

Lichfield foodbank



Annual Report for the period 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Foodbanks provide emergency food, collected from the local community, to local people in crisis. Lichfield foodbank was launched in late March 2014. It was developed under the auspices of Churches Together in Lichfield and is part of the national foodbank network seeded by the Trussell Trust.
- 1.2 Lichfield foodbank became a charity in its own right operating as a charitable incorporated organisation in June 2015. This paper identifies the work undertaken during our financial year from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023.
- 1.3 The charity's name is Lichfield foodbank and has been entered onto the Register of Charities with the Registered Charity Number of 1162359.
- 1.4 The registered address of the charity is Lichfield foodbank, c/o Saxon Hill Academy, Kings Hill Road, Lichfield, WS14 9DE

2. The Need

- 2.1 The district of Lichfield has a population of circa 106,000. As well as the city of Lichfield, the district includes the town of Burntwood which is served by the Cannock and district foodbank. The area served by Lichfield foodbank is a relatively affluent area but it does contain some pockets of deprivation. Financial crises can impact on anyone, not just those in the most deprived areas or on income related benefits.
- 2.2 Nationally, the need for foodbanks has grown significantly in recent years. The need for a foodbank in Lichfield was identified from information provided by foodbanks in neighbouring areas that residents of Lichfield had needed to call upon them for assistance in times of crisis. In 2023, Lichfield foodbank fulfilled 4,483 food vouchers which is a 45% increase compared to 2022. The growth in the number of people approaching Lichfield foodbank for help confirms that there is an ongoing need to have a foodbank in the city.
- 2.3 Demand, in terms of individuals fed, increased by 35% compared to 2022, by 123% compared to 2021 and a total of 1,165,651 meals distributed since we started in April 2014. We have only been able to feed so many people because of the support we have received from individuals and groups across the city and surrounding villages, plus local churches, businesses and the supermarkets Tesco, Morrison's, Waitrose and Central England Co-operative.

3. Highlights of the Year

3.1 Food Collections

- Five supermarket collections were held during 2023 and these, together with all other food donations generated a total of 69.6 tonnes of food. We have been warmly welcomed during 2023 and previous years by Tesco, Waitrose and Morrison's stores in Lichfield and we would like to thank their staff for their co-operation on collection days.
- Tesco also supported our food drives at their stores with an uplift on the value of the food collected. In 2023 this amounted to £5,788 which was 28% higher than 2022's amount.
- Six new collection locations were added to our existing network of 30 foodbank collection points well established in churches, schools, shops, businesses and other local organisations. Contributions are also delivered to our warehouse and the foodbank distribution centres during opening times.
- In all, during 2023, Lichfield foodbank collected and purchased 103.6 tonnes of food which is 27% more than in 2022.
- We continue to be very grateful to all the schools, churches and community organisations that supported our 'Harvest' appeal which amounted to just over 4 tonnes of food.

3.2 Food and Non-Food Distribution

- The growth of our food distribution continued during the year. The foodbank's clients receive a parcel of three days' worth of nutritionally balanced, non-perishable food following referral by an agency. By the end of 2023, we had 34 such agencies registered to issue Lichfield foodbank referrals. The operation of the foodbank relies on the co-operation of these agencies and we appreciate their support and involvement.
- A total of 4,483 vouchers were fulfilled during 2023 providing food to 7,014 adults and 3,793 children. This is significantly higher than the 3,099 vouchers fulfilled in 2022 to 4,845 adults and 3,137 children.
- Until October, we included vouchers in the food parcels to allow our clients to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables from Lichfield's market stall and bread from Hindley's bakery, both located in the city centre. During the 10 months, a total of 6,480 x £5 fruit/vegetable vouchers and 3,576 x £2.35 bread vouchers were redeemed and we would like to formally thank Jake Lane and Duncan Hindley and their staff for their fantastic support. The reason why we stopped issuing vouchers in October can be found in section 5.5, Treasurer's report.
- For families with children under 3 years of age, we also provided a £10 Boots voucher to enable essential toiletry items be purchased. For the 10 months until October, we provided a total of 361 vouchers.

- In the run up to Christmas, we assembled and distributed 173 special Christmas food parcels, each containing more Christmas type food in addition to the normal food parcels.

3.3 Ongoing Support

Each foodbank distribution centre maintains an agency database and manual for use in signposting a client to additional support.

3.4 Additional Support

- In April 2023, Lichfield foodbank received a further grant of £45,000 from the Trussell Trust to fund a Citizen's Advice South East Staffordshire (CASES) representative at every session to help our clients, focusing on income maximisation.
- The total number of clients taking advantage of this initiative was 330 who made a total financial gain of over £285,000. The total amount of debt managed for people using this service was £280,000 and a total of 84 clients were able to dispense with the services of the foodbank completely.

3.5 Volunteers

- Lichfield foodbank is a volunteer run organisation; we do not have any paid staff. Over 250 volunteers helped to operate the foodbank in 2023.
- There are teams of regular volunteers staffing the warehouse and distribution centres and conveying food to and from our warehouse. All of our volunteers use their own vehicles to carry food to and from our warehouse, which means we can operate without the expense of having our own van, as many other foodbanks have to do. There are a large number of volunteers involved in the supermarket collections. We thank all our volunteers for their ongoing commitment.

3.6 Supporters

- We continue to be delighted by the level of support, both financial and in kind, that the foodbank has received. We are grateful to all those who have enabled the foodbank to operate as it does.
- Our thanks go to our other supporters, namely Life Church, Lichfield, Wade Street Church, Lichfield and Curborough Community Centre for hosting the distribution sessions and for providing office support and food collections; Saxon Hill Academy for providing the premises for our warehouse and two containers, plus the support of staff and students; Tesco in Lichfield, Shenstone and nationally; Morrison's in Lichfield and nationally; Waitrose in Lichfield and nationally; Central England Co-operative in Lichfield for accommodating our collection baskets and their direct donations.

3.7 Distribution Centres

There are operational distribution centres at Life Church, Netherstowe, Wade Street Church, Frog Lane and Curborough Community Centre. We started opening a foodbank distribution centre on a Tuesday evening at Life Church following the trial at the end of 2022 and we now cover a total of five sessions a week. We are grateful to our partners who allow us to use their premises to run these distribution centres free of charge.

3.7 Community Engagement

- Lichfield District Council passed a motion in July to appoint a food Justice champion and the first of the food partnership meetings took place in November which was very well supported to start addressing food insecurity across the district.
- Lichfield foodbank was involved in the Trussell Trust National Day of Action on 9 September to campaign for 'Guarantee our Essentials'.

3.8 Governance

- The purposes of the charity are defined in the constitution as follows:

“to relieve persons in Lichfield and the surrounding areas that are in financial hardship in such ways as the trustees from time to time think fit, in particular, but not exclusively by: a) providing emergency food, essential toiletries and household items to individuals and families in need and/or for distribution by charities or other organisations working to prevent or relieve poverty and: b) such other means, including (but not limited to) the provision of support or signposting to relevant information and other advisory services.”
- Lichfield foodbank was granted formal charity status as a charitable incorporated organisation on 23 June 2015. It is constituted under the Foundation Model which means that its only voting members are the Trustees.
- At the start of 2023, the Board of Trustees consisted of four members who are the clergy of two of the churches within Lichfield, namely; Rev. Steve Speight (Chairman of Trustees) and Rev. Rod Clark plus Mrs. Ann Schwarzenbach (secretary) and Mr Peter Westwood whose responsibilities are safeguarding and finance. Rev. Rod Clarke resigned during the year and we recruited three new Trustees, Samantha Gudsell (policies), Sophie Ellis-Carroll Bayliss (fundraising and grants) and Hilary Dunphy (operations) meaning we end the year with six Trustees.
- The Trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers and duties.

- The Trustees are supported by an Executive Working Group whose role is to ensure that the foodbank operates smoothly with good governance, to report to and support the Board of Trustees and to keep volunteers, clients and partner organisations appropriately informed.

4. Chair's Report

Over the past twelve months we, like other outlets, have seen our foodbank grow and expand. In many areas of life people would celebrate that growth and development. And yet we are not celebrating because any growth simply means more people living on the breadline and not having food in their cupboards.

What we do celebrate is the commitment of the many volunteers who week by week work in the warehouse, drive supplies to the various centres, apply for grants, do the budgeting and accounting and support those who enter the centres to simply feed their families. This report would have little content if it wasn't for those people who make it happen. And so, we salute all those people on behalf of the population of Lichfield.

One of the effects of the growth is the need to purchase food from local supermarkets to add to the donations and supermarket collections. This has been a challenge to the finances with serious scrutiny having to be adopted right across Lichfield foodbank.

We have continued to open on an evening as the pilot sessions seemed to have the suggested impact.

On the personnel side of things there have been major movements. David Clarke the ex-chair and current operations manager of the EWG (Executive Working Group) is stepping back after many years of fabulous service. We have a new chair, Verity Ashley, who has been in place since February and are seeking to distribute David's various operational roles amongst a wider spread of people to lighten the load somewhat.

I finish by saying thank you for the privilege of serving in the way that we do and to a small degree helping individuals, couples and families to have food on the table each day for the people that they call family.

Let's see how 2024 develops.

Rev. Steve Speight – Chairman of the Trustees of Lichfield foodbank

5. Treasurer's Report

5.1 In 2023 we received very generous monetary donations of £85,317.22 but 18% lower than were received in 2022. Included within this figure is £5,788 in top-up payments received from Tesco following our supermarket collections and other public food donations at the store. We are grateful to all those who purchase food at all our supermarket collection points and donate it to the foodbank.

5.2 We received some extremely generous donations from individuals and organisations during the period for which we are extremely grateful. Organisations that we would like to formally thank for their tremendous support in this way are:

- Aldridge Masonic Lodge
- All Saints Church, Alrewas
- Autosmart International, Shenstone
- Christchurch, Lichfield
- Co-operative Society
- Duke of York public house, Lichfield
- Hewdens Ltd.
- Hints PCC
- King's Bromley PCC
- Lichfield Ladies T
- Lichfield Methodist Church
- Lichfield Rotary Club
- Life Church lunch club
- Methodist Women in Britain
- Partsworld Ltd., Cannock
- Pedro Distribution Ltd
- Peppermill Antiques
- Saxon Hill Academy
- St John's church, Shenstone
- Three Spires Morris Club Account
- Waitrose Ltd.
- Whittington PCC
- Yoxall WI

together with dozens of individual donors whose donations often amounted to three or even four figure sums.

5.3 By the end of 2023, we had 74 donors who had committed to regular payments via a standing order mandate. This was up from 54 donors at the end of 2022. We also receive donations via JustGiving many of which are donated on a regular basis.

5.4 We are registered as a charity for tax purposes and are able to claim a further 25% of the value of the donation, from donors who have signed up, via the Government's Gift Aid scheme. A Gift Aid payment of £6,467.02 was received during 2023 for donations received in 2022.

5.5 Due to client numbers being so much higher than in 2022 and both food and financial donations being much lower, the foodbank had to buy top-up food to the value of over £54,000 in 2023. This is compared to £14,000 in 2022 and just

£3,200 in 2021. Due to the high spend, the Trustees thought it prudent to stop issuing the fruit and vegetable, bread and Boots vouchers during October and just concentrate on the core business, ie. ensuring we can continue to supply all our clients with three day's worth of non-perishable food.

- 5.6 Lichfield foodbank remains on a sound financial footing, is well placed to consolidate and develop its work going forward and will continue to manage its money responsibly. We have a policy in place to hold a reserve of £10,000. This is based on holding a minimum of 12 months' expenditure to guard against uncertainties in income. At the same time, it provides assurance that the charity would be viable in the short to medium term if it became necessary to pay rent for warehousing or distribution centres in the future.
- 5.7 At the end of 2023, the foodbank had assets in the bank and cash in hand of £84,711.61 which is 13% lower than at the end of 2022 and a trading deficit during the year of £11,740.43.

LICHFIELD FOODBANK

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR PERIOD 1 JANUARY - 31 DECEMBER 2023

INCOME		2023	2022
Donations	¹	83,517.22	101,775.13
Grants (local council)		1,000.00	1,300.00
Grants (Trussell Trust for subsistence)		15,000.00	0.00
Grants (Trussell Trust for CASES)		45,000.00	45,000.00
Fund Raising		802.88	539.40
Bank Interest		0.00	0.00
Gift Aid		6,467.02	3,694.66
TOTAL INCOME		151,787.12	152,309.19
EXPENDITURE			
Food Purchases	²	93,013.89	67,598.75
Volunteer Expenses		7,137.60	3,145.25
Volunteer Training		0.00	0.00
Trussell Trust Franchise	³	0.00	0.00
Insurance		254.97	412.73
Bank Charges		0.00	0.00
Telephone, printing, postage and stationery		916.02	964.90
Equipment Purchases		1,495.90	1,616.58
Equipment Maintenance		0.00	0.00
Accommodation		0.00	0.00
Non-food Purchases	⁴	4,459.17	4,470.43
CASES		56,250.00	33,750.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		163,527.55	111,958.64
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)		(11,740.43)	40,350.55

Notes to the Accounts

Note 1 - excludes food donations

Note 2 - excludes donated food

Note 3 - the Trussell Trust's franchise fee was waived in both 2022 and 2023

Note 4 - non-food purchases included essential items such as toiletries, nappies, etc.

LICHFIELD FOODBANK

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	31/12/2023	31/12/2022
ASSETS		
Cash at bank and in hand		
Bank	84,513.05	97,478.94
Cash in hand	198.56	122.48
Supermarket vouchers	0.00	68.92
	84,711.61	97,670.34
LIABILITIES		
Creditors	0.00	0.00
NET ASSETS	84,711.61	97,670.34
INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT		
Balance 31/12/2022	84,711.61	97,670.34
Surplus (deficit)	(11,740.03)	40,350.55
Balance 31/12/2023	84,711.61	97,670.34

EXAMINER'S REPORT

I have examined the above Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2023 and the annexed Receipts and Payment Account for the period ending on that date and certify them to be in accordance with the books, records and information supplied to me.

Signed by: J J Shanahan, FMCA, CGMA. Dated 25 February 2024