

How we help create amazing community

Kate Warstone leads a group of volunteers who use this church building to serve hundreds of people in need each year

POP into St Faith's Church in Gosport and you'll see a real community in action. Volunteers are cooking food for their neighbours, handing out clothes, sharing essential skills – and listening to those in need.

The St Faith's Hub, in Tribe Road, Leasland, was launched four years ago, initially with a Foodbank and clothes swap. It now offers sewing machine classes, a film club, breakfast club, holiday club, family fun days and so much more.

And much of the impetus for this amazing work comes from Kate Warstone, who works part-time as parish administrator for Alverstoke parish, and – in her spare time – leads the St Faith's Hub.

Thousands of people cross the threshold, some because they are in need and others because they want to help. In 2025 alone, they estimate they served 3,095 adults and 516 children, and gave away 275 bags of food.

And Kate, who lives in Leasland, said: "At St Faith's there is a real outworking of God's love. People can see that we care, and so many of our amazing volunteers offer to help because it is part of their faith and community. But we do welcome people of all faiths and none, and we hope that people can see there is something different on offer inside this building."



Kate Warstone with some of the clothes and toys available at St Faith's Hub

Kate was originally part of the Leasland Neighbourhood Church created in 2018 by former pioneer minister the Rev Tim Watson, which also met in St Faith's. Then, around four years ago, the future of the building – a daughter church of St Mary's, which was originally a Victorian mission hall – was in doubt.

'At St Faith's Hub, there is a real outworking of God's love'

Around £6,000 was raised from crowdfunding for the first year, plus two years of funding from Stokes Bay Strummers. Another £14,000

came from grants to clear, insulate and rebuild its loft as storage space, thus securing its future.

That paved the way for the monthly Foodbank and clothes swap to be launched, helping those suffering as part of the cost-of-living crisis with the essentials. Then it expanded to include shoes, nappies, toys and other items.

The monthly Food and Clothing Bank now happens for two hours, after school on a Wednesday afternoon. Volunteers serve a hot meal and drinks for families, offer craft for children, and organisations that advise on financial or energy issues are available. Even more importantly, the volunteers can



listen to those dealing with difficult situations.

The desire to help create a real community led to the creation of 'Chill and Chat' on a Thursday night, which offers creativity and conversation to those who need it. The sewing machine classes happen on a Saturday, and regular fun days involve activities for the whole family.

St Faith's Hub also used the 'Chatting Faith' resources created by our diocese's education team to help families talk about the Christian faith by using reading books used in schools. That turned into a Family Breakfast on the fourth Sunday of each month, which includes Messy Play, a Bible story and prayer.

"I do have a passion for this community," said Kate. "And our motto is 'Listen, Act and Serve'. We have done polls to ask our local community what they want, and that's why we have started so many of the things we have done. People around here are often still struggling



Left: Kate Warstone stocks up on Foodbank provisions: above: the bags of food prepared for guests to pick up

– they may pay their bills but not have enough extra for a day out. That's why we provide fun days, with craft, bouncy castles and so on. We had 180 people for our last Light Party.

be, as we can use a minibus. And we have recently started our first Alpha Course for those who come to 'Chill and Chat'.

"And the families who attend our Family Breakfast on a Sunday enjoy the Messy Play, and the café-style breakfast. We offer worship via five stations of prayer that helps them to engage with God.

"My paid work with the parish involves working 20 hours a week, managing bookings for the St Mary's parish centre, and doing the administration. And as a couple, my husband and I also foster end-of-life dogs for the charity Oldies Club. So we do keep ourselves busy, but that's how we like it!"

St Faith's Hub does need more volunteers. If you can help, do contact them directly on stfaithshub@gmail.com or 07494-077194.

"It's also true that sometimes people can be in need, and receive from us. At other times, they may be in a better place and have some clothes they can donate or some time they can give to us.

"There is an amazing team of nine leaders and 13 volunteers, who are the backbone of what we do.

"We can even take the 'Chill and Chat' people on a day out to somewhere like Chichester if need

'Why I love St Faith's Hub'

ELLIE Hewer has been visiting the St Faith's Hub for the past four years. She was originally referred to the Hub because she was homeless, and she kept coming.

"It was good to get out, but I kept coming because of the support and the conversation," she said. "I was meeting new people, and I was being offered clothes and things to help me.

"My boys have fun when they come. They get a meal and they get to play, so they like coming after school. And I can also help other people now, by pointing them towards someone else who can help.

"It is a proper community here. Nobody knew each other to start with, but now we are like family. People are welcomed, whoever you are."