



## ALTON FOODBANK GETS READY FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

Alton foodbank was established in 2011 by the Butts Church and then a few years later developed into a separate charity (Alton Christian Care Ltd) that is supported by all the churches in the area together with local people and businesses. In November 2021, the foodbank will have been operating for ten years. Alton Foodbank is affiliated to a national charity, the Trussell Trust, which provides support for 70% of the foodbanks operating in the UK.

Having just completed its national 5-year strategy (see the box opposite) the Trussell Trust is encouraging all local foodbanks to develop a local vision and strategy and the Alton foodbank has just completed this looking out over the next 3 years.

**The Alton foodbank's vision is that no one in Alton & the surrounding villages goes hungry and that people can find solutions to the problems that push them into food poverty.**

The core of the foodbank will continue to be the provision of emergency food to people referred to the foodbank and in 2021 we are aiming to supplement the packaged food we supply with the offer of a delivery of fresh fruit & vegetables from a local greengrocer (Get Fresh & Fruity, Lasham). This has been running for 2 months with great feedback and provided the foodbank has the funds it will continue to offer this.



In addition, the foodbank will continue to collect secondhand school uniform (particularly expensive items such as blazers, skirts, jumpers and sweatshirts that can only be purchased from specialist suppliers) and offer them to families referred to the foodbank.

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Giving: [www.goldengiving.com/wall/alton-foodbank](http://www.goldengiving.com/wall/alton-foodbank)

## The Trussell Trust TOGETHER FOR CHANGE strategy

**The Trussell Trust recently launched its 5-year strategy.**

***Our vision is for a UK without the need for food banks.***

***We say this because it's not right that anyone cannot afford their own food. That's why we are working towards a just, compassionate future, where no one should have to use a food bank to get by.***

In **Changing Communities**, we'll be working with food banks to reduce the need for their services locally, helping people to access targeted support that addresses the underlying reason for their crisis. Extending the suspension of benefit deductions to cover Advance Payments – the loans offered to cover the five-week wait for a first Universal Credit payment

In **Changing Policy**, we'll be working alongside food banks and partners to provide stronger evidence of the drivers of extreme poverty (or 'destitution') and pushing for positive solutions that will help tackle these.

In **Changing Minds**, we'll be increasing levels of understanding and empathy amongst the general public, locally and UK-wide, to build a movement that is willing to take action to create a just and compassionate society without the need for food banks.

## Alton foodbank goals for the next three years

Our hope is to do more to address the underlying causes of why people visit foodbanks and to this end we will be:

- **Working with Citizens Advice** to develop and fund a service for people who visit the foodbank to ensure that they have access to financial & benefit advice to help them better manage their situation.
- Offer people who visit the foodbank in Alton the **opportunity to learn how to cook** from scratch on a budget.
- **Raise awareness with our local councillors and our MP** on the issues facing local people who visit the foodbank and to campaign for policy changes at a local and national level.

### **Hot news:**

*To facilitate the goals we have set we are just finalizing an arrangement with Citizens Advice to have a dedicated case worker to help our clients. We hope to have someone in post in a couple of months' time.*

*In addition, we have been invited by EHDC and ATC to join a working group to see if the proposed Community space to be provided in the Brewery redevelopment can become a co-located Community Hub occupied by CA, Foodbank, Community Cupboard etc. Probably this is some three years away from fruition - but it is good that the local politicians appreciate the benefit that the Foodbank and our colleague charities bring to the Town.*

### **ALTON FOODBANK VOLUNTEERS RECOGNISED**

The Alton Lions recognised the efforts of the foodbank and its volunteers in a ceremony in the Public Gardens. Face masks were removed but social distancing (between bubbles) was maintained



### **WHAT A YEAR IT HAS BEEN...**

The last 12 months has been a massive challenge for everyone, and the foodbank has been extremely busy. The foodbank has distributed nearly 26 tons of donated food, nearly double the amount distributed in previous years.

The premises in Market Square have been shut twice for several months and the foodbank has implemented a home delivery service to ensure families continue to receive emergency food when needed.

To help easy referral, the foodbank has moved from a paper-based referral system to an online e-referral one. Agencies can refer families from anywhere at any time provided they have an internet connection.

All of this would not have been possible without the generous support of local people and businesses and the tireless support of our volunteer team who have ensured that we have continued to operate in the midst of a pandemic.

**A big thank you to everyone!**