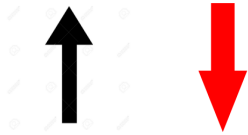




Meals supplied  
**up 17%**



Food donated  
**down 5%**

## A challenging year

2016/17 proved to be a challenging year, as the introduction of Universal Credit and the tightening of the benefit cap, impacted the ability of low paid local people to cope. Reasons for the need for Foodbanks are nowhere near as complex as certain politicians might have you believe, and a day at a foodbank instead of a Battle Bus might be a profitable use of their time.

At the beginning of the year we were hopeful that demand had peaked and was beginning to decline, but these hopes were dashed last autumn and winter when a sudden and sustained increase tested our resources to the full. The percentage jump we have seen is broadly in line with that of other Trussell Trust foodbanks in areas where Universal Credit has been rolled out.

Despite a record pre-Christmas collection event at Tesco's in Southport when over 6 tonnes of food was donated, the total for the year was down by 5%, largely because a special event held by local schools last year was not available to us this year. The core of our donations still comes from church congregations and the on-going food collection boxes in shops, schools and workplaces and we are grateful for the support of all these wonderful people.

The means of getting the donated food to needy clients relies on our partners who issue the food vouchers and the small army of our volunteers who work, week in and week out, in the warehouse and our six distribution centres, sorting, labelling and making up the parcels. Yet more volunteers are the outward face of Southport Foodbank to our clients, welcoming them with a smile and a cuppa, listening to their difficulties and, in many cases being able to point them towards a solution, as well as stemming their immediate hunger.

Thank you to all of them.

## Notable landmarks in our year

New warehouse extension brought into use

Community Money Advice service extended

New Welfare Benefits Advice service introduced

45,000 meals distributed

44.5 tonnes of food donated, collected and processed

Over 100 volunteers giving over 11,000 hours of free service

Launched a new website



## Welfare Benefits Advice service launched

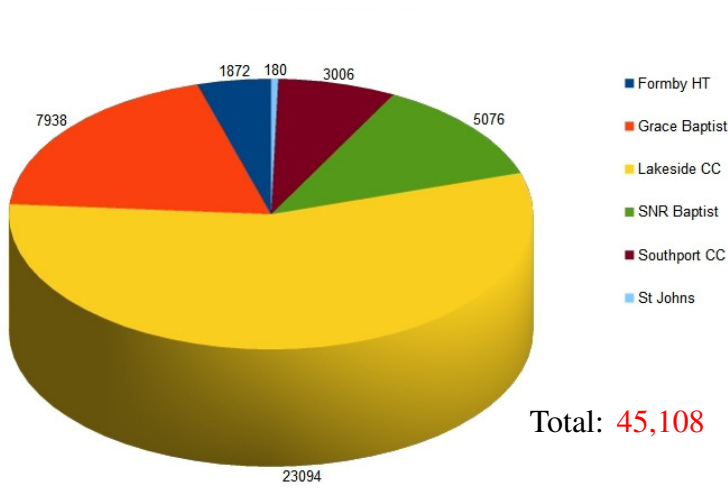


In January 2017 Southport Foodbank Welfare Benefits Advice Service was launched providing advice, support and advocacy exclusively to our Foodbank clients with issues relating to welfare benefits. This includes assessing benefit entitlement, assisting with completing benefit forms and writing letters, explaining decisions, assisting with challenging decisions and submitting appeals, and signposting clients to other agencies if appropriate. It operates closely with the Community Money Advice Service.

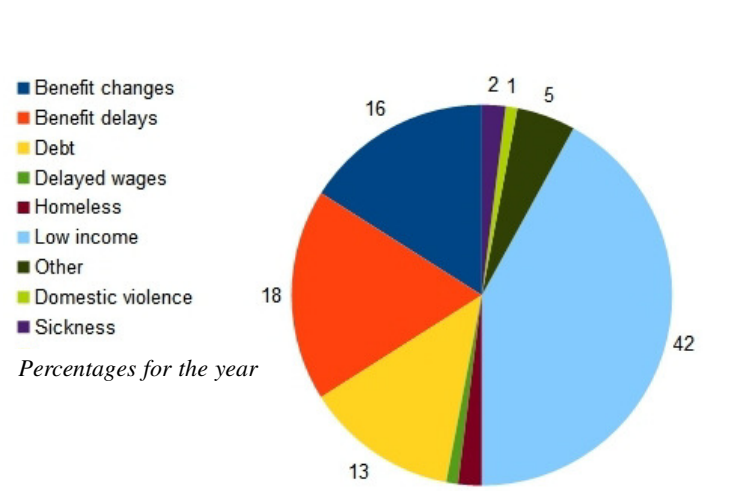
The eventual aim, when sufficient trained volunteer resources are available, is to have benefit advisors in attendance at each foodbank location when it is open.

Where this has been done already it has proved effective in identifying and supporting clients at the earliest opportunity. Currently, volunteers are present at Lakeside on Mondays and Fridays, and occasionally at SCR and Ainsdale.

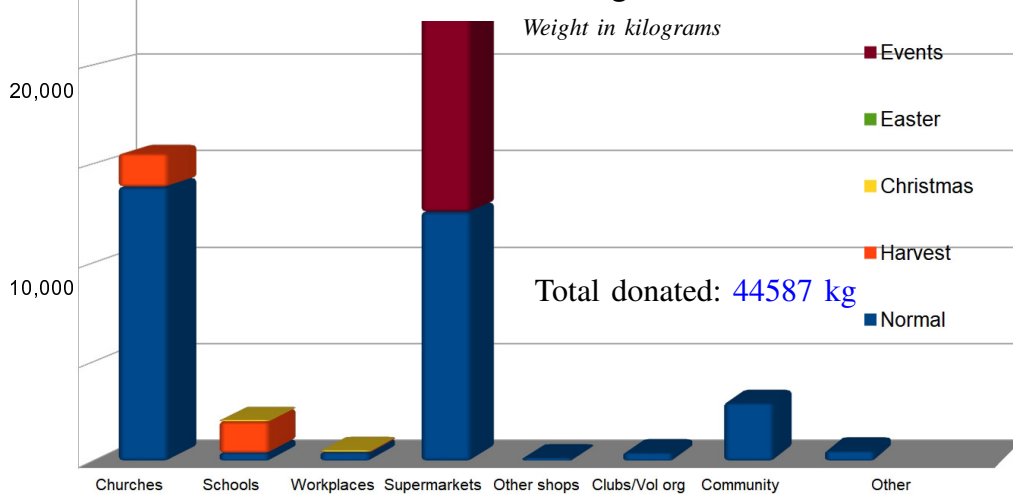
### Meals distributed



### Crisis reasons



### Sources and weight of food



## Southport Community Money Advice



We have seen an uplift in activity since the introduction of the Welfare Benefits Advice service in January. Clients struggling to keep pace with their debt repayments are often having difficulty in claiming the benefits they are due and we are therefore taking a joint approach to resolving their issues.

The first four months of the calendar year saw 36 appointments made compared with 56 for the whole of 2016 and we are currently working closely with 8 clients.

We gratefully acknowledge the support we have received from EVERYONE including

