



The Michael Roberts Charitable Trust
developing lives...enriching community

Annual
Report

2015-16



MRCT is a work driven by **faith**,
guided by **love** and sustained
by **hope** in our Lord Jesus



Contents



The Michael Roberts Charitable Trust

● Mission Statement	Page 2
● Report by Director of Community Services	Page 3-4
● MRCT Staff/Trustees	Page 5
● Maybury Open Door	Page 6-7
● Harlow Foodbank	Page 8-9
● Bounty Club	Page 10-11
● Breakfast Club	Page 12
● Community Partnerships	Page 13-14
● MRCT Volunteers	Page 15
● Acknowledgments	Page 16

Mission Statement

MRCT promotes the value and significance of every person, empowering them to develop their potential and self-confidence. By giving support and encouragement we provide opportunities for community integration, enabling each individual to help meet local social needs in a positive and practical way.



The Michael Roberts Charitable Trust

Director's Report



Gary Knott -
Director of Community Services



Warehouse at Housham Hall, Matching Tye



St Paul's Church & Harefield Church

It has been an inspiring but demanding year, in which we have seen the work of the Michael Roberts Charitable Trust (MRCT) continue to expand. This expansion has enabled us to meet more of the challenging and diverse needs within our local community, working alongside other like-minded, community-focused, charities and organisations. For those people and families who are overwhelmed by these challenges, we have again been able to offer support and encouragement, besides meeting their immediate needs in times of emergency or crisis. With the dedication and commitment of our staff members, volunteers and partners, our practical assistance has helped us meet these challenges head-on and change those people's lives while also helping them get back on their feet and breaking their cycle of poverty.

One of the biggest challenges to our work this last year has been the need to find our own warehouse for Harlow Foodbank, when our six-year partnership with LOKnSTORE was brought to an end by a redevelopment proposal for our ground floor working area. After much prayer and deliberation, and a prophecy from God, we were directed to a vacant warehouse in Matching Tye, just outside Harlow. On investigation we were delighted to find that the unit had two floors, each with 2,500 square feet of space, which far exceeded our expectations and would more than meet all of our needs for food storage. On Monday 22 February 2016 we moved from LOKnSTORE in Harlow to Unit 8, Housham Hall Farm in Matching Tye, assisted by a team of dedicated staff and volunteers using loaned lorries and vans. The move was completed in two days. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the management and staff at LOKnSTORE for their staunch and constant support ever since we started the Foodbank in April 2009, as without them we could never have supplied so many people with emergency food. LOKnSTORE have agreed to remain a drop-off point for small food donations only, and for this we are very grateful.

Maybury Open Door (MOD) continues to provide a unique community service, week in, week out, at Harefield Church in Momples Road, Harlow, and St Paul's Church in Harlow Town Centre. The value of this service cannot be underestimated as it supports a wide range of people of all ages and abilities. MOD is a centre for all comers, where everybody is treated equally and fairly. Most importantly, it provides a safe and warm environment for anyone who is homeless, vulnerably housed, suffering with addictions or isolated and looking for a place of refuge where they will be accepted just as they are. Maybury Open Door also supports senior citizens and young people from all walks of life. It is always encouraging, and at times challenging, to witness how well this diverse group of people get on together at the centre. To some, the centre is a lifeline where they know they will be safe and secure in a place where support will be given if asked for. On my visits to Maybury Open Door during the year I have always been greatly encouraged and gratified at what is being achieved. The positive impact it is making in people's lives with the support of a dedicated team of staff and volunteers is very much in evidence.

Special thanks are due to our partner churches at Harefield and St Paul's, as without their input this service to the community could not function.

Harlow Foodbank maintained its momentum during the year. Although we recorded a slight drop in client referrals compared with the previous year, this was partly because front-line agencies reduced their services or were forced to close by spending cutbacks or loss of funding. Another contributory factor may have been the extra provision of fresh food for clients visiting the satellite centre this year, as this increase will probably have reduced the need for additional referrals.

Director's Report cont...



The Michael Roberts Charitable Trust



In order to maintain the level of non-perishable food donations needed, the Foodbank continues to develop its partnerships with local supermarkets, banks, fitness centres, estate agents and other local businesses, while maintaining long-standing partnerships with churches and schools. This year we have again been very grateful to Harlow Council and GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) for providing us with additional back-up food storage facilities at Latton Bush Business Centre and the GSK site at the Pinnacles in Harlow. It will be our aim before the summer to transfer all of the stored food from Latton Bush and GSK into our new warehouse at Matching Tye. Once completed, this will both reduce transport costs and ensure we have a more effective stock control system for future food donations.

My thanks go also to Harlow Salvation Army, who operate our Wednesday Foodbank satellite service. This has enabled us to give our Foodbank customers five-days-a-week support. We are very proud to be linked with such an inspirational Christian ministry. Places for People, our Foodbank van sponsor, have again agreed to sponsor the van in 2016/17, which will help us to cover all of the vehicle expenses during the coming year, so our special thanks go also to them, as well as to Bristol Street Motors in Harlow, who help us by providing support with repairs, servicing and other small jobs free of charge.

The Bounty Club has been progressing well during the year under the stewardship of Kevin Tierney and has advanced from its initial pilot stage operation to a fully-fledged part of the charity's work. Since the last report the work has been steadily increasing with the introduction of Brakes, another fresh food company, which now functions alongside the two existing food companies, namely Bidvest in Harlow, and Swithenbank in Hoddesdon. As part of its move into fresh food redistribution the charity recognised the need for a refrigerated van and has been working on a funding application to the Essex County Council Community Initiatives Fund (CIF) for such a vehicle. Fortunately, after much work, we were informed we had been successful with the funding application, and in February 2016 we took delivery of a brand-new Peugeot Expert refrigerated van, which went straight into service the following day. With increasing numbers of Bounty Club customers during the year we are very excited to be involved in this new area of work, as it genuinely helps local fresh food companies reduce their fresh food surpluses, which would otherwise go to landfill or animal feed. This the Bounty Club does by redirecting the food into the community via local charities, schools, churches and other front-line services in support of their clients. The food redistribution also assists front-line agencies financially by helping them restrict expenditure and meet budgetary constraints.

Special thanks

As a charity we have had a very successful year and I would like to thank all of our community partners for helping us to achieve our objectives over this period. I would also like to thank our loyal supporters who have made donations of food to the Foodbank, and others who have made regular and/or one-off financial donations to the charity since all such donations are the very lifeblood of our work and greatly appreciated. My thanks go also to the MRCT Trustees and Rob Carrington (Honorary Treasurer) for the support they have given me over the year. I also want to record my special gratitude to our dedicated MRCT staff team and volunteers, who have done such a wonderful and inspiring job. They really are a great team to work with as we serve our community.

Most importantly, thanks be to God for His faithful provision this year and for His direction and wisdom in all that we do. To Him be the Glory, Honour and Praise.

Gary Knott - Director of Community Services & Company Secretary



The Michael Roberts Charitable Trust

MRCT Staff



Gary Liz Kevin

Head Office

Gary Knott - Director of Community Services
Liz Hay - Administrator
Kevin Tierney - Community Development (Voluntary)



Belinda David Margaret

Harlow Foodbank

Duncan Craig - Satellite Centre Manager
Belinda Glanfield - Satellite Centre Coordinator
David Evans - Warehouse Manager
Margaret O'Donovan - Foodbank Administrator



Liz Suzie Karolina

Bounty Club

David Evans - Bounty Club Manager



Clair Moira Moira

Maybury Open Door

Liz Bellworthy - Coordinator & Community Worker
Suzie Raraty - Community Worker
Karolina Sadowska - Community Worker (Thurs)
Assistant Community Worker (Friday)
Clair Forway - Assistant Community Worker
Moira Luff - Bank Worker
Moira Howard - Bank Worker
Jean Steele - Bank Worker



Jean

MRCT Trustees

Patricia Balkwill
Richard Bowers
Jeanette Ehlers
Grant Edwards
Teresa Knott
Jean Woodward (appointed 10/07/2015)
David Norkett (appointed 10/07/2015)

Company Secretary

Gary Knott

Honorary

Robert Carrington - Honorary Treasurer
Robert Dunham - Honorary Member



Clair and Liz celebrating the Maybury Open Door 10 year anniversary

Maybury Open Door



Main aims

To promote the ability of all people and encourage social inclusion

To enable and encourage people to meet their full potential

To give a voice to people and help them to shape the service

To support people who are often designated as being disadvantaged through either disability or social exclusion

To encourage a team philosophy where working together achieves more and benefits the community

To provide a support and advice service via community partners



Maybury Open Door (MOD) is based at two churches (Harefield and St Paul's) and has been working in Harlow since 1998. Managed by a team of MRCT community workers and volunteers, it is an inclusive and unique adult drop-in centre which offers support to a wide range of people each week. The structure is informal with various activities undertaken to help enhance people's skills and personal development, thereby enabling them to integrate better with others. The centre is also supported by Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) and Family Mosaic, who provide advice sessions in housing, debt, benefit issues and general welfare enquiries.

Those attending include people with disabilities; the elderly; homeless and vulnerably housed people; addiction sufferers; people who feel isolated and lonely; foodbank referrals and others who just call in when shopping to enjoy some light refreshments and meet new friends.

Maybury Open Door promotes community spirit and integration. It is a place where anyone can come and feel welcome in a safe and warm environment. The centre seeks to promote the ability of all those attending by encouraging them to get involved and take an active role in their local community.

Observations recorded by a visiting member of staff during one hour at Maybury Open Door:

- Health & Social Care are helping a man who came into the centre in need. This is where they had arranged to meet him - how encouraging!
- The large table is surrounded by people sitting together and playing a game of Hoj; there's lots of laughter. Pool is being played alongside them.
- The tombola table is busy and being run by a very committed lady, so this is great for helping us with fundraising.
- There's a lovely reunion meeting between father and son - their first in many years.
- The Foodbank manager and driver have come in for lunch together.
- The craft table is very busy with volunteers helping some of the visitors at Maybury.
- A lady from Safer Places (a women's refuge) is waiting for a meeting with one of our visitors.
- A lady has just entered in a very distressed state and wanting to pray; Liz has just arranged for a couple of volunteers to go out into the side room with her. She stayed for more than an hour and was very thankful afterwards.

"All this was happening in just the hour or so that I was there, I personally feel very proud to be a part of this work and will continue to help every single person that needs us."

Clair Forway - Assistant Community Worker

Partners

Harefield Church, St Paul's Church, SSAFA (The Armed Forces Charity), Red Cross, Safer Places, Citizens' Advice Bureau, Family Mosaic, Rainbow Services, Streets2Homes, Harlow Healthcare Navigator, Free Cakes for Kids - Harlow, Bounty Club (Fresh Food), U First Care Ltd, Harlow University, All Nations Christian College, Community Agents, South Essex Advocacy Team, MIND, Harlow Foodbank and Essex Social Services.

Achievements

MOD:

- runs a clothing bank to support people who are homeless, vulnerably housed or on low income;
- provides information, advice and telephone support when dealing with benefit, housing and other general enquiries, as well as giving assistance in completing forms and benefit applications;
- provides hot meals and drinks service throughout the day for people attending the centre; also supplies free food vouchers to people on low income or foodbank referrals;

Maybury Open Door



- successfully supported three volunteers into full-time employment in the local community;
- provided entertainment programmes which included; Epping Green Choir, Fawbert & Barnard Primary School Choir, U3A Ukulele Group, Honeytones Musicians, Music in Hospitals and a magician;
- sent out birthday and 'get well' cards to people who were unable to attend the centre due to illness or hospital admission;
- supported foreign visitors at the centre with English Language assistance when completing paperwork, form-filling and the preparation of CVs;
- provides a unique adult drop-in centre for all comers, encouraging community spirit and social integration;
- provides a warm and safe environment for people who are homeless and/or vulnerably housed, either during a crisis or while they look for a permanent home.;
- provided an Internet-based 'Skills Development Programme' for staff and volunteers which included online training in; Manual Handling, Food Hygiene, First Aid, Health & Safety, Managing Volunteers and the Mental Capacity Act;
- organises festive events and meals for people using the service at Easter and Christmas;
- arranged the Maybury Open Door 10th Anniversary Celebration at St Paul's Church in Harlow Town Centre;
- worked in partnership with Free Cakes for Kids in Harlow, who provided special birthday cakes for two senior citizens who attend the centre;
- supported an average of 152 people each week at two locations in Harlow;
- organised fundraising events to raise money for the centre which included tombola, raffles and other in-house activities;
- provided volunteer opportunities for 32 people, of whom 18 (44%) have learning/physical/mental disability;
- supported work placements at the University Centre in Harlow and All Nations Christian College in Ware;
- operates a support structure and free food service for people who are hungry, homeless and/or vulnerably housed. 288 free food vouchers were given out in the past year to a value of £864.00 (£18.00 per week);
- put to good use the 6,216 unpaid hours' work contributed by its volunteers



In March 2014 I came out of respite care after having a stroke and whilst at home on my own I fell and was lying on the floor of my house for five days. Luckily my neighbours realised that they hadn't seen me for a while and climbed through an open window and arranged for me to be taken to the local hospital. After returning home I started to feel lonely and isolated and, when I was able, I began the short walk to the town centre just so I could see other people.

I found my way to Maybury Open Door after having to use the Foodbank and whilst there was given a leaflet, which unfortunately I lost, and then after another low point in my life I eventually found the centre, although initially I was very apprehensive about coming in as I wasn't sure if this was the right place for me. It did take a couple of weeks for me to settle in but now I'm a fully-fledged volunteer at Maybury Open Door. Staff helped me to get a DBS check and references and I now volunteer at both St Paul's and Harefield Church. I really enjoy it and I am happy now, I'm even doing two online courses as well to help me develop my skills.

Tony - Volunteer

Volunteer feedback



Harlow Foodbank



Statistics

Harlow is one of the most deprived local authority areas in England. 21% of Harlow children are living below the poverty line.

There were 3.7 million children living in poverty in the UK in 2013-14. That's 28 per cent of children, or 9 in a classroom of 30.

When benefits are set at too low a level in households where only one adult works, they fail to act as a safety net for families.

In 2009/10, families with at least one disabled member were 30 per cent more likely to live in poverty than families without disabilities.

28% of adults skimp on their own food to feed others.



The Foodbank is a ground-breaking concept designed to help individuals and families in crisis by providing free emergency food until the appropriate agencies are in a position to assist. Our aim is to engage with communities, introducing sustainable projects that enable marginalised people to break out of their cycle of poverty.

Tinned and dried food is collected from the public at churches, schools, supermarkets, banks, and other local groups and organisations. It is then 'banked' in a warehouse before being given out to people in crisis who have been referred to the Foodbank by registered frontline care professionals. These include staff of, Citizens' Advice Bureau, Jobcentre Plus, Saferplaces, Harlow Advice Centre, Harlow Council Front-Line Services, Spurgeon's Children's Centre Network, Adult Social Care (Essex County Council), Harlow Salvation Army, National Probation Service, Assessment & Family Support Team (Harlow Social Care), Family Mosaic, Occasio House (Foyer) and many others in Harlow and the surrounding area working in the front line.

Partners

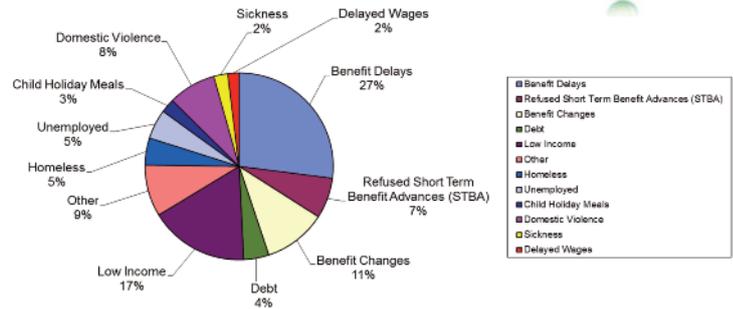
- 72 churches in Harlow and the surrounding area, which have supported the Foodbank (food donations)
- 26 schools in Harlow and the surrounding area (food donations)
- 5 Beaver, Cub, Brownie and Scout groups (food donations)
- 169 front-line care professionals (Foodbank voucher holders)
- Salvation Army, Harlow (Foodbank satellite centre on Wednesdays)
- 8 supermarkets: Tesco (4), Sainsbury's (2), ASDA (1), Waitrose (1)
- LOKnSTORE, Harlow Council and GlaxoSmithKline (food storage buildings)
- Places for People (van sponsorship in 2015/16)
- Kier Harlow (free Foodbank van parking 24/7)
- Santander & Halifax Bank (food drop-off points in Harlow Town Centre)
- Harlow Walkers (food donations)
- Bristol Street Motors, Harlow (maintenance, servicing and MOT of Foodbank van)
- St Paul's Church, Harlow Town Centre (Foodbank satellite centre)
- Bishop's Stortford Foodbank (storage and distribution of their donated food)
- Newcastle West End Foodbank (support with end-of-line, low-dated food donations)
- The Storehouse, Southend, Stevenage Haven, The Need Project, Beds & Herts (support with end-of-line, low-dated food donations)
- Lawsons (Whetstones) Ltd (who provided a lorry and driver for food transfers)
- East End Farm, Roydon (provider of fresh turkeys and turkey portions at Christmas)
- Free Cakes for Kids, Harlow (who provided 18 children's birthday cakes to local families in crisis)
- Greenways Eggs. High Trees Packers (potatoes), UK Salads and Couzens Bakers (who provided free fresh food to the Foodbank satellite centre at St Paul's Church for their clients)
- Tesco Resource Centre, Cheshunt (food donations)
- Harlow Cricket Club (which provided a venue for the volunteer social at Christmas)
- Rotary Club of Harlow Tye & Rotary Club of Harlow (which provided volunteers for supermarket collections)

Achievements

- Since opening in April 2009 and up to the end of March 2016 the Foodbank has fed 17,360 (11,508 adults & 5,852 children) people in crisis with emergency food.
- 2,744 (1,743 adults & 1,001 children) people in crisis have been provided with emergency food in 2015/16 - an average of 229 people each month.
- 1,412 Foodbank vouchers issued in 2015/16 - an average of 118 each month
- 47.925 tonnes of non-perishable food donated - an average of 3,994 each month
- 47.671 tonnes of non-perishable food issued - an average of 3,973 each month
- 10 tonnes of fresh food issued to Foodbank clients - an average of 83 kg each month
- 3.8 tonnes of harvest food donated by local churches and schools
- 24.5 tonnes of food donated by local people via supermarkets

Harlow Foodbank

Reasons for the HFB referrals 2015/2016



- 8 tonnes of non-perishable food provided to local primary schools in Harlow and Ongar in support of their breakfast clubs, which in turn helped an average of 155 pupils each day, many of whom were on pupil premium, and others from low-income families
- 126 people (62 adults & 64 children) received fresh turkey from the Foodbank at Christmas, provided by East End Farm in Roydon.
- A DWP work placement supported for 6 months
- Electricity & gas payments made to clients with no access to funds via front-line agencies
- Participation by managers, staff and volunteers in the charity's 'Skills Development Programme' in the form of online development training.
- Heart4Harlow award presented to Kevin Tierney (Community Development) for his outstanding work with Harlow Foodbank, the Bounty Club and other community work.
- Christmas toys, treats and Easter eggs distributed during the year to local children
- Move to new warehouse at Unit 8, Housham Hall Farm, Harlow Road, Matching Tye, Harlow in February 2016.



Volunteer feedback

You have helped me survive with my children for the foreseeable future.

I have a partner with five kids and had our monies stopped. If it wasn't for places like this I don't know what I would have done.

Foodbank has helped me a lot of late. If it wasn't for their invaluable services I would have starved by now! So I think they are great. The manager and staff are angels.

You have helped us through this difficult time. The staff are extremely helpful and very friendly and we appreciate the Foodbank's help!

The lady (Gill) at the Foodbank was really kind to me and did not judge – just helped. Thank you so much, Harlow Foodbank. What would we do without you?

Thank you so much. Without your help my anxiety levels would be higher. I wouldn't have been able to feed my family and we would have been hungry. All of us are very grateful for all your help even though I feel bad taking the help. I know my children would have been hungry and upset and I wouldn't have known what to do as I have had no money coming in for 3½ weeks and still haven't got it sorted out.

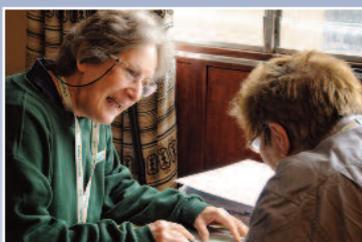


Agency feedback

"We are writing in regard to the excellent service you are providing for the women in our refuge. We would like to say a big 'thank you' for all of the fresh food and emergency food boxes you deliver to us on a weekly basis. It really is appreciated and is such a huge help for those women and families who are less fortunate and struggling with money and food." The staff and women at Safer Places, Harlow

"We have used the Foodbank for over a year now and it has been invaluable. Not only are we able to make Breakfast Club free of charge with your help; we can also provide tuck and snacks to our most vulnerable children. At the end of each term we give our leftover food to our most vulnerable families, which they do appreciate."

Anna Bailey, Inclusion Support Manager, William Martin School



Bounty Club



The Michael Roberts Charitable Trust (MRCT) has been piloting the Bounty Club project in Harlow since September 2014, alongside the work of Harlow Foodbank and in partnership with three local fresh food companies (Bidvest-Harlow, Swithenbank, Hoddesdon and Brakes, Harlow). The project's aim has been to help reduce companies' low-dated/end-of-line surplus fresh food, which would normally be treated as wastage, by picking it up and redistributing it into the community via front-line professional care and support agencies. These agencies have included children's centres, women's refuges, services for the homeless, foodbank clients, primary school breakfast clubs (working with children on pupil premium), community drop-in centres, the Salvation Army, drug projects, youth hostel services, refugee services and school holiday clubs. The Bounty Club food is provided 'for the benefit of the community' and not just for people in crisis.

The success of this project has established the Bounty Club as a permanent part of the charity's work in Harlow, and to help us in our operations we have recently acquired a new refrigerated van. Our special thanks go to Kevin Tierney for developing this work during the pilot project.

From April 2015 to March 2016 the Bounty Club collected and redistributed the following fresh food to 33 local front-line professional agencies in support of their work:

Company fresh food business partners:

- Bidvest Foodservice, Harlow - 6 tonnes
- Swithenbank, Hoddesdon - 33 tonnes
- Brakes, Harlow - 18 tonnes (3 months only)
- Total collected and Redistributed - 57 tonnes**

All of the above food would otherwise have gone to landfill or animal feed.



Client feedback

“ The fresh food that we try helps us to experience food we have not had before.
 I am on a tight budget, so the bread you provided has helped me a lot.
 My partner and I have both had operations recently and have been off work. These food donations have been a lifeline for us both and our three children.
 With five children, this greatly helps.
allowed us to have fresh fruit and vegetables at the end of the month.
 Very much appreciated. I'm a single mum with two children and good fresh vegetables are so expensive.
”

Bounty Club



Company feedback

"Since the formation of the Bounty Club, Bidvest-Harlow have been able to divert more chilled products away from landfill. This partnership helps support local organisations working on the front line and low-income families. It will also help us reach our aim of eliminating all surplus food sent to landfill."
Andy Bulled, Site Excellence Manager, Bidvest-Harlow



New refrigerated van

On Thursday 11th February 2016 MRCT picked up a new refrigerated Bounty Club van from Bristol Street Motors in Harlow, and on the following day it started its work for the charity, distributing free fresh food to local front-line agencies, schools, children's centres, women's refuges, homeless projects and other community charities and organisations, all for the benefit of the community.

Special thanks are due to the Essex County Council Community Initiatives Fund (CIF), who provided the funding for this vehicle, which will support local families/people on low income and others finding it difficult to make ends meet each week. Thanks also to everyone who has helped by making a financial contribution towards the van and to Bristol Street Motors in Harlow, who have been incredible partners in meeting our transport needs since 2013.



The Bounty Club enables our clients to have a proper nutritious meal every day, which not only helps with their health and wellbeing, but helps them to know that people care. They get really excited each day to hear what is going on the menu and are continually saying that they have never eaten so well. It also means that funds which we would have spent on food can go to other resources for our clients.

Helen Baker, Welfare and Support Officer, Street2Homes

I am writing to say thank you for the food that is donated to The Treehouse Children's Centre by the Bounty Club. We know that this service is invaluable to many parents whose finances are limited and they are really appreciative. It enables people to try other foods and it is encouraging to hear recipes being shared.

Angela Cameron, Treehouse Family Centre Manager

Woodlands would like to say a big 'thank you' for the regular supplies of fresh produce delivered by the Bounty Club on a daily basis. Yesterday, a mother was pleased to tell me that her children are enjoying the pies she made from the meat and poultry from the Bounty Club. This is a mother who had previously never used her oven and only provided microwaved ready meals. A triumph indeed! Thank you, Bounty Club; you are much appreciated.

Lorraine Bendon, Woodlands Family Centre

Agency feedback



Breakfast Club



The charity's work with school breakfast clubs continued to expand in Harlow and the surrounding area over the year, and the list of local school partners increased from six to eleven. This is encouraging, as the charity seeks to provide support to school children on pupil premium from low income and/or deprived families, thereby ensuring that they receive a nutritious breakfast at the start of each school day. It is well recorded by educational professionals that a breakfast each morning before school will greatly enhance children's attentiveness in class and also their educational attainment, giving them the opportunity in life that they deserve.

Harlow Foodbank provides cereals and jarred spreads (jam, honey, Marmite, chocolate, peanut butter etc), as well as milk, bread and fruit juice. Baked beans and spaghetti are also available if specially requested. In partnership with the Foodbank the Bounty Club have also provided some schools with fresh food options as well.

During 2015/16 the Foodbank has been working in partnership with eleven local schools, namely:

- Abbotsweld, Harlow
- Cooks Spinney, Harlow
- Katherines Primary School, Harlow
- Kingsmoor Academy, Harlow
- Little Parndon Primary School, Harlow
- Longwood Primary Academy School, Harlow
- Milwards Primary & Nursery School, Harlow
- Pear Tree Mead Academy, Harlow
- Potter St Academy, Harlow
- Shelley Primary School, Ongar
- William Martin Junior & Infant, Harlow



From April 2015 to March 2016 Harlow Foodbank and the Bounty Club provided 9.5 tonnes of non-perishable and fresh food to local school breakfast clubs, supporting an average of 155 children attending each week.



Agency Feedback

We have been using the Foodbank for over a year now and the service has been invaluable. Not only are we able to offer a breakfast club free of charge with your help; we can also provide tuck and snacks to our most vulnerable children. At the end of term, we give our surplus food items from the Foodbank to our most vulnerable families.

Anna Bailey, Inclusion Support Manager, William Martin School

Thank you for all the delicious food you give to us and how much you help our breakfast club.

George (pupil from Katherines School)

Thank you for helping our breakfast club. We do lots of fun things.

Anon School Pupil

I just wanted to write and say a massive thank you for all you have done for our breakfast club. Without the Foodbank partnership we would not have made the breakfast club the success it is, and it has helped so many families. The children look forward to coming each morning and we get lots of positive feedback from the parents.

Suzanne Ryan, Headteacher, Katherines Primary School



Community Partnerships



MRCT continues to recognise the importance of developing partnerships and networks with local organisations, charities, businesses, supermarkets, banks, schools, churches and other faith groups, since this helps to enhance and expand its work and, more importantly, benefit the people it serves in the community. These partnerships also help the charity to provide work experience placement referrals for individuals, thereby equipping them with the necessary skills to move on into employment.

As a Christian charity, MRCT also works in partnership with Heart4Harlow, which encourages churches and businesses to work together for the benefit of the community. The charity also works closely with local churches, two of which provide the buildings for a community adult drop-in centre, the Maybury Centre, as well as a Foodbank satellite centre.

The charity is affiliated to Harlow Voluntary Sector Forum, Harlow and District Chamber of Commerce, the Trussell Trust Foodbank Network, Heart4Harlow and Faithworks. Other community partners include:

- **Harefield and St Paul's Church, Harlow**

These two churches provide the buildings to accommodate our Maybury Open Door work, and St Paul's Church also makes available its 'Upper Room' for our Harlow Foodbank Satellite Centre.

- **Harlow Council**

The Council provides free storage space at the Latton Bush Business Centre in Harlow, which will be available until July 2016. Special thanks are due to Harlow Council for this valuable support, which enables the Foodbank to have additional back-up storage space.

- **LOKnSTORE**

This company provided both free and subsidised storage space ever since the Foodbank was established in April 2009 and until it moved to Matching Tye in February 2016. Our special thanks go to them for their faithful help and support and for agreeing to continue as a drop-off point for small food donations.

- **Places for People**

Places for People have sponsored the Foodbank van in 2014/15 and again in 2015/16, and this has greatly helped with food distribution and the on-going costs of keeping the vehicle on the road. We extend our special thanks to Mary Parsons, Group Director - Placemaking and Regeneration, Places for People.

- **East End Farm, Roydon**

This has been the fifth year that the Foodbank has been working in partnership with East End Farm in Roydon. Working together, we have provided fresh turkey and turkey portions to 126 people (adults and children) on Christmas Eve. Once again, our particular thanks go to Charles and Lindsay Abbey, the proprietors.

- **Housham Hall Farm, Matching Tye**

On Monday 22 February 2016 Harlow Foodbank moved its main warehouse operation from LOKnSTORE in Harlow to Unit 8, Housham Hall Farm in Matching Tye. This site has 5,000 square feet of space on two levels (ground and first floor). With this generous capacity available, the Foodbank will be able to concentrate all of its current and backdated non-perishable food stock at the one site in the foreseeable future. Special thanks are due to Stuart and Kathryn Tinney (landlords) for their support with this opportunity.



Community Partnerships



- **Free Cakes for Kids, Harlow**

Harlow Foodbank referred eighteen families in crisis to Free Cakes for Kids in Harlow to ensure that one of their children received a celebration birthday cake on their special day. Free Cakes for Kids have also supplied senior citizens' birthday cakes to Maybury Open Door during the year.

- **Bristol Street Motors, Harlow**

This company have been very supportive of our work with Harlow Foodbank this year and provided free annual checks, servicing and minor repairs for the Foodbank van. They have also provided the refrigerated vehicle for the Bounty Club at a discounted price.

- **Bidvest Foodservice, Harlow and Swithenbank, Hoddesdon**

These two companies provide the Bounty Club with surplus fresh food that would otherwise be deemed as wastage. This is then redistributed into the community 'for the community's benefit'. Special thanks to these companies for supporting the Bounty Club through its pilot period and for helping to make it a permanent area of work for the charity.

- **Brakes, Harlow**

The charity has been working in partnership with Brakes since January 2016, picking up their surplus food, which would normally be deemed as wastage, and redistributing it into the community. This partnership has greatly enhanced the range of fresh food being given to the Bounty Club 'for the benefit of the community'.

- **Salvation Army, Harlow**

The Salvation Army, Harlow, works in partnership with Harlow Foodbank by providing a Foodbank satellite centre on Wednesdays. During the year the Foodbank satellite centre has redeemed 91 Foodbank vouchers, and in line with this it has supported 215 (126 adults and 89 children) people with emergency food. We greatly value this partnership and extend our special thanks to Majors Chris and Karen Sandford, as well as their team of staff and volunteers.

- **Homeless work in Harlow**

Harlow Foodbank and the Bounty Club have been working in partnership with homeless charities and other organisations, namely Streets2Homes, Helping Hands and the Harlow Chocolate Run. They have been given both non-perishable and fresh food to support their work with their client groups.

- **Citizens' Advice Centre (CAB) and Family Mosaic**

Both of these organisations hold sessions for people attending Maybury Open Door to help them with issues of housing, debt, benefits and other social problems.

- **Kier, Harlow**

Kier provides secure parking for our Foodbank and Bounty Club van seven days a week at no charge. We are most grateful for this support.

- **Greenways Eggs / UK Salads / High Tree Packers Ltd**

All these enterprises supply the Foodbank satellite centre with fresh food free of charge. This food is distributed to local people in crisis alongside their emergency non-perishable food. We are indebted to these companies for their support and partnership.

- **Bishop's Stortford Foodbank**

We continue working in partnership with Bishop's Stortford Foodbank, providing food storage and distribution during the year. In turn they have supported us through Tesco supermarket collections in Bishop's Stortford.

MRCT Volunteers



MRCT volunteers are very important to the charity as they provide us with many life experiences and skills which can be used to benefit the people we serve. Everyone is encouraged to develop his or her full potential through a structured training, development and support programme. They are also encouraged to contribute suggestions which help shape our services each year.

Some volunteers come to us to gain valuable work experience as part of a planned return into paid employment, whilst others want to support a community project that will motivate and inspire them after retirement. Each volunteer gains the satisfaction of knowing they are helping a local good cause and making a difference in their community.

Volunteers are given full training and can work flexible hours to suit their availability. All are required to undergo a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check.

Statistics

121 volunteers worked for MRCT in 2015/16 covering a range of volunteering and unpaid work with Maybury Open Door, Harlow Foodbank, Bounty Club and other general charitable duties.

16,082 volunteering and unpaid hours were contributed to MRCT in the financial year 2015/16.



Volunteering opportunities ranged from office duties to website design and updating, kitchen duties, food preparation, activity sessions, one-to-one listening and signposting, self-advocacy, food sorting and distribution, manning the welcome table, setting up and clearing away, supermarket collections, tombola and bric-à-brac stalls, making up food boxes and food bags, food delivery, van driving, client one-to-one support and fundraising.



Part of my role has been instigating and co-ordinating the Bounty Club. It has been full of rewards, as I meet volunteers who help me and the many groups, organisations and individuals who are receipt of the bounty of various foodstuffs I carry in my van each day.



I am greeted in many ways by the people waiting to receive food to feed children and families in need. They are overwhelmed at the variety and the fact that they are free to take fresh produce away.

There is always a smile that erupts from frowns as people realize the predicaments folk are in, and that these predicaments can now be resolved with this bountiful supply of food.

Kevin Tierney, Bounty Club Driver

Volunteer story



Acknowledgements



Bristol Street Motors (free van servicing and repair)
 LOKnSTORE (discounted storage)
 Bishops Stortford Foodbank
 Places4People (foodbank van sponsorship)
 Harlow Council (free storage)
 Salvation Army, Harlow (satellite centre cover)
 Santander, Harlow
 Halifax, Harlow
 Robert Halfon MP
 St Pauls Church, Harlow (discounted use of building)
 Harefield Church, Harlow (free use of building)
 Rainbow Services, Harlow
 Kier, Harlow (free foodbank van parking)
 The Gateway Centre (free bounty club van parking)
 Bidvest Foodservice, Harlow (fresh food supplies)
 Swithenbank – Hoddesdon (fresh food supplies)
 Brake Brothers (fresh food supplies)
 High Trees Packing (potato donations)
 UK Salads (salad donations)
 Greenways Eggs (egg donations)
 GlaxoSmithKline GSK (free storage)
 Sobell Charitable Trust
 Rotary Club of Harlow Tye
 Rotary Club of Harlow
 Trussell Trust Foodbank Network
 Paul Sexton, Lawsons (Whetstones) Ltd (free distribution support)
 Stuart and Katherine Tinney, Housham Hall Farm
 Charles Abbey, East End Farm (Christmas turkey donations)
 Tesco Supermarket, Harlow and Bishops Stortford
 Sainsbury Supermarket, Harlow and Bishops Stortford
 ASDA Supermarket, Harlow
 Waitrose Supermarket, Bishop's Stortford
 Church of The Holy Innocents, High Beach
 Front line care professionals (Harlow and surrounding area)
 Harlow and District schools and churches
 Heart4Harlow
 Essex Community Foundation
 Essex County Council, Community Initiative Fund (CIF)
 Bethan Walker (fundraising charity cards)
 Free Cakes for Kids, Harlow (birthday cakes for foodbank client's children)



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