



New Forest
Basics Bank
Churches Together, Lymington
God's love in action



Newsletter Autumn 2010

Quotes from:

Member of Parliament Desmond Swayne TD MP New Forest West:

"There is a perception in the New Forest that we are a relatively affluent part of the country and there is a consequent tendency to neglect some real pockets of deprivation. It is true that the new Forest is well off but there are still plenty of poor and vulnerable people desperately in need of help. I have been to visit the Basics Bank and was amazed at the efficiency of this voluntary organisation. I am grateful for the essential work that they are doing on behalf of all of us to help those in our community who really are in urgent need of that help."

New Forest District Councillor Elizabeth Lewis – Lymington Ward:

"A few years ago, through my association with the Basics Bank, I was shocked to learn how many people in this supposedly wealthy area, through no fault of their own, find themselves in a desperate situation without money for the food or basic essentials which I take for granted. Perhaps they are made redundant or they experience poor health or they are the victims of domestic violence. Whatever the reason they need immediate practical help.

"Fortunately they have somewhere to turn. The small group who run the New Forest Basics Bank give willingly of their time and expertise and work extremely hard not just at Christmas but throughout the year. Their reputation has grown and now 74 agencies rely on them to support families and individuals all over the New Forest and beyond - though I'm proud to say they are still based in Lymington. Of course they could not continue without generous donations of money and goods from local people or the shelves would be bare because each parcel is valued at about £20+ and 76 were given out in May 2010 alone.

"It is a matter of regret that an increasing number of residents need emergency support but for me it is a privilege to be associated with the volunteers at the New Forest Basics Bank who strive to do all they can to help."

Lymington and Pennington Town Mayor – Councillor Jan Hawker:

"As a councillor of Lymington and Pennington Town Council my job is to try to improve the community. This isn't always easy and the subject is about as far reaching as you would care to imagine. I am in my second year as town mayor currently and this post really does make you appreciate community issues. One of the best things about being the town mayor is that I am invited to visit so many community organisations within the Lymington and Pennington area and indeed further afield. It is really encouraging, especially in these difficult times of restraint, to see many eager members of our community volunteering to help charities and organisations that are trying very hard to help improve the lives of those that may not always be in a position to help themselves. The work of volunteers is quite often the only thing that keeps organisations afloat. I attended a large community charity event recently that was staffed totally by volunteers. A member of the public suggested to me that the event would be very expensive to run if the organisers had to be paid. In fact I believe that, if the organisers were paid, then the event wouldn't happen. It would just not be economically viable.

“One of the organisations that is located in the town and relies on volunteers is the Basics Bank which has a new building behind the United Reformed Church in the High Street. Sometimes people find themselves in a very difficult situation through no fault of their own. The Basics Bank is a real “life saver” for those that are waiting for benefits to be paid or don’t have immediate access to essential items. The Bank relies on donations of food, toiletries and money from members of the public and the Bank’s volunteers are very well experienced in ensuring that the essentials of life are provided to those in greatest need. This is a facility that really gets to the root of basic needs and, never knowing what is around the corner, I can only say, “there but for the grace of God go I”.”

- Ø We are greatly indebted to our Member of Parliament, Desmond Swayne, to our District Councillor, Elizabeth Lewis, and to our Town Mayor, Jan Hawker, for their kind and supportive commendations of the work of Basics Bank. Earlier this year, in May, we were also delighted to have a visit from Councillor Pat Wyeth, Chairman of NFDC and to receive her practical support: she has made us one of the charities she is supporting this year. District Council support is vital to us and we say a big ‘thank you’ not only to Cllr Wyeth, but also to Cllrs Jill Cleary and Sheila Snowden for their very helpful contributions to our work.
- Ø We have now completed our SIXTH year in Lymington – our year runs from 1st September to 31st August – and over these six years the requests for help, made through our hard-working referral agencies, have grown steadily in number. 2009/10 has been no exception: 795 parcels have been given in support of 1803 individuals. There has been an increase approaching 20% in parcel numbers this year and a very significant 60% increase in the number of people we have been able to help.
- Ø Our ability to respond to this increasing need has only been made possible through the generosity of many people, both individuals and groups, who have continued to make regular donations of food and money. Without that help we could not survive! The tins and packets of food we have on our shelves at any one time, together with basic toiletries, are seldom sufficient to meet demand and we then go shopping, using the cash donations we have received. Our shopping bill regularly comes to something between £100 and £200.

HARVEST APPEAL: CAN YOU HELP US?

May we again take this opportunity of appealing to churches, schools and individuals to remember, if possible, the work of Basics Bank in a very practical way by collecting tins and packets of food at your Harvest Festival Celebration. We have received so much generous support in the past, and we rely very heavily upon this major source of donated food and money to restock our empty shelves. So we do hope that you will feel able to help us once again in this way.

Those people whom you enable us to help are indeed grateful and it’s often OUR privilege to receive their words of appreciation – or sometimes letters of thanks. These thanks belong to YOU!

Quote: “Dear Basics Bank, I am just writing to thank you for the recent donation of food we received via Social Services. We very much appreciate it. Things are difficult for us at the moment. Yours faithfully ... ” Such a response makes it all worthwhile.

Finally, we thank once again ALL who have helped us during the past year: not only those who have donated food and money, but also the army of volunteers who, week after week, give their time and services to deliver parcels, bring donated goods to the Basics Bank, or staff the Bank when we are open.

INVITATION: *You are warmly invited to the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of Basics Bank, to be held on Thursday, 23rd September at 7.30 pm in the OPEN DOOR CAFÉ at the front of the UNITED REFORMED CHURCH.*

New Forest Basics Bank: Tel: 01590 610008 Website: www.basicsbank.org.uk