



5th March 2021

**Baildon Town Council Community Development Grant
April 2020 to March 2021
End of Grant Report**

In this challenging year, the St Hugh's Centre has continued to support the Baildon South West community, but not quite as we planned! If 2020 showed us one thing, it was the Community Development Worker's paradox – make plans but be prepared to adapt if the needs of your community change. We found ways to keep the Centre open throughout all lockdowns. As CD Worker I have not been furloughed at any point.

First quarter – April to June 2020

The challenge of this quarter was to ensure we kept the Centre operational despite the full national lockdown. We cancelled all groups and hirers in line with national guidance. As CD Worker I then conducted an impact review and it made plans to support our area by:

1. Keeping the food bank open – accessible, safe and functional
2. Developing relationships with other organisations to offer strategic, Baildon-wide systems.

Food Bank

The St Hugh's Food Bank increased its capacity for storage. We conducted a successful drive to encourage donations of non-perishable items. We set up a contactless system for claimants and donators. This entailed providing donation boxes outside each of our three Baildon churches, promoting donations on social media and among our congregations and setting up a system of collecting and storing the food on a very regular basis. Clearly travel was not permitted due to the lockdown unless it proved unavoidable. Subsequently I asked our regular food banks support volunteers to step down and took on the work of emptying the boxes, managing the food system and making up the food parcels myself so as not to contradict the guidance. The

number of claims increased dramatically but we always managed to fulfil the demand. We also received referrals from other projects which had been forced to close and doctor's surgeries.

St Hugh's food bank became a member of the Bradford wide Wellsprings Food Bank system so that we could receive referrals for our area and also report our figures into the strategic plan for Bradford.

Strategic Baildon-wide support

Marcia Churley of Bradford Council set up the Baildon Covid Response Group. Along with other support organisations in Baildon, Sandra Benham, Vicar of Baildon and Chair of the St Hugh's Management Committee and I, have attended every meeting and contributed whatever support we could offer as a Community Centre and church. We worked closely with Mike Pollard and Joe Ashton to overcome issues over the Neighbourhood Support Centre for Baildon. This involved solving some logistical challenges and offering one of our halls as a venue.

Second quarter – July to September

As the lockdown continued, the food bank became much busier. We were fortunate that the increase in demand was met by the increase in donations. Local shops offered us supplies and local people responded incredibly to our requests for specific items.

It looked as though lockdown was working and that we would be released to restart some groups and activities in September. Much work was put into making the building ready for selected groups, in a manner which did not contradict the guidance. In the end only our mental health support group could resume.

Children's Work

Recognising that children were not having opportunities to play and socialise, I contacted Nicola Murray of SpongeTree and we devised two children's activities to run in Roberts Park in August which fit with the current restrictions on group meeting and Covid safety. We ran the Dabble and Do event on 15th August for families with pre-school and primary aged children. This was accessed by 112 children and we distributed all 55 craft kits.



We also planned a Big Bubble event, an activity by its very nature (1m bubble wands!) created social distancing. We were forced to delay this event due to change in restrictions and planned to hold it on 1st September. However we then entered the second national lockdown and we were left with no alternative but to cancel.

Third quarter – October to December 2020

We continued to work with the Baildon Covid Response group which had become Baildon Liaison Group. At this point the Neighbourhood Support Centre was no longer required at St John's Church so we removed the remaining food supplies and incorporated them in St Hugh's stores and donated to other food bank projects.

Vulnerable Families



I worked with local primary schools to identify families needing extra support at Christmas. We supplied 30 Christmas hampers to local families, covering 40 adults, 65 children and 3 babies. Each child received a £10 gift card and hampers included luxury food items, Christmas crackers, gifts etc. We also secured a new volunteer who worked tirelessly to assist with this project.

Isolation

To tackle isolation issues for older people, we delivered themed gift boxes for our groups in time for Advent. Each member received a package with activities, quizzes and treats pertaining to their hobby. Crafts for the craft group, memory activities for Reminiscence group, games for Bingo and quizzes for Oasis Café.

Food Bank

The food bank continued to be busy and St Hugh's was identified as the main food bank provision for Baildon by the Baildon Liaison group, meaning that other local organisations now refer any food poverty issues to us. I engaged two new volunteers to assist me with the food bank which has greatly improved our operation.

Fourth quarter – January to March 2021

We were hit with a sudden third lockdown after returning from the Christmas break. I conducted an impact review and found that many older people were struggling with isolation, ability to shop and cook for themselves, loneliness.

St Hugh's Community Kitchen



It took just two weeks from inception to a pilot scheme for our new Community Kitchen. Our scheme offers a weekly, home-made, 2-course meal to older people with isolation, mobility or mental health issues. Meals are delivered to the door and we now have 4 teams of delivery volunteers who are doing a sterling job of facilitating requests for extra support where possible. We have had to comply with FSA rules, register with Bradford Council as a meal provider, and develop Covid-safe working situations for cooking and delivery. Our pilot of 20

recipients was exceptionally well received so we continued as a weekly scheme. We now deliver over 30 meals to local older people. Supplying a meal to someone who struggles to shop, cook or just lacks enthusiasm for making food due to mental health issues, has proved really beneficial. However, the scheme was not totally about food – it is a backdoor approach to tackling loneliness and isolation. We supply a weekly newsletter to which users

contribute. We telephone every user, every week to chat, get feedback, take next week's menu choices and to offer books from our little St Hugh's library. Of course, there is the added bonus of seeing your delivery volunteer turn up every Wednesday with your food and a quick socially-distanced chat!

Summary

Last year, St Hugh's food bank provided over 3000 meals to local people experiencing food poverty. Support through signposting, listening and paying utility charges was given. Of course, our users of all our support systems benefitted but another outcome is the development of our volunteer programme. At a time when people were unable to work and socialise, extending our volunteering opportunities has been good for the project but also a lifeline for those who want to help.

Funding

Baildon Town Council's Community Development grant is the keystone to our project. It covers salary so that the project can employ a CD worker. The worker then applies for further funding to run aspects of the project. Income from grants and donations has been secured successfully this year so that the project is in an excellent position to continue to support the South West community in Baildon.