CHARITY

We are slowly moving towards being a Value-based Charity. Wondering what that is? It is a way for us to clarify who we are, what we believe in and how we treat people (volunteers, recipients, donors, referrers etc).

Everything we do is entirely driven by our volunteers. It is all about our working together to help people in need. Becoming a Values-based Charity will help us improve what we do, ensuring we get feedback from everyone who engages with us on what they need and what more we can do.

We will be holding meetings over the next few months. Come along and hear all about it. A huge part of the meetings is hear your desires and ideas for the charity, to help direct what we do. We value your input into this charity. TOGETHER we are making a difference.

Meeting dates will be circulated shortly.

SUPERMARKET COLLECTIONS

The majority of our food comes from supermarket collections. We collect food roughly once a month, from different supermarkets in Maidenhead.

We are having to spend around £4,000 each month on food for Foodbank. If we can ramp up supermarket collections, will be able to become more self-sufficient.

Please consider signing up to collect. It only takes one hour a month, on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday, at a time that suits you. You can sign up at: foodshare.today/supermarket_rota



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BIRTHDAY PARTY

In October, we have a birthday party which we hold with our AGM. We will circulate the date and location shortly.

It is a great chance to meet other volunteers, and to get an update on what we do.

It is also a rare chance for the charity to thank you in person for everything you do for the charity, and specifically for the people we help.

This year, we have the chance to say a very sad farewell to Father Tom who without his ability to see our vision when Sue Brett originally went to see him looking for a venue for the first ever meal, Foodshare would not have been the charity it is today.

DOCUMENTARY

We are seriously considering doing a documentary on poverty, focused on Maidenhead. The purpose is to raise awareness of the reality of poverty, and to draw attention to the terrible consequences of people in poverty being made to feel ashamed of their awful situation. The hope is that we can change perceptions of poverty in a way that make it easier for people in poverty to climb out of it.

If you want to participate in any way, or have any ideas or suggestions for us, please let us know.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Thank you ALL again for your valuable time and huge hearts and wanting to make a difference to those here in Maidenhead.

Sue, Joan, Tom, Joan, Nigel