



Nourish 2022-2023
A community larder
and food bank *More than just food*

FAITHWORKS

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Welcome to Nourish

"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around." - Leo Buscaglia, Author & Speaker

With the help of 46 volunteers giving their precious time and energy, people making regular donations of food and financial help, numerous local care organisations working alongside us, and our very own Community Money Advice helping to sort out people's financial burdens, we are proud to announce our latest initiative, our new Community Larder.

From our launch in October 2023, Blandford Food Bank+ will become known as Nourish - bringing the work of the Food Bank and a new Community Larder together.

This gives us a chance to help anyone in immediate crisis through the Food Bank with a food parcel, and for those who are on a low income, we have our Community Larder, where for a small membership fee, those who need a little extra help can pick up some groceries.

We have literally become 'a heart of the community' - a place where new friendships are borne, where worries and anxieties are lessened, and hope given.

Thank you for all your care and support – we simply could not do this work without the support of our local community.



HR. Roberts

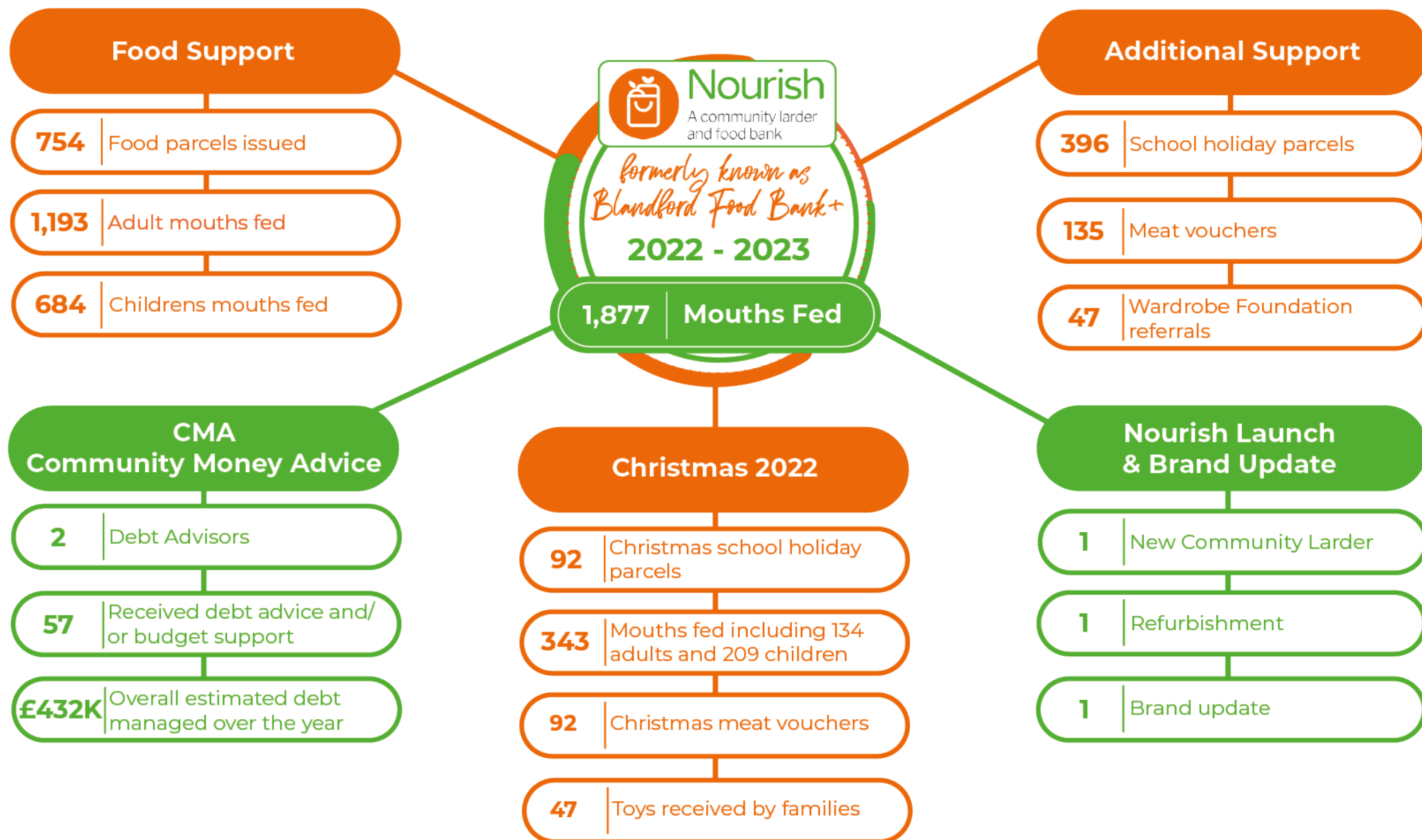
Heidi Roberts
Nourish Food Bank
Deputy Manager

C. Del-Pinto

Gail Del-Pinto
Nourish Food Bank
Manager

H. Britton

Hayley Britton
Nourish Larder
Manager





Nourish Larder

In 2023 we started our renovation project at the United Reformed Church to enable us to open the Community Larder. Our aim was to create new storage rooms for the Food Bank, freshen up the main hall and create a new space for the larder; having new flooring laid, installing new shelving, and adding a fridge and freezer.

Following a 'soft launch' we are so happy with the positive response we have received. People often comment on how lovely it feels to walk round and choose their own items.

The refurbishment has allowed us to use the main hall as our welcome area. Here we offer free hot drinks and cake, providing the opportunity to sit and chat with visitors, offering support and signposting with any needs they have.

Our new space also allows local agencies to come and meet with people, for example The Blandford Group Practice

"It has been such a privilege to set up the Larder. We have worked hard to provide a space that doesn't feel intimidating but feels safe; I feel that we have done this well."

In the short time we have been open it is already making a huge difference."
- Hayley

Social Prescribing Team, Sovereign Housing and Victim Support.

There is a strong sense of community building where people are offered a friendly face and a listening ear when they find themselves in hardship or just need a change of scenery. We are looking forward to developing this space, growing community connections and seeing lives changed.





Jade's Story

"In the supermarket my daughter goes for the normal things, but here she picked up something different which was nice."

Jade was one of the first members of the **Nourish Community Larder** and has found it has impacted on much more than just what is on the family menu. She became a member when her regular food shop became too expensive and she was having to go without fresh produce.

One week she brought her thirteen year old daughter with her and found that she was picking up lots of fresh fruit and vegetables that she would not normally eat. Jade explained that she feels the smaller, quieter environment, compared to local supermarkets, enabled her daughter to feel able to take her time and enjoy looking at the produce and to try new foods.

Main Reasons People Use the Food Bank:

Benefit Delays

Benefit applications can take up to 10 weeks to process

Housing - Being Rehoused or Relocated

Job Loss

Carers - Low Income

Low Income Jobs

Domestic Violence

Pensioners on low income

Homelessness

Serious Illness or Lack of Sick Pay

Inspired by cookery lessons at school, her daughter has decided to choose food as one of her course options. Jade feels that coming to the Community Larder will provide experience in handling and getting to know a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables which will help with her studies.

Her daughter is also a keen dancer and her son loves swimming, and so they both need healthy, nutritious diets.

Jade has also become an invaluable part of the **Nourish team through volunteering**, guiding members through the Larder and helping keep a note of food items that need restocking. She also brightens the place up with her cheerful personality and bright smile!



Becky (left) and Nicky (right) Faithworks CMA staff

CMA Debt Advice & Budget Support

cma
Freedom from debt
Hope for the future
Faithworks CMA

FCA FINANCIAL
CONDUCT
AUTHORITY
Authorised and regulated by the
Financial Conduct Authority FRN #618754

"I now feel in control of my finances for the first time in my life - I'm now debt free."

"I was kept fully informed and there's nothing I can think of that could improve the wonderful work you've done on my particular case, thank you."

Faithworks CMA (Community Money Advice) operate under the framework of CMA, a national charity. The team provide debt advice and budget support onsite at Nourish. Nicky joined the staff team this year as a Debt Advisor to work alongside Becky and the volunteers.

Our volunteer Mike has recently stepped down. He faithfully volunteered many hours during his time with us. We would like to say a special thank you to Mike who has been so caring and committed in the support he has given.



Mike

Over the last year, the Faithworks CMA team have helped 57 clients and managed around £430,000 of debt.



Cooking Workshops

“My kids tried more vegetables!”

An exciting addition to our programme was the introduction of cookery courses. These were a response to the cost-of-living crisis and presented a means of supporting the local community with how to prepare and cook nutritional meals on a budget.

As a result of peoples’ financial generosity to Nourish, the Friendly Food Club were able to come and run the cookery courses.

Each course consisted of three sessions and clients were provided with all the ingredients for the meals and a slow cooker to take home.

The additional benefits included social opportunities - much conversation and laughter could often be heard, while relationships and new skills developed.

23 people have participated in these workshops, enabling them to learn new healthy recipes on a budget and pass these on to their families - *a huge thank you to our donors who made this possible.*

Going forwards we are expanding the workshops to include new recipes. We are also planning more seasonal dishes such as summer fruit-based dishes.

“My confidence has grown. Andrea, our tutor, makes it so easy to learn. I’ve learnt so much.”





Our Team

"[Volunteering at the Food Bank] gives me something to do and I get to meet new people and contribute to the community."

Over the last year we were able to call upon a **wonderful team of 34 volunteers** who give time regularly every month to support the essential work of the Food Bank.

Together they undertook so many of the vital roles which make our Food Bank function. These include sorting the food donations, packing parcels, collecting donations from supermarkets and delivering food.

"[Volunteering at the Food Bank] has been an eye-opener!"

Our incredible volunteers gave 2,340 hours in time last year!

Many of our volunteers have been with us for more than four years. They all commit to working two hours a month, with many doing far more than that!

During the year our incredible volunteers gave 2,340 hours of their precious time.

We are immensely grateful for all they do. We could not achieve what we do without you.

"[Volunteering at the Food Bank] makes me feel good. I feel as if I'm doing something useful."





Lucy's* Story

Lucy* has been coming to the Food Bank for a few years, I first met her when she was a client of our Community Money Advice team. She recently shared her story with me:

Lucy's Dad walked out on the family when she was 12 years old, leaving mum to bring up her and her younger brother. Her Mum was not in the best of health and died a few years later and so Lucy and her brother went to live with their grandparents.

Lucy eventually lost both grandparents leaving her alone with her own two children. With no family support, and no contact with the children's father, debts started to pile up. At her lowest ebb she approached the children's school for help, they referred her to the Food Bank.

Our Community Money Advice team provided support with clearing the debt and helped put her finances in order. Whilst this was happening the Food Bank provided food parcels, access to fresh fruit and vegetables, clothing, holiday hunger parcels (extra food support during school holidays) and much more.

Lucy is now a member of the Nourish Larder and appreciates the help, especially during the school holidays. Her gift to us is that she sees us as a real and genuine place of support - Gail Del-Pinto, Nourish Food Bank Manager.

**Name changed to protect identity*



The Coronation Tea Party

Warm Welcome

Our Warm Welcome space was launched due to the rising cost of heating. Our vision was to offer a warm safe space where new friendships could develop as well as the chance to set aside anxieties for a couple of hours.

Seven people came to our first session. Two trained volunteers made refreshments and delicious homemade cakes to choose from.

Max* also approached us to offer to bake cakes for us as part of his Duke of Edinburgh award - this he continued on a weekly basis throughout the winter. We were most blessed by this - his lemon cake was to die for!

We are looking at developing this into a friendship group, providing much more than just refreshments. Our aim is to offer a range of activities that will help build relationships and develop existing friendships through having fun together.

Friendships are essential; they enable people to share the challenges they face and help put these into perspective. They develop self-esteem, improve mental health and reduce loneliness - smiles become the norm as people feel valued and wanted.

**Name changed to protect identity*

“Warm Welcome was vital throughout the winter. It enabled those who didn’t want to put their heating on, for fear of the cost of doing so, to have somewhere warm to go and to be with other people.

Everyone seemed to enjoy it especially when we served hot pie and custard! We also really enjoyed bringing people together to celebrate The Coronation.” - Hayley





Thank You

Every Tuesday, come rain or shine, a woman discreetly visits the Food Bank with a donation in her hand. She comes before anyone else and passes her donation to us so that we cannot see the value until she has gone. She has been coming to us for long time now - truly humbling!

It is not the value that is important, but the obvious love and compassion she has for people who are vulnerable. Her understanding is that we will make sure that her immense gift is transformed into the help that people need.

Many of our supporters are like the woman above, they pop in through the door handing over their donations, food items or money and ask for no thanks or recognition.

Local businesses also faithfully support our work.

Bryanston School students annually make up hundreds of Recipe Bags (containing a recipe and ingredients needed).

"It's such a happy place!"

The Spetisbury Country Day fair have supported us generously over the years and the many church congregations hold lunches, fêtes and fairs to raise funds for the Food Bank.

Dorset District Council supported us with our transformation to Nourish, and the Town Council provided regular funding through a Service Level Agreement.

Thank you to you all, for without your support we simply could not help the many who come to us seeking our help.

You can support us through regular giving

Regular donations help us to plan more long-term. Standing orders can be set up using the bank details below.

- **£5** per month provides a hygiene bag including toothbrush, toothpaste, shower gel and sanitary products.
- **£10** per month provides the ingredients for a recipe bag (a recipe and all the ingredients needed to make it).
- **£20** per month contributes towards the cost of a slow cooker for a family.



Standing orders can be set up using our bank details below.

Bank: CAF Bank Account

Sort code: 40-52-40

Account number: 00034964

giftaid it

Alternatively a standing order and gift aid form can be downloaded from our website at:

faith-works.org.uk/get-involved/donate/ or contact the office on 01202 429037.

*Nourish is proud to be part
of the Faithworks' family of projects*

FAITHWORKS

LISTEN | GIVE HOPE | ACT | INSPIRE

Charity no: 1108714 – Company no: 5077777

We believe that no one should be alone on their journey when life is hard.
Faithworks works alongside people, practically building hope and resilience.

We want every single person locally to be within 15 minutes of a place of welcome that
radiates life, community, and immediate help – exactly as **Nourish** does!

We run practical projects around food, finance, recovery, homelessness and lone parenting
in urban Dorset, collaborating with councils, other charities and local churches.

Find out more by clicking on the QR code below...



Our website



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facebook.com/blandfordfoodbank



faith-works.org.uk/locations-across-dorset/nourish-blandford/



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*Names with an * have been changed
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