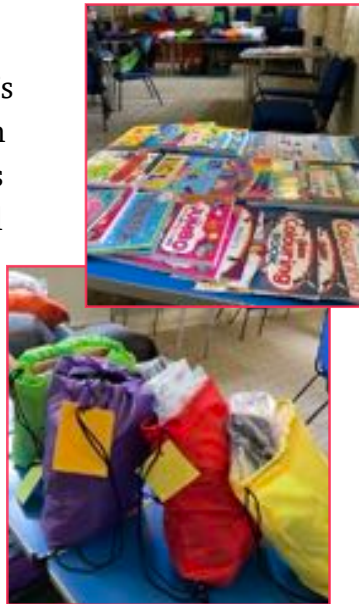


Back to school

Following on from the success of last year's back to school pack scheme, we have been busy putting together individualised packs for families again ahead of the new school year.

With the looming further increase in energy costs on top of the cost of living crisis, we knew the scheme would be incredibly important for families already struggling financially. One woman told us the pack for her son meant she might be able to pay her bills in September.



A social worker who referred four families said: *'The children have been so excited... most families I support rely on second hand or ill fitting 'hand me down items' so having new clothes is sadly a very exciting prospect. It was like Christmas, taking the parcels to them.'*

This year we spoke to parents and teachers about what they thought would be most useful additions to last year's packs...



We added a second pack of polo shirts, a swimming costume, trousers or skirts and a PE bag in addition to PE kit, socks and underwear, a water bottle and stationery.



A change of trustees

We are delighted to have two new trustees! Victoria has been volunteering with us for some time, and Mike, whilst a relatively new volunteer, has demonstrated a passion for our work and helping others. They each bring new skills and experiences to our board of trustees, especially at a time when we are considering future changes.

A change of Chair

After serving as Chair of Trustees for three years, Mike Pidd stood down in June. We are hugely grateful for all he has done during a time of huge challenge and change for the charity. He has been succeeded by Linda Currin, who has been increasingly involved as a volunteer since January 2019 and trustee since early 2021.

"This is an exciting time as The Olive Branch looks to welcome people 'face to face' again as a core part of our work, and extend how we can love and serve people facing difficult times."

Farewell to volunteers

Two of our longest serving volunteers, Mary and Audrey, are sadly leaving our team. We are very sorry to see them go, but we can't thank them enough for all of their time and dedication.



MEET SALLY... our new Assistant Project Manager!

Sally joined us at the beginning of August and has thrown herself into her new role at The Olive Branch. She said, *'I can't wait to join The Olive Branch at what seems to be a really critical moment in its history and ministry.'*



How has your first month been? *'Busy! Learning the ropes, finding out how things work and getting to know the team, who I'm loving working with! I've been so impressed with all the volunteers I've met and people put so much into their roles and go above and beyond time and time again.'*

Has anything surprised you? *'I was expecting there to be a need, but I have been shocked at how much need there has been... seeing the need as the referrals come in day after day has emphasised how important The Olive Branch is and what a great thing it is to be involved in.'*

What are you looking forward to? *'I'm looking forward to seeing what God has in store with us over the next year because The Olive Branch has been in such a strange time through covid and now the cost of living crisis.'*

What has been your highlight so far? *'A real highlight has been Thursdays with the asylum seekers, meeting them as we provide for them and seeing the importance of face to face relationships and donations first hand.'*



The Olive Branch Harvest appeal

This Harvest time, your donations are more important than ever. Our shelves are currently very low, and with a tough winter on the way for many, we need your help to be ready to support our community.

Please help us to keep providing food for those in need by donating any of the following items which we are particularly in need of:

Toiletries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shampoo - Shower gel - Deodorant - Nappies (sizes: newborn, 5, 6, 7) - Sanitary towels - Non bio washing powder 	Food <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tinned meat - Tinned fish - Tinned spaghetti hoops/ ravioli - Tinned pudding - Tinned fruit - Tinned vegetables (peas and sweetcorn) - Coffee - Pasta sauce - Crisps - Biscuits (especially multipacks) 	Asylum seekers' parcels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basmati rice - Vegetable and olive oil - Plain flour - Tinned chickpeas - Tinned tomatoes
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THINK ABOUT...
Whether you could spare a day or few hours a week to help us deliver food parcels, or to help as a volunteer in our office.
Go to 'Support Us' on our website to fill out a volunteer interest form.

LOOK OUT FOR...
New drop off points for donations on our website map.
What items we are most short of - especially in our upcoming Harvest appeal! You can find the full sized image on our website or Facebook.

PRAY...
That at this difficult time for many we will have the resources and support of our community to match the need of those who will struggle in the coming months.