

September 2020

Would you be willing to help support a local *Digital Inclusion* program in your Community?

Dear Parents,

Thank you for taking a few minutes to read this note.

We run a Surrey foodbank that started in Epsom & Ewell in 2012, but now has extended its coverage to also include Mole Valley, Reigate and Banstead. Since we started and thanks to the generous support of the wider community, we have provided food to nearly 27,000 people – all of them living in one of the wealthiest counties in the UK.

Our long term mission is to eventually close the Foodbank, but in order to do that we have realised that we need to offer wider support, engagement and encouragement to the people that use us, so that they can move on with their lives. Apart from food support, we have started numerous projects including counselling, personal debt advice, recycled furniture, and a Poverty Truth Commission. The Commission brings together people living in poverty with community and business leaders; to share, discuss and understand poverty better – from lived experience. This enables the real lives and people behind the statistics to be seen. It has been eye-opening.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFWiww8iD6s>

Recently through our work and awareness of needs in our community related schooling and education, we have learned that not having access to a computer at home can be a great barrier, and even more so in this COVID climate. Through our network, we recently had three second-hand working laptops donated, which we were able to donate to local families in need who did not have the means to buy one. This has changed their worlds.

- one family with young children that could not access their schoolwork, to do their homework.
- a family with four older children, all trying to do their lock-down schooling on one device.
- an individual that was shielding for health reasons was able to interact with people and get vital support for her anxiety.

We supported the families with access to the internet and some basic instructions on how to use the devices and we have already seen an amazing positive impact from enabling this type of “Digital Inclusion”.

As the new school year is starting in September, if you were able to donate your “old” working laptop, we would guarantee that it would be go to a household where it would make a huge difference – perhaps more than you may realise.

We appreciate that there are many good causes in Surrey, but if you could give it some consideration – we would appreciate it.

Thank you

Jonathan Lees

Founder & Managing Director

Phone: 020 8786 8221 Email : poverty@generation.org.uk Web : <https://epsomewell.foodbank.org.uk/>

