

Gillingham Foodbank

Report and Accounts
Year ended 31 March 2024

Stewardship 
Active generosity

1 Lamb's Passage, London EC1Y 8AB
www.stewardship.org.uk

GILLINGHAM FOODBANK
LEGAL & ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE	Wessex House 8 High Street GILLINGHAM Dorset SP8 4AG
GOVERNING DOCUMENT	Declaration of Trust dated 23 March 2012
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER	1146565
TRUSTEES RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING THE CHARITY	Hannah Gibbons Clive Ozzard Alistair Angus (resigned 24/10/24) Helen Long (resigned 19/06/23) Robert Rickards (resigned 17/06/24) Sheela Vishnu Upton (appointed 20/11/23) Neil Ian MacBean (appointed 13/03/24) Simon Vivian Chase (appointed 13/05/24)
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER	Sarah Crispin ACA Stewardship 1 Lamb's Passage LONDON EC1Y 8AB

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Gillingham Foodbank

Annual Report

1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024



[A] Objectives and activities

National and county context

The first UK foodbank was established in 2000 by Christian charity The Trussell Trust in Salisbury. The Trust now co-ordinates a network of local independent foodbanks, to which it provides consultancy, training, systems, services and quality assurance. There are now over 1200 foodbank centres in the UK network, working to the same systems and standards.

Gillingham Foodbank purposes

The objects of the charity are to relieve poverty, hardship or distress through the provision of food to people in need of emergency supplies in North Dorset, South Somerset and Wiltshire and by such other means as the trustees may decide.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities, Gillingham foodbank trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the Charity Commissioners' public benefit guidance, in particular, when exercising powers or duties in advancing our objectives, conforming with the Charities Act 2011.

Foodbank main activities

Gillingham Foodbank provides emergency food assistance to local residents in short-term financial crisis.

Clients are normally referred to the foodbank by a front-line service or agency, such as a health worker, children's centre, council service or housing association. Agencies hold boxes on our behalf and distribute accordingly. This referral process ensures that the client's need has been validated, and thereby ensures that assistance is targeted appropriately.

The client receives a voucher which they bring to the foodbank. There they receive half-a-week's food, suitable for the size of their family. The food is donated by the general public, and is non-perishable standard groceries. Clients are usually limited to three vouchers per crisis in order to prevent the development of a dependency relationship.

Like other foodbanks in the Trussell Trust network, Gillingham Foodbank is run by mainstream Christian churches. However, the operation and objectives of Gillingham foodbank is entirely charitable, and non-religious in nature. Clients, partners and volunteers of all backgrounds are welcomed and treated equally.

Since October 2021 we have extended our opening hours to include Tuesday and Wednesday mornings where Foodbank clients who no longer require food can come to a safe place. There is a need for some to operate within community so that they avoid the need of help with food from the Foodbank. Activities include life skills, fun activities, tea coffee and cake and a listening ear. This was funded by Trussell Trust from a grant received for that purpose.

In January 2024 we appointed Helen Weaver as a salaried Project Manager, taking over from Neil MacBean who was a volunteer Project Manager. Neil has now become the Stock Control Manager.

[B] Achievements and performance

B1. Outcomes: food allocations to clients

Total “person allocations” during this report period = 2919 (comprising 1799 adults and 1120 children)

During the preceding year 2022-2023, 2844 people were fed. This shows a small increase in the number fed. We fulfilled 1569 emergency vouchers (1092 during 2022-23), representing a 40% increase on the preceding year.

North Dorset is a rural area, in which many areas appear affluent; however, there are pockets of poverty and low income. This is a surprisingly high level of relative demand, for an area that is easily type-cast as affluent. It strongly indicates the presence of real issues of poverty in this rural area.

Trends in demand over the year show peaks at major school holidays, when there is additional demand from families identified as genuinely reliant upon “free school meals” during term-time. That apart, the overall trend appears to be steadily upward.

In any six-month period, clients access the foodbank on average twice. This is consistent with the principal of providing specific crisis-relief, and not long-term, regular or open-ended assistance.

Age and ethnicity of clients

Age of client	Client 17-24	Client 25-64	Client 65+	Undisclosed	“children”
Number assisted	407	1252	62	0	1120

Simple statistics are collected about the age of clients and the number of “adults” and “children” in their household. The small number of clients over 65 is notable. This elderly group is not in natural contact with many of the voucher-holding agencies, and also can be reluctant to seek or accept charitable help.

B2. Voucher referral agencies

Foodbank vouchers are held by 46 agencies, mostly with a local focus, although there are 9 very active referral agencies. Open Door (Gillingham), Open House (Shaftesbury) and Cary Cares (Castle Cary) were our three busiest distributors. The role of referral agencies remains absolutely crucial to the operation of the foodbank, and their continuing partnership is greatly appreciated.

The rate of referrals is highly variable between voucher-distributors, reflecting the varied scope of their work, the needs of their clientele and the period in which they have held vouchers.

Vouchers are issued by the Foodbank itself where there are *bone fide* contacts validated by agencies that do not themselves hold vouchers, or where an agency asks the foodbank to issue an “emergency voucher”. Vouchers are occasionally issued to “cold callers” on understanding that they must seek further help from agencies that the foodbank volunteers signpost them to. Virtually all of our distributors now use the e-voucher system for emergency food parcels (not food boxes).

B3. Food collections and donations

Food donations from the general public remain consistently high. The Foodbank continues to attract very strong support from the public at large.

Food donors

Stock in type	Stock in (kg)	Stock in (% of total)
Donations from donors - Charities	766.8	2.55%
Donations from donors - Churches	2,209.6	7.35%
Donations from donors - Community groups	1,066.4	3.55%
Donations from donors - Corporates	703.9	2.34%
Donations from donors - Educations	1,493.5	4.96%
Donations from donors - Individual(s)	1,384.7	4.6%
Donations from donors - Supermarkets	18,771.1	62.4%
Purchased	3,208	10.66%
Returns from food bank centre	476.8	1.59%
Totals	30,080.8	100%

Current stock level stands at a little under 3,230kgs, a far more manageable amount, especially with a stocktake imminent.

Last year we received 30,080kgs of donated food, which represents an decrease of 11% on the preceding year (33,784kgs . We are having to buy food most months to provide the variety of food required for the clients.

The top 3 sources: 34% of donations were received via Waitrose, 18.7% Tesco and 10% Lidl, proportions being steady throughout the year.

It is worth noting that there has been a 5.22% increase in the amount of food purchased compared to 2022-23 and that only 2.6% of all donated food was unusable (out of date, partially used or damaged) – this being a total of 651kgs.

B4. Levels of abuse

Fraud, abuse and misuse are minimised by the voucher referral system, whereby clients only access the foodbank when referred by an agency that has validated their level of need. Nevertheless, some clients will attempt to abuse the system. The systematic processing of vouchers, discussion with voucher-issuing agencies and data checks keeps this under control.

It is believed that the level of actual abuse is not above 5% and may well be under half that figure. This low rate reflects the robust systems that are in place, although sustained vigilance will always be required to maintain this security.

B5. Future projections

Geographically, the Gillingham foodbank has reached its natural frontiers. The establishment of a new pop-up foodbanks during March 2020 many which have continued, have some limiting effect on client referrals on the periphery, though likely to be more than offset by generic increases.

National forecasts suggested increases in demand during 2023-2024, which has happened. While food and energy costs continue to rise and low-income household earnings remain stagnant, there is no likelihood of a down-turn in the households in financial crisis.

Increases in demand during 2024-2025 will put pressure on aspects of the Foodbank operation:

- **Administrative and managerial** functions will be under pressure, and additional volunteer support needed to share some of the central activities.
- **Outlet opening arrangements** and volunteer numbers will be periodically reviewed to ensure capacity to handle local levels of demand
- **Food supply** we anticipate having to purchase some food but it is not expected to be a problem as we have the funds to support this. Public donations are very strong, and is helped by food dump bins in many local supermarkets.
- **Foodstore capacity** will not be a problem as we have two foodstores based in Paris Court, one acting as an overflow store.

There appears every prospect that the foodbank will be able to meet the challenges, and continue to provide vital assistance to households in crisis across its area of operation. A Strategic Plan is in place to meet the aims of the charity.

[C] Financial review

C1. Key points

During the year 2023-24 Gillingham foodbank received total income of £80,002 (FY2022-23: £102,122) and dispersed £63,815 (FY2022-23: £66,846). Of the £80,002 income, £40,550 was unrestricted and £39,452 was restricted. Of the expenditure, £28,837 was unrestricted and £34,978 was restricted.

C2. Income and expenditure

Our donations continued at a more normal level after the generous gifts from the public in response to the Covid 19 pandemic in the previous years.

We received income from Gift Aid due to the high level of donors willing to do this.

C3. Reserves policy

Cash reserves

The foodbank's cash reserves held on 31st March 2024 as follows:

	£
Funds:	
Co-op Bank – current account	133,191
Wyvern Credit Union	14,996
TOTAL CASH FUNDS	148,187

Monetary investments

The foodbank has no money directly invested in property, securities or other forms of investment.

Gillingham foodbank's reserves policy covers all of its general and restricted funds. This policy is reviewed and approved annually by trustees. This policy is as follows:

Reserves policy for general funds

We agreed to keep at least this amount to enable us to make financial decisions

9 months normal expenditure	40,000
2 further years for CA adviser from 2025-2026@ £12kpa	24,000
1 further year for Distribution Centre management @£14kpa	14,000
Total	78,000

Reserves policy for restricted funds

Not applicable

C4. Investment policy and performance

The foodbank's investment policy is to diversify its (limited) funds in bank accounts and deposit accounts only. It has no other financial investment products or any investment property. The foodbank has no endowment funds, currently.

Short-term deposits are lodged directly with Co-operative Bank plc and attract rates of interest comparable with available commercial market rates. Deposit lodged with Wyvern Credit Union attract a dividend which is currently 0%. In FY2023-24 Gillingham foodbank's deposit account funds attracted an average interest rate of 0%.

C5. Going concern

The trustees of Gillingham foodbank have every reason to believe that the charity is a going concern, principally because it continues to be able to raise funding to support all of its activities, and further to extend those activities. The foodbank has adequate reserves to cover any shortfall in anticipated income.

C6. Deficits

The foodbank's total income exceeds its net expenditure and the charity does not operate in deficit. The charity has no subsidiary funds or undertakings.

Governance and charitable status

Gillingham foodbank was set up by Gillingham Community Church (GCC), St. Benedict's Catholic Church, Gillingham Methodist Church and St. Mary's Church, Gillingham.

The foodbank is a charitable trust with independent charitable status, and is constituted as a body of incorporated trustees with five trustees on the trust body.

The foodbank's governing document is a trust deed, executed on 23rd March, 2012.

Trustees are appointed to Gillingham foodbank by a resolution of the trustees passed at a special meeting of the trustees. In selecting individuals for appointment as trustees, the trustees have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the charity. Every trustee is appointed for a minimum of three years. The Chair of trustees is elected by the other trustees at an ordinary meeting of trustees.

One of GFB's trustees, Hannah Gibbons, was paid by GCC as an employee during the year. Part of her role for GCC during FY 2023-24 included specified staff services provided to GFB, funded by GFB as agreed by the other GFB trustees. No other trustees were employed or received any remuneration or benefit from the charity during FY 2023-24.

The foodbank is audited annually by the Trussell Trust, to verify the efficiency, effectiveness and probity of procedures. This audit generates a written report to the trustees and any actions carried out if needed. A copy of the report is available on request.

The foodbank is registered with the Information Commissioners Office. All volunteers are required to sign confidentiality agreements, protecting both client personal details and operational information.

Risk Management

The trustees have considered the risks that the charity is exposed to and put strategies in place to mitigate those risks. Policies are established for financial control, health and safety, safeguarding and data protection, equal opportunities, and for processing complaints.

Operational structure

The foodbank operates from two locations. One, in Paris Court, Station Road Gillingham hosts the food stores, and the other, Wessex House, 8 High Street, Gillingham, deals with the administrative functions and the public-facing outlet.

Volunteers

Around 30 regular volunteers contribute to the foodbank operation, in administration, stock management, deliveries and public-facing roles. All public-facing volunteers receive training to ensure consistency of procedures and standards. It has been calculated that the volunteer hours put into the foodbank equate to 2.5 full time paid staff; which if paid the minimum wage would cost over £25,000. We are therefore very grateful to all our volunteers who give up their time.


[D] Exemptions from disclosure

None.

[E] Funds held as custodian trustee

Gillingham foodbank holds no funds as custodian trustee. Nor does it collect any sums as agent for any other bodies for passing on to them.

This report was approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:


[H Gibbons \(Dec 9, 2024 16:58 GMT\)](#)
Hannah Gibbons

Dec 9, 2024
Date

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF GILLINGHAM FOODBANK

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Gillingham Foodbank ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 on pages 11 to 13 following.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Sarah Crispin
Sarah Crispin (Dec 10, 2024 14:29 GMT)

Sarah Crispin ACA
Stewardship
1 Lamb's Passage
LONDON
EC1Y 8AB

Date: Dec 10, 2024

GILLINGHAM FOODBANK
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

		<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>			
		General Funds	Restricted Funds	2024	2023
Notes		£	£	£	£
<i>Income receipts</i>					
		32,831	-	32,831	53,674
		3,207	-	3,207	1,868
		3,314	39,452	42,766	46,580
		1,198	-	1,198	-
		<u>40,550</u>	<u>39,452</u>	<u>80,002</u>	<u>102,122</u>
<i>Payments</i>					
		28,837	34,978	63,815	66,846
		<u>28,837</u>	<u>34,978</u>	<u>63,815</u>	<u>66,846</u>
		11,713	4,474	16,187	35,276
		-	-	-	-
		<u>11,713</u>	<u>4,474</u>	<u>16,187</u>	<u>35,276</u>
		108,816	23,185	132,001	96,725
		<u>120,529</u>	<u>27,659</u>	<u>148,188</u>	<u>132,001</u>

The notes on page 13 form part of these accounts.

GILLINGHAM FOODBANK
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted General funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 £	2023 £
A Cash funds					
Cash at bank with immediate access		120,529	27,659	148,188	132,001
		<u>120,529</u>	<u>27,659</u>	<u>148,188</u>	<u>132,001</u>
B Other monetary assets					
Gift aid due to charity		546	-	546	942
		<u>546</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>546</u>	<u>942</u>
C Liabilities					
Falling due within one year					
Fee for Independent Examination		1,050	-	1,050	1,110
Pension payments		194	-	194	-
Accrued expenses		-	-	-	315
		<u>1,244</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,244</u>	<u>1,425</u>
D Assets retained for charity's own use					
			Fund to which asset belongs	Cost £	
Equipment				<u>4,159</u>	
				<u>4,159</u>	

The accounts were approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:

H Gibbons
H Gibbons (Dec 9, 2024 16:58 GMT)

Hannah Gibbons

Date: Dec 9, 2024

The notes on page 13 form part of these accounts.

GILLINGHAM FOODBANK
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1 Accounting policies

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and comprise a statement that shows the charity's receipts and payments, a statement that summarises the charity's assets and liabilities and related notes. The accountancy profession have determined that only accounts prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards present a 'true and fair' view and, as these receipts and payments accounts have not (and cannot) be prepared in accordance with accounting standards, these accounts do not present (and are not intended to present) a 'true and fair' view of the charity's financial activities and state of affairs.

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity. Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. Restricted funds are donations which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors; they include donations received from appeals for specific activities or projects.

	Unrestricted General funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
2 Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly				
Staffing costs	8,321	29,195	37,516	18,993
Direct costs	8,369	5,783	14,152	9,310
Premises costs	8,609	-	8,609	35,502
Insurance	1,084	-	1,084	819
Office costs	930	-	930	839
Professional fees & governance	1,524	-	1,524	-
Sundry expenses	-	-	-	1,383
	<u>28,837</u>	<u>34,978</u>	<u>63,815</u>	<u>66,846</u>

Staffing costs includes £14,380 paid to Gillingham Community Church for seconded staff, including £6,391 (2023: £7,000) relating to Hannah Gibbons (trustee of the charity) and £20,454 paid to Citizens Advice for services provided by advisors

3 Movement of funds

	Opening balance £	Receipts £	Payments £	Transfers £	Closing balance £
General funds	108,816	40,550	(28,837)	-	120,529
Restricted funds					
Strategic Resources grant	-	14,380	(14,380)	-	-
Cost of Living grant	-	5,000	(1,306)	-	3,694
Caseworker grant	8,431	9,658	(6,510)	-	11,579
Financial inclusion grant	7,644	9,914	(8,305)	-	9,253
Client utilities fund	7,110	-	(3,978)	-	3,132
Client fresh food top up fund		500	(500)	-	-
	<u>23,185</u>	<u>39,452</u>	<u>(34,978)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>27,659</u>
Total funds	<u>132,001</u>	<u>80,002</u>	<u>(63,815)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>148,188</u>

The strategic resources grant is for staffing of foodbank and is paid to Gillingham Community Church for staff who are seconded to the foodbank.
The winter warmer grant was to fund the provision of shower facilities.
The triage advisor grant is to pay for a triage worker from Citizen's Advice
The financial inclusion grant is to pay for a case worker from Citizen's Advice
The client utilities fund is to support clients with gas & electricity costs
The client fresh food top up fund is to purchase fresh food