



Emergency food for local people in crisis

Newsletter

May/June 2020

Dear Supporter,

What a difference a virus makes!

Over the last 3 months we at Hart Foodbank have experienced our biggest challenge in 9 years of operations. We noticed an increase of 100% in our numbers of clients in March, when the effects of the coronavirus began to hit hard. We had many new clients, especially families facing feeding their children at home. We had 30% fewer volunteers as many of our regulars were shielding. We had 80% fewer donation points as all places of worship and offices closed. As people were furloughed, we recruited some as new temporary volunteers; trained by our experienced helpers. We have lovely hardworking new teams following social distancing and wearing protective gloves.

As the public stripped the supermarket shelves we received corporate and charitable donations, set up new supermarket collection points, bought food online increasing our stock to cope with the extra demand. As people were reluctant to leave their homes, we increased our "out of hours" phone and delivery support and sadly had to reduce contact with clients to a friendly wave. As many of our usual referral agents had to work from home, we set up several of them on E-referrals using online vouchers. We also teamed up with Hart District Council - Hart Hub so that when people phoned the helpline, the call operators could refer them to our foodbank. The best news is when we hear from a client: "We received our food parcel today and we are over the moon with what you have found for us. Thanks is just too small a word. We cannot put into words how grateful we are."

THANK YOU!

I want to say a big THANK YOU to our volunteers, food donors, financial donors and referral agencies for all your hard work, contributions, generosity and flexibility. Someone wrote to me and said: "I'm so happy to donate this food. My daughters set up a foodbank stall outside our home. They've been making and selling loom bands to raise some money too." Thanks to our clients for their patience as we continue to provide for them at this difficult period. If you know of anyone who is in need of emergency food please visit our website to find the nearest branch and phone numbers or contact hart.foodbk@hotmail.co.uk and we'll help you through the crisis.

We still need to stay safe

Thank you and best wishes

Christine Siddall

Foodbank Manager

www.hart.foodbank.org.uk