

Thank you



To our friends at the Bognor Regis Methodist Church,

Following our successful transition back to operating solely from Argyle Hall earlier this month, we wanted to firstly say a huge 'thank you' to Bognor Regis Methodist Church for gifting us your premises over the past year, and secondly share more about how the season has looked for the foodbank.

Having only joined myself in February this year, it was amazing to hear of BRMC's generosity from Mandy and Sue, who managed the Foodbank as the pandemic hit and throughout multiple lockdowns. Here's a reflection from Mandy:

March 23rd 2020, a date never to be forgotten! The world became very scary overnight with predicted food shortages and people fighting over loo roll in supermarkets. As a town centre foodbank in a small building with floor to ceiling windows and one way in and out we had no option to close while we tried to consider how we could carry on supporting those in need in Bognor. As a Christian organisation we prayed, tried to think of options and then prayed an awful lot more! We were then approached by Rev Dan who offered us the hall at the Bognor Methodist Church. It could not have been more perfect, the building ensured the safety of staff and clients and allowed us to continue to be in the centre of the community and to be helped and supported by that same community. We had the added bonus of Rev Dan helping regularly, his colour coding, efficient organisation and quietly reassuring presence was a blessing practically and spiritually.

We were able to use the hall for many more months than we could have ever hoped, and we helped many people.

If ever I am asked whether God helps when we need it, I will give this as my testimony. God truly does give us what we need but also what we didn't realise we needed!

Mandy

During our time at BRMC between March 2020 and June 2021, we fulfilled **2026 vouchers**, feeding nearly **5000 people in our community**. We had a brilliant team of volunteers who would make up our food parcels, ship them down to the BRMC each week, and help distribute them to clients who had been referred to us from a variety of agencies we work closely with in the Bognor area.

Of the 4974 people who received food, **1803 were children** under 16. During the summer and other holidays, we were also able to distribute 'holiday bags' for these children, meaning they had enough additional food for picnic lunches, alongside some activities to do while at home. We were also able to give a lot of Easter eggs out in April as well – a beautiful bonus and treat for those who were in need around that time, and a way to communicate the Hope and New Life we are reminded of in the Easter season.

Having the Church Hall space has been an incredible blessing, and has ensured the continued distribution of food parcels to so many people in our community who have been in crisis during the pandemic. Thank you for responding so immediately and continually to the need. We are so grateful for offering the space, and how flexible you continued to be as we all navigated the various twists, turns and delays experienced as the government have looked to ease or amend restrictions.

Going forward, we know we're not 'out of the woods' yet with regards to COVID restrictions, but we do hope to open our doors to welcome the public back into Argyle Hall soon. A couple of key areas for prayer as we prepare for this are:

- We are currently still having doorstep conversations to help signpost clients to channels of support out there, but long to welcome them back inside, make a brew and have a proper opportunity to connect with them. We would appreciate your continued prayer as we explore the safest ways to make this possible
- We are very much in need of volunteers to join the team on a regular, semi-regular or occasional basis. Again, prayers for this recruitment would be appreciated, and if you or anybody you know may be interested in joining us, please do get in touch to find out more

We have been overwhelmed by the support we have received over the past year – both from a food perspective, as well as prayerfully, financially and practically. People have served with open hearts and hands, willing to adapt with an amazing 'can-do' attitude, and have continually gone above and beyond to ensure the smooth, safe and constant running of the foodbank. We look forward to this new season as we discern the Bognor foodbank's next steps, respond to the local need, and connect further with community networks striving to support those in crisis.

Thank you for your continued support – it really does make a huge difference.

Every blessing,

Hannah

Hannah Drury

Bognor Foodbank Project Manager

We want to see a future where food banks aren't needed
and we know that together, we can make that happen.

Bognor Regis Foodbank

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