

 THE CHURCH



sed people sees sharp rise in demand

A project that started as tea and toast served by a Cathedral congregation in response to rising poverty and unemployment has grown into a charity that has helped at least 10,000 people over the last 30 years.

The Archer Project began in 1990 at Sheffield Cathedral giving breakfast to people amid the decline in manufacturing industry in the city and widespread job losses.

The Project now has its own purpose-built premises in the precincts of the Cathedral and is an independent charity working with other agencies, providing support and services to homeless and insecurely housed people.

It serves breakfast and lunch and distributes food parcels, clothing, sleeping bags and toiletries. It also offers showers, laundry, and access to GP and dental services.

People attending can take up roles as partner volunteers with the charity. The Project also has a service providing supported employment as well as help to find accommodation.

It still works closely with Cathedral congregation and clergy who provide fundraising support and help through appeals for items that are in short supply, such as food.

The impact of rising living costs has seen the number of people attending The Project rise from 912 in 2022 to 1,085 in 2023.

There was also a sharp rise in the need for free meals in that same period, jumping from 7,525 breakfasts to 12,296, and lunches from 6,082 to 8,667.

Talya Stitcher, of The Archer Project, said "What started as tea and toast served by members of the Cathedral congregation has developed and expanded into a holistic service designed to help homeless people to improve their lives.

"A conservative estimate would be that we have helped more than 10,000 people over the last 30 years.

"In the period between March 2019 and December 2023, we had 4,641 individuals visiting The Archer Project for some form of support."

Canon Missioner of Sheffield Cathedral, The Revd Canon Justin Dodd said: "On a daily basis we see the sacrificial, loving presence of Christ at work in The Archer Project.

"We are actively pursuing ways to deepen collaboration between The Project and the Cathedral community whilst also recognising that it is very tragic that the need for its services have grown."

:: The Paradox Orchestra (pictured, below) will stage *Fifty Years of Pink Floyd at Sheffield Cathedral* on May 16. This will be the first of ^{four}



, with a percentage of the proceeds being donated to The Project.

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/stories-and-features/tea-and-toast-cathedral-grows-charity-helping-thousands-people>