



Stories

Working with local supermarkets to tackle food waste

In the UK, we throw away almost 15 million tonnes of food and drink every year! The Knaphill Community Fridge was launched in May 2019 by [Holy Trinity Church with St Saviours in Knaphill & Brookwood](#) in Surrey, as a response to this. Local residents are encouraged to leave their surplus food in the fridge for others to take and use, which diverts it away from landfill. The fridge volunteers also collect surplus food from a number of local supermarkets.

The fridge is housed in a garden shed at the entrance to the church premises and is open for most of the day, operating on an honesty system, making it accessible to passers-by. The fridge is open to everyone, to take food or to donate food. The Community Fridge has partnered with all the major supermarkets nearby. In the year since opening, they have saved 22.4 tonnes of food from landfill!



While tackling food waste and its environmental impact may have been the primary driver, the community fridge has been a key way for the church to demonstrate the love of Christ and build relationships with the local community. Over half the volunteers wouldn't identify as Christians and they work alongside members of the church, contributing to this important initiative.

As everybody is encouraged to use the fridge to keep food out of landfill, there is no stigma attached to those using the fridge. And as well as keeping food out of landfill, the fridge is also meeting real need in the community. A user of the fridge recently said: *"We just moved here with our 3 kids over Christmas. The cost of Christmas, the move, loss of earnings etc has left us in a tough money situation. We would never use a food bank because there are others who need it so much more. But the community fridge is something we feel like we can use and help at the same time because it stops it going to landfill. Great idea."*

As the Covid-19 crisis struck, the fridge responded by delivering food parcels to the vulnerable and families in need. As restrictions ease, they adapt and change and continue to work to keep food out of landfill, serving their community and showing the love of Christ so tangibly.

As Jules Hopkins, Knaphill Community Fridge Project Manager, reflects on their journey as a church she muses, *"Start small. Grow, according to your abilities and God will provide. You don't need to do it all at once. Every community fridge works differently and that's what's beautiful about it."*

The Knaphill Community Fridge is one of over 100 community fridges in the country and part of a larger network, overseen by charity, Hubbub (<https://www.hubbub.org.uk/>). They helped provide valuable support and guidance in the set-up of Holy Trinity's fridge. If you're interested in finding out if your church could do something similar, visit Hubbub's website to find out more.

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/knaphillcommunityfridge/>

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Money
Makes
Change