



get for food donations for people in crisis this Christmas, as churches

Chloe Webb

The cathedral launched a campaign at the start of Advent aiming to collect 250kg of food for Chichester District Foodbank in time for Christmas – but has so far received 536kg of food.

The Foodbank is a project founded by local churches and community groups, working together towards stopping hunger across Chichester.

Among local churches involved, St Mary's Felpham is running three days of food, games, shelter and Christmas cheer for those alone or otherwise in need.

Dr Daniel Inman, Canon Chancellor of Chichester Cathedral, said: "We are really heartened by how members of our community have gone out of their way to make a donation to our appeal.

"Whilst we are pleased to have exceeded our target, the challenge for our society remains acute and we must all continue to work for that day when the foodbank is made redundant."

Joanne Kondabecka, CEO and Founder of Chichester District Foodbank, said: "[The] Foodbank is so grateful that the Cathedral community has chosen to provide a gift to those who are facing hardship.

"As we move into our busiest time of the year, your gifts of food and finance will help our charity alleviate food poverty across our district and bring a smile to those we help."

The Cathedral is one of many churches across Chichester to have registered as a warm space. St Mary's Felpham is another, which is open from Christmas Eve to Boxing Day for all through an initiative called Open Stable.

The event provides heating, community, free hot food, tea and coffee, games and a space for children to play and parents to find some respite amid a busy season, particularly at the end of a tumultuous year. The church will also be open overnight for homeless people.

The vicar, the Rev John Challis, said: "Perhaps you are on your own, perhaps you are cooking for 15 and no one is thinking of you in the kitchen, or perhaps you are a single parent and run out of ideas about what to do with your children. There is space in our Stable for everyone.

"Last time we had the elderly playing games with the single parents whilst we helped them by entertaining their children on Christmas Day.

"Boxing Day was busy with many people from all over town who just wanted to meet others and get out of the house.

"Overnight we worked with Stone Pillow to care for the homeless. We try to simply be with people and help them through the season. Many cafes close over Christmas, most shops are shut. Some people still want to be somewhere with others."

This year, the church applied for a £500 grant from the Diocese of Chichester's Mission Fund, which will allow the church to be open for longer,
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keep guests warm and provide more food.

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