



REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1154018

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

St Neots Foodbank

1154018 (England and Wales)

Mrs Carol Way
Unit 3
Little End Road
Eaton Socon
St Neots
Cambridgeshire PE19 8JH

Operating address

Unit 3
Little End Road
Eaton Socon
St Neots
Cambridgeshire PE19 8JH

Charity Trustees as of 31st March 2024

	Office	Church represented
Mrs Carol Way	Chair	St Mary's Churches, St Neots with Eynesbury Parish
Mr Malcolm Crawford	Treasurer	New Street Baptist Church
Mr Kevin Rowland		Opendoor Church
Mr Simon Leher		River Church
Mr David Gill		St Mary's Parish Church, Eaton Socon
Mrs Judith Johnson		Berkley Street Methodist Church
Mrs Wendy Hallett		St Neots Evangelical Church

Independent Examiner

David Brown FCA
Executive Suite, A1 Lifestyle Village
Great North Road
Little Paxton
St Neots
Cambridgeshire PE19 6EN

Bank

Lloyds Bank

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR PERIOD 1ST APRIL 2023 TO 31ST MARCH 2024

1. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

1.1 Governing document

St Neots Foodbank is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation whose only voting members are its Charity Trustees. The Trustees adopted a constitution on 6th September 2013 following the 'foundation model' of the Charity Commission. Registered charitable status was granted on 30th September, and the registered charity number is 1154018.

1.2 Trustee selection and management

The charity is managed by a Board of Trustees, most of whom attend and have been nominated by one of each of the ten founding churches. All Trustees strongly endorse the charitable objectives of the organisation and support its Christian ethos.

The Trustees are responsible for the development and strategic direction of the Foodbank, and for ensuring governance and financial responsibility. They meet quarterly to review performance and monitor the achievement of objectives. The Treasurer provides a financial monitoring statement at each meeting, including a forecast of the likely income and expenditure for the whole financial year, based on the results thus far. The Trustees agree an annual financial statement which is independently examined before submission to the Charity Commission website. The Project Manager oversees the day-to-day operation of the Foodbank, and reports to the Trustees at each meeting.

1.3 Related Organisations

The St Neots Foodbank is affiliated to the Trussell Trust, a charity based in Salisbury that assists churches and communities to open and run foodbanks nationwide. Following a successful grant application for Financial Inclusion the Foodbank has employed two part time staff from Citizen's Advice and an adviser from "Mast", a local debt advice service to attend Distribution Centres and support our visitors.

1.4 Management of risk

The Trustees have adopted a range of policy documents that are intended to manage and minimise risk. Areas covered include Health and Safety and Safeguarding. To further identify and minimise risk, a new policy and procedure on risk management was introduced in January 2021 together with a Risk Management Assessment Matrix which is collectively completed and agreed by trustees. This matrix is updated every six months to identify all potential areas of risk, including governance, finance, operations, compliance with the law and regulations and any other external factors that could affect the foodbank.

Initial training was provided by staff from the Trussell Trust. The responsibility for training new volunteers has now been taken up by experienced Trustees and volunteers from St Neots Foodbank. In addition, regular training for volunteers is offered, including safeguarding and health and safety. All volunteers are encouraged to attend.

The Trussell Trust last undertook a comprehensive Quality Assurance Audit of all aspects of the Foodbank's operations, management and governance in October 2018 *is this the most recent?* to monitor the operation of the foodbank against their procedures and policies. The assessors were complimentary about the running of the foodbank and for the first time there were no "requirements". The recommendations that were highlighted by the audit were incorporated into our annual Action Plan and successfully implemented in 2019.

Done in 2023

In August 2021 the Foodbank completed the newly introduced Governance Self-Assessment and this resulted in a written summary report from a member of the national Trussell Trust Quality Team. All 12 strands of Governance were assessed as at least meeting Trussell Trust standards and legal requirements (amber) with 7 being assessed as exceeding Trussell Trust standards (green). No strands were assessed as not meeting Trussell Trust standards and legal requirements (red). The recommendations in the report have either been implemented or included in ongoing actions. *Have we had another since?*

2. OBJECTIVES, AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

2.1 Charitable Objectives

The St Neots Foodbank has as its objective the prevention and relief of poverty in St Neots and surrounding area, particularly, but not exclusively, by providing emergency food supplies and signposting help available from other agencies to individuals and families in need. This objective is undertaken with a Christian ethos; we seek to operate according to Christian principles of compassion, honesty, integrity, openness, kindness and care of all people, regardless of backgrounds or beliefs.

2.2 Aims

Our aims are to alleviate poverty through the provision of food parcels to those in crisis, in partnership with local care agencies who refer clients in crisis to us. The food parcels are intended to meet the immediate need. In parallel, signposting to care agencies, advice services and other support agencies is intended to help clients resolve the crisis causing their need of the foodbank. In addition, the Financial Inclusion project has enabled this work to be enhanced by helping visitors manage their income and benefits with the aim of reducing their need to rely on the Foodbank.

2.3 Objectives for the year

The main objective for the year was to consolidate the work of the previous ten years. In practice this meant:

- recruiting and supporting volunteers and training them appropriately,
- efficient operation of the warehouse, equipping it and maintaining and putting in place appropriate systems to enable the warehouse to function,
- exploring possibilities for increasing the capacity of the warehouse,
- maintaining an effective administration operation,
- recruiting and supporting existing voucher holders,
- ending the home delivery model and moving back to the Distribution Centre model,
- ensuring sufficient food and finances to sustain the operation,
- implementing the Financial Inclusion Grant to provide visitors with advice and support from CA and Mast at our Distribution Centres.

2.4 Key decisions and events during the year

- Home delivery model:
This has now ended and the Distribution Centre model is fully operational although delivery is still available for the disabled and housebound if they have no support to collect their food.
- Changes to Officers and Trustees:
 - A new Trustee has been appointed for Berkley Street Methodist Church
 - We currently do not have Trustees for St Joseph's or the United Reformed Church but are hoping for nominations
 - Following the end of our Secretary's term of office we have not been able to find a replacement but are hoping to do so. We do however have an excellent volunteer minute taker
 - Our Project Manager, Adrienne Dunn, who has provided us with seven years of superb support, has indicated that she wishes to step back from the role so Trustees are exploring ways to recruit a new manager.
- Trustee Training – June 23rd
 - Trust Advice provided a training day for existing and new Trustees. This provided an excellent overview of the Trustees' role, and included activities to enable a shared awareness of the strengths and abilities of the group
- 10th Anniversary – October 1
 - To mark ten years since the establishment of the Foodbank in St Neots a Thanksgiving service and lunch was held. This provided an opportunity to thank all our amazing volunteers and supporters.

- **Update to our Charitable Objective:**
In January 2021 Trustees agreed to amend our charitable objective within our CIO document, to include an explicit reference to “signposting” (the amended objective is stated in full in section 2.1 above) and this was uploaded onto the Charity Commission (CC) website in November 2021.
- **Trussell Trust Franchise Agreement:**
In April 2021 trustees agreed to remain part of the Trussell Trust Network and sign the newly introduced Network Franchise Agreement. Signing this agreement further committed St Neots Foodbank to actively promoting and working to fulfil the Trussell Trust’s vision of ending the need for Foodbanks in the UK. Signing the franchise agreement also allowed St Neots Foodbank to apply for new ‘Financial Inclusion’ grant streams. This successful bid which resulted in the provision of advisors from Citizens Advice and ‘Mast’ (Money Advice St Neots) at our Distribution Centres has hugely contributed to our aim of enabling visitors to better manage their financial situation and relieve debt.

2.5 How the Foodbank works

- Food is donated by the public;
- Donations of non-perishable food are checked for “use by” dates, weighed and sorted by food type;
- Those in food crisis are issued with a St Neots Foodbank voucher by a recognised Voucher Partner;
- Recipients of vouchers can redeem them at one of the Distribution Centres for an emergency food box.
- Through a partnership with Waitrose, visitors who come to Distribution Centres with a voucher are given an additional voucher which they can exchange for fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables, and eggs at our local Waitrose store.
- Visitors are also signposted toward other agencies, which may be able to help resolve their crisis; in particular through the work of the advisers recruited through the Financial Inclusion grant.

2.6 Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities

3. ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

3.1 Summary of the Year's Activities

St Neots Foodbank has continued to operate its four Distribution Centres at Opendoor, United Reformed, Berkley Street Methodist and St Mary's Eaton Socon Churches, with Berkley Street continuing to be our busiest centre. As well as collecting their food parcel our Foodbank visitors have an opportunity to have a conversation with our volunteers over a drink and biscuit to be helped with a range of issues, including support from our 'in house' CA and Mast (Money Advice St Neots) staff. This Financial Inclusion Service provided £320,000 of either financial gain or managed debt for our Foodbank visitors in its first year of operation. In addition, we are able to provide help with obtaining the Household Support Fund through the County Council, help with small items up to the value of £200 through Acts435, phone cards, energy top ups, pet food and birthday cakes through 'Free Cakes for Kids'. We additionally support with information about local groups and events which our visitors might be interested in attending to provide friendship.

Our visitors are also given vouchers to spend at Waitrose on eggs, fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables. 1 x £8 voucher for one or two persons, 2 x £8 vouchers for 3/4 persons and 3 x £8 vouchers for families of 5+.

We continue to do some deliveries for people unable to attend one of our centres through ill health or age and offer telephone signposting to them.

The number of people attending the Foodbank has gradually increased in the past four years, having seen a considerable rise between 2019/20 and 2023/24.

Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Food in (kg)	19,737	21,813	25,999	33,879	26,790	32,885	29,358
People fed	1,415	1,555	1,781	2,583	2,168	2,546	2,705
Christmas parcels	209	242	290	259	367	319	408

Short-dated stock has mainly gone out through our Distribution Centres, with people able to choose these as additional extras. We have been able to give away dented cans to an organisation happy to take them. Other groups such as Paines Mill, which provides bedsits for 16-25 year olds in sheltered accommodation, have been supported as and when needed.

We did our annual stocktake on 26th April and a small discrepancy with the weight on our data system was adjusted to reflect the stock in the warehouse.

3.2 Voucher Partners

Voucher Partners are professionals from organisations providing welfare and community support in the local area such as doctors, schools, social workers, registered social landlords, local charities, and Citizens Advice staff, amongst others. When these professionals identify people in crisis, they are able to issue them with a Foodbank voucher. We have continued to move organisations to the e-referral system and are phasing out the use of red vouchers.

The number of Voucher Partners is 93 and 1,267 vouchers have been fulfilled during the year.

3.3 Recipients of Food

During the year food was provided for 2,705 people (1,682 adults and 1,023 children). The following table provides the breakdown of the crisis types prompting use of the Foodbank for the year to the end of March 2024 (cause attributed by the Voucher Partners).

Table: Reasons for Referral (Extracted from Trussell Trust Data Collection System)

	Vouchers	Adults	Children	Total
Financial - earnings related				
Change in work hours	24	38	35	73
Unemployment following permanent work	49	59	29	88
Unemployment following temporary work	12	19	9	28
Delay in or awaiting other income	103	127	83	210
Financial - benefits related				
Benefit delay	180	229	117	346
Benefit deduction due to overpayment/benefit advance	16	19	5	24
Benefit reduction due to change in eligibility	12	19	15	34
Benefit reduction due to sanction	53	68	38	106
Awaiting first benefit payment for less than a month	17	22	10	32
Awaiting first benefit payment for more than a month	6	6	9	15
Financial - debts, costs and expenses				
Priority debt	143	214	125	339
Non-priority debt	69	100	58	158
Cost of dependents has increased	47	77	109	186
Rising costs of essentials	529	698	412	1110
Other unexpected expense	78	109	92	201
Personal circumstances				
Insecurely housed	82	93	27	120
No access to financial support - immigration status	5	7	7	14
Loss of support from friends or family	26	42	34	76
Change in relationship status	27	40	23	63

Domestic abuse	53	64	95	159
Change in dependents	5	11	11	22
Health				
New physical or mental health condition	17	26	14	40
Ongoing impact of physical or mental health condition	185	259	130	389
Change in existing physical or mental health condition	6	9	2	11
No answer				
None applicable	45	67	37	104
Declined to answer	2	4	1	5
Unable to ask	55	72	58	130

3.4 Food Donated

The Foodbank has 'drop-boxes' in Tesco, Waitrose and the Co-op Stores which are collected weekly. In addition, we have collection boxes in St Neots Library and the Yorkshire Building Society. This makes up about 70% of the total food collected. To collect much needed extra items of food we did one day collections at Waitrose on 18th August 2023 and 21st March 2024, where we gave shopping lists to customers of our most needed items.

We used the national Trussell Trust three-day collection at Tesco on 30th November, 1st and 2nd December to collect items for our Christmas hampers. Having taken referrals from our partner voucher agencies we were able to distribute 408 and also gave out fruit, vegetable and egg vouchers to all hamper recipients.

A number of churches, schools, businesses, groups and individuals also donated food throughout the year. Harvest donations are a significant help to food donations, and we received about 0.8 tonnes of food from schools and 0.8 tonnes from churches. The total amount of food collected this year was 29,358 kg and over the year to 31 March 2024 the amount of food distributed was 30,026 kg. At the end of March 2024, the stock level was 2,889 kg. Stock is valued at £2.37 per kilo as advised by the Trussell Trust. Therefore, the value of food held in stock at this time was £6,847.

We have encouraged people to download and use the BanktheFood App, which tells them our most needed items of food.

3.5 Publicity

Publicity has contributed to the success of the Foodbank. We produced a special 10th Anniversary newsletter which was issued in October and which has gone to all volunteers, voucher holders, churches and those who have asked to be kept informed about our work. We have done talks to various community groups including WIs, Brownies

and occasionally go into local schools. We continue to be well supported by our local paper, the Hunts Post, who did a double page spread to cover our 10th Anniversary. We continue to make posts on social media platforms and update our website.

3.6 Volunteers

The Foodbank is run entirely by volunteers, and we have added a number during the year. There are various roles for people to volunteer at our Distribution Centres. In our warehouse volunteers weigh in food, date and sort donations and make up parcels, along with those doing supermarket 'pick ups', delivery drivers and office staff. We have a number of WhatsApp groups to get relevant information to selected groups very quickly.

We appointed a volunteer co-ordinator to help with the process of safely recruiting volunteers and also to put all our volunteers on Assemble set up by the Trussell Trust. This enables us to provide online training modules in such things as Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Active Listening.

We had two school students join us to do their work experience.

4. FINANCIAL REVIEW

4.1 Principal sources of funds

Donations for general (unrestricted) purposes of £44,080 were received. We received £3,789 being top-up payments for food collected at Tesco. The latter is designated by the Trustees for the purchase of food.

During the year the Foodbank submitted to the crowdfunding service, Acts435, the needs of clients, and grants totalling £2,609 were received.

There was a surplus of Unrestricted Funds for the year of £21,384.

4.2 How expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity

Most of the resources used by the Foodbank to achieve its objectives are donated in the form of the time offered by volunteers as drivers, packers, and in the Warehouse, the buildings and other facilities offered either free-of-charge or at greatly reduced cost by partner organisations, and the gifts of food by the public – e.g. the nominal value for the food gifts of 29,358 kg received in the year was £69,578 which compares to the financial expenditure on other items of £26,131. The largest expenditure item was £12,800 to purchase fresh vegetables and fruit to add to client deliveries.

It is necessary to pay for the core running costs of the Foodbank in order to enable its objectives to be achieved. This year £1,816 was needed to supplement donations of food. The Foodbank's operations are audited regularly by the Trussell Trust, and the accounts are independently examined.

In order to support other complementary charities in the area, 10% of the donations received (£4,408) has been set aside. During the year the total payments from this fund, including topping up Acts435 grants, was £836.

In total the Unrestricted and Designated Reserves total over £186,000 compared with £164,000 a year ago. This includes £50,000 in the Development Fund and £106,800 in unrestricted Funds. The latter compares with the aim under the Trust's Reserves Policy to maintain minimum unrestricted reserves of £30,000 being equivalent to about 6 months operating costs and about 3 months food supplies.

ST NEOTS FOODBANK
CHARITY NUMBER: 1154018
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS
PERIOD ENDED 31st March 2024

	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023/24	Total 2022/23
	£	£	£	£	£
Income					
Voluntary Income:					
Donations	44,080		0	44,080	55,506
Grants	0	3,789	2,609	6,398	9,800
Interest	3,435	0	0	3,435	685
Total Income	47,515	3,789	2,609	53,913	65,991
Expenditure					
Warehouse rent	5,000			5,000	5,000
Electricity	2,086			2,086	447
Container Hire	442			442	475
Business Rates	0			0	0
Warehouse / Distribution eqpt	77			77	176
Subscriptions	360			360	360
Telephone	1,074			1,074	1,932
Printing, Stationery, Postage	364			364	442
Insurance	588			588	536
Office and other Expenses	3,341			3,341	880
Purchase of vegetables and boxes / vouchers	12,800	1,816		14,616	9,857
Camb's CC Outreach project			0	0	0
CAB Project			0	0	0
Acts435 grants		244	2,789	3,033	2,578
Hardship Fund - General		220		220	195
Hardship Fund - Energy		372		372	
Gifts to partner charities		0		0	753
Total Expenditure	26,131	2,652	2,789	31,572	23,632
Net Movement of Funds	21,384	1,136	-180	22,341	42,360
Transfer of Funds					
Provision for tithe 2023/24	-4,408	4,408		0	0
				0	0
				0	0
				0	0
Add: Funds brought forward	89,823	74,444	1,904	166,171	123,811
Funds carried forward at 31 March 2024	106,799	79,988	1,724	188,512	166,171

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

	Total 31 Mar 2024	Total March 2023
	£	£
Current Assets		
Bank Current account & in Hand	42,259	28,701
Deposit Accounts	139,457	136,023
Paypal Account	5,462	146
Soldo prepayment card	1,333	1,300
Tesco vouchers	0	0
Total Current Assets	188,512	166,171
Funds of the Charity		
Unrestricted Funds	106,800	89,823
Designated Funds		
General Tithe Fund	15,179	11,607
Development Fund	50,000	50,000
Energy Hardship Fund	2,000	2,000
Hardship Fund	1,000	1,000
Tescos top up	11,809	9,837
	79,988	
Restricted Funds		
CAB Fund	1,224	1,224
Acts 435	500	680
	1,724	
Total Funds	188,512	166,171

I confirm that these accounts are in accord with the books of the St Neots Foodbank

M. J. R. R. R.

Treasurer, St Neots Foodbank
01/09/2024

We have examined the above accounts and give our approval to them

David W. Brown

A1Lifestyle Accounts Ltd
17/09/2024

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report has described operation of St Neots Foodbank during the year 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. The Trustees have again been truly grateful to groups and individuals in terms of donations of food and finance, people who hold vouchers, the local churches and to all those who have helped the foodbank to help local people in crisis. Tesco have continued their support of St Neots and other Trussell Trust network foodbanks by means of the twice-yearly food collections and cash top-ups. Waitrose have taken on the voucher system for the provision of fresh eggs, fruit and vegetables and have been hugely supportive to our visitors. Brittain's store continued to provide office and storage space in their warehouse, at a reduced rent and David Brown of A1Lifestyle accountants carried out the Independent Examination of the accounts, waiving the fee. ~~but their store has now closed ... if this is just up to April how far had we got ?!!!~~ St Neots Foodbank is indebted to the many volunteers, without whom the Foodbank would not operate. In particular, it depends heavily on the hardworking and always-cheerful key volunteers who run the Foodbank on a day-to-day basis – Adrienne Dunn, Peter Dunn, Rona McCormick, Kerry Walsh and Peter Bradford. In particular Trustees are incredibly grateful for the work of Adrienne our Project Manager for whom this was her last full year.