

Sustainability Matters

Community Outreach – Farnborough foodbank

May 2018



ADCW has donated some of the funds raised by our 'hotshots' from the excellent Salisbury Plain tank experience to the Farnborough foodbank.

We visited the foodbank to see how this money will be used. Farnborough foodbank is currently located in some old warehousing in the former Browning Barracks site, less than a mile from Aspire House, on land now operated by Grainger Homes.

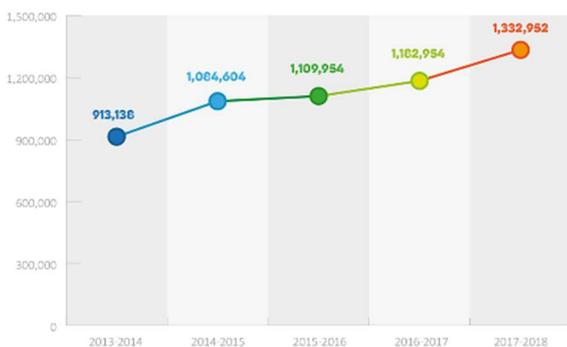
We were welcomed by Colin Williams who manages the foodbank. The first thing that struck me was the compassion and commitment of the volunteers at the foodbank who surrender so much of their time to work there.

Colin explained that there is a real need for the foodbank in the Aldershot area and how demand had increased over recent years. The foodbank depends on charitable donations to exist. Financial donations cover costs for rent, power, vehicle fuel and maintenance as well as the separate food donations themselves.

The Farnborough foodbank is partnered with The Trussell Trust, an anti-poverty charity which runs a network of 428 foodbanks across the UK. The Trussell Trust partners with volunteers from communities, churches, schools and businesses to open foodbanks. The Trust provides Farnborough foodbank with an operating manual and all the computer software, contacts and data to run a foodbank in an efficient and co-ordinated manner. At Farnborough foodbank volunteers from local churches played a key role in its initial set-up.

The Trussell Trust also gives a voice for foodbanks and reporting the disturbing national trends which have been in recent news. Between 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2018, the Trussell Trust's foodbank network distributed 1,332,952 three-day emergency food supplies to people in crisis, a 13% increase on the previous year. 484,026 of these went to children. This is a higher increase than the previous financial year, when foodbank use was up by about 7%.

NUMBER OF THREE-DAY EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPLIES GIVEN BY TRUSSELL TRUST FOODBANKS



TYPES OF FAMILIES MOST LIKELY TO NEED A FOODBANK



People referred to foodbanks are more likely to have dependent children (70%) than the UK average (42%).



Families with children are particularly likely to fall into crisis, making up over half of foodbank users.



Single parent households are particularly at risk of needing a foodbank – they are almost two times more prevalent among households at foodbanks compared to the general population.

How the Farnborough foodbank works

The Farnborough warehouse operates a fairly complex logistical process. Non-perishable in-date food and toiletries are donated by the public from a range of places, including schools, churches and business, as well as supermarkets. These are collected and brought to the Farnborough warehouse. The foodbank operates a van, itself donated, for these collections and also deliveries. Sometimes there are surprises, including most recently a lorry load of tins delivered from a company providing catering for a film shoot at Farnborough airport.



Plate 1 Farnborough foodbank distribution van

All incoming packages are first weighed and then moved to segregated storage areas, dependent on the commodity and their use-by dates. Volunteers must be well versed in manual handling techniques and HS&E good practice because this is not a modern, mechanised warehouse. An inventory is maintained to ensure that materials are distributed before their use-by dates. Items are sorted into emergency food parcels ready for distribution, using big sorting tables and many shopping bags, normally by volunteers working in groups.

Care professionals such as health visitors, schools and social workers identify people in crisis and issue them with a foodbank voucher. The voucher entitles them to receive a foodbank parcel of three days' nutritionally balanced, non-perishable food. The food parcels are then driven by Farnborough foodbank to local distribution points where the vouchers can be exchanged for food and a detailed inventory of the food distributed is kept and returned to the foodbank.



Plates 2 and 3 Farnborough foodbank store rooms