

round
about
café 

A year at

Round About Café

April 2023 – March 2024

Introduction from Nigel Powney Café supervisor

Welcome to our 10th year at the Round About Cafe, what a fantastic year we've had! To celebrate we've rounded up all our achievements into this report, so grab yourself a cuppa and read all about what we've been up to.

Our Community Pantry, based at the café, turned two in January this year and now has 237 members. I can't believe how popular the pantry has been, it's been wonderful to hear directly from our customers about the difference it's making to their lives. We can see that it's really worth doing. A big thank you to everyone that uses the pantry, and of course to the amazing volunteers who offer their time and commitment to help support the community every Tuesday, and throughout the week. It's such a nice feeling to know that the products we provide at an affordable price, have helped to make a difference to so many people's lives, during a difficult time with the cost-of-living crisis. I'm looking forward to seeing the pantry continue to grow and I'm excited to welcome new members over the coming year.

This year we've seen a flurry of new customers at the Round About Cafe, enjoying our fantastic range of food, beverages and fresh cakes, all made on site with love and care.



It's been great to see some of our new customers become regulars, and of course we've enjoyed visits from our long-standing customers, who have supported us for years. We really want the cafe to be an inclusive spot where everyone in the local community feels comfortable.

It's truly amazing to see the community spirit and how customers interact with each other, as well as the staff and volunteers within the café. I love to see new relationships blossoming into long term friendships. The cafe is becoming more popular in the community, which is such fantastic news. We offer so much more than just delicious food and drinks – we're at the heart of the community, creating opportunities for customers, delivering activities and listening to what you want to see in your community.

Thank you to all our customers, volunteers and staff for a great year. Here's to another successful year ahead.

Key stats

Volunteers

12



Volunteers gave

2,154

 hours
to the cafe

17

 people
accessed
training

Buffet orders **61** (People eaten **736**)

5,840

 cafe falls

237

Cafe sales
£36,552

20

 activities,
events or
projects
delivered

Pantry members
Pantry sales
£3,703*

344

 people
accessed the activities,
events or projects

*we're not-for-profit, so all our sales
go back into the café and supporting
the community

Food saved from landfill

8,000kg

(which is the equivalent
weight of the largest
elephant in the world)

Social value
Confirmed
£201,017

Social Return
on Investment
£1:£22



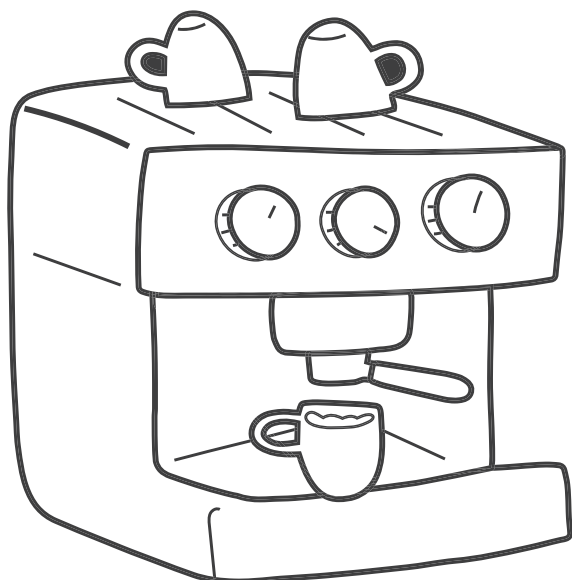
Our customers

Round About Cafe is not just a café - it's a community hub where we support the local community by offering events, activities and training. We asked our customers what they enjoy and what activities they want to see happen and bring these to life:

Neil's story

Neil moved to Mansbridge in February 2023 from another area of Southampton and was unfamiliar with Mansbridge. One of the first things he did was come and visit the café. Café staff and volunteers were able to give him useful information about the area and helped him locate things like the local GP surgery and bus stops. Neil's now a regular customer and pops in to see us most days.

He's made lots of new friends and been involved with projects, such as the Junk Orchestra, cooking courses and the Digital Skills course. He even has a favourite chair!



"I come here for breakfast nearly every day. I hang about for a bit and chat to people that come in and I've met lots of people that way. That's the best thing really as I live alone and I enjoy chatting to people so it's the perfect place. We always have a good laugh."

Mansbridge Melody Makers & James story:

James has been a volunteer at the cafe for the last ten years. He often tells us about his love for singing, and he even shared a video of his Elvis rendition. He told us that there was nowhere locally for him to sing and suggested we start a singing group.

We recognised that there was an appetite in the community so we reached out to SoCo Music Project, as we knew they already ran vocal groups in other areas in the city. SoCo's mission is to change lives through music, and they've been delivering various music engagement programmes since 2008 with a focus around improving mental health.

They helped us set up a singing group called Mansbridge Melody Makers with the aim to bring together people of all ages to have fun singing, which in turn builds social connections and increases confidence, which are integral to improved health and wellbeing. The group has now been running for over a year and has a regular group of people that come and sing together each week on a Monday evening between 6-7.30pm.

They would love more people to join in so if you enjoy singing or making music, please come along and take part. There's no auditions and the sessions are very relaxed.

Cara Headon cara.headon@abri.co.uk



"I love to sing as it makes me happy. If I'm having a bad day, I'll get a song in my head and start singing it and it makes me feel better. What I enjoy most is when we sing in front of people. I come back every week as it's a bit of a laugh and we also have chat as well as singing. I enjoy meeting new people and the group's helped with this. My favourite things to sing are any country or rock and roll music.

I've also taken part in Junk Orchestra where we made music using rubbish, pots and pans and broken things. Since then, that has given me more confidence in making music and now I've bought two guitars and I'm teaching myself to play them. Some of the Melody Makers have gone to karaoke nights together and got up to sing. My record is singing eight times in one night!"

Cost of living support

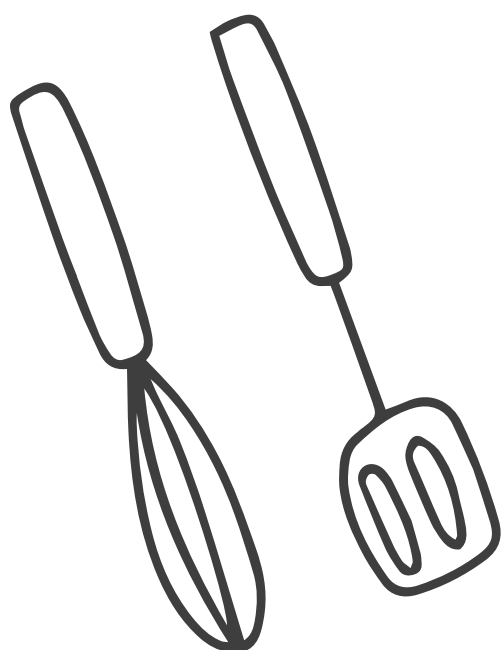
The cost of living crisis continues to impact more and more of our customers, so we've refocused some of our activities to help provide more support to the community.

Over the last year we delivered events and sessions including:

Electrical Repair Cafes	20 attendees
Clothes Swaps and Clothing Alteration and Repairs Sessions	50 attendees
Cost of Living Drop Ins	9 attendees
Slow Cooker cookery course	9 attendees
Christmas Gift Making sessions	44 attendees

We also delivered these activities, events and training:

Craft courses	7 attendees
Barista training	5 attendees
Adult Mental Health Awareness training	12 attendees
Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene training	6 attendees
Winter flu vaccinations	9 attendees
Menopause Cafe	3 attendees
Mansbridge Melody Makers singing group	11 attendees
Junk Orchestra music making group	7 attendees
Digital Skills course	6 attendees



Slow cooker course

During April and May we held a six-week Slow Cooker cookery course.

The sessions offered valuable support and education on using slow cookers and essential pantry items as a cost-effective and energy-efficient cooking method. Participants learned how to cook healthy meals at a low cost and received their own slow cooker, along with food and recipes to take home. This initiative helps with the cost of living by teaching more efficient ways of cooking.

Customers that took part told us:

"I liked the free ingredients we were given to take home and also getting to eat a meal each week, which has helped me with the cost of living. It has also helped me to improve my diet."

"I learnt about using cheaper cuts of meat and how to cook them so they are tender, and the meat turns out lovely. I loved the social part and meeting new people."

Clothing swap and repairs

Buying new clothes and school uniforms can be expensive and unaffordable for many. So to help with the cost, we've held regular clothes swaps throughout the year, with the addition of a clothing repairs and alterations service. Many people used the clothes swap, especially for school uniform. Thank you to Mansbridge Primary School PTA for the donations of brand-new cardigans and jumpers. 50 people attended the sessions, and we carried out 12 repairs/alterations which saved customers a total of £161.

Customers told us:

"I've had this dress for four years but only worn it once as it got a hole in it, but now, I can wear it again, I love it!"

"Thank you for fixing my coat as it's the only one I have, and I would've had to buy a new one if it couldn't be fixed."

Electrical repairs cafe

Electrical items often break and have to be replaced which costs a lot of money, so to help with this we held regular Electrical Repair Cafes, run by Southampton Repair Cafe volunteers. Ten items were successfully repaired saving a total of £711 on the cost of replacement.

Customers told us:

"I'm really pleased I came along. I was given the fan for free, and it is worth a lot of money and now I can use it instead of buying a new one."

"I haven't used my sewing machine for two years and tried to get it fixed before, but now it's working I can finally use it."

Round About Cafe Community Pantry

The Community Pantry has had another successful year. We welcomed 60 new members with a total of 237 members since January 2022. Pantry members have shopped 909 times, and we were able to support an average of 18 members to shop each week.

Our food is provided by FareShare who distribute surplus food from supermarkets which helps the community save food from going to landfill. This year we have saved 8000kgs of food from going to waste and in total since we opened, saved 18,000kgs which is equivalent weight of a refuse lorry or a whale shark. We also have free food available such as bread, pastries and cakes, provided by Co-Op Basset Green Road, that anyone can help themselves too, not just pantry members.

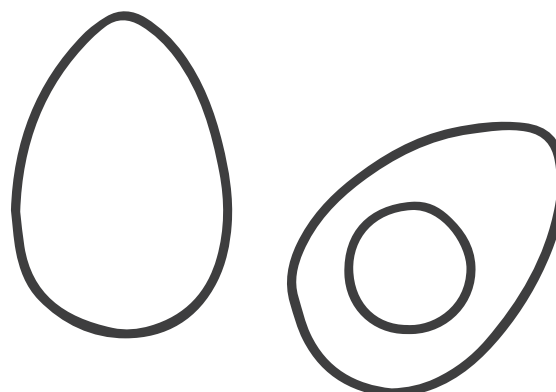


Last year we saved members an average of £21,000.

- 84% of members surveyed have been able to save money because of the pantry
- 50% general wellbeing has improved
- 41% eat more fruit and vegetables
- 75% have tried new foods
- 54% feel less anxious about being able to feed themselves and their families
- 50% feel more connected to their local community since joining the pantry
- 50% feel more confident since joining the pantry

The pantry is open to anyone with an SO postcode to join and membership costs £1 per year. Members can shop once a week and choose to pay £3.50 for up to 10 items or £5 for up to 15 items.

If you would like to join, pop into the cafe and fill out a membership form. The pantry is open Monday to Friday 8am-2pm.



Dancing: The key to enhanced happiness, health, and mental wellbeing

Our support goes beyond holding events, activities and projects inside the cafe. Nigel, Cara, café volunteers and a customer took part in ZoieLogic Dance Theatre's Headfunk project. This is the fourth year we've taken part in the project. Headfunk is a thought provoking and entertaining event, which aims to raise awareness of men's mental health through dance performances, sharing personal journeys and community stories. With the help of Zoie Golding MBE, the group choreographed a routine, based around what noise and listening means to them, living or working in Mansbridge. The performance took place at MAST Mayflower studios in October in front of a sold-out theatre.



Credit: Matt Bartram, ZoieLogic Dance Theatre - Headfunk 2023

Members of the group told us:

"I wouldn't have thought that I would ever perform on stage in front of over a 100 people. I've learnt new skills and made friends being part of the group. It's been a great opportunity and has really changed my life. After taking part I wanted more and so I've joined ZoieLogic in their steering group helping them for a project in the future."

"It gets me out the house in the evening and we have a great laugh with everyone taking part, especially when things go wrong during rehearsals, and we forget what we're doing."

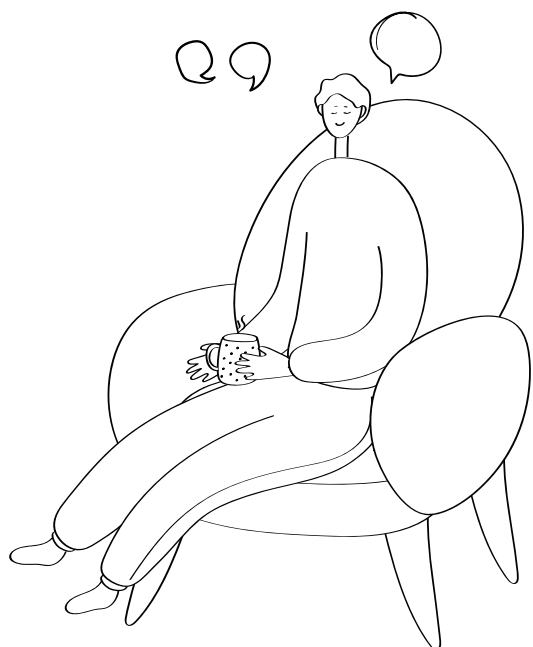
Training

We don't just offer activities at the cafe, but we also arrange training for cafe volunteers and the community to take part in. We delivered two Adult Mental Health Awareness sessions as people told us they would like to learn how to recognise symptoms of poor mental health and how to support someone with this.

Some of our new volunteers at the cafe wanted to learn how to make excellent coffee for our customers, so we arranged for Winchester Coffee School to deliver a Barista training session with three members of the community also joining in. Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene training is important knowledge to have when working in a catering environment, so we arrange this regularly.

This year one of our cafe volunteers and five members of the community took part to update their skills, learn something new and to help them find employment.

People taking part really enjoyed the sessions. Here's some of their feedback:



Adult Mental Health Awareness sessions

"I suffer from depression which comes and goes. Some days are good some days worse. This course built up my confidence and helped me gain lot of knowledge to talk to other people as well. I liked Sue and the way she delivered the course, there was no pressure at all. Big thanks to Cara as I can help the community with more confidence and guide them in the right direction and to contact the right person. Thanks, a lot. I will definitely encourage my friends to attend this course in the future. Keep it up."

"Sue was a fantastic course leader. This course teaches invaluable information and would benefit anyone. Anyone can encounter mental health challenges and more knowledge, and less stigma, can only ever be a good thing. I felt Sue delivered the course material with great understanding and willingness to answer all questions. The emphasis of this course was on early intervention, but I would love to see/attend further courses that perhaps dealt with more advanced mental health issues and how to deal with sufferers who are harder to reach or have been previously overlooked - those for whom early invention wasn't taken."

"I'm so glad I signed up and attended and am extremely grateful for Susan Hayward sharing and teaching us her knowledge. I now feel I know more about mental health since joining this half day workshop. Many thanks."

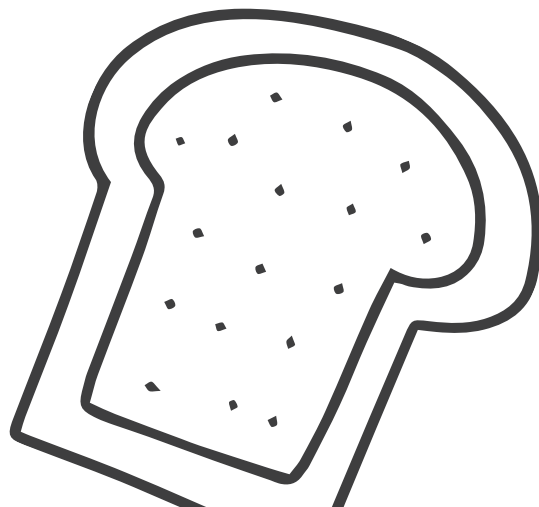
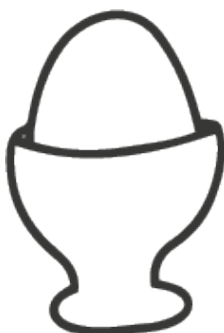
Our volunteers

Barista training

"I enjoyed the session and learning how to use the coffee machine as I haven't used one before. It was great to learn how to make different types of coffee and I really enjoyed learning how to froth the milk."



"I learnt things I'm surprised I didn't know about coffee (no idea they came from fruit!) as well as a mental diagram of espresso machines, what they do and what is being aimed for when making shots. But I just enjoyed being around new people for the first time, in a new space and context a little bit outside of my comfort zone."



Our volunteers are the lifeline of the cafe, and we wouldn't be here without their support and time.

The support they provide in cooking, coffee making, cleaning and amazing customer service skills, keeps our customers coming back. Over the last year when Nigel has been out and about, the volunteers have been keeping the lights on and running our Community Pantry.

In the month of March Nigel spent time at our sister Cafe in Bordon, Cafe 1759, and the volunteers have stepped up to the plate to ran the Round About Cafe and pantry for those Tuesdays.

We would like to say a huge thank to each and every one of our incredible volunteers.

If you're thinking about volunteering with us, get in touch. You can learn new customer service skills or improve existing skills you already have. From taking orders at the till, to serving food and drinks to the tables, or using the barista coffee machine and keeping all cafe areas clean – there's lots to do and learn.

For all enquiries, please contact Nigel Powney, Cafe Supervisor, or 023 8067 2700 between Monday to Friday 8am-2pm



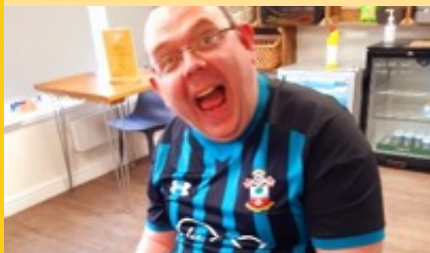
"Volunteering gets me out of the house and keeps me busy, plus I love my conversations with customers." Shirley Watts



"I want to give something back to the public and feel happy to help others."
Thi Diep Page



"I come into the cafe for the community spirit and to make new friends"
Helen Hart



"I love volunteering here as it's good company for me and we have a great laugh with the other volunteers and customers." James Tester



"I enjoy volunteering as it gets me out of the house and communicating with others as most of the time, I'm either at home, caring for my dad or at work, so I see it as 'me' time. It's nice to help out within our community especially when there is a huge increase in the cost of living for everyone at the moment." Sara Musgrove

"I've been volunteering at the cafe for nearly seven years, and I really enjoy working with my friends."
Heather Thompson



"Volunteering has helped me learn new skills and grown my confidence."
Amanda Haskings



"It's the one time in the week I can support the local community." Jennie Lee



"I like to volunteer to get experience to help me look for work."
Rory Fraser



"I come to the cafe as I love having a chat and seeing people."
Adrienne Hollingshead



Amanda's story

"I live locally and used to visit the cafe as a customer to use the Community Pantry. One day the pantry was so busy so I asked Nigel if he would like some help and I've been volunteering here ever since. At the time I was struggling with my mental health and confidence, and I wasn't sure if I was ready to volunteer. But as I already knew everyone at the café, it made me feel more comfortable, so I gave it a go. I've been volunteering regularly over the last year, making food and drinks, using the till and supporting Community Pantry members to do their shopping. I really enjoyed taking part in the Barista training and improving my coffee making skills so now I can make more than instant.

Volunteering has been brilliant as it's helped me grow my confidence and I know I make a difference to people. It's got me out of my comfort zone as I need to speak and interact with people. It's given me purpose to get up in the morning and get out the house and given me a stable routine. Over the last few months, I've been helping to run the cafe and pantry along with some other volunteers when Nigel has not been around. Which means the cafe has not had to close and we can continue to support the community.

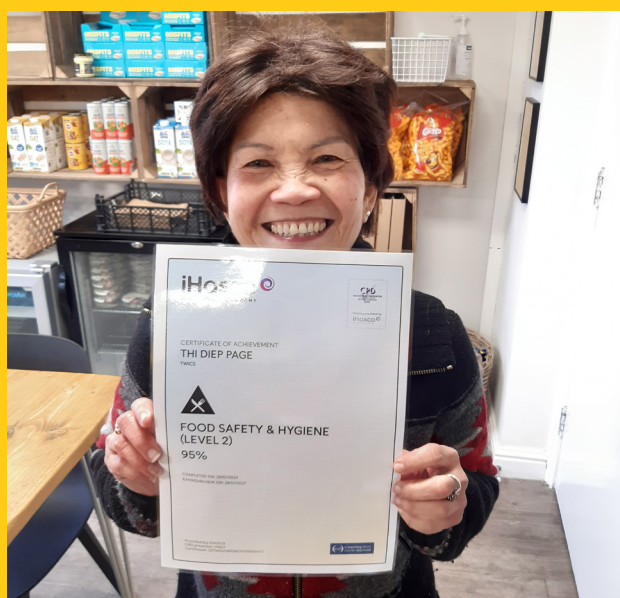


It's also helped me to prepare to get back in to work. I've been working with Abri's Employment Team who have helped me update my CV and look for work and I'm really pleased to say that I have just been offered a part time role that I start soon. If it hadn't had been for the experience of volunteering, I wouldn't have had the confidence to apply for a job."

Diep's story

"I started volunteering after I visited the cafe to take part in a craft course. I don't live in the area, so it was the first time I had been to the cafe, and it seemed like a welcoming place. Cara mentioned they were looking for more volunteers, so I left my details. I've done a lot of volunteering before in places such as the General Hospital as a Vietnamese interpreter, a charity called Caraway making tea and coffees and chatting to people with dementia, as well as the League of Friends Cafe at Royal South Hants Hospital.

But now I volunteer once a week at Round About Cafe which suits me well as I have other commitments. The best thing about the cafe is it's such a friendly place and the activities and events that are run for the community are a bonus. I'm also a member of the Community Pantry and I'd never heard of one before I joined and think it's a fantastic idea. I wish more people knew about it and used it.



I've done some training whilst volunteering here, including Barista training and Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene. I've taken part in lots of activities held at the cafe; at Christmas I made a beautiful wreath to go on my door. The activities are great for the community and a good way to meet people.

I'm a keen gardener so I take home the used coffee grounds for my garden to keep the slugs off and eggshells to use on my orchids. It's good to know they don't go to waste."

What's coming up

Next year marks the 100th anniversary of the Swaythling estate, originally founded by Herbert Collins. Mansbridge, is the largest estate built by Collins which holds significant historical importance.

To celebrate this milestone, we've launched the Mansbridge 2025 program, the program is taking a collaborative approach to planning and managing improvements across the estate and community. By working together, we're creating a model that can be used to enhance other estates as well.

Our goal is to upgrade the overall condition of homes, enhance outdoor spaces, and launch initiatives that bring the community closer together, creating a stronger sense of unity and improving the quality of life for everyone in Mansbridge.

The program also includes an exciting Mansbridge heritage project, to honor the past and build a legacy for future generations. The project aims to create a sense of shared history and community pride, we are inviting residents and those with fond memories of Mansbridge to contribute their stories. These stories will be featured in an art exhibition next year, highlighting the estate's history and preserving its memories for generations to come.

For more information, please visit (website Link) or contact Cara Headon, cara.headon@abri.co.uk 07769 241365

Opportunities Hub

The hub is open to anyone living in Southampton on the first Friday of the month, 9-11am. So, if you're looking for a job, new career, housing advice, or to find out what's happening in the area, come along! You can chat to our friendly advisors who can help you search and apply for jobs, discuss any housing issues, as well as connect you with groups and activities happening in the area.

We can help with CV's, cover letters, applications and job searching. No need to book, just pop in.

For any enquiries, please contact our Employment Services on **0300 123 1537** or email **esdepartment@abri.co.uk**.

Room hire

Did you know you can hire the Round About Cafe space for events, groups and birthday parties? The space is available on weekdays after 3pm and daytime during the weekend.

Costs:

- Business users £17
- Private users £15
- Community groups £10

As the cafe is run not-for-profit, any monies made through the hire of the cafe go straight back in to supporting the community.

For all enquiries, please contact Nigel Powney, Cafe Supervisor, or 023 8067 2700 between Monday to Friday 8am-2pm



Cafe events

MONTH	EVENT
AUGUST	Children's meal deals all month Mansbridge Memories, 22 August, 3-5pm
SEPTEMBER	Bacon Butty Day, Thursday 23 September Mansbridge Memories, 18 September, 6.30-8.30pm
OCTOBER	Winter flu vaccinations, first two weeks of October Vegetarian Week, 1-7 October Mansbridge Memories, 17 October, 3-5pm Baking Week, 14-20 October Sausage week, 28 October-3 November School Uniform Swap Shop, 31 October, 3-4.30pm
NOVEMBER	Christmas Cake Making sessions, Tuesday 12 November, 3-5pm and Thursday 14 November, 6.30-8.30pm
DECEMBER	Christmas Craft sessions, 2-6 December

**Round About Café, 12 Westfield Corner,
Mansbridge, Southampton, SO18 2LE**

023 8067 2700

www.roundaboutcafe.org

cafe@roundaboutcafe.org

Monday – Friday 8am – 2pm

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The community pantry is open while the café is open, however, we receive our food delivery on a Tuesday

Supported by Abri, one of the largest housing providers in the south

Thanks to our partners for their help and support over the last year:

SoCo Music Project
Southampton City Council
FareShare
Three Rivers Partnership
Solent NHS Trust
Darn it and Stitch
Southampton Repair Café
Touch Network
TWICS
Southampton Voluntary Services
ZoieLogic Dance Theatre
Wainrights Chemist
Winchester Coffee School
The Environment Centre
Citizens Advice Southampton
WEA
BITSmart.tech
Hayward Hub
Utilita
Menopause Café
Mansbridge Community Association
Mansbridge Primary School
Mansbridge Primary School PTA