

Report from Medway Foodbank Centre

St Marks Foodbank has been closed to clients throughout this period along with the other 7 Foodbanks within Medway because of the risk of COVID19.

Medway Foodbank has been running a delivery service over the last 2 difficult years of the pandemic. Here are brief statistics for the Gillingham area (for wards Gillingham North and South)

| Ward | No. of parcels | No. of adults fed | No. of children fed | Total no. fed |
|------------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Gillingham North | 764 | 1029 | 906 | 1935 |
| Gillingham South | 701 | 923 | 812 | 1735 |
| | 1465 | 1952 | 1718 | 3670 |

During this period we fed 24,572 people in Medway. The number from Gillingham is 15% of the total fed in Medway.

Throughout the pandemic local organisation offering free food like ourselves have worked closely together to support those in need in our communities.

In April 2022 Medway Foodbank plans to re-opened 7 centres for collection across Medway with 1 centre open but for delivery purposes only out on the peninsula rural area.

It will be great to be able to see people face to face once again and an absolute pleasure to have 150 volunteers back with us supporting those in need in our local communities. Churches are so well placed to offer clients a warm and loving welcome, as well as being able to signpost to activities going on at local churches. The ability to offer prayer in person is also a vital part of the work of the Foodbanks across Medway – it is a privilege to be able to offer this to people who may have never been in a church before and who may have never had someone pray with them. It underlines the value of each individual, that they are valued by us and by God in the midst of their difficulties.

As an organisation, Medway Foodbank remains so grateful for the support from local churches that support us by hosting foodbank centres, by collecting food for us and by donating finances. We are facing huge increases in our overhead costs and it is a struggle to keep stock levels in line with the increased demand.

We look for a time when Foodbanks are no longer needed in the UK but until that time we will be in our communities working with those in local churches to support those in need.

Loraine Schulze Project Manager

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