



*God's love in action*

## Newsletter Spring 2016

### Special Christmas parcels

When I was asked to coordinate the helpers with the special Christmas parcels I had no idea what it entailed. Luckily the Basics Bank is a well run organization with many willing and helpful volunteers. Firstly we had to e mail the agencies to see how many parcels they required. Unfortunately we had to order goods from Tesco before we had the numbers, so 250 parcels were thought to be adequate, and there were 16 items for each parcel. Later we found that we required another 60 parcels so we added to our Tesco order. As the date drew nearer to collate these parcels, volunteers were recruited to help.

The big day arrived. I was working in the cabin in the morning and so was able to see all the action. Unfortunately one order was received past the deadline, but not wanting to disappoint 27 families two of us filled these from the goods in the cabin.

The tables were set in the hall. People had bought down 310 cans of soup and baked beans from the container. Then Tesco arrived pushing large crates of goods up the High Street. The volume of goods was tremendous, but so were the actions of the volunteers. 310 bags were filled on a conveyor belt system with foods including ham, salmon and potatoes. All bags were labelled and moved into the church with labels identifying the agencies. There was good banter, helped with cups of tea. The amount of packaging was astonishing, but



*Part of the team  
packing and,*

*below,  
330 parcels ready  
to be collected*





was kept under control. In a few hours it was all over for the packers. There were a few hiccups along the way, but these seemed minor in light of the volume of goods we were coping with. The press were there interviewing and taking photos. Although it was very busy there was a great sense of companionship and joy. The next day the agencies had to collect their parcels, this required more volunteers to help man the car park, find the correct bags and help load into cars. I did have a few doubts that one man could take 50 parcels, but luckily he had a van. I have never seen anything like this, but there is always next Christmas Theresa

## What effect will the cutting of Hampshire children's services have on vulnerable people?

Like many local people, we are concerned about the effects of the widely publicised proposals of Hampshire County Council to reduce children's services severely, mainly families with young children. All social and community services face similar drastic cuts.

The County Council has difficult financial choices to make, and individual services have to bear some of the pain of funding cuts.

But are the County Council looking

overall at the effects on their responsibilities for vulnerable individuals and families before a crisis happens - especially in diverse and scattered communities of New Forest District?

New Forest Basics Bank will continue to respond actively in the best way we know how to help people in need, and we will carry on working with the County Council, referral agencies and their individual staff.

## Freemasons support local Foodbanks

At their meeting in November the members of Test Valley Masonic Chapter, meeting at Eling, near Totton agreed to donate some of the charitable funds donated by its members to local foodbanks before Christmas.

Tony Barnes and the Third Principal James Sampson visited the New Forest Basics Bank and presented a £200 cheque to the Chairman, Janet Blizzard. Talking to the volunteers they learned that in addition to

the regular parcels they distribute each week they were preparing 334 special Christmas Boxes with items that will give those in crisis a special meal at Christmas. When asked what they lacked from the kind donations they receive from Churches, Schools, businesses and individuals locally it was a surprise to learn that it was plastic carrier bags! Since the introduction of the 5p charge for carrier bags they now get so few that they need to buy them. So if you able to support your food bank remember to let them have plastic carrier bags too!



Freemasons James Sampson and Tony Barnes present their cheque to Janet, our Chair, in January.





### Waitrose Bin

The Waitrose Donation Bin has now been in place for a year. The store provides a large wire basket at the entrance. We empty the basket on Tuesdays and Fridays and take the contributions to the container in Ampress Park for sorting. From there it is transferred onto the Cabin shelves as required.

Over the Christmas period the basket was overflowing and we had to add extra smaller baskets and increase the rate of emptying. We were obviously very thankful for the Waitrose customers' generosity. New Forest individual church monthly contributions continue.

When stocks built up we were able to send surplus items to other charities that supply food to needy people in adjacent areas. Waitrose have done a superb job supporting us. We are also tremendously grateful for the continuing support of their customers.



### Are food banks in danger of becoming the norm for low income families?

The Trussel Trust, Britain's biggest food bank network, seem to think so as reported in the Guardian. They give the main reasons as benefit problems and low income.

## A message from the Chairman, Janet

Summer is just round the corner and we are as busy as ever at the cabin.

Firstly I want to thank all the churches, clubs and individuals for your continuing support with donations, food and household goods flowing in.

Alongside this we have the permanent Bin at Waitrose which is also keeping us well supplied. So thank you all.

As we had such an overwhelming amount of Harvest and Christmas donations we have been able to assist another food bank that was running short and we will keep a link with the them and help one another if possible.

**Just a reminder** - Please watch that the dates on all goods donated have a long **USE BY DATE and are not perishable**. We are unable to use out of date items and we have no facilities for storing perishable goods.

Please visit us and see us at work, our volunteers will be delighted to show you round and chat.

Please note our AGM is on 15 July 2016 in the Hall at the United Reformed Church Lymington commencing at 2.00pm. We will be delighted to welcome you to the meeting and for light refreshments at the close of the meeting.



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Open: Tues, Wed, Fri, 10-12noon

## This is what we need most of

Milk (UHT)  
Meat / fish paste  
Tinned custard  
Instant Coffee (100g jar)  
Tinned potatoes  
Sugar 500g pack  
Tinned meat  
Tinned vegetables  
Noodles

Sponge puddings  
Biscuits  
Toothpaste  
Toothbrushes  
Washing-up liquid  
Shampoo  
Shower gel  
Jam & marmalade (*but not home-made*)

*We particularly don't need:*  
*Tinned tomatoes*  
*Powdered milk,*  
*Lasagne sheets,*  
*Dry lentils,*  
*Loose tea or*  
*Hair conditioners, thank you.*

## Donate while you buy on the internet

Did you know that you can give to Basics Bank while you shop on the internet at **no cost** to you!

We know of at least two ways of doing this:

**Giving-a-Bit.** If you have a PC or a Mac you can go to [givingabit.com](http://givingabit.com), sign up and download a widget (a small piece of harmless software). Every time you go to a shop that subscribes to this scheme your computer will remind with a blue banner to click. When you have made a purchase the shop will automatically give Basics Bank a percentage.

If you have a tablet, iPad, etc. you have to go to the [givingabit.com](http://givingabit.com) web site first, then to the shop; not so easy to remember, but worth it for large purchases.



This is an alternative:

**Give as you live.** The same principle applies, a percentage is given to your chosen charity. This time you register at [giveasyoulive.com](http://giveasyoulive.com). I don't think they have a widget. But they do give as you switch car or home insurance or utility suppliers.

Please write to tell us of your experiences with using these to give us money.



Give as you Live®

## Please give money to Basics Bank

Basics Bank is always very happy to receive donations of money which will be used to buy food and household necessities.

Please use GiftAid if you are eligible, (i.e. if you pay tax). To give any amount, pick up one of our fliers and complete the form on it.

Please phone us if you would like to make a regular donation.

We are very grateful to all volunteers for their generous and unstinting help.

