

# **FOOD RESOURCES IN THE FOLKESTONE ANDHYTHE DISTRICT AREA**

Updated July 2024

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

With its significant pockets of deprivation, the Folkestone and Hythe District has always been home to a substantial minority of people who experience barriers to accessing sufficient, healthy food.

Since the effects Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and the subsequent rise in the cost of living, there has been an increase in the number of people at risk of food poverty. Local voluntary organisations and community enterprises, along with Folkestone and Hythe District Council (FHDC) and other statutory bodies, have worked together to try and support those in most need.

This document aims to set out food resources and other related support available in the district.

### **1.2 The Folkestone and Hythe District Food Network (DFN)**

The DFN was set up in 2021 to gain a better understanding of need and provision of food services across the Folkestone and Hythe District Council (FHDC) area and to build from the legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic response, where the relationship between the community hubs, food banks, faith groups, etc. had grown and strengthened.

It is open to all organisations and community groups that provide food services, and

provides a forum in which they can communicate, share information and coordinate their activities. Members of the network lend their different areas of expertise to overcome the complex and inter-related barriers that prevent access to good food and work together to address gaps in service provision.

Many of these community projects are primarily focused on reducing food waste and keeping supply chains local rather than specifically addressing food poverty, but by increasing access to affordable, fresh food they complement the work of the better-known, larger voluntary organisations and statutory agencies.

This document provides a Folkestone and Hythe District food provision position statement as of June 2024.

## 2. **FOODBANKS AND SOCIAL SUPERMARKETS**

**Shepway Food Bank.** Supported by the Trussell Trust, run by the Rainbow Centre, works with referring agents from a variety of organisations to support people in crisis and facing food poverty. Those in crisis can contact the 'Help through Hardship' team Freephone number (0808 208 2138), which will assess what support they can offer, not just issue a food voucher.

Food parcels are collected from the **Rainbow Centre's Mobile Food Services Van**, which is the country's first combined Mobile Foodbank and Pantry. It goes to locations across the district each week, including:

- Lydd
- Cheriton
- Hawkinge
- Folkestone

The Rainbow Centre Shepway Foodbank also operates a static foodbank in New Romney.

The Pantry service, which is a social supermarket under the 'My Local Pantry' franchise, allows Foodbank users to progress easily into accessing affordable, healthy food. It furthermore stops people from reaching crisis point and having the need to access the emergency service Foodbank.

**Hythe Pantry.** Also run by the Rainbow Centre under the 'My Local Pantry' franchise at the Catholic church of Our Lady of Good Counsel, every Monday 9.15am – 2pm and Tuesday 9.15am – 1.30pm. Volunteers ensure a friendly, welcoming atmosphere, offering tea and coffee and a warm clothes exchange rail as well as shoes, bedding, toys and school uniforms.

**The Mobile & Hythe Pantry** is for people experiencing financial difficulties, hardship and food poverty they can apply on-line to become members; for £7.00 a week, members can purchase food worth about £30.00 plus free items, including sanitary products, tinned food, bread, fresh fruit and vegetables. Volunteers ensure a friendly, welcoming atmosphere, offering tea and coffee and a chat.

The Rainbow Centre supports people through difficult times to help them to get back onto their feet. This is why the Mobile Food Services & Hythe Pantry work with specially selected agencies to offer its members access to a host of extra support including well-being, Money Matters tackling debt, Citizens Advice, welfare representatives, housing support and community wardens. The support services work on a rota basis to cover all their locations. All of the services are available to anyone accessing the Foodbank or Pantry.

For more information and details of how to apply, go to:

<https://www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk/join-a-pantry/>

Those unable to apply on-line can also do so by phoning 07913 573403 or sending an email to [pantry@rainbow-centre.org](mailto:pantry@rainbow-centre.org)

Donation collection points for the Shepway Foodbank can be found at many supermarkets and other locations across the district – Download the app 'Bank the Food' then follow 'Shepway Foodbank' to find their nearest collection points and their needs in real time.

**Folkestone Pantry** which is part of the FareShare Kent Community Pantry network operates from Sunflower House (see below) on Friday mornings from 9.30 – 10.30am. This is a membership facility, costing individuals £16.50 and families £33.00 a month (direct debit). Members will receive 10 items (20 for families) or more a week – fruit and vegetable, meat, dairy and hygiene products.

### **Salvation Army**

Hythe Salvation Army Foodbank is open on Wednesdays from 10am - noon at the Salvation Army Hall, Hythe CT21 6EG. No referral is needed.

### **Family Foodbanks**

Information about these can be found at: <https://www.familyfoodbank.org/folkestone-hythe-ffb.html>

Vouchers for the foodbanks can be obtained by self-referral to a Distribution Centre and from some professionals.

Distribution Centres:

*For families only:*

People Plus, 145-147 Sandgate Road, Folkstone, CT20 2DA

- New Romney Family Hub, Craythorne Lane New Romney TN28 8 BL Tel 03000 420000
- Castle Hill Family Hub, Denmark Street, Folkestone, CT19 6EQ Tel 03000 420893
- Folkestone Family Hub, Dover Rd, Folkestone CT20 1QF Tel 03000 419727
- Cheriton Family Hub, Chart Rd, Folkestone CT19 4PN Tel 03000 416444
- Folkestone and Hythe Social Services
- East Kent College EKC - Westcliff House, Westcliff Gardens, Folkestone CT20 1SZ. Tel: 01843 230876 - **College Students only**

For more information email: [familyfoodbank@children-families.org](mailto:familyfoodbank@children-families.org)

### **Turner Stone Centre - Folkestone Academy**

A family foodbank is run at the school on Tuesdays and Thursdays. They also run 'Cooking on a Shoestring' family workshops on Tuesdays, 4.30-5.30pm.

### **Stella Maris Catholic School**

Stella Maris Catholic Primary School, Parkfield Rd, Folkestone CT19 5BY – Sunshine Team Food Pantry, open during school hours for anyone who needs support. Run on a 'give what you can, take what you need' basis – dried goods only.

**Community Fridge.** Reduces food waste by receiving and offering donated food to anyone in the community. Open every day except Tuesday and Sunday. Located in Wood Avenue Library, 17 Wood Avenue, Folkestone, CT19 6HS. For more information including detailed opening hours see

- <https://www.facebook.com/Folkestonecommunityfridge>
- <https://www.instagram.com/folkestonecommunityfridge>

## **3. COOKING SKILLS**

This section lists initiatives which aim to help people to enjoy preparing and sharing low cost, healthy meals. This is a new development across Folkestone and Hythe District and is likely to develop further as funding permits.

**Napier Friends.** Cheriton Baptist Church, Mondays. For Napier residents to improve their cooking skills by cooking and sharing food from their home countries

**Pop-Up Kitchens.** occasional cooking demonstrations using low-cost ingredients to prepare simple, healthy meals. Linked to the Hythe Pantry and Mobile Food Services run by the Rainbow Centre. For dates or to reserve a place, contact:

[wendylehnert@rainbow-centre.org](mailto:wendylehnert@rainbow-centre.org)

**Bags of Taste.** Home-based course. Ingredients and small items of equipment are delivered to the home and each participant is supported by a mentor. Course graduates can join an online or WhatsApp cooking community after the course has finished. Apply to join via Sunflower House, contact: [info@sunflowerhouse.org.uk](mailto:info@sunflowerhouse.org.uk)

**Turner Stone Centre - Folkestone Academy.** Runs 'Cooking on a Shoestring' family workshops on Tuesdays, 4.30-5.30pm.

**Academy FM.** Produces podcasts and broadcasts including items on skills for cooking on a budget.

*East Kent College.* There is an intention to start 6-week themed cooking course for 8 – 10 people, with recipe cards and nutritional advice. This is in development.

## **4. COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND ADVICE**

This section lists organisations and support groups based in the community and offering a range of food-related support or projects.

**United Response Community Network, 378 Cheriton Rd, Cheriton. CT19 4DX**  
Telephone 07909 882121

Has a Community Fridge as part of its Local Larder, offering free food and provisions that would otherwise be wasted from local shops and supermarkets. Open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 10.00am – 3.00pm

**Sunflower House.** Operates from two sites: the Dover Road building and the Community Room at the Bayle. Provides Warm Welcome drop-in service on Fridays 0930-1330, including hot drinks and snacks and emergency weekend food parcels; health and well-being activity; advice surgery. Works alongside and in tandem with Action on Homelessness (see above). Leads a pilot project for a home-based cookery skills course: **Bags of Taste**. Ingredients and small items of equipment are delivered to the home and each participant is supported by a mentor. Course graduates can join an online or WhatsApp cooking community after the course has finished. Apply to join via Sunflower House, contact: [info@sunflowerhouse.org.uk](mailto:info@sunflowerhouse.org.uk) Telephone: 01303 980661.

For further information about all activities and projects, visit:  
[www.sunflowerhouse.org.uk](http://www.sunflowerhouse.org.uk).

**Age UK South Kent Coast and the Folkestone Community Hub**, The Marigold Centre, 65 Shaftesbury Road, Cheriton, CT19 4NS. Lunch club for over 55s, 12pm Monday-Thursday - delicious, freshly cooked two course meal = £6.50. Meal Delivery, 7 days a week = £7. Also provides access to emergency food (and other essential goods and services) for those in most need. Open 10am – 3pm, Monday – Friday.

**Age UK Hythe and the Hythe Community Hub**, Sanford House, Stade Street, Hythe, CT21 6BD. A day centre offering information, advice and support for over 55s, as well as a café open to all, and a meal delivery service. In addition provides access to emergency food (and other essential goods and services) for those most in need. Open 9am – 3.45pm, Monday – Friday, and 10am – 2pm Saturday and Sunday (phone line only).

**Romney Marsh Community Hub.** Rolfe Lane, New Romney, TN28 8JR. Provides a range of services:

- Community Hub providing day support on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
- Information, advice and support for the over 50s. Open Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm
- Monday to Friday the Sunflower Café is open and lunch can also be booked
- Hot meal delivery service for the over 50s, from Monday to Friday, with frozen meals available for the weekend
- Home Support Service available for domestic chores and shopping
- Access to Dementia Coordinators

The hub can also provide a referral to a food bank for those in need.

**Age UK Lyminge.** 63 Station Road, Lyminge, CT18 8HQ. Provides a range of services including a day centre providing information, advice, and support for the over 55s, as well as a café open to all members of the community and dementia day care, including lunch provision. Open Monday – Friday

### **The Rainbow Centre, Folkestone**

In addition to the Food Services listed above, the Rainbow Centre provides a range of services for those experiencing hardship, including a Homeless Support Service.

For information about these services, please use links to their website:

Foodbank <https://www.rainbow-centre.org/our-services/shepway-foodbank/>

Pantry <https://www.rainbow-centre.org/our-services/pantries/>

FoodStop <https://www.rainbow-centre.org/our-services/foodstop/>

Homeless Support <https://www.rainbow-centre.org/our-services/homeless-support-service/>

Family Contact <https://www.rainbow-centre.org/our-services/family-contact-centre/>

Money Matters <https://www.rainbow-centre.org/our-services/money-matters/>

Winter Shelter – only updated at the start of each shelter

## 5.1 COMMUNITY GARDENS AND GROWING PROJECTS

**Thoughtful Food Lyminge.** Lyminge based volunteer-led group, centred around a community allotment at the heart of the village. Thoughtful Food promotes growing and using local, seasonal, organic and sustainable food supplies. TF runs vegetable growing workshops and organises plant and produce share events. Open to all members of the community.

**Locavore Group.** Martello Primary School, The Warren, Folkestone. Community garden based at the school, focused on encouraging people to eat locally-grown food, as well as offering regular sessions and community events teaching about growing food through the seasons. Open Monday – Thursday afternoons (term time only).

**Incredible Edibles.** [www.facebook.com/incredibleediblecheriton](http://www.facebook.com/incredibleediblecheriton). National network that promotes locally produced food and encourages people to grow and harvest vegetables, fruits and herbs in small community spaces. The local group is based in Cheriton and Broadmead and volunteers support community gardens from Cheriton to Sandgate. The gardens include **Sandgate Community Garden**, SAGA, Enbrook.

Grows vegetables, herbs, flowers and has a small orchard for fruit. **Fremantle Park** five plots for local families, herb beds and a small orchard. **Golden Valley Shops:** large brick planters for fruit trees and bushes, herbs and flowers. Between **Chichester Road and Meadow:** two alley beds for herbs, flowers, fruit bushes. Contact Leonie Wootton: [leoniewootton2311@gmail.com](mailto:leoniewootton2311@gmail.com)

**Harbour Church Community Garden.** Community garden managed by Rainbow Centre volunteers, primarily for users of the RC Homeless Support Service. This project has been part funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

**Napier Friends.** Runs an on-site community garden in the Barracks and supports residents to grow herbs, flowers, vegetables and fruit

**Folkestone Nepalese Community.** Nepalese volunteers manage a large Community Garden at Pent Farm, Postling to grow vegetables for use by their community

**Touchbase.** 19 Tontine Street, Folkestone, CT20 1JT. Social enterprise catering company which employs and supports young people and adults with disabilities. Runs a range of activities including cooking and nutrition. Service users grow and use fruit, vegetable and flowers grown in a Community Garden at Pent Farm, Postling

## 5.2 OTHER COMMUNITY RESOURCES

**Feeding Folkestone.** A WhatsApp group of local independent businesses and organisations (including Action on Homelessness, Locavore, Incredible Edibles, and Hythe Environmental Group) providing community gardens, educational initiatives, gleaning, food waste initiatives etc., as well as provision of fresh food. Feeding Folkestone runs the Community Fridge in Wood Avenue Library, Folkestone.

**South Kent Mind.** Runs two cooking sessions a week to support mood and improve skills for cooking on a budget: healthy baking; preparing and eating a low-cost lunch together. Has a weekly Gardening Club with a site at Park Farm, which aims to grow food used in the cooking sessions

**Shepway Youth Hub.** Grace Hill, Folkestone, CT20 1ET. Runs a free, rolling six-week programme of life skills sessions, including budgeting, cooking, and CV writing for 11 – 18 year olds. Thursday evenings, 6pm – 7pm for 11 -13 age group, and 7.30pm – 8.30pm for 14+.

**The Rainbow Centre Food Stop.** A mobile service located behind the Folkestone Magistrate Court at 4.50pm (Saturdays only) and the Harbour at 5.30pm. Provides sandwiches, snacks, bread, water, toiletries, socks and sleeping bags. Available to all members of the community, with a focus on hard-to-reach clients who do not engage with other services, and those who are homeless without access to cooking facilities. Runs Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

### **The Danny Gallivan Trust**

In partnership with The Picnic Hut, Haguelands Farm, Burmarsh. A mobile service that offers free take-away hot meals from a van located in Paltings Way every evening from 5.30 – 7.00pm, except Saturdays.

**Action on Homelessness.** Offers hot lunches to anyone in the community on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Sunflower House, Foord Road, Folkestone, CT19 5AE.

**The Beacon Plus Café** provides low-cost snacks for all members of the community. It operates from Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church, Guildhall St North on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 9.30 – 2.30pm and from Sunflower House on Fridays as part of their Warm Welcome project.

**Folkestone Repairs Together** Holy Trinity Church Hall on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday every month and Nepalese Community Centre, Baker Road, CT19 4NN, 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday every month.

12.30 – 14.30. Open to all. Budgeting advice, electrical repairs, sewing, technical support in a warm space with free lunch provided.

**East Kent College,** Shorncliffe Road, Folkestone, CT20 2TZ. Provides free meals for 16 – 19 year olds from low income households, as well as grants for 19+ students.

**Kent Food Hubs.** Quarterhouse, Tontine Street, Folkestone, CT20 1JT. Sells organic produce from local suppliers directly to customers, as part of the Open Food Network. Orders placed online, collection on Tuesdays.

**Hythe Environmental Community Group.** [hytheenvironmental.community](http://hytheenvironmental.community). Runs



various projects in and around Hythe including:

- Community Kitchen
- Gleaning of produce from local farms, distributed to Streetz2Streetz, Folkestone Women's Refuge, KRAN, Action on Homelessness, Home Farm Trust and the Hythe Pantry
- Community Fruit Press available to borrow by anyone who wants to juice their fruit
- Network of hop growers who donate hops to local brewers in exchange for beer
- Seed, plant, and produce swaps twice a year on the Hythe High Street.

**Custom Food Labs.** [customfoodlab@gmail.com](mailto:customfoodlab@gmail.com). A collaboration of local artists, activists, and environmentalists linked to various initiatives including Locavore and Kent FoodHubs. Partners with organisations to support social and therapeutic horticulture for people living with mental health issues or dementia.

**Streetz2Streetz.** [www.streetz2streetz.com](http://www.streetz2streetz.com). Mobile fish and chip van with strong social values that donates hot meals to homeless people during its rounds and delivers a weekly supply of sandwiches.

**Academy FM.** Produces podcasts and broadcasts including items on skills for cooking on a budget.

**Future's Café** 41A Guildhall St North, CT201EF. Tuesdays 9.30 – 11.30am. A safe space for female survivors of domestic abuse to meet over coffee and cake. Contact the Coordinator on 07773179082 or email [mel.goodban@clarionhg.com](mailto:mel.goodban@clarionhg.com)

**Rotary Clubs.** There are a number of Rotary Clubs across the district, who offer support on a range of initiatives. Below is an example where more information can be found: <https://www.folkestonerotary.org/>.

## 6. REDUCING FOOD WASTE

A number of online resources and apps exist to help redistribute surplus food and reduce food waste. These include:

- Olio. Allows users to advertise surplus food being given away for free.
- Too Good To Go. Purchase surplus food from shops at greatly reduced prices.
- Bank The Food. Allows users to see what items are needed by local foodbanks in real time.

## 7. COST OF LIVING SUPPORT

Information relating to support with the cost of living, including food and fuel vouchers, benefits, welfare, energy etc. can be found at: <https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/help-support-cost-living>.

Additional support may be available through the following:



Holiday Activities and Food Programme. Provides healthy food and activities in the school holidays for children and young people aged 4 – 16 years who can access certain benefits related to school meals: <https://www.theeducationpeople.org/holiday-activities-and-food-programme-kent-haf/>.

For support aimed at Ukrainians and other refugees – <https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/community/support-for-Ukraine>.

Social Enterprise Kent hosts an on-line Kent-wide Asset map and a data base of organisations that offer support through the Cost of Living crisis: <https://sekgroup.org.uk/community-support/community-wellbeing/cost-of-living-support/>.

## 8. FAITH-BASED SUPPORT

**South Kent Community Church.** The Cornerstone Centre, Castle Avenue, Folkestone, CT20 2QR. A drop-in centre for all adults (18 years and above), providing social interaction, hot snacks. Open Mondays and Wednesdays 2.30 – 4.30pm.

**Folkestone Baptist Church.** Hill Road, Folkestone, CT19 6LY. Provides a drop-in service offering conversation and hot meals for all members of the community. Open Thursday and Saturday mornings.

**Holy Trinity Church.** Sandgate Road, Folkestone, CT20 2HQ. Provides free lunches for all members of the community. First Friday of the month only.

**All Saints C of E Church.** Park Street, Lydd, TN29 9AS. Provides three-day food parcels from the Shepway Food Bank through a referral system. Open Fridays 6.30 – 7.30pm. Also provides emergency food boxes to any member of the community in need, available 24 hours a day.

In addition, several of the Romney Marsh churches run small-scale mini-pantries that provide a variety of tinned and fresh groceries and toiletries, open to all.

**Sellindge Church.** Sellindge church provides a warm space with hot drinks from 10-1 every Thursday, as well as a soup and roll lunch afterwards. In addition a foodbank operates from the church during the same period, and can be accessed via referrals from local schools or by contacting the Church.

## 9. SUPERMARKETS

Many of the supermarkets in the district are signed up to the Neighbourly platform, through which they redistribute surplus food and other products to community groups including food banks.

Other supermarkets and organisations in the District may be signed up to FareShare Kent, part of a national network ([https://faresharekent.org.uk/?page\\_id=415](https://faresharekent.org.uk/?page_id=415)).

## 10. WIDER LINKS AND GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

The District Food Network continues to develop its activities across East Kent, building wider links to enable better coordination and a sustained focus on local

health and wellbeing priorities.

It is currently participating in the following Forums:

**Kent Food Partnerships** Healthy Food for All Sub-groups

<https://www.producedinkent.co.uk/kent-food-partnership>

**Folkestone and Hythe Health Alliance**

**Whole Systems Approach to Obesity – East Kent Healthy Communities and Workplaces Sub-group**