

NEW FOREST BASICS BANK

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2025

OUR OBJECTIVES

Guided by the Christian ethos expressing God's love in action, we aim to relieve poverty or financial hardship in the New Forest and surrounding area by:

- Providing food and other essentials to families and individuals referred to us by recognised social work agencies, local authorities, community bodies, churches, charities and other organisations whose purpose includes the prevention or relief or poverty ("referral agencies");
- Providing goods, services and discretionary grants in association with other referral agencies to alleviate poverty;
- Providing, either on our own or in association with another organisation, practical guidance and training for local people to help them improve budgeting for limited resources, and to maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle; and
- Disposal of foods, goods or other stock which is considered to be surplus to requirement, to charities or other organisations whose purposes include the relief of poverty or financial hardship.

We provide these services freely, impartially, confidentially and non-judgementally, irrespective of religious opinion, race, nationality, colour, gender, age, sexual orientation or political opinion.

WHAT WE DO

We operate in the southern part of the New Forest, including Lymington, Pennington, East Boldre, Boldre, Brockenhurst, Sway, Burley, Milford-on-Sea, Everton, Bransgore, New Milton and Barton-on-Sea and the surrounding areas.

There are many reasons why people need a food parcel. It can be caused by something as simple as a benefit payment being late, or a more serious debt issue, an unexpected bill, a family breakdown, domestic violence, losing a job or illness preventing the client from working. Receiving a food parcel can help relieve the stress that food poverty causes.

We provide food parcels to allow our clients some respite while they find a way forward, for example providing a lead-in for the first Universal Credit payment to be received. We may also work with other agencies to help our clients find a way forward and to become more self-reliant.

We rely on the generosity of local people, as well as receiving support from local businesses and local government. Our process is simple:

- Generous local people donate non-perishable food or money to us;
- The food is sorted by our volunteers and supplemented with fresh items purchased locally and made up into bags designed to feed individuals or families for up to a week at the time;
- People who are in need either collect the parcels from us or it is delivered direct to their homes, or their children's schools, by our volunteers;

- We also collaborate with the Fuel Bank charity and act as one of their accredited referrers to facilitate access to fuel grants for local households in need.

The charity is run entirely by volunteers who make an invaluable contribution of their time and skills.

The Trustees have regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit when planning their activities.

CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR

We provided 4,356 parcels in the year which gave over 9,910 people food and basic supplies when they needed it (2024: 4,658 parcels and 11,000 people). Additionally we referred 354 people (2024: 479) to the Fuel Bank to assist them with their fuel bills. As well as parcels picked up by or delivered to individuals and families, we also provided support for fuel bills and food to 246 (2024: 219) schools for lunches, breakfasts and after school clubs.

In November 2024, we were honoured to be awarded the Kings Award for Voluntary Service. This is the highest award that a voluntary service can achieve and reflects the charity's service to the community which is only possible due to the generous financial and volunteer support given to us by the local community

In addition, we continue to support the FareShare Community Larders in New Milton, Ashley, Pennington and Bransgore. We provide volunteer resources and take surplus food donated to the Food Bank for distribution. These Larders provide fresh and ambient food to people for a small weekly subscription and provide support for individuals and families struggling to make ends meet. The Larders act as a potential introduction pathway to the foodbank. Equally larders can provide a useful stepping stone away from the Food Bank as clients have to make a small contribution each visit and physically collect their food. On average, the four larders were used by 140 families per week. At each Larder location we provide a service whereby the main providers like Citizens Advice, Doctors' Surgery representatives, Universal Credit Advisors, specialists from the Housing and Tenancy teams attend along with free tea and coffee which makes for a very social occasion.

We continue to work closely with the Food Rescue Kitchen (which collects surplus food from the supermarkets and redistributes it to people in need) and have given it a grant of £10,000 to help establish itself in its new premises. This service operates every evening from 2020-2145 and is invaluable in terms of supplementing both the NFBB and the FairShare Community Larders.

As ever, none of this could have been achieved without the endless generosity of our supporters in the local community and the enthusiasm of our many and varied volunteers who have worked tirelessly to ensure that anyone who has requested our help receives it – all of whom have my undying thanks!

HOW WE ARE STRUCTURED, GOVERNED AND MANAGED

New Forest Basics Bank is a registered charity, number 1150170.

We are a Charitable Association with 87 members. The Association is governed by our Constitution dated 20 September 2012, as amended on 18 September 2013 and 15 July 2016.

We are managed by a team of 8 trustees who are elected or re-elected annually by the members of the Charity at the Annual General Meeting.

The Trustees who served during the year were:

Oliver Stanley (Chairman)

Charles Cooke-Hurle (Treasurer)

Nellie Rogers (Secretary) Resigned: 21st November 2024

David da Cunha

Doug Knight

Lynn Peck

Hilary Tudor

Sue Winnington

Sarah Richards

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Donations and grants receivable

Income from donations and grants receivable increased to £256k, compared with £235k in 2024. This included a legacy of £64k. Grant income was £23k, a reduction of £40k over the previous year..

Resources expended

Resources expended on charitable activities increased by £18k to £240k in 2024. The average cost per parcel increased from £31 to £33. This reflects the increase in the cost of food and provisions during the year and some maintenance improvements to the premises.

Net incoming resources and total funds carried forward

Net incoming resources for the year were £23k which, combined with funds brought forward, give total funds carried forward of £498k at 30 April, 2025.

RESERVES POLICY

The purpose of our reserves policy is to ensure that the New Forest Basics Bank can continue delivering its mission of providing food and other basics to people in desperate need.

As approximately two thirds of our funds are tied up in our new building, our reserves policy looks at reserves after deducting the net book value of our fixed assets. These reserves equated to approximately £308k at 30 April 2025.

These reserves are intended to provide an internal source of funds for situations such as a sudden increase in demand for our food parcels; a sharp rise in the cost of the food and other basic items we provide; or an unexpected reduction in either cash or food donations.

The Trustees reviewed the minimum target for these reserves in the year and decided to retain it at 6 months of forecast running costs. For the year ending 30 April 2025, the minimum target equates to approximately £120k.

The Trustees review the minimum target at least annually to ensure it remains appropriate.