

# Andover Food Bank



*Providing food for local people in crisis*

## Harvest Festival Collection

Harvest is a time of celebrating and sharing when communities get together and enjoy the fruits of their hard work over the year. It seems appropriate that at this time our local community makes its most generous contribution to the Food Bank.

Over 23 schools and several churches have participated this year in the Food Bank's Harvest Festival Collection. This year an astonishing 3,348kg of food has been donated - a significant increase of 112% over last year's total. This represents 20% of the overall amount of food collected annually by the Food Bank.

Trevor Sleath and Annie Mihell have been kept very busy picking up contributions from all over Andover and its environs and bringing them back to the Food Bank. Liaison with schools has provided useful opportunities to spread the word about the work at Food Bank in talks at morning assemblies or during visits to Alexandra Road.

The Food Bank can be compared to a traditional bank but thankfully one without bailouts, questionable loans or excessive bonuses! There are no loans and food is given free of charge with no penalties. The Food Bank is like the central bank for our community – a store for our food that can be shared with those who need it. The inhabitants of Andover all work together to keep the bank's "credit" high and available to all.



What better time can there be than during the Autumn harvest to remember our sense of community in Andover as we share the harvest with local people who need help.

## Welcome to Trevor

Trevor Sleath joined the Food Bank as Project Co-ordinator in July. Trevor has already forged excellent relationships with the local agencies, schools and Churches and is helping to plan and oversee the continued growth of the Food Bank. You can contact Trevor on 01264 362111 Monday to Friday 9am to 1pm. Trevor or Annie Mihell are happy to talk to local groups about the work of the Food Bank.

# Statistics and information

## Statistics

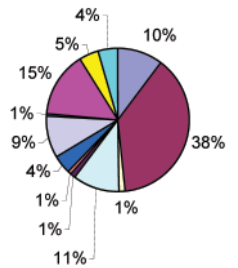
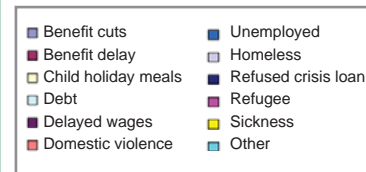
The worsening economy began to put pressure on local residents early in 2008. By October the Andover Food Bank had fed 1340 people, including 456 children. In ten months, more had been helped than in the whole of 2007 when 1205 people were fed.

The main reason for referral continue to be financial – with the highest reason being benefit delay 38% (an increase on 35% in 2007), low income 15%, debt 11% and benefit cuts 10%. Homelessness has slightly fallen, down to 9% from 12% in 2007.

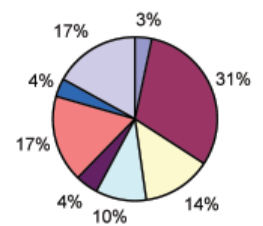
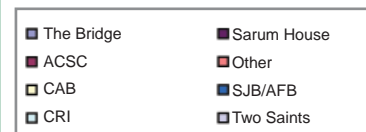
Andover Crisis and Support Centre again referred the largest number of clients. Those from Two Saints increased with the Floating Support Team now reaching a wider area.

A successful Harvest period for food donations means that stocks in the warehouse are currently at good levels, but they need to be. With a difficult economic period ahead we expect referrals to continue to rise. To meet this challenge the Food Bank must receive more food than it gives out each month.

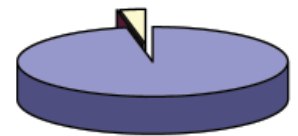
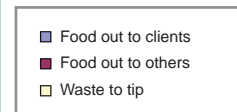
### Crisis Category 2008 Andover



### Referrals 2008 Andover



### Food Distributed 2008 Andover



## Crash Beds

There is a chronic shortage of temporary accommodation for the homeless in Andover. The only available space is currently provided by the Two Saints hostel in Deane Close. The hostel has 18 bedrooms for the single homeless, 7 move-on flats and one room set aside for temporary accommodation.

In this room there are 3 'crash beds' – a set of bunk-beds and a mattress on the floor. Another mattress is provided on the floor in the corridor. Not much you might think, but far better than trying to survive winter weather on a bench, in a shop doorway or under a bridge. Almost every night this accommodation is full to capacity.

Individuals can stay for a maximum of 3 nights but then usually have to leave to make room for others. This rotation is necessary in order to share the accommodation equally among all those in need of shelter. Clients are given full access to a bathroom, TV lounge and laundry facilities. While staying in the 'crash room' individuals are given two meals per day – a 3 course dinner and a breakfast. The cost of the dinner has been funded by donations from the Food Bank. Two Saints are now looking for additional contributions to ensure that they can continue to provide this vital service within the area.

# Company News

## Abel and Cole support Andover Food Bank

In July 2008 Abel and Cole, a national organic food retailer based on the Walworth Estate in Andover, became dedicated supporters of the Food Bank. Every Friday surplus fresh food, in good condition but which would be unsuitable for resale the following Monday, is collected by Trevor Sleath of the Food Bank. Several big boxes of fresh fruit and vegetables are distributed to six hostels and centres in town which provide support and shelter for vulnerable or homeless people.



Keith Abel, founder of the company, who initiated the support on hearing about the Food Bank's work at church, is delighted for the company to contribute. Company policy has always been to seek involvement in the community from which the workforce comes – and as a food retailer Keith can't bear waste! Staff at Abel and Cole have warmly welcomed involvement which sits comfortably with a commitment to give back locally. Keith recognises that as the economic climate worsens this sort of contribution is invaluable.

Trevor reports an increase of over double the amount of fresh food being picked up from Abel and Cole – all of which is of excellent quality. He is able to deliver fresh fruit to drop in centres (where it is a vital source of healthy nourishment for clients in severe need) or vegetables and fruit to hostels where residents have cooking facilities and can incorporate them into their everyday meals.

## How you can support the Andover Food Bank

The Andover Food Bank needs **food, volunteers** to pack and distribute boxes, **administrative support** and **cash** to fund basic running costs. We welcome support from:

### Group Donors

Groups of people at work like the team described above or those who meet for social activities and can organise collections of food or money or can offer their combined support.

### Individual Donors

Any member of the general public who can provide food, time or money

### Corporate Donors

Can help in a wide variety of ways, for example, by giving sponsorship or seconding staff.

## *With thanks...*

To the following businesses for their support in the last 6 months: Abel & Cole, The Andover Advertiser, Andover Practice Nurses Group, Andover Ford, Curves, Lita Life, Petty Wood & Co Ltd, Sainsbury's regional warehouse, Spear Electrical, Tangley Parish and Village Hall, Thompsons, Test Valley Borough Council and Winton Chase. In addition 23 Schools and 15 Christian churches or groups have contributed food or money to the Food Bank.

# Agency Update

## Food for thought: CRI Partnership working at local level

CRI (Crime Reduction Initiative), is a community based service offering support and advice to local substance users and their families. The project offers a range of services such as group work, creative activities, alternative therapies, education, and skills training. These options are designed to enable clients to manage their lifestyle responsibly reducing the impact of substance use on the individual, the family, and the wider community. This harm reduction strategy is envisaged as one component of an integrated treatment journey empowering clients with the means to stabilise their lives, rebuild their relationships, and acquire the confidence and skills required to secure employment and take their places as full and responsible members of society.

CRI is ably assisted in this endeavour by the staff and volunteers of Andover Food Bank who work tirelessly to maintain a supply of food parcels and tins and packet food for use inside the service – not to forget the valuable supply of fresh fruit . This is especially useful for service users that may have weekend contact with their children. The donations from the Food bank enable CRI to offer a lifeline to the poorest and most vulnerable members of its community, many living “chaotic” and “nomadic” lifestyles. Not only do such acts of human kindness make a real difference to those struggling to cope with financial difficulties, or an unexpected bill, but also the knowledge that someone cares, and that society has not completely given up on those on its margins is also an invaluable source of spiritual solace and hope in the darkness. This is perhaps the greatest gift Andover Food Bank has to offer.



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through purposeful lives

## Dates for your diary

Saturday 29th November 2008 – food collection at Tesco  
Saturday 6th December 2008 – food collection at Asda  
Tuesday 23rd December 2008 – Concert and Carols  
Saturday 31st January & 1st February 2009 - Slum Survivor (Homeless Weekend)  
Saturday 7th March 2009 – food collection at Asda  
6th to 18th April 2009 – display at Andover Library

The first Andover Food Bank Conference is planned for Spring 2009

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with

