



Southend Foodbank release their ¾ year figures for 2022

We have today released our three-quarter year statistics, highlighting the number of people needing a food parcel in the area so far in 2022.

Since January, the Southend Foodbank has received 3,266 referrals for a 3-day emergency food parcel, feeding 8,822 people, 3,781 of whom are children. Referrals to the food bank started the year at 90% of the Christmas 2020 referrals received, and figures have been record-breaking all year.

Foodbank Media & Campaigns Coordinator Cass Francis said

“We are usually busiest in the run-up to Christmas, and last December we had 378 referrals in that month alone, unfortunately we are again breaking records with September 2022 being the busiest month we have ever had - 476 vouchers presented to the food bank in one month. We have already fed more people this year than we did in the whole of 2021.

“Based on previous trends, my forecast is we could be looking at 700 referrals in December this year.

“The biggest reason for referrals is people’s incomes are just so low; not having enough weekly income to buy even the basics needed to survive.

“Inflation is currently at 9.8%, and benefits have not been increased in line with inflation this year, which comes on top of the 4-year benefits freeze from 2016-2019. There was a respite in March 2020, when the £20 per week uplift to Universal Credit came in during lockdown, but this was removed in October 2021. The huge increase we have seen in foodbank usage directly correlates to this damage done to people’s income.

“Families on low incomes disproportionately spend their incomes on essentials – especially food, energy and transport, so when prices rise and incomes don’t keep pace, they are left cutting back on essentials – missing meals so their children can eat.”

As part of the Trussell Trust network, Southend Foodbank support evidence-based approaches towards tackling food poverty and call on all levels of government and industry to urgently to face up to the realities of the hardships being experienced in the community. Along with other community groups, they are currently assisting Southend City Council with a Tackling Poverty Strategy, to try and get as much information and assistance to those that need support to get them through this winter.