

Today (Monday 8 May) the Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, and Deputy Lieutenant of North Yorkshire, Rebecca Cottrell, helped out at a York food bank at St Joseph's Church.

The Archbishop and his wife Rebecca met with staff and volunteers, as well as people visiting the food bank, joining in the Big Help Out.

Archbishop Stephen and Rebecca heard how York food bank relies on the generosity of the York community, but how the need for support is greater than ever before.

Over 9,500 emergency food parcels were distributed in York during 2022/23, with nearly half of these (4,092) going to children. In 2022/23, food banks across the Yorkshire and Humber distributed over 200,000 emergency food parcels, with nearly 3 million distributed to people who needed them across the UK.

Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, said: "It's been a joy for me and my wife Rebecca to help out with volunteers for York Foodbank this afternoon as part of the Big Help Out. The team here are doing an amazing job here.

"Serving and helping others has been a key theme of the coronation weekend, so I am praying that this love for others and for the communities we live in, will shine through. And, if you haven't given volunteering a try yourself, be inspired and encouraged. We can all make a difference."

Adam Raffell, manager of the York food bank, said: "We were excited to welcome the Archbishop and Rebecca Cottrell, who rolled up their sleeves and helped out on this day of national volunteering to mark the King's Coronation.

"In joining us today, they're recognising the enormous contribution of the 140 regular volunteers giving their time week on week to welcome people into our host churches, as well as collecting, packing, sorting, and transporting food across the city!"

Rebecca Cottrell said: "Today it's been lovely for Stephen and I to join in with the dedicated volunteers here at St Joseph's Church and at the warehouse preparing food parcels. It's been such a friendly and welcoming place and we were delighted to bring with us a small contribution for the food bank on behalf of staff at Archbishop Stephen's Office."

Jessica Foster, Head of Church Engagement at the Trussell Trust, said: "The staff and volunteers at York food bank are incredibly important to us, and we could not continue the work we do without them.

"It never fails to amaze us how much time people are willing to give, and this has never been more apparent than during the past year when so many more people have needed help. Our volunteers have worked tirelessly, under incredibly challenging circumstances. An emergency food

parcel and compassionate, practical advice can make all the difference to someone facing crisis. We would like to thank all our volunteers for giving so much."

A typical emergency food parcel consists of items such as cereal, tinned fruit and vegetables, canned meat and fish, tea, coffee, biscuits, UHT milk, pasta and rice amongst other items. A food parcel is designed to last a household for three days, and food banks offer access to other support such as benefit advice.

York food bank is currently running low on tinned fruit, fruit juice and squash, jam, and sponge puddings.

If you want to find out more about the work of York food bank, and to find out how you could volunteer or donate to support their work, visit:

york.foodbank.org.uk



3 min read

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