

Tuesday 9th January 2024



Immediate Release

Southend Foodbank release their 2023 statistics.

Southend Foodbank have today released the figures for guests attending their distribution centres throughout 2023. The Foodbank received 7,835 referrals for a 3-day emergency food parcel, feeding a total of 20,435 people, of whom 8,295 were children.

Comms & Campaigns Coordinator Cass Francis said “These figures represent an enormous increase in referrals to the food bank and the amount of people we are supplying with 3-day emergency food parcels. It’s a near 60% increase on the figures last year, and when we look back to 2021, these numbers represent a 161% increase in the number of referrals we were receiving just two years ago.”

Southend Foodbank have previously stated that they are spending thousands of pounds to buy in basic food items every week, to top up the food donations they receive from the public, and are asking the public to continue to support the Foodbank.

Asked what changes the Foodbank would like to see to improve the situation for Southend and Rochford residents, Cass Francis said “We welcome the small increase in benefits due in April 2024, but these will not help the people in our city get through this winter. We are asking the community to support us in any way they can, be it with food donations, regular or one-off financial giving, fundraising activities and supporting us in campaigning for changes at local and national levels.

Also, we are also very concerned that the Household Support Fund has not been extended past March 2024 by the UK government. It’s a fund that the council can use to help vulnerable people with micro-grants of money to see them through particularly tough times. Southend Foodbank will be writing to Southend City Council and Rochford District Council to urge them to write to the government to ask that the Chancellor include an extension of the Household Support Fund in the March 2024 budget, and we are encouraging other charities and local organisations to do the same.

Notes

- Southend Foodbank opened in November 2013.
- To find out more about how to support Southend Foodbank, visit: southend.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/
- As part of the Trussell Trust network, Southend Foodbank works on a referral model to make sure that people in need are connected with at least one source of support as well as getting emergency food. The foodbank also offers signposting to further help for people in crisis.
- Referrals are made to the foodbank from a range of agencies, including Citizens Advice, Health Visitors, GPs and social workers, housing associations, and community organisations such as SAVS.

Ends.