### It's about so much more than just food

The Matthew Tree Project underpins, in many respects, the excellent work of many other agencies, organisations and charities who are working to help people with different complex needs; be it mental health, addiction, re-offending, unmanageable debt, homelessness or family breakdown. When anyone is hungry and/or malnourished they will struggle to focus on, and have the ability to overcome the huge challenges that they need to be able to conquer if they are to rebuild their broken lives.

### **HUNGER EFFECTS**

We now know from various studies that hunger effects behaviour - negatively. Reducing the prevalence of hunger can therefore cause a ripple of positive changes throughout a community, thereby improving the living environment for us all.



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### So, how are we doing?



## It could be any one of us. We are all at risk

"The Matthew Tree Project has been a revelation to me and my family. The help and support they have given to us has been excellent and has made us keep strong and healthy."

Edward (client of TMTP, 8.2.13)

Being without food due to financial hardship is a real life experience for a growing number of families and people in Britain today. situation could easily affect almost any one of us at any time. With the continuing economic difficulties, employers are having to lay people off and the austerity measures are squeezing the welfare budget meaning the degree of help and support that was available in the past isn't there anymore. It has been said that over 90% of the population are only three packets away from poverty and homelessness.

We have been experiencing, and are still in, the longest period of ultra-low interest rates in living memory. Energy prices predicted to keep rising until at least 2020, and as a result of this food costs are set to continue to rise. Household budgets are being saueezed already and interest rates start to rise (as they surely will) it will be the 'tipping' point for many of us.

Without the generous support of others we could not do what we do Please help us by supporting ou work with a financial donation Thank you!



We are thrilled to welcome the Carmel Storehouse to the Bristol Foodstore network. The Storehouse has been up and running for some years, but mainly to service the needs of the local Carmel Christian Centre members. By joining the Bristol Foodstore network, the Storehouse is opening up to the local community in the Brislington and surrounding area.

"Matt Thompson and his team have done a fantastic job, in making the transition from serving the church members on a Sunday to being open to the community as a whole on a Monday, which was never going to be easy" commented Mark Goodway. Charity Director of The Matthew Tree Project, "many people in real need in this area now have somewhere to go where they will be fed and supported."

Meanwhile, in Knowle, The Mede Foodstore decided to start opening on Thursday's as well as Tuesday's

## The Bristol FOODStORE network now 'open' five days a week

On Monday 11 February the fourth Foodstore in Bristol opened for the first time, in Brislington. The Mede Foodstore, in Knowle, also began opening on Thursday's as well as Tuesday's which means we are now open five days a week to help those in desperate need.

to meet the local need. "The Foodstore has had a significant impact on the Mede Community & Learning Centre itself bringing an unexpected and most welcome new lease of life. It has put the Mede on the map in a fresh way and aroused considerable interest among the public locally and further afield." stated Alister Palmer, chair of the Mede Community & Learning Centre.

"Churches, community organisations, local schools, & individuals have offered generous support through donations of food and money. It has drawn

together a team of enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers who serve those who come to the Foodstore on a weekly basis. It has been so good to see many of the Foodstore clients grow in confidence, sort out their problems and develop new friendships. Many say that they no longer feel alone."

In Withywood, The Carpenter's Foodstore continues to grow and do

great work and through the connections of one of the management team, Debbie Forge, we are pleased to welcome a fact finding team from El Salvador in March who are investigating different models of tackling the root causes of poverty. They heard about the work we are doing and requested to be able to come for a closer look.

Continuing with the international

"I now have hope. I honestly believe without the help of your service / volunteers, I wouldn't be here to write this now."

Mark (client of TMTP, 5.10.12)

theme, the central Bristol Foodstore in St Jude's were very happy to welcome two superb German university students, Elena & Antonia,

from Berlin. They were here for three months from October to December 2012 and did a fantastic job working full time at the central Foodstore as a work experience placement.

We also had a recent visit from two members of the London Assembly who had heard about our work and wanted to include what we did in a report on tackling poverty due to be released at the end of March 2013.



The Matthew Tree Enterprise Ltd is a wholly owned trading subsidiary of the charity and has been established to enable us to help the long-term unemployed back into work.

We aim to teach people to grow fruit and vegetables to the highest organic standards, so that it can be sold into the local food chain.

In addition to the growing of fresh fruit and vegetables, we also plan to have a separate group being taught how to make food products in local kitchens, that can also be sold into the local food chain.

The objective is to create a financially sustainable model that enables us to offer apprenticeship programs to the long term unemployed, training in horticulture, agriculture and permaculture skills for clients to obtain qualifications and satisfying on-going & sustainable employment.

Bristol City Council have been very supportive of our plans and have granted us a lease on the land (pictured above) in Brislington.

We will be hoping to involve the local residents and local groups to work with us on this exciting initiative.

Our vision is that the plot becomes a place where local people can come and help with the growing of the food, can sign-up for work-shops, socialise and connect with other like-minded people. We will be approaching and encouraging local schools, colleges, churches, businesses and organisations to get involved and be part of making this into the heart of the local community and a place to be proud of.

#### COOK SMART, EAT WELL

## Cookery school – a huge success

In October and November we ran a 6-week pilot of our 'Cook Smart, Eat Well' cookery school, in partnership with Coexist and Food Inside Out. The funding for the course was provided by UWE.

The objective of the course was to teach our clients to cook from scratch tasty, healthy and affordable meals.

One of the clients who took the course commented, "I would strongly recommend the course to anyone because I learnt how to eat and cook healthier and it was enjoyable."

# MONEY & BUDGETING SUPPORT

We currently offer helpful but quite basic money and budgeting support. We have identified that this is a key area for many clients that needs greater expertise and attention.

We have therefore organised formal training for volunteers who would like to specialise in helping vulnerable people manage their money and debt better. Please contact us if you would like to be considered for this role.

### Malnutrition screening and dietary advice

#### Helping People Live Happier Lives

It is not just about the giving of food. It is about the whole person, the mental and physical health of each client. The diet and eating habits that leads to a general wellbeing of good mental and physical health.

By measuring the BMI of the client each

By measuring the BMI of the client each week, for those who request this service, enables us to adjust food allowances on an individual client basis and provide dietary advice which tailors the support specifically to their needs

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This creates behaviour change which, for families, not only effects the mother or father, but also the children. Children learn what they live and it is hoped when they have children of their own, these 'good' habits will be passed on. The food allowances are based on a healthy balance of protein, carbohydrates, fruit and vegetables and also seeks to provide each person with their 5-a-day requirements.

The Foodstore is based on the

# Wellbeing & Inspired Communities

The Matthew Tree Project is born out of a person-centered vision to effect true and lasting community transformation for the benefit of everyone, most importantly, the disadvantaged and vulnerable.

Without the generous support of others we could not do what we do. Please help us by supporting our work with a financial donation.

To do so, go to our localgiving page by scanning the QR code to the right, or go to the giving page of our web site or send cheques made payable to:

The Matthew Tree Project at the central Bristol address in St Jude's below.





RISE Issue 01 March 2013

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### Services offered by The Matthew Tree Project

- A healthy food diet based on the eat well plate which clients are able to choose for themselves
- · Money, budgeting and debt support
- Cook Smart, Eat Well cookery school
- · Malnutrition screening and dietary advice
- Welfare support (more than signposting, less than a support worker)
- · Help applying for hardship grants
- Help applying for essential household items
- · Help applying for assistance in the payment of gas, electric and water bills
- Help and encouragement into employment (we do not believe being on benefits is beneficial)

The Mede Foodstore

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