

Little Village Press Release

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Baby bank charity ‘completely astounded’ after Royal seal of approval on Instagram

London-based charity, Little Village, says it has been ‘completely astounded’ by the response from the public after it was mentioned on the new record-breaking Instagram @SussexRoyal account of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, Harry and Meghan.

In an Instagram post on Friday 5th April about the grassroots-led #GlobalSussexBabyShower which has been led by fans of the Royal Couple, the Duke and Duchess said:

“In lieu of sending gifts, the couple have long planned to encourage members of the public to make donations to select charities for children and parents in need.” Little Village was one of four charities selected by the Royal couple.

Little Village is like a foodbank, but for clothes, toys and equipment for babies and children up to the age of 5. Local families donate items, which are passed on to families who have been referred via a network of partners like health visitors, children’s centres and midwives. It has sites in Wandsworth, Camden and Southwark and saw an increase of 97 per cent in the demand for its service in the past year.

There are thought to be around 100 baby banks across the UK, many of which appear on this [map](#).

Sophia Parker, Chief Executive of Little Village said:

“We’ve been completely astounded by the response we’ve received since being mentioned on the Duke and Duchess’ Instagram account. We’ve received messages and donations from as far afield as Australia, Texas and Hong Kong, it’s fantastic to think that people across the world appreciate our work.

“We’re a very small charity, so support like this is crucial. We often see families whose babies are being forced to sleep on cushions on the floor and children with shoes two sizes too small. We support families by providing clothing for their children, safe places for them to sleep, and toys and books to help them thrive.

“We receive no public funding so are reliant on donations and the generosity of the public - every penny really does count.”

Since its launch in 2016, Little Village has supported 2098 families. This includes passing on:

- 1022 safe places to sleep (cots, Moses baskets) - showing that almost half of the families did not previously have a safe place for their babies to sleep

- 722 buggies
- 170,000 items including clothing, shoes, warm coats, toys and books
- 21,000 pieces of equipment including bottles, high chairs and baby carriers

The charity estimates that it costs around £100 to support each family it sees. The average value of donated items they receive is around £550.

You can support Little Village via their [Just Giving page](#).

Find out how else you can support Little Village, including how to set up regular payments, at: www.littlevillagehq.org.

Ends

Notes to editors

Follow Little Village - [@LittleVillageHQ](#) on Twitter; [Little Village HQ on Facebook](#) and [Little Village HQ on Instagram](#).

Little Village statistics

The families we help:

- The number of families seen by Little Village rose from 773 in 2017 to 1524 in 2018 – a rise of 97 per cent.
- Just under half of the families we support come from the bottom fifth of wards based on deprivation data.
- Around half of families we support (51%) are either homeless or in temporary accommodation – a figure that has increased this year from 32%.
- Around one in five of the families we support are in work but still struggling to make ends meet.
- A third (31%) of families have no recourse to public funds.
- 39% are single parent households and 23% are refugees and asylum seekers.
- Many are dealing with domestic violence and substance misuse.