



Providing crisis packs for those in need

Appendix 1

Feedback from user agencies

2017

Record of Pack Numbers

The monthly average for 2017 was **515**, the highest in our history.

Monthly deliveries/collections are shown in the chart.

All units are crisis-pack-equivalents							
Month	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Jan	110	145	204	359	410	420	486
Feb	134	88	210	238	369	331	414
Mar	217	302	296	517	364	478	659
Apr	123	269	319	316	397	333	570
May	123	155	224	447	392	389	553
Jun	138	169	373	282	324	305	461
Jul	172	194	359	388	446	353	368
Aug	113	114	253	224	304	391	474
Sep	143	81	332	305	386	399	410
Oct	207	312	543	415	323	477	466
Nov	182	275	553	318	319	534	364
Dec	344	606	1060	924	1076	985	954
Annual Total	2006	2710	4726	4733	5110	5395	6179
Monthly average	167	226	394	394	426	450	515

At Christmas 2017, toys were given to over **231** children.

A further **256** families received a Christmas food hamper.

315 individuals received Christmas food bags.

At Easter 2017, donations of Easter eggs were given to local families.

Feedback on our service from agencies:

A brilliant Service, it has helped lots of families facing really difficult times such as loss in income, benefits sanctions, Asylum status impacting on benefit allowances all of these affect parents' ability to provide basic needs such as food.

Vicki Burgess Senior Outreach Worker Prestwich Hub

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We just want to thank you and the Porch Boxes service for your support in our work with first time parents under the age of 19.

I know all the team have had need to contact you for parcels of food, nappies, household products and even bedding.

It really means a lot and has been a life line to some clients who live a hand to mouth existence. I know we have contacted you on behalf of families due to delay of benefit payments, unexpected costs such as travel to hospital, pets requiring vets treatment, moving in to accommodation from being homeless.

On all of these occasions it has helped alleviate some of the stress parents experience and help them get back on track to providing for their children following these times of crisis. We all value this service and your hard work.

Karina, Kathryn, Tracy and Liz Family Nurses

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In Radcliffe the Childrens' Centres regularly request Porch Box support. On average over the last 12 months this has been between 2 and 3 food boxes per month.

Obviously there are periods of high demand but the instant response and provision is second to none and the families receive the requested support when they need it the most. The content of the food provision is excellent and all dietary needs are respected. Families have fed back that the support has been invaluable and has often stopped situations escalating into further hardship.

Not only have the Porch Box supported with food but also with books, baby toys and gifts as well as necessary equipment for babies and young children. It is truthful to say that we could not carry out our roles in supporting the families we work with without the help and support of the Porch Box service and team.

In recognition and thanks for all the support from Porch Box the staff at Radcliffe personally donated monies to Porch Box in lieu of Christmas Cards. As the Manager I can assure you that if staff did not believe in this valuable, worthwhile and often overlooked support, they certainly wouldn't have donated.

All the staff at Radcliffe would like to offer a huge Thank you for all you support and kindness.

Radcliffe Children's Centre Staff

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Porch Boxes are a life-line to the most vulnerable members of our community who are financially struggling for many and various reasons. The availability of Porch Boxes is integral to our support function and many members of the community would suffer tremendously if this service was no longer available. We cannot thank Porch Boxes enough for the contribution they make to the alleviation of short term food crisis within the borough.

Helen Griffiths Bury Community Support Fund

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At Bury East Children's centres we work with some of the most deprived families in the borough, Porch Boxes always think of our families if they are given any donations of food, clothing, toys, etc. If we are holding an event which is themed, we have had donations for the families that are linked to that theme, this could be anything from food to face paint, to items to carve out pumpkins and Christmas presents.

If we are given donations from families in our local area, things like cots, fire guards, toy or clothes etc, and we have no families that need them at that point in time Porch Boxes volunteers will come and pick them up and store them for when they are needed. Nothing is ever too much trouble.

Porch Boxes are crucial to our families that may have had their benefits put on hold or if they have not managed to budget we for that week. Families are so appreciative.

Zoe & The team at Bury East Children Centres

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I am writing to express our thanks and gratitude for the continued support offered through the provisions of food parcels. Your efforts are appreciated by our staff and service users who are often on the margins of society either as individuals or as part of a family. Support from yourselves is of great assistance at times of financial hardship and / or homelessness and support people who often feel isolated and have little other support within the community. Many thanks for your continued support

Catherine Entwistle Senior Probation Officer

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Receiving the Porch Boxes has made an immeasurable difference to the families we work with. We have so many families that require support with food parcels and they are all so grateful. It is also wonderful that we can make specific requests for things like baby items. We can't thank you enough for your support throughout the year.

Kimberley Whittle Interim Team Leader SCIL & Accommodation Team

Additional Thanks from the SCIL Team December 2017

We appealed for donations for our Troubled Families Christmas Party. The party was held at the Freedom Church and to say this was a huge success is an understatement but we could not have done it without the kind donations and support we have received from the people of Bury. Donations came from teams and employees within the Council but we also had a lot of external support from individuals and also the likes of the Schools, Masons, Women's Institute, Porch Boxes, Salvation Army and Zen Internet to name a few.

The response we have had has been overwhelming and for those that have been to the office you will know we have been working in what looked like Santa's Grotto! Your support enabled us to throw the biggest and best party yet and the families that attended had the best time. It has been a very grounding and emotional time for the team and our hearts are well and truly warmed by the generosity we have witnessed over the last six weeks. Thank you so very much and we hope to work with you again next year!

Kimberley Whittle Interim Team Leader SCIL & Accommodation Team

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I'd like to take this opportunity to say a huge "Thank you" for your continued support. The food parcels, Christmas Hampers, Easter eggs and craft supplies that you provide make a huge difference to lives of the children and families that we work with. I thought you might appreciate the testimonials below from our parents.

"When my benefit was stopped I found it very difficult to pay for everything, Holding Families brought us a food parcel for a few weeks until it was sorted, it was a really big help"

"Thank you for bringing us a food parcel, it made a real difference"

Amy Calderwood Holding Families Co-ordinator Early Break

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I have used Porch Boxes regularly and find them a vital support to families in need. Whenever I have ordered a Porch box I have always found them to be so helpful and passionate ensuring the basic needs of our most vulnerable families are met.

Thank you all so much for your hard work and dedication

Jo Davies - Outreach Worker Bury East Children's Centre

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I would like to say that Porch box is an excellent service nothing is ever too much trouble and they will help us in times of crisis no matter how short the notice is. I feel the families of East would be lost without this service and I hope we will be able to work with them for many more years to come.

Terrí Collier Outreach Worker Bury East Children's Centre

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As a Children centre outreach worker, we work with many families who experiences difficulties for many different reasons, some of them financial, when this happens we always have to look for support from local charities, Porch Boxes have been a vital support in ensuring children and families have the essentials they need, like food clothes and other household items,

We work in a very diverse community and many families have different needs, Porch Boxes have always been on hand to ensure they support family's individual needs for example, if we are working with Muslim families Porch Boxes will ensure the food parcel caters for their needs. Porch Boxes will also ensure the needs of the Children are a priority. Porch Boxes are a vital partner in supporting families who are going through a very difficult time and even families in Poverty.

The volunteers are very approachable and will always go the extra mile to help support families in need.

Tazra Amir Outreach Worker Bury East Children's Centre

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Porch Boxes have been so valuable to Bury East Children centre as we work with some of the most deprived families in the borough.

Within my role as a PSW I deliver Cooking Courses to our families with course of 6 weeks. With the budget cuts and the expensive costs of buying ingredients we have struggled sometimes to actually be able to deliver these courses. But Porch Boxes have been able to contribute to the cooking courses by bringing me the food that I require and much more! This ensures that we can make the recipes for our families and for us to be able to give them the ingredients to go away and make it at home. With Julia and Frank continually supporting me with all the ingredients, this has helped me to do my job to the best of my ability. The families so appreciate the extra ingredients and to be able to go away and make whatever we have made at the session.

Porch Boxes are crucial to our families and our families are so appreciative as we are at Bury East Children Centre

Jan Programme Support Worker Bury East Children's Centre

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We work with young people who have been in the care of the local authority in Bury. Some of them live independently or semi independently which means they have to budget for utility bills as well as buying food and clothing and paying for travel. This is something that is very difficult to do when you only have £57.90 a week. For young people in this situation a food parcel and some toiletries is a great help. Items like loo roll, soap, shampoo, deodorant toothbrush and toothpaste are things that we take for granted, however if it is a choice of buying those items or food then food has to be the priority so they will go without these basics.

We really are grateful for the food parcels you provide, they really do make a difference to our young people who are on a very low income and have either very little, or no family support.

Please pass on our thanks to those who donate and to the wonderful people who volunteer to make up the parcels and deliver them.

Lorna and the Through Care Team

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On behalf of Whitefield Children's Centre and the families from the cookery session, thank you so much for your very kind donations.,

Lots of the families do not eat any vegetables and very little fruit, you wouldn't believe the amount of 'hidden' veg in all that food (baked beans in cottage pie, I'd never have thought of that!)

They were all discussing what they were going to make at home with their goodie bags and everyone left the building with smiles on their faces, and full bellies ☺

Michelle Sutherland-Barlow Programme Support Worker

Whitefield Children's Centre Hub

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I would just like to congratulate you on the service that you provide for our families in crisis. I only wish we could take photographs to show the relief and delight on the families faces as they receive the porch boxes and it always amazes me that you can accommodate us at such short notice.

I cannot thank you enough for the difference that the items provided make to our families

Linda Barnes Outreach and Home Visiting Worker

Radcliffe Children Centre

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For many years Porch Boxes Project has been providing help for our service, enabling us to give out essential food packs and special treats over festive periods for the people accessing help and support from the resettlement team

The Resettlement service help and house vulnerable families and adults who are experiencing homelessness. We support people fleeing immediately danger/catastrophes like house fire, flooding and domestic violence and people who have lost their homes due to complex issues like drug/alcohol addiction, mental health problems and people facing massive cuts in benefits, debts and arrears resulting in them losing their tenancies and being evicted with no support network to taken them in.

Another big part of our job is to support refugees who has been granted leave to remain and therefor become eligible to claim benefits for the first time - we help with filling in the forms and make sure that the applications get processed as fast as possible. However these families are often left for a period of time where the funding from Serco has been withdrawn and the new applications haven't been processed leaving families and individuals without any money - whatever the reason for being in temporary accommodation, the people who receive the food parcels are in a situation where they do not have any other people or places to turn to for help and they are extremely grateful for the aid provided by Porch Boxes

The special treats round festive periods are especially directed at the children but is also helping the parents cope with the added financial stress facing them at Christmas and Easter

Porch Boxes have over the years adapted to the changing nature of our service - they respond to individual requests for baby food, vegetarian food, toiletries or whatever the need of our service is Porch Boxes have always done the utmost to accommodate and help out, serving some of the most vulnerable people in society.

Signe Johansen Resettlement Team Bury

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The Housing Link has been using Porch Boxes for many years and we find it an invaluable service that we value highly; The Housing Link is a provider of accommodation for single homeless people in the Bury area with a total of 60 bed spaces.

As a charity our funding is for the provision of accommodation and we do not have a budget for food and essentials (toiletries etc) but Porch Boxes help to bridge that gap providing emergency food parcels for those who move in with very little. Many of our clients come to us after living on the streets, sofa surfing or in unsuitable, temporary, and sometimes, unsafe accommodation and food may have been low on their list of priorities.

At Christmas time Porch Boxes always manages to provide a fantastic hamper for each of our clients. The chocolates and little luxuries are such a nice touch and much appreciated by all.

We have always found the Porch Boxes staff extremely giving and dedicated in their time and effort to help us provide help to homeless people and it is acknowledged that they are all doing this voluntarily. Over the years Julia has built up an organisation, with a hard working team of volunteers, who call upon the local community to help the local community and this is both heart-warming and humbling.

Keep up the good work team Porch Boxes and all the best for 2018.
From Clients and Staff at The Housing Link.

Debbie Brown Housing Support Worker The Housing Link

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Once again we would like to thank the team at Porch Boxes for all their hard work and dedication to this valuable service. Without Porch boxes, some of our families would truly struggle to feed their children at times.

*A family we referred had been sanctioned by the benefits agency for being late for an appointment, resulting in benefits being withheld for a period of time. There was a reasonable explanation as to why this mum of 3 was late, she simply missed the bus as one of the children was sick just before they left the house! Alongside the help from Home-Start Bury, Porch Boxes was able to supply her with enough food to last her a few days until a crisis payment could be accessed. The food was vital for this family, mum actually broke down in tears with relief. We **COULD NOT** survive without the partnership work with Porch Boxes*

Kate Brookes Scheme Manager Home-Start Bury

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I have had occasion to contact Porch Boxes a number of times over the years for items of food and nappies for families experiencing financial difficulties.

[1] The family had 3 children under the age of 4 with no support as they were new to the area. The carer had a health problem which required an operation. Due to the nature of the illness the carer had a long time off work; and is now unemployed. The family had been given notice to quit their rented property. This was a very stressful time. The goods

provided by Porch Boxes made a tremendous difference to the family. Without the charity the family did not know how they would manage.

[2] Another family supported by Porch Boxes had to declare themselves bankrupt which meant benefits could not be made as bank accounts were frozen. It took weeks for the entitled benefits to be awarded. The family received food items and were very grateful.

[3] A young single parent had problems with the heating and had to use fans which ran up utility bills forcing the parent to choose heating or eating! The parent had a child under the age of 5. Food provided by Porch Boxes ensured the family had hot meals.

[4] A family seeking asylum had difficulties with their card issued from the Home-Office; the family could not buy anything until a new card was posted out to them; without food from Porch Boxes this family would not have eaten. Porch volunteers were able to put together a food parcel the same day.

We are extremely fortunate to have such a dedicated caring team of individuals who provide a lifeline to some of our most vulnerable families.

Bernadette Thomson Parent Support Advisor (PSA)

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Here is the feedback from across Stepping Stone Projects who utilise the amazing service you provide, Thankyou for all your help, support and generosity which makes our job easier.

Jackie Brennan

Referral and Assessment Officer Stepping Stone

This is an excellent, much needed service which helps prevent vulnerable people turning to crime to feed themselves and prevents people going hungry

Porch Boxes provide emergency on-the-spot food without waiting for the Food Bank opening times. Plus those who are unable to access the Food Bank.

Porch Boxes helps to support families who are struggling with monies due to changes in the welfare benefits systems.

Stepping Stone Operations Manager

Due to the introduction of Universal Credit this has had a huge impact on our client group. Clients that have struggled to meet the requirements set out by UC have been sanctioned for months on end, which has resulted in clients suffering food and fuel poverty. Porch Boxes are a vital resource that individual clients and clients with families can access. The Porch Boxes really do make a difference and clients are very appreciative of them. '

Stepping Stone Floating Support Worker

'The availability of the Porch Boxes are helpful for clients who are in financial difficulties particularly as a result of benefit changes. In addition some of our clients have been sanctioned for various reasons and are only allowed to have 3 food bank vouchers in a 12 month period. The availability of the Porch Boxes gives us a little more flexibility in responding to their needs and they are appreciative of the additional support that is offered.'

Stepping Stone Floating Support Worker

'A super initiative that helps people who quite often through no fault of their own find themselves without food. Always a generous service who provide us with useful food items really efficiently. Thank you for helping and taking some of the worry away from our clients.'

Stepping Stone Central Referral & Assessment Officer

'Invaluable service to clients, who through no fault of their own have no money for food, for example new benefit sanctions which leave families having to access food banks, although these are limited and stretched, it is extremely generous of your stakeholders to donate food to support others who are in desperate need of help. Some rewarding feedback is that clients haven't had to 'work the streets for money to buy food as benefits were incorrected sanctioned'

The volunteers who take time to deliver the items to sites, and take into account what is valuable is such an amazing service, and we can't thank everyone enough.'

Stepping Stone Central Referral & Assessment Officer

'Thank you so much for your help and generosity over the years, For clients who move into our supported accommodation from rough sleeping, or prison who have literally the clothes on their back and have no money to buy food it can be lifesaving and start them on the road to recovery with the support they need'

Stepping Stone Resettlement Workers

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Our women really appreciate the valuable service you offer. A very big thank you from everyone at Women of Worth. Food and clothing have gone to the most needy and vulnerable members of our community.

Dawn Giamas Women of Worth

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The family who received the pram today were totally delighted and very grateful. Their daughter is new born and they required a substantial pram to keep her warm when walking to school . Mum was quite emotional and very happy with the pram.

Mum expressed it will make a big difference and she would be proud to push the pram as it was beautiful.

Sarah Harrison Radcliffe Children Centre

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Thank you so much for the toys which were delivered at the Hub for the little girl I am working with. This will bring lots of happiness to the family. Thank you for your support.

Rebecca Webb Radcliffe Children Centre

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The Eagles Wing has welcomed the regular support of food and other essential items from Porch Boxes for over a decade, sharing it with our asylum seeker and refugee members at our weekly drop ins.

We work with the British Red Cross Destitution Project, the scheme enables us to pay each individual a maximum of £10 per week for 12 weeks. After this we must stop the donations despite many of our members being in dire poverty for more than this period. Porch Boxes provide us with a steady supply of essential non-perishable food, toiletries and some fresh food on a regular basis. The mixture of this practical help and the cash donations is enabling about 30 people each week to survive. Once an individual is granted leave to remain they then face delays in the benefit system of around 3 months during which time they have no money and no access to housing.

This year once again we were grateful for the special Christmas hampers. This year our volunteer drivers took 50 specially prepared hampers round to our families who are living in complete destitution.

Without this network of help and support our asylum seeker and refugee friends would feel outcast and desperate in our community. Thank you Porch Boxes !

Sue Arnall Honorary Treasurer of Eagles Wing

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We would like to say a massive thankyou for all the things you give us at the mother and baby unit. We are so grateful and appreciate everything you lot have done for us. It helps us to understand that there is food and other things out there that are a lot healthier than what most of us actually eat. Just a MASSIVE thank you

Resident

Thankyou for bringing the food from Porch Boxes. It helps me to budget better and also helps me and my daughter whilst we are living in a supported accommodation. We appreciate that you are bringing us fruit and vegetables it helps us eat healthy.

Resident

Dear Porch boxes I want to say thankyou for all the things you have donated to us at Radcliffe Road. Everything you send us is highly appreciated and helps us when we are struggling and haven't got money for things. It makes us feel appreciated

Resident

Radcliffe Road Mother & Baby Supported Accommodation [Caritas]

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A massive thankyou for all your generous donations throughout the year. Thankyou especially for your very generous donations of treats at Christmas and Easter. Your support is greatly appreciated and really does make a difference to the services that we can offer to our young people.

Bolton Young Persons Housing Scheme

Lucas Project & Project Front Door [PFD]