



A huge **THANK YOU** to the people of Bromsgrove & surrounding areas. You have once again overwhelmed us with your generosity & thoughtfulness:

Haybridge School in Hagley, who held a carol service attended by staff member Sadie, with all proceeds donated to The Basement. Each class also collected food and toiletries for our clients

Champion Security Installations who donated the proceeds from their 10k run and one of their daughters who gave up having Christmas presents and asked that a donation be made to us instead

Pupils of Aston Fields Middle School who collected food for our clients at Christmas

Bromsgrove Baptist Church who are running a drop-in for food donations which are divided between The Basement Project and Newstarts

Clent Hill Vets who gave pet treat hampers so our clients animals also had a Christmas treat

Waitrose for their continued support in providing fresh food for clients; Sainsbury's for making us their Charity of the year and Morrison's for allowing us to have a bucket collection

And a huge "thank you" to all other Churches, Schools, Nurseries, individuals and local businesses for your kindness and support - it has meant a world of difference.

We have had cash donations from many other individuals and organisations, including a very generous donation from some travellers passing through the area. To list them all would take up the whole sheet! But your support is greatly appreciated. Thank you.



Hand knitted blankets for our clients...

Independent foster agency, Foster Care Associates (FCA), recently donated two hand-knitted blankets to us. The FCA Midlands team set up a knitting club for its young people and since then, staff have worked with foster children on a number of projects - most recently on the two blankets, which the young people asked to be donated to a local charity. So just before Christmas the two blankets were delivered to us by representatives of the FCAs foster children.

Picture shows Basement CEO Jackie (left) with Basement Support Worker, Barb (2nd right) together with FCA representatives

Ever heard of a "Reverse Advent Calendar"?

No! It's not one back to front – but one where the person doesn't have an Advent calendar and therefore doesn't receive something like a chocolate on each day through Advent, but instead gives something to someone less fortunate than themselves. And this year several young people ran Reverse Advent Calendars and donated a gift or item of food to us for our clients! So **"thank you" to everyone who did this!** Or should that be:

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Keep informed and join the fun!



www.bromsgrovebasementproject.org.uk



<http://facebook.com/TheBasementProject>



20 years on from the start...



20 years ago 5 ladies from the Youth Service met together with a then County Councillor to try and help the youth of Bromsgrove – and that was the start of the Basement Project. Those 6 people recently met again for a celebratory meal. Pictured are (left to right) Sheila Nunnerly and Sheila Collins (both are still Trustees); Moira Shaw; Jackie Hooper (now the Basement CEO); Ali Mindelsohn, and Ann Holmes (who was the County Councillor and is now Chair of the Trustees). **Thank you ladies!**

We extend a warm welcome to Dani Briscoe who is a 2nd year student studying for a BA Hons Social Work qualification at the Heart of Worcestershire College. Dani will be with us for 70 days on her placement and will gain an insight into all aspects of our project. We hope you enjoy your stay, Dani, and take away good memories of the Basement as well as lots of valuable experience.



We were recently asked, “has Universal Credit had any impact on the Basement’s clients?” The simple answer is “yes”! For some of our clients it has meant financial hardship which in many cases has exacerbated their

already poor mental health due to raised anxiety and depression. Many are without an income for about 6 weeks when they make a new claim for Universal Credit due to the current processing times. They can request an advance but this has to be paid back over a limited period which again impacts on their already low income. We have seen a notable increase for food parcels from us and we are providing more financial support for utilities such as gas and electric.

Ex client supports the Basement Project

One of the businesses at Bromsgrove’s Basepoint Business Centre, Academy Bikeworks, is co-run by Hannah, an ex-client of ours. Hannah accessed our service about 11 years ago and she says that The Basement supported her through a particularly difficult and traumatic time in her life and that had it not been for our project



her life could have turned out very differently and so she wanted to show her appreciation, along with the other businesses from Basepoint, by donating items to us. Hannah is seen with partner Owen in their bicycle repair facility (above right). Hannah and Owen also helped with the food collection at Basepoint and Hannah is seen (left) with Support Worker, Sadie and Senior Support Worker, Marina.



Dealing with a “Trusted Charity”!

We’ve been displaying the PQASSO Quality mark since attaining the recognition in 2015. It runs for 3 years so we’ve been working towards obtaining it again, and were assessed in early January. The assessor found 3 small items we need to address, all of which have been sorted, and we hope to be able to announce that we have been awarded a certificate again in the next newsletter. It is now called **Trusted Charity** Status.

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