



Southend Foodbank is busier than ever, according to latest figures.

Southend Foodbank have today released their statistics for the first half of 2023. The figures reveal a compelling narrative of need and support that is being seen across foodbanks locally and nationally.

So far this year the foodbank has received 3,723 referrals to its distribution centres and given out 9,664 food parcels. They have now fed more people this year than in the whole of 2021, and on average receive 620 referrals each month and give out enough food to feed 1,600 people, more than a third of whom are children.

Following on from their pleas for more food donations in March of this year the foodbank did see a small increase in the amount of food being donated. They are still spending thousands of pounds on basic food items, £53,000 this year so far, to be able to supply three-day parcels. In previous years the foodbank were able to say that 90% of the food they gave out was donated. Unfortunately, there is now such a shortfall that over 40% of the food they give out is being bought by the foodbank.

“We’ve run out of pasta and beans”

In June, Warehouse Manager Simon Carter had to take to social media to ask foodbank supporters to start donating pasta and beans – the first time he had to ask this in his many years at the warehouse.

A typical food parcel supplies enough basic foodstuffs to last a household for a three-day emergency and typically contains tinned meat meals, tinned vegetables, tinned fruit, cereal, pasta, rice, teabags, biscuits, fruit juice and UHT milk.

Foodbank spokesperson Cass Francis said “The parcels we give out are often augmented with fresh foods such as eggs, vegetables and bread. These are donated by The Lions Club of Leigh on Sea.

“A food parcel is packed by our warehouse volunteers, which means the person receiving it doesn’t have the choice someone normally would have when they go food shopping.

“A parcel from any foodbank isn’t a lifestyle choice or a personal budgeting decision. The main reason people are turning to Southend Foodbank for help is inevitably, the rising cost of essentials. This is affecting both people in work, out of work, with caring responsibilities, and those who have a disability. We often see people (especially mothers) leaving in tears at the relief that they are able to feed their kids for the next few days.”

As part of the Trussell Trust network Southend Foodbank support evidence-based approaches towards tackling food poverty. Trussell Trust and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation are running a campaign to ask the government to 'Guarantee Our Essentials'. For more information on this campaign please visit <https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-involved/campaigns/guarantee-our-essentials/>

There are many ways you can support Southend Foodbank: Donate food, donate money, regular giving, one off giving, give-as-you-shop, give-as-you-sell, gift-aid, fundraise, or ask your organisation to partner. All details of how to support the foodbank are on their website <https://southend.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/>

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