

# EPPING FOREST FOODBANK



END OF YEAR REPORT  
FOR 2021

Helping local people in crisis



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# PROJECT MANAGER'S REPORT

## 31ST JANUARY 2020

In many ways, it is strange to be writing a report for the year before I joined Epping Forest Foodbank, having started in January 2022. However, I can see the immense work carried out by the Food Bank in 2021 and see the fantastic achievements of Epping Forest Foodbank. As the new director, I will strive to build on this work and put my all into making Epping Forest a place where no one needs to go Hungry.

2021 has been Epping Forest Foodbank's tenth year operating as a food bank and third year as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. We have a great team of committed volunteers, support of the local community and Trussell Trust to work with our network of referral agents to identify and support people in crisis with nutritionally balanced food.

Epping Forest Food Bank supported more people in crisis than ever before, increased our number of volunteers, and continued to reach people that no one else could through doorstep deliveries and manned phone lines. We also distributed more donated food and saved more surplus food from going to waste in a safe, socially distanced way.

We will continue to use the experience and expertise we have gained through this work as we enter a new period of uncertainty. With a cost of living crisis looming, refugees seeking sanctuary and inflation continuing its upward trend, many face an uncertain future, but I am confident that Epping Forest Foodbank is well placed to meet whatever comes our way.

**JACOB FORMAN**

Director

## VOLUNTEERS

Epping Forest Foodbank is a volunteer-powered organisation. Now numbering over one hundred and fifty, our volunteers come from a diverse range of backgrounds, representing many faiths and none, employment experience and ages.



We are fortunate to have creative and resourceful volunteers that made use of technology and resources provided by Trussell Trust to help reshape the operation and provide a socially distanced delivery service in response to lockdown guidance and restrictions.

There are numerous roles and responsibilities that keep an operation like this running smoothly, including warehouse, governance, collection and delivery drivers, office and admin, social media, training, communications, centre volunteers, health and safety, liaison with donors, referral agents, premises, recruitment, accounts, research and keeping records of local services. We are fortunate and grateful to have a committed, enthusiastic, dedicated group who work as a team to provide the best service we can to the people we serve and support.

We have worked creatively to support people remotely, to signpost and understand what to include in their food parcels.

Keeping open the hubs around Epping Forest has made sure that all those who are in need of a Food Parcel can receive one, and making sure that deliveries kept going out meant that even those without the mobility and transport could still access our service when they were in need.

# REFERRAL AGENCIES

We have over 150 partner referral agencies that support people during a time of crisis who can make a referral for a food parcel. These front-line professionals have knowledge of a person's circumstances to understand and support them with more than just food during a crisis.

We have built this range of referral agencies to enable all who need help in a difficult time to access help and for that help to be more than just food. We are proud of the deep knowledge we have built up about local support and services to signpost the individuals and referral agencies to tackle issues like benefit claims, debt, housing issues, visa issues and domestic abuse.

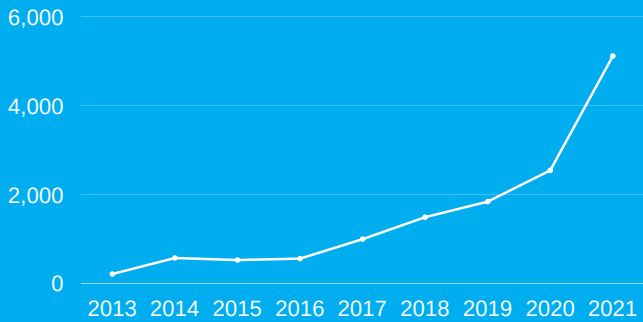
2021 was the first year solely using Trussell Trust's E-referral system. This has helped us give remote access to the foodbank service while staff work from home. We have built stronger communication with our referral agencies. Where one might touch the tip of an iceberg of issues going on for an individual or family, it plays a part in linking them up with holistic support. We are proud of the impact this support is having on people in our community and that these professionals rate highly our professional, helpful, kind, collaborative and efficient approach.

We have also enthusiastically joined the Epping Forest Frontline service, which allows us to make our own referrals onwards to partner organisations that can further support the people who need our help.



# EMERGENCY SUPPLIES DISTRIBUTED

NUMBER OF EMERGENCY PARCELS DISTRIBUTED BY EPPING FOREST FOODBANK SINCE OPENING IN 2013'



Our emergency supplies can come in several forms;

- A food parcel of at least three days of nutritionally balanced food collected from a distribution centre in exchange for a voucher or code
- A food parcel delivered to a doorstep from a voucher or code issued by a referral agent
- Where we have supplies of fresh food from supermarket surplus and donations from catering establishments this is in addition to the food parcel
- An emergency food box.

We have 13 of these boxes with Children's Centres/medical practices/community groups, 19 with churches, and 20 in schools. These on-site boxes contain a small family equivalent food parcel.

We are grateful to the venues that host our foodbank sessions. We work collaboratively with them to make them safe enough for our volunteers and people using the Foodbank at this challenging time. Particular thanks to St Mary's Church, Loughton who have allowed us extended use for socially distanced packing and dispatching, St John's Church, Loughton for the centrally located space on The Broadway we occupy on a Saturday and Epping Forest Council for the space in The Hub in Epping.

