

### **Cost of Living (CoL) Briefing**

This briefing covers the period from March-April 2023. The CoL response for Stroud is a partnership between the statutory and voluntary sectors.

#### **Data & Insight**

##### **Stroud Foodbank**

April 22 - March 23 was the busiest year on Stroud Foodbank's record. However, for April 2023, demand has fallen to similar levels as April 2022. Additional Government payments to individuals may have eased demand.

An end of year update from Amanda Strover CEO of Stroud District Foodbank is appended to this briefing which includes data on demand in Stroud District.

We are working closely with the Foodbank to enhance their outreach support through the Hubs network. Audrey Harris from GL11 has been working as part of Hubs network to broker a new partnership to support Foodbank provision in Berkeley. Recent venue issues impacted on Foodbank usage in the Berkeley data which we hope will improve through better partnership working.

##### **Stroud Citizens Advice**

Demand continues to be high for Citizens Advice (see data at the end of this briefing) but they are pleased to have recruited a new Foodbank advisor after the post has been vacant for several months. The new advice worker is currently in training and is aiming to begin outreach advice sessions with the Foodbank in June.

Once again, Stroud Citizens Advice are able to hold a discretionary fund from our Household Support Fund allocation. Sometimes a small amount of funding to pay a bill, fix or replace something essential is the most effective way to support a client. The HSF 'Wider Essentials' allocation is made available for this purpose.

##### **SDC Household Support Funding from GCC**

GCC have allocated £300k to Stroud district for the financial year 23/24. The focus continues to be on food vouchers and energy support.

A delivery plan is being drafted to allocate support through the partners we have worked with successfully through the Cost of Living crisis.

In addition, for the first time, GCC are now allowing Districts to allocate HSF to resource money advice charities. SDC Cost of Living budget currently has a proportion allocated to provide this type of outreach money advice (through GL1 Communities, P3 and Clean Slate). This element of Stroud's Cost of Living support may therefore be considered for other uses.

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**GCC Household Support Fund Individual Grant** – Data from GCC on Stroud allocations of this fund will be updated when we have it.

**Energy Vouchers** – Severn Wye Energy Agency have been allocated £300k by GCC from the Household Support to provide energy vouchers for 23/24. In 2022, the Fuel Bank (sister charity to Foodbank) supported Foodbank referrals with fuel vouchers. This was a faster service than Severn Wye could provide, with clients usually receiving funding within the day of referral. SDC could allocate some HSF funding to resource Fuel Bank to support Foodbank clients in Stroud District.

**Community Hubs** – Hubs continue to be in high demand. Hubs report that they are seeing new faces at their food pantry and foodbank sessions. Some are seeing residents who are working, not on benefits and are struggling to afford bills.

The Hubs network is receiving additional support from UKSPF for individual Hub funding, and from SDC for Local Area Coordination from experienced community development workers. This extra coordination will help Hubs to put in place processes and support to help deal with continued demand.



**Appendix A**

In March 2023, we experienced our busiest month on record, issuing a total of 968 emergency food parcels. This marked a significant increase of 76% compared to March 2022. However, in April, the parcel count remained similar to the previous year, with only a modest 4% increase. Referrals so far in May have followed a similar trend to April, indicating a comparable level of demand compared to the same period last year. The cost of living payment of £301 may have alleviated some financial strain for eligible households, potentially reducing the need for emergency parcels.

<b>Food Bank Centre April 2023</b>	<b>Adults</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total (%)</b>
Stroud	167	84	251	38.79%
GL11 Community Hub Foodbank	52	50	102	15.77%
Stonehouse	50	42	92	14.22%
Wotton-Under-Edge	50	41	91	14.06%
Dursley	41	23	64	9.89%
Paganhill	23	16	39	6.03%
Nailsworth	2	3	5	0.77%
Berkeley	1	2	3	0.46%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>Food Bank Centre March 2023</b>	<b>Adults</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total (%)</b>
Stroud	294	235	529	54.65%
Stonehouse	79	77	156	16.12%
GL11 Community Hub Foodbank	45	43	88	9.09%
Dursley	52	32	84	8.68%
Wotton-Under-Edge	46	12	58	5.99%
Paganhill	29	8	37	3.82%
Berkeley	7	5	12	1.24%
Nailsworth	4	0	4	0.41%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>968</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Year so far**

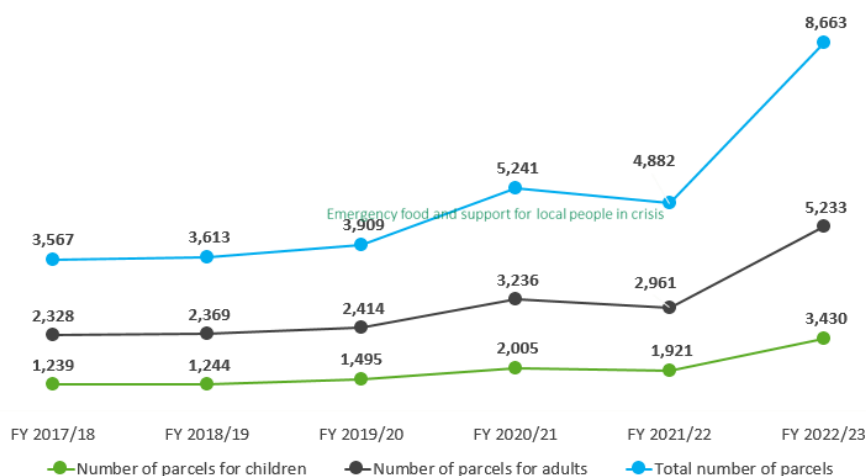
<b>2023</b>	<b>Vouchers</b>	<b>Adults</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Total parcels</b>
Jan	307	447	281	728
Feb	302	434	258	692
Mar	384	556	412	968
April	261	386	261	647
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1254</b>	<b>1823</b>	<b>1212</b>	<b>3035</b>

**Highest Ward Referrals Jan-April 23**

Ward
1 Dursley
2 Stroud Slade
3 Cainscross
4 Stonehouse
5 Wotton-under-Edge
6 Cam West
7 Cam East
8 Stroud Farmhill & Paganhill
9 Nailsworth
10 Severn

### End of year Stats Summary Apr 22- March 23

- Sadly, our busiest year ever with 8663 emergency food parcels packed & distributed (5233 adult & 3430 child parcels)
- A staggering 77% increase in emergency food parcels across the Stroud District.



### Centre Updates & Development

**Paganhill:** Whilst the Octagon is closed, we are running a mobile service on-site every Wednesday from 1-3 pm using our van. We remain committed to supporting our Paganhill clients during this challenging period and give thanks to our volunteer team for adapting so well to the situation. The presence of P3 alongside us further strengthens the range of support services still available to the Paganhill community.

**Berkeley:** We're delighted to announce that starting in August, our delivery service from the Jenner Museum in Berkeley will be expanding to a new centre at St. Mary's Church.

This expansion means that not only will we continue to provide essential food provisions, but we'll also be developing additional services to support the community

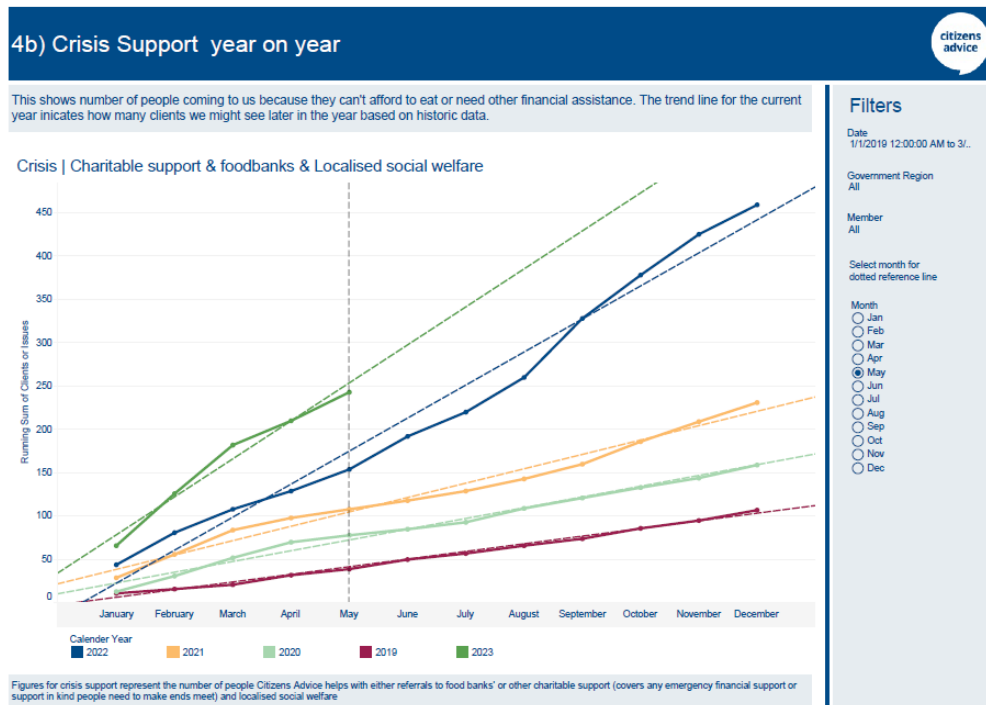
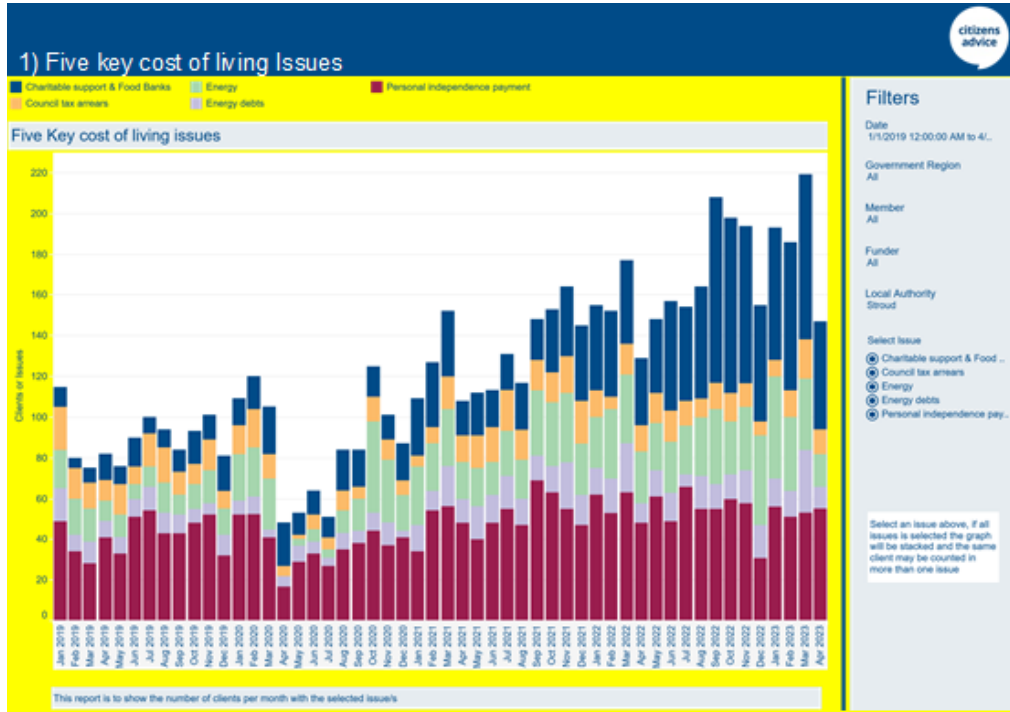
even further. Our new CA caseworker will be on site and we hope that our potential new collaboration with P3 will further support this.

We're also looking at the Town Hall in Sharpness, potentially partnering with the GL11 Community Hub and their outreach team.

**Cashes Green Community Centre:** We're opening a new foodbank provision here to coincide with the existing Friday café. As Cashes Green is our third-highest ward for referrals creating a hub here providing food & support will allow us to directly address the needs of the community. We hope to be on-site from July.

Update provided by Amanda Strover, CEO Stroud District Foodbank.

**Appendix B: Stroud District Citizens Advice Data.**



## Ward

### Count of clients with a financial crisis issue

Local Authority Ward	Current Period	Previous Period	Change	% Change
Amberley and Woodchester	0	1	-1	-100%
Berkeley Vale	1	1	0	0%
Bisley	0	1	-1	-100%
Cainscross	8	5	3	60%
Cam East	3	3	0	0%
Cam West	4	3	1	33%
Chalford	1	1	0	0%
Coaley & Uley	0	0	0	
Dursley	4	1	3	300%
Hardwicke	2	1	1	100%
Kingswood	2	1	1	100%
Minchinhampton	2	1	1	100%
Nailsworth	1	3	-2	-67%
Painswick & Upton	1	5	-4	-80%
Randwick, Whiteshill & Rus..	0	1	-1	-100%
Rodborough	1	0	1	
Severn	4	0	4	
Stonehouse	4	2	2	100%
Stroud Central	1	1	0	0%
Stroud Farmhill & Paganhill	5	4	1	25%
Stroud Slade	9	6	3	50%
Stroud Trinity	2	2	0	0%
Stroud Uplands	0	1	-1	-100%
Stroud Valley	4	1	3	300%
The Stanleys	3	0	3	
Thrupp	1	0	1	
Wotton-under-Edge	3	1	2	200%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>43%</b>