



Bethany Food Bank Support

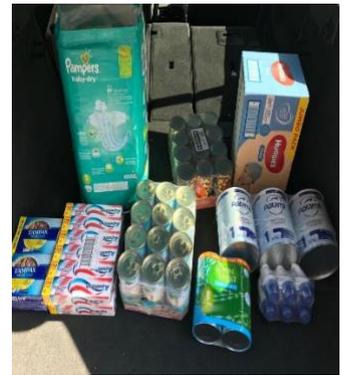
Newsletter : 23rd April



An absolutely OVERWHELMING response to this first donations week for the Food Bank in lockdown – there are only three words that springs to mind:



WOW !
Thank you !



These photos show only a tiny proportion of the donations that came in. There were so many donations that we had to use an estate car, delivery van and transit van to collect it all!

Word quickly spread, and lots of people got involved: St G & T school, S G & T church, Blessed Robert Grissold church (Balsall Common), Arden school, family members, neighbours, B93 Residents, unknown residents, social groups and complete strangers (strangers no more!)

.... A whole community coming together to share daily necessities, solidarity, friendship and support to those who need it most.

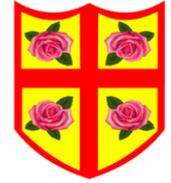


This picture (above) shows the SVP van with Bob. He set up the SVP charity distribution system from Dorridge many years ago. The van goes out each day using teams of volunteers to deliver to the Bethany Food Bank, Homelessness Shelters, Asylum Seekers' Centres and Women's refuge centres around Birmingham.

Read on to see inside a Food Bank, and to find out how it works.....



How a Food Bank works



This week's special buy request:

Pasta Sauce jars please!



Bethany Food Bank is just underneath the main M6 Spaghetti junction in the Witton area of North Birmingham (near the Aston Villa football ground). It serves people from all around Birmingham. It is run & managed by volunteers from the Bethany Outreach Project, which is part of a Pentecostal church group.

This is Pastor Kevin, who set up Bethany Food Bank. He works for the food bank full time during the week, but has to leave time to write his Sermon for the church on Sunday!



The team of Food Bank volunteers work really hard. They start work from 7.30am, and continue until the early evening. During this time their work includes: receiving goods, unpacking, sorting, checking sell-by dates, completing admin, dealing with food hygiene, legal and safety requirements, and, of course, serving their customers!

Because of all the immense organisation needed to supply and run it, the Food Bank is only open to customers for specific times and days of the week. In order to share the food fairly, a voucher system is used (a bit like rationing) given out by GPs, Social Services, Churches & Schools, which entitles each customer a fortnightly visit & supply of food for their family situation. Customers are first taken to the café area where they are welcomed with a hot drink & slice of cake!



Then it's about spending the vouchers. The inside of the Food Bank is just like a Supermarket. However, to make sure that everyone gets a fair share, large packets such as tea bags & cereals are measured out into individual portions.



