

Welcome to Foodbytes, Autumn 2026! In this issue we share the importance of donations raised during Harvest celebrations and let you know we now have an instagram account. Read on to also hear about our new partnership and look back at what we have been up to over the last few months.

Harvest our busiest time of year!

For Basingstoke Foodbank, harvest is one of the most important times of the year. It is a time when local schools and churches celebrate by collecting tinned and dried goods on our behalf, and in just a few weeks, they donate several tonnes of food.



This year, we're delighted that 49 schools, nurseries and preschools across Basingstoke have confirmed they'll collect again for us this harvest. Behind the scenes, a team of 12 volunteers will be busy over the coming months delivering assemblies and activities for children. During these talks, they'll speak about who the foodbank supports and why, and importantly, help to break down the stigma that children can feel when their family needs to ask for help.

In Basingstoke, in an average class of 30 children, 2-3 will receive food from the Foodbank each year. Harvest is a chance for the next generation to understand that food poverty can affect anyone in our community, and that reaching out for support is nothing to be ashamed of.

If you've been reading Foodbytes for a while, you'll see from our stats that our stock levels tell their own story throughout the year, with more going out than coming in. Harvest is where that story turns around. It's our biggest opportunity all year to top up our shelves, so we can keep every family in Basingstoke fed for the months ahead.

A huge thank you in advance to every school, church, individual and community group taking part, and to our volunteers for the work they put in to make these sessions so meaningful. Every tin, packet and jar collected this harvest will make a real difference to families across Basingstoke and Deane this winter.

School Holiday Support

For most families, school holidays mean a welcome break. But for households already stretching every pound, the holidays can bring a fresh set of pressures. Free school meals stop the moment term ends and childcare becomes harder to arrange and afford.

That's why we continue to run our **school holiday food programme**, offering fortnightly parcels containing at least three days' worth of nutritious meals, plus toiletries and other household essentials. This allowed parents to focus less on stretching the budget and more on enjoying the time with their children.

20 schools got involved in referring families, this initiative is a small but meaningful way of making sure the help doesn't just stop when term does, helping holidays to feel like a break for the whole family, not another financial worry.

Partnering with Pop Up Play Village Basingstoke

We're delighted to introduce a brand-new partnership with Pop Up Play Village Basingstoke, who are generously offering free play session vouchers for our visiting families. The families can use the voucher to book a 90 minute play session at the village.



Pop Up Play Village creates real-world role play environments that children instantly recognise and love exploring, from a hospital and vets to a baby nursery and supermarket. Each area is filled with high-quality, open-ended resources and dressing-up props designed to spark imagination and collaborative play, with an open-plan layout that lets children move freely between spaces and follow their own interests.

The business is run by husband and wife team Erica and Frank Mudd. We're thrilled that they've chosen to partner with us to bring some of that same joy and imaginative play to the families we support. A huge thank you to the whole Pop Up Play Village team for their generosity.

The role play centre and café is in the iFly building at Basingstoke Leisure Park. For more information about Pop Up Play, visit their website at popupplayvillage.co.uk/organiser/basingstoke or find them on social media.



Community Paws

Caring for the whole family, furry members included

In May, the RSPCA's Community Paws came to our Brighton Hill foodbank centre for a second year, bringing their mobile clinic van to provide free veterinary support and care essentials to our visitors, because when times are tough, the pets in the family feel it too.



Keeping pets and people together

With more people turning to food banks for support, many are also struggling to provide for their pets. The RSPCA has seen a rise in owners feeling forced to give up beloved animals purely due to financial pressure, something that affects the wellbeing of both pet and owner. Community Paws exists to help keep pets and people together during times of financial crisis, offering face to face welfare support alongside practical, preventative care.



On the day

The event welcomed 16 dogs and 12 cats, with support offered to some households with multiple animals. Inside the van, an RSPCA vet nurse carried out 5 health checks and 2 parasite treatments, while the team handed out 11 pet food bundles and 12 pet provision bundles packed with toys, treats and other essentials. Six visitors also received vouchers for veterinary financial aid, worth up to £250 each towards the cost of vet care and neutering.

For many of our visitors, a pet isn't just a pet. They're a source of comfort, companionship and routine, especially during hard times. Thanks to the RSPCA's Community Paws team bringing their expertise right to our door, more families (and their pets) were able to access professional advice, essential supplies and real financial support, all at no cost.

A huge thank you to everyone who helped refer and signpost people to the event, your efforts meant more people could benefit. We're already looking forward to welcoming Community Paws back for a future event.

Follow us on Instagram!



Basingstoke Foodbank now has an Instagram account!

Whether you're a long-time supporter or just discovering us for the first time, it's a brand-new way to stay connected with everything happening at the foodbank.

Following us on Instagram means you'll hear about upcoming events, donation drives and updates. It's also one of the easiest ways to help us reach a wider audience. Every follow, like and share helps more people in Basingstoke discover the support that's available to them, and helps us find new donors, volunteers and partners along the way.

We'll be sharing updates on our latest projects, ways to get involved, and the difference your support makes to families across the community. If you'd like to be part of it, search for us on Instagram at [@basingstokefoodbank](https://www.instagram.com/basingstokefoodbank) and hit follow. We can't wait to connect with you there!

Christmas Hamper Project

Each December, our local community comes together for the Christmas Hamper Project, bringing festive cheer to individuals and families experiencing hardship.

Last year, thanks to the generosity of our supporters, volunteers and donors, we hand delivered 945 hampers, feeding 3,214 people across Basingstoke.

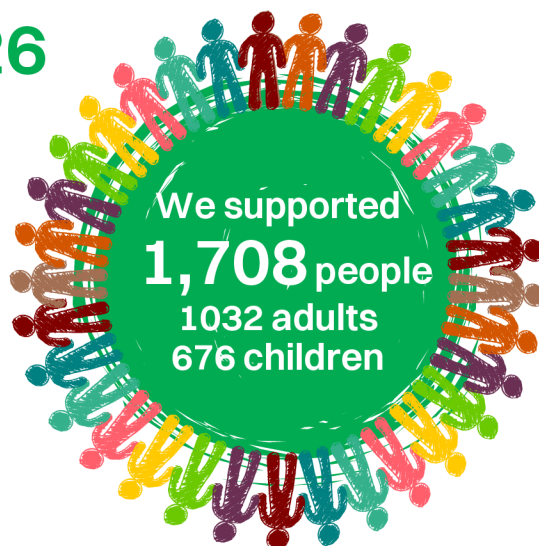
Whether you'd like to donate hamper items, put together a hamper yourself, or volunteer with us at the Hamper Packing Hub, there are lots of ways to get involved. Find out how and watch last year's project in action at basingstoke.foodbank.org.uk/hampers.

Stats: Jun 2026 - Aug 2026

Food Recived: 15 Tons

*Thank
You!*

Food Distributed: 18 Tons



Stay Connected with Basingstoke Foodbank!

Follow, like and share us on Facebook to stay updated on our latest news, events, and community efforts - and to help us spread the word and make an even bigger impact!

Sign up to our Foodbytes mailing list by scanning the QR code:

or visit basingstoke.foodbank.org.uk/contact-us/subscribe-to-our-newsletter

