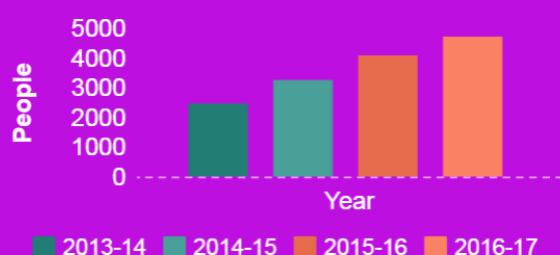


# HUNGER & POVERTY IN WANDSWORTH 2016-17

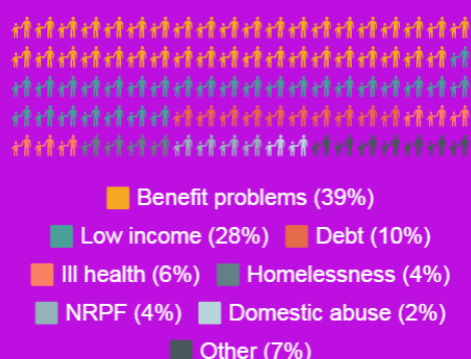
## Number of emergency 3 day food supplies given to people in crisis



In 2016-17, we provided 4712 emergency food supplies to people referred in crisis. 1 in 3 were to children. Each referral was made by a local statutory or voluntary agency. The majority of referrals were from Citizens Advice, Wandsworth Borough Council, GPs and mental health services, schools and children's centres - accounting for 87% of all referrals.

Guests to Wandsworth Foodbank can access emergency food and essential toiletries; signposting to help; direct referral to our Citizens Advice Foodbank Advisor; Fuelbanks & Families help for electricity & gas, and grants for school uniform; and a cup of tea and a chat.

## Crisis referral reasons

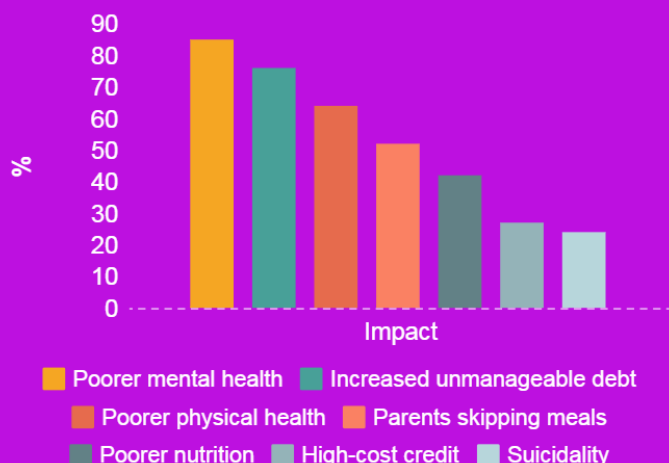


For the 4th year in a row, problems with benefits was the most common reason for crisis referral. Referrers voiced particular concern about how well the benefits system supports people with learning disabilities and poor mental health; the quality and accuracy of health assessments for sickness benefits like Employment Support Allowance; the use of benefits sanctions; and the impact of the benefit cap and Universal Credit.



Read the full Hunger & Poverty in Wandsworth report at [wandsworth.foodbank.org.uk](http://wandsworth.foodbank.org.uk)

## Impacts of hunger and poverty (seen by referrers in their clients)



Hunger and poverty severely impacts the lives of people who experience it, and is strongly associated by both Foodbank referrers and guests with poorer mental health (stress, anxiety, depression and suicidality), poorer physical health, increased unmanageable debt and poor nutrition.

In our research, 18 out of 20 guests interviewed said they'd experienced poorer mental health in the previous 12 months; six of whom had thought about or attempted to take their life during the last year. 1 in 4 referrers cited clients showing suicidal tendencies in the previous 12 months.

We're calling on politicians locally and nationally to take seriously the need for action to address the root causes of hunger and poverty, and to better support our neighbours who experience it - so that next year less people, not more, have to use a foodbank to meet their basic needs.

# 1171 households in crisis

1171 separate households were referred in crisis to Wandsworth Foodbank in 2016-17, without sufficient food or money to buy food in the week ahead.



16% households more than in 2015-16, and 82% more than in the first year the Foodbank was open (2013)



*"For some of our families the Foodbank is a serious lifeline, financially, enabling the children to have basic food." (Referrer)*



50% of people receiving emergency food were single people. 1 in 4 were single-parent households.

## Households using the Foodbank in 2016-17



Single people (50%) Single parent families (24%)  
Couple parent families (11%)  
Couple families (9%) Not known (6%)

## Bill's story

"Working on a building site, you're on your feet all day long. I was struggling to get about and the foreman said you basically can't do the job. So that was it, I got laid off.

Nearly all building staff now are agency, it's just hire and fire you as they want you, and get someone else in. You haven't got a leg to stand on – literally in my case. No holiday pay, no sick pay, nothing.

So I tried to sign on, but they said no, because of your time [working abroad] you haven't paid contribution for the right year, so I didn't get absolutely no money until this February.

When the lady at the council said the foodbank, not being funny, that's a very humbling experience. But everyone's been very nice, very friendly, very kind. All the volunteers giving up their free time to help other people – it's nice to see there's nice people about."

## Asha's story

"The Jobcentre told my partner he needed to do his job [a delivery driver] in a wheelchair. His job? It doesn't make sense.

But even to work, he needs to get out of depression first. The problem is when he starts to feel better, all this stuff is coming to us, and it makes him feel more down. Just last week he took an overdose.

It's like a nightmare. The system makes it worse for you and in the end they just leave you in the problems. You really have to be in the same situation, no changes, to be safe. Any small problem and you can lose everything. You give the children food and you eat last so you can know they can have enough.

The Foodbank is great, because I came to take just food, and I received a voucher for electricity so another stress will go out. You've given me an appointment to see the Foodbank advisor, to discuss my situation. Just talking to you I feel less stressed."



A huge thank you to our 270 amazing volunteers who gave more than 9700 hours to help in 2016-17



Thank you too to everyone who gave food, essential toiletries and money to support local people through Wandsworth Foodbank.



[wandsworth.foodbank.org.uk](http://wandsworth.foodbank.org.uk)



Wandsworth Foodbank is run by local churches, with the community and for the community, and is open 7 days a week.



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