



It seems a long time ago since our last update & Christmas has been & gone!!!! Nicky and her team have done an amazing job packing 190 Hampers, which were given out to almost 500 individuals! (69 singles, 32 x 2's, 39 x 3's, 27 x 4's, 15 x 5's & 8 x 6+!)

God Continues to work miracles & answers prayers before we even ask and we are so grateful for the continued supply of food, time, skills & money, inspite of the cost of living challenges.

Read on for more details:



Karen Kendall – Project Lead

Referral Statistics: In the first 11 weeks of the year, we have seen a 38% increase (comparing 2022 to 2024) in the number of individuals we have fed. During these 11 weeks in 2024, we have provided at least 2,298 days of food which equates to at least 6,894 meals.

Thankfully we haven't had quite the level of demand that we experienced during the 2023 summer months. But this may be in part because of the distribution of the Government's Household Support Fund which is aimed at anyone who's vulnerable or cannot pay for essentials.

I am delighted to report that in the recent budget the Chancellor gave a last-minute reprieve to all concerned by extending this Fund for 6 more months.

In March alone already we have provided 6 Household packs & 3 New mum packs, the Household packs mostly go to individuals moving into emergency accommodation but also a number of Ukraine families moving out of their sponsors homes into independent accommodation.

A few recent messages of thanks:

From a referrer: *You are AMAZING. Thank you so much. Can I ask, how do you take donations etc? I wanted to support you in some way.....*

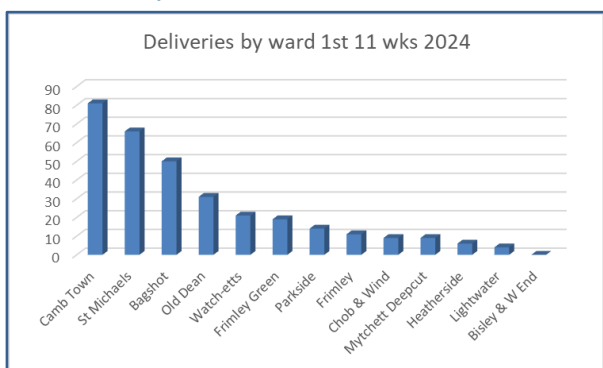
... another referrer: *Thank you very much for your support the mum is delighted with her baby pack.*

From a client: *I wanted to send this email as a very very big thank you for the delivery parcel today.*

I have never been in a position to have to rely on Food Bank items before but with how my life is presently I am so overwhelmed and happy and unpacking the items today bought tears to my eyes I really appreciate and its means a lot to me to have received these items, I am very grateful and would like to say a Big Thank You once again 🙏

From a Client after a stroke: *... again you people make it hard for me to find enough words to say thank you for the Microwave to make my life easier... stay blessed...*

Town Ward continues to be the top ward in terms of delivery numbers, closely followed by St. Michael's.



Citizens Advice Surrey Heath (CA-SH) continue to be our biggest referrer.

24 hr Emergency bags: Demand for these bags by has gone down a little recently for some reason. But we have developed some additional bags at the request of CA-SH so now we also have **Family packs** which have enough in for 4 individuals and also **hygiene packs** for the homeless. Notably however stock in the warehouse is lower than this time last year – (I have not known us NOT to have crates of tinned tomatoes in our overflow area!) For a complete list of what we need we maintain a “Shopping list” on our website here: www.thebesomincamberley.com/shoppinglist

Time Givers update: In our last report we were encouraging folk to consider becoming time-givers and now I am delighted to say we have had to close the door on applications for Drivers & Packers. We have a number of people in training or who have recently been trained! We have been approached by many from Lakeside Hotel & recently 4 more have joined us, mostly from South America. Sadly for us but hopefully joyfully for them they cannot stay with us long as they get permission to remain in the UK and get

jobs or move away, they are a blessing to us whilst they are part of the team. We have also appointed a New Trustee Secretary Caroline Osbourne from St Peter's Frimley; this is a huge relief to the Trustees. If you have administration skills to offer, we would still like to hear from you!

Visitors: We have had quite a number of visitors over recent months, councillors, SHBC staff, funders, new referrers & folk interested in applying to be time-givers. Most notably in February we were delighted to receive the current SHBC Mayor, Pat Tedder and her consort Libby:



Picture taken by Libby, left to right Karen, Nicky (Shift Lead) & Juliette (Thursday Team) & Margaret & Greg Trustees.

Schools Breakfast club: We continue to deliver crates of breakfast provisions to Kings International College breakfast club, & **welcome contributions!** If you would like to help us with facilitating this, please let us know. We would be particularly interested in anyone who has children at the school!



SPOTLIGHT Greg Scott: I first came across Besom when managing the operation during lockdown, when all time-givers were isolating, and we move the warehouse to High Cross. It was a fantastic experience, working with a brilliant team of brave (no vaccine at that time!) volunteers including Jane B (the only original Besom team member), Lesley, Peta and 1 or 2 others that are still time-givers today. After fourteen weeks I supported Mary and Grace in moving operations back to Bridge Road and ensuring Covid compliant procedures were in place to protect returning time-givers as much as possible.

There were some that felt that the team would be unable to maintain operations through that next period and the increased demand during the second & subsequent phases but with continuing support from Jayne Boitout @ SHBC, maintaining Sainsbury deliveries, the team proved them wrong and met every demand and challenge.

My role now is primarily chief shopper to ensure we maintain stock levels to meet increased demand and step in as a backup driver/shift lead/jack of all trades when I can.

Though retired, I also keep myself busy as a Rotarian and Chair of Trustees at Citizens Advice Surrey Heath, another brilliant charity, with a very similar ethos to Camberley Besom, providing outstanding support to the local community.

Beyond my volunteering, I am married to Julie, have 2 adult children, both married and we have 3 amazing grandsons aged 4, nearly 4 and 2½ who we love spending time with.

We celebrate our 40th wedding anniversary this year and have set time aside for our love of travelling, with trips planned to The Azores, Peru, Ecuador & Galapagos Islands and culminating in a family trip to Tuscany.

I am privileged to have the time and opportunity to work collaboratively with a number of wonderful teams and individuals throughout Surrey Health in support of their communities.



Branding: You might have noticed that the Besom Network has changed our Branding (which I have reflected at the top of this update and also partly on our website & Facebook pages). Over time they have removed the Strap line “Sweep way suffering”, then the broom finally the place name! The latest logo is more relevant to majority of other Besoms that do painting!! I am not in a rush to update the website again and in fact I occasionally still see the original black & grey logo around the churches. If you would like to replace the original logo on any of your publicity please contact me to discuss.



Waitrose Collection:

As most of you will know, 3 times a year we have a collection day at Waitrose Bagshot. On Friday last week we had a very successful time there and as I write there is a stock of Easter Eggs ready to go out in the food parcels over the next 2 weeks leading up to Easter. Our next Friday collection is the 13th September if you would like to be part of the team on that day & can do any 1 or 2 hour slot 9am - 3pm let us know. Peta King (Tuesday Shift Lead) who organises this will be delighted to hear from you!



*Picture taken by Neil Lyddiatt (Trustee) and featuring Andrew who was having his hip replaced the next morning!
Now that's commitment!*

Current Shopping List:

- tinned meat meals
- tinned fruit & vegetables
- tinned pulses/tomatoes
- jars of sauce (pasta/curry/Chinese)
- custard & rice pudding
- long life milk
- squash & long-life fruit juice
- jam or marmalade
- cereal

Special dietary requirements:

- Halal
- vegan/vegetarian
- gluten free
- diabetic

Cleaning materials & toiletries:

- Bleach
- Surface spray
- Washing powder/tabs
- Antiperspirant/deodorant
- Shampoo/Conditioner

Please note we have a good stock of: pasta, baked beans, tinned soup, tuna, tea & toothpaste.

Prayer Thanks & Needs:

1. Thank God for his abundant generosity & for all those that give, be it in "time", "money", "skills" or "things".
2. Pray especially for Shift Leads who have been putting in extra shifts to cover for those who have been on leave or unwell.
3. Pray for a time-giver to help with School breakfast club provision & another with administration skills.
4. Pray for Time-givers currently undergoing medical treatment.
5. Pray for our Trustees to have wisdom in the decisions they take to keep us in line with God's will.
6. Pray for those referred to us, especially many who struggle with mental health.
7. Pray for a balance of donated ambient food stock

🔗 Thank you for reading this – please share it with your church/friends 🔗

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