

Blyth Foodbank

Trustees Annual Report from April 24 – March 25

- We continue to be very busy however the number of referrals has decreased, we believe that this is due to many of the schools now offering food parcel support to the larger families. The number of referral agencies we are working with has increased to 92 who are based within the Town or South East Northumberland. Our analysis indicates an increase in the number of single people relying on our services; more alarmingly is the increase in the number of people being referred with no fixed abode.
- In the full year we distributed a total of 4189 parcels, these supported 2934 adults and 1331 children. The period in January (after Christmas) was particularly very busy due to clients over spending during the festive period. In December we also included small Christmas gifts for the children and once again supported 60 Christmas Hampers for young people living on their own and leaving care.
- Unfortunately, due to the cost of living getting higher the level of donation of goods and cash declined, we therefore had to continue to buy in goods on a weekly basis to support our services.
- The Foodbank was supported by donations once again from Northumberland County Council Communities Together, Blyth Town Council and the Asda Community Fund along with a number of businesses located within the Town. We are also partnered with FareShare who give us access to donations from Booker.
- We have a regular reliable group of volunteers, and we hold Team Leader meetings every three months and a volunteers meeting every six months so that we are always looking at ways to improve our services to the local community. We operate five days a week Monday to Friday. All our Team Leaders now hold a Food Hygiene certificate, we have also reviewed all of our Policies, Procedures and Operational processes, and a Volunteer hand book has been put together, for training and reference.
- Our volunteers are very involved with local school and groups where we will visit and deliver talks on the services we provide and the many reasons why families and people in our community require this. Regular communication with other organisations that offer similar services to ours is essential to prevent duplication and that families are referred back so they can receive the correct support and advice.
- We are also now holding regular meetings with the referral agencies so that can communicate back to them any issues or support that clients require.
- We are also working with Signal who offer support to clients who want to change their life path and improve their circumstances.