

BROMLEY BOROUGH FOODBANK

England & Wales · Charity number 1167961

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2016-06-30

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address c/o Orpington Baptist Church
Station Road
Orpington
BR6 0RZ

Phone 08009202324

Email info@bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk

Website www.bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECT OF THE CIO IS 'THE RELIEF OF FINANCIAL HARDSHIP AMONGST PEOPLE IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY AND THE SURROUNDING AREA OR IN OTHER PARTS OF THE UK 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;B) SUCH OTHER MEANS, INCLUDING (BUT NOT LIMITED TO) THE PROVISION OF SUPPORT OR SIGNPOSTING TO RELEVANT INFORMATION AND OTHER ADVISORY SERVICES, AND TO PROVIDE SUCH SERVICES WITH A CHRISTIAN ETHOS SUPPORTED BY THE CHURCHES IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY.)

Activities: Bromley Borough Foodbank is a community-led charity, helping local people to get back on their feet and improve their financial independence. It meets the needs of people in food poverty with emergency supplies of food and importantly, assists people to locate the right support for any wider needs by referring them to specialist agencies relevant to their situation.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty
- **Who:** Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Bromley

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£357,267	£473,083	-	-
2024-03-31	£335,000	£407,736	-	-
2023-03-31	£426,773	£290,914	-	-
2022-03-31	£302,608	£201,356	-	-
2021-03-31	£479,552	£98,726	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Simon Lees	Chair	2021-04-09
Basak Azaz		2022-03-14
Duncan Aitkins		2021-04-09
Jasmin Sen		2022-03-14
Stephen Walsh		2021-04-09

BROMLEY BOROUGH FOODBANK

England & Wales - Charity number 1167961

Accounts



Report and Accounts of Bromley Borough Foodbank

For the period
1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

*"a community led charity, helping
local people to get back on their feet
and improve their financial
independence"*

c/o Orpington Baptist Church
Station Road
Orpington
Kent
BR6 0RZ
www.bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk

Contents

	Page
Chair of Trustees' Statement	3
Objectives and Activities	5
Challenges, Achievements & Performance	7
Public benefit	10
Structure, Governance, Management	11
Trustees' details	12
Risk Management	13
Financial Review	14
Annual Accounts	15
Accounting Policy & Notes to accounts	16
Reserve Policy	20
Independent examiner's report	22

Chair of Trustees' Statement

As a bit of a background I quote from recent research, conducted by WPI Economics and Humankind research in which they demonstrated that public finances and the economy could benefit by at least £75 billion each year if people were protected from hunger and hardship.

This figure includes over £38 billion lost in a year due to reduced employment and lower productivity rates as hunger and hardship can harm people's chances of securing or sustaining employment. In addition, public finances loses out on over £18 billion in income from taxes and needs to spend £5 billion on social security payments due to the impact on employment and wages. A further £13.7 billion has to be spent on the NHS, schools, children's social care, and tackling homelessness as poverty affects many aspects of life.

This report found that a record 9.3 million people are facing hunger and hardship in the UK.

During the last year, the Trussell Trust community of food banks provided more than 3.1 million emergency food parcels to people facing hardship across the UK. This is the most parcels they have ever distributed & nearly double the number compared with 5 years ago. Over the same period, there has been a 57% increase in the number of families supported, and a 69% increase in the number of children supported by food banks

The network is busier now than during Covid, with food donations having dropped by about 21%, and the food going out increasing by about 19%. A challenge for all of us to try and manage this gap. Over the year even more food banks had to purchase food, with the total amount of stock purchased rather than donated jumping from 13% to 21%.

It seems that the public are generally concerned and compassionate about the issues of hunger and food banks, but are often overwhelmed and pessimistic that change is possible. Campaigns need to be clear in their focus and provide hope in order to generate traction.

One such campaign is the Guarantee our Essentials, which is calling for the embedding in the social security system of the principle that at a minimum, Universal Credit should protect people from going without essentials. Research conducted by YouGov revealed that 780,000 people (12%) claiming Universal Credit were forced to use a food bank.

Within this context you can see how important the work of Bromley Borough Foodbank is for our Borough with the strong help of everyone in the Bromley Borough for their real generosity in giving food and money to us.

When we feel hungry, we know that the next meal is not far away or we can get a snack out of the cupboard. Unfortunately, there are many people in our Borough who are not able to look forward to their next meal, or at least they would not be able to if it wasn't for

foodbanks. This includes families with children but also many singles, especially men, and the situation is not getting any better.

While much of the activity of foodbanks has been to alleviate the consequences of food poverty, something which is absolutely necessary, at BBF we try to do what we can to push back upstream and ensure clients get the help they need to avoid falling back into poverty.

The trouble is we are, at times, being drawn deeper into client issues, often way beyond lack of food. To be quite frank, we are limited in how far we can take this and I think Bromley Council is going to find themselves put under a great deal of pressure to provide full support to many more people as we move forward and I hope they are prepared for this.

What really delights me is the quality and commitment of those working to create a better future for our clients.

Firstly, our volunteers, over 180 of them, who commit themselves to using their time to meet clients, manage systems, channel enquiries etc. It is only through having such a large and committed team of volunteers that we can support all those who seek our help.

Secondly, we have a wonderful staff team that have over the last year continued to develop our operations in the face of new challenges, while maintaining a highly efficient set of operations. The success of our organisation is not just that we have skilled and experienced staff, but that they work really well together and support each other. They are always ready to put in the extra effort when needed and as a trustee board, we have complete confidence in them.

Thirdly, as a trustee board, we have developed an open, honest and effective way to work together. We meet every 2 months as a board and in smaller groups to support our Foodbank Manager if needed and to work through strategic and policy issues. I couldn't imagine a better team.

And our referral partners are so important as they ensure clients are advised on a whole range of help available, which can avoid them needing a visit to a foodbank.

In conclusion, it is clear that foodbank funds are being squeezed as the economic conditions in the country tighten. At BBF, we have moved a long way down from a high during Covid when a very wide range of organisations and individuals donated considerable amounts to us. We want to give a smile of hope to our clients but we cannot keep expanding our client support. The next couple of years are going to be critical for organisations like ours.

Simon Lees

Chair of Trustees

Objectives and Activities

Bromley Borough Foodbank (BBF) is formed and shaped by Christian principles, in response to Jesus' command to "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Math 22:39), and is linked to many churches in the Borough. It is a member of the Trussell Trust (TT) franchise that has as its vision "a UK without the need for foodbanks", thus ending hunger resulting from poverty. Underpinning this vision is the BBF objective, to relieve hardship amongst people within the Borough of Bromley, in particular, but not exclusively:

- a) Providing emergency food and essential toiletries to individuals and families in need;
- b) Using such other means including the provision of support or signposting to relevant information and other advisory services supported by the churches in the Borough.

The clear aim of b) is to move our clients away from the need to use the services of a foodbank. We see this as fundamental to all we do.

The charity's affiliation to TT provides it with many tools, supply sources and in addition, TT has developed strategic links to a variety of organisations that enables a wide range of grants to be made available. Critically, anonymous client information is sent to TT so it can build a database across the UK in order to inform and challenge Government policy.

Our strategic objectives continue to develop as necessitated by changes in client conditions or to exploit new opportunities that present themselves. A particular growing aspect of the work of TT and its connected organisations is to work across different organisation in order to mobilise communities to become more involved in the elimination of food poverty.

We see this as a key aspect of our work as it is really important for people to understand why food poverty exists and how it might be eliminated. While government and council action is essential, it needs upward pressure to make this happen.

The main operating activities of BBF include:

- Ensuring supplies given out are appropriate to the people receiving them
- Signposting clients to appropriate professional help agencies
- Helping clients to navigate benefit applications and follow professional advice
- Running a number of distribution centres which are opened at different times during the week depending on the availability of the premises and volunteers
- Operating a warehouse for collecting, recording, sorting and organising distribution to the various centres
- Linking with agencies which are entrusted to provide food vouchers to clients
- Working with schools which recommend families needing BBF support
- Liaising with supermarkets which provide food or financial support

- Developing relationships with churches and schools that commit to providing harvest festival supplies to the foodbank
- Gaining funding through presentations to a range of organisations, making collections, applying for grants and running fund raising events

While day to day operations largely focus on treating the symptoms of poverty, it is very clear that without addressing the causes of such poverty, there is little hope of improvement. This is borne out by the increase in client numbers we are experiencing along with many other foodbanks. Therefore, we are keen to develop relationships which have the power to target the levers of poverty.

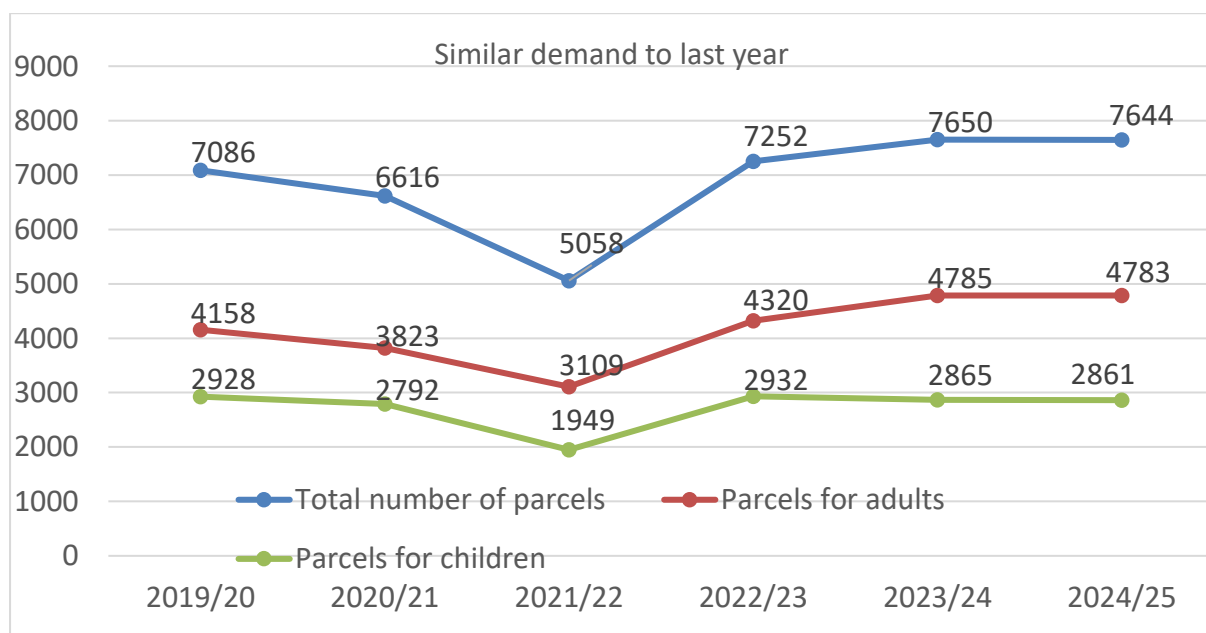
Strategic objectives include:

- Networking with other local foodbanks to establish cooperating actions
- Presenting the issues of food poverty to schools, churches and other organisations
- Developing relationships with corporate partners
- Working with the local Council, when possible, to review relevant information and explore mutual cooperation
- Meeting with Borough MPs to discuss issues relating to our work
- Seeking new openings for wider cooperation
- Deepening our support for clients where we have resources to do so

Challenges, Achievements and Performance

Bromley Borough Foodbank continues to run 6 foodbank sessions a week across the Borough, operating from 4 host churches in Bromley, Penge, St Mary Cray and Orpington.

We distributed over 7500 food parcels between April 2024 and March 2025. This was broadly the same as the previous year but still 8% higher than 5 years ago. Over 2800 of these parcels were for children. It's too early to say that demand in the area has now peaked and we will see what the next year brings. Our clients are vulnerable to changes in income and there is particular concern around any future changes to the social security system, particularly for those with long-term health conditions and disabilities.



The majority of our vouchers are issued to households without children. 60% of the households we see are adults only with 53% being single adults. We have also seen an increase in single parent households, now up to 23% of the households we see. This reflects the challenge of having to cover the entire set of household bills with only one income. 76% of the households we see are solely reliant on social security payments for income, which sadly means they find it very hard to balance income and expenditure.

Amnesty International recently published research to say that low levels of social security is a violation of human rights. They call for measures to be taken to address this including:

- Removal of the two-child benefit limit and the benefit cap
- Ending the 5 weeks wait for initial Universal Credit payments and providing non-repayable grants up front
- Halting the proposed reductions to disability benefits
- Implementing an Essential Guarantee (as called for by Trussell with other charities)

- Scrapping sanctions on Universal Credit
- Reviewing job centre practices

45% of clients coming to the foodbank are struggling with the cost of living, but this proportion is down compared to the previous year. 25% of clients have an ongoing physical or mental health difficulty. We know that Personal Independence Payments (PIP) have a protective effect on household incomes. The government has proposed changes to PIP which suggest that 46% of current PIP recipients will no longer receive it driving more people to foodbanks.

25% of our clients have priority debt. Citizen's Advice tell us that negative budget rates have increased, and even those managing to budget are stretched and unable to cope with additional unexpected expenses. Overall average debt has increased over the last 2 years.

Balancing the books is increasingly challenging for our clients reliant on social security payments. One client, Jim*, receives £299 a month Universal Credit. He then has fixed outgoings of £68 council tax, £74 water rates and £27 for utility monthly standing charges. Leaving £130 per month to cover food, transport, gas and electric usage and other expenses – around £32 per week. Given this impossible situation he chooses to eat, not heating his house, even in winter and doesn't pay all his bills. He is in danger of losing his housing.

Our challenges over the last year have been:

1. Increased repeat visits. We are seeing less households, but those coming to us are having to come more frequently. The number of one-off visits has decreased from 59% of visits to 52%. Those struggling are facing deeper poverty.
2. Funding. Like many charities, we are having to think carefully about both our income and expenditure and have been fortunate to have surpluses from previous years. We now need to look at sustainability and keeping core operations running. We have had to make difficult decisions, for example, reducing the value of supermarket vouchers for clients. We will be working hard to increase our income.
3. Client complexity. Clients coming to foodbanks often face multiple and complex issues. They have been let down by the system and may find it hard to engage with support. The road to improving their situation may well be long and bumpy.

Living in poverty has devastating effects of its own. We see many clients living with situational issues which would start to be alleviated with enough money to live on. Stacey* told us "When you are really trying to survive day by day, worried whether you have enough food to feed your children, and pay your bills, it's likely your mental health will suffer."

Our response to these challenges has been to focus on increasing our wraparound support.

- Our supermarket voucher scheme was extended to all Bromley households this year, providing dignity and choice in food purchases in addition to the 3 days' worth of food received. We distributed 2275 vouchers with a total value of £108,000.

- Our partnership with Citizens Advice Bromley provided in-depth support for 835 households resulting in an incredible income gain of nearly £600,000 back into people's pockets and debt write-off of nearly £500,000. The benefit to individual households can be transformative.
- Our Client Support Worker provided 254 signposting sessions, assisted with PIP applications and appeals and other practical support eg, Freedom Pass applications.

We are hugely grateful for the support we receive from so many people and organisations. Our 190 volunteers contributed nearly 14,000 hours of volunteering. Like most small charities our work totally depends on their enormous contribution. They are all so important but I would like to mention Michael who supported us with 648 hours of his time, Andrew, Bruce, Tony and Luce who gave over 200 hours each and Lee and Bruce who provide vital warehouse cover throughout the year. Our trustees work so hard behind the scenes to make sure we are governed and run well.

We have 88 active referral partners across the borough who do a fantastic job in supporting those in our community, thank you to them all especially Citizens Advice Bromley, Community Fridge at Unity Church, Bromley Homeless, Clarion Housing, Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid, Bromley Drug and Alcohol Service, our NHS partners (GPs and mental health services), Bromley Children's Project, Mind and Stonewall.

We would also like to thank our super supporters, all the individuals, churches, companies, schools and community groups across Bromley who collect stock and fundraise for us. We're honoured to be a part of the fantastic and generous Bromley community.

Our local supermarkets are brilliant partners, hosting collection bins and allowing us to hold food drives at their store. Thank you to Tesco, Sainsburys, Morrisons, Waitrose and Lidl. We are also grateful to work with charities who help keep us stocked – The Hygiene Bank and Sheffield S6 foodbank.

Thanks to our great corporate partners who have volunteered their time, collected stock and generously given us gifts in kind – in particular Wasserman Live, Bank of America, Neilcott Construction and Baxter & Co.

Our staff team work tirelessly behind the scenes to keep everything running, often taking on additional challenges outside their role to keep the foodbank running. We sadly said goodbye to Claire and Gwen this year, both such devoted members of the team who will be sorely missed, thank you both for all of your work.

We are proud to be part of the Trussell Network of food banks, and in particular the campaigning work fighting for a better deal for our clients. We appreciate the support and solidarity of the other Trussell foodbanks in our area, as well as our Area Manager, Ellie.

Public benefit

As a charity for the relief and prevention of poverty, BBF only needs to satisfy the “benefit” requirement of charity law; the “public” aspect then being automatically satisfied provided benefits are identifiable.

The Borough of Bromley is relatively wealthy; however, there still exists a significant number of people and families within the Borough who are in need of emergency supplies of food and other essential items. Analysis shows that the main causes of this are low income, benefit changes, debt, no recourse to public funds and sickness. Much of this situation could be alleviated if national governments and local councils saw this as a priority and responded appropriately. Without foodbanks such as BBF there would be no help for those finding themselves in food poverty, a direct consequence of financial poverty.

The BBF centres are set up to provide a whole range of food items and other supplies that are carefully packaged into appropriate parcels. There are standards that specify the best mix of foods to provide nutritious meals for individuals and families of different sizes. These take account of dietary needs as well as ages and number of children. In addition, various household goods are provided where needed to help with hygiene.

All but a small proportion of the items distributed by BBF are donated by a wide range of individuals and organisations around the Borough. These donors and others often also make financial gifts to ensure BBF is financially secure. In addition, various grants are available from grant organisations or others, e.g., supermarkets.

Provisions are only given out on the basis of foodbank vouchers which, in order to provide the most appropriate help, are obtained from local agencies. If the agent feels someone is struggling to put food on the table due to financial hardship, they will issue them with a foodbank voucher. The local agency can also provide long-term support if needed to help address some of the issues behind the reasons for the crisis.

BBF works with a number of different agencies, such as Citizens Advice, children’s centres, housing associations, schools, social services, Hestia, health visitors and many others. They help identify the cause of the crisis, offering practical guidance and allow BBF to prepare suitable emergency food for the right number of people.

If we receive fresh fruit or vegetables, which we are unable to store, we can pass these items onto other food agencies.

From this, it is clear that the BBF is providing extremely valuable benefits.

Structure, Governance and Management

Bromley Borough Foodbank is governed by our Constitution and an agreed governance document and overseen by 5 Trustees. It is part of a nationwide franchise network of foodbanks operating under the umbrella of the Trussell Trust.

There are 4 distribution centres operating within the Borough and run by the BBF:

Central Orpington

Unit 7-9
Walnuts Shopping Centre
Orpington High Street
Orpington
BR6 0TW

Penge

The Salvation Army
172-176 Maple Road
London
SE20 8JB

Central Bromley

United Reformed Church
Widmore Road
Bromley
BR1 1RY

Orpington

Oak Community Church
345 Chipperfield Road
St Paul's Cray
BR5 2LJ

All these facilities are offered to BBF cost free except for a contribution to heating costs during the winter months.

In addition, a warehouse is operated from premises in Ashgrove Industrial Estate, Bromley, which is leased to us. It is used to collect donated goods that are then weighed, recorded and stored. This warehouse distributes items to the 4 distribution centres and is a key part of our operations. To facilitate this, we run a delivery van driven by volunteers.

We also have access to the basement of the old Orpington Library, which is used for storing long dated stock.

BBF operates with a salaried Foodbank Manager, Warehouse & Logistics Coordinator, Community Mobilisation Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator and 2 Admin Assistants. Some of these roles are part time. In addition, there are over 180 volunteers who run the various distribution centres, work within the warehouse and provide specialist support in various aspects of our operations.

Trustees' Details

Mr Simon Lees – chair

Mr Stephen Walsh – secretary

Mr Duncan Aitkins

Mrs Jasmin Sen

Mrs Basak Aziz

New Trustees are provided with information about UK foodbanks and the Trussell Trust that supports BBF and introduced to the various BBF distribution centres and warehouse. They are made aware of any legislation that is relevant to charities and foodbanks, including training where appropriate, and of our governance framework, including the use of Trustee sub-committees. Trussell trust provides a wide range of documentation relevant to trustees' responsibilities.

To assist the Trustees in their role, we operate a Trustee Sub-Committee structure which expedites decision making and provides a clear framework in which the Foodbank Manager can work. These cover matters relating to People, Operations, HSE & Risk, Finance & Major Assets, each of which is headed by a trustee and normally include the Foodbank manager plus others as appropriate.

The Trustee Board meets formally every 2 months, with ad hoc meetings in between when necessary.

No trustee has received any remuneration or benefit from their position within the charity.

Risk management statement

We recognise that risk management is an important element of good management practice and we encourage an open and receptive approach to identifying, discussing and addressing risks. We accept that risk can never be fully eliminated but the scale of most risks can be reduced by appropriate action and where residual exposure exists, ways to mitigate can often be identified.

We are particularly conscious that our premises are run mostly by a wide range of volunteers, some of whom may only be with us for a short time, and this can bring its own level of risk for older helpers or less experienced members. In addition, the clients who visit our distribution centres are often anxious and stressed, which can produce situations where risks are possible for them and us. Regular conversations among the Centre Coordinators and the Foodbank Manager highlight any specific actions that are needed and any particular issues are reported to the Trustee Board.

We have developed risk assessment processes and actions are taken when risk reviews indicate it is necessary. In some cases, we have found it necessary to bring in consultants to help us update our processes and we continue to work through various action plans.

Our HSE & Risk Sub-Committee is responsible for reviewing the risk register, with high-risk items considered by the Trustee Board on a regular basis.

Financial Review

Bromley Borough Foodbank, as with all other organisations, needs money to carry out its purpose and maintain its operations. BBF does not have the facility to borrow funds so it can only spend what it has available in the bank. It's about surpluses and deficits rather than profits and losses. Additionally, being a charity, we are obliged to only spend funds on activities which are in line with our purpose and the Trustees must seek the best deal for all expenditure.

Last year I reported that 2023/24 had been the first time our reserves had decreased since we were established in 2016. Last year 2024/25 also saw our bank balance dropping.

We knew that the Covid effect of substantial donations being made to foodbanks would not last, with many of the major donations received during that period being one-offs. At one stage we hit a bank balance of £703,000 which enabled us to take on more client driven activities and assured our ability to cover the costs of leasing and running our warehouse.

While the very generous donation regime of the pandemic period has abated somewhat, the Borough residents remain very supportive of the work of BBF. Excluding Trussell Trust grants, which have totalled some £520,000 over a 9-year period, giving by individuals continues to account for over 80% of funds raised, excluding grants. In addition, it's so encouraging and we are very grateful for the engagement of a number of local businesses, demonstrating the raised profile of BBF through the activities of our community mobilisation.

It is true to say that without the boost we received over the 2020/23 period we would be a much smaller organisation than we are today and we would not be supporting our clients in such a deep way. Feedback from clients, referral partners, staff, volunteers, Councillors and MPs confirms that without the strength and reach of BBF, the Borough would be a very much poorer place. So, I firmly believe we have the best organisation to meet current demand and we want keep it this way.

So, what do we finance and why.

We have 4 centres which cover all weekdays, these facilities, all church premises, are provided free of charge. We receive large quantities of stock from supermarkets, churches, schools, individuals etc, cooperate with other foodbanks and all the complexities that go with running a charity.

It would be impossible for us to operate without a warehouse. It is the hub of the logistics of our operations and handles some 100 tonnes each year. To lease the premises, cover all the costs of the manager and running the delivery vehicle; costs some £82,000 per year.

As we have been forced to take on more activities, with significant increases in the number of clients we support and having to dig deeper into the issues they face, we have developed a strong and extremely professional team of staff. Providing our prime objective to help and support the many clients who come to us, managing the complexities of our operations, organising and looking after our large volunteer base and mobilising the community to act, has meant we now have the equivalent of 5 ½ fulltime staff. The employment cost for this team is some £174,000 per year.

For the last 2 years we have contracted with the local Citizen Advice Bureau for them to run a small team of experienced practitioners to be the main front to assess, signpost and issue vouchers to use at our centres. This costs something over £90,000 per year.

Finally, there is the cost of the voucher scheme which cost over £100,000 for the year.

All this means our costs last year amounted to about £473,000. This is a considerable spend, unimaginable a few years ago, and given that we are only one of a number of food charities operating in the Borough, clearly demonstrates the scale of the problem of food poverty around us.

And how on earth do we finance all this?

Well, we received some £108,900 from regular giving by individuals with a further £96,000 more ad hoc. Churches contributed £9,500 and other organisations £18,400. Lastly, we received, mainly from Trussell Trust, grants amounting to £121,400.

We have seen our funds reduce over the last 2 years, in common with many other organisations like BBF, but we are very committed to maintaining all our activities which means we need to strengthen our income stream. And this points to a need for a much-raised profile on proactive fundraising.

We aim to widen our regular donation pool. It is fortunate that there are so many generous people and organisations in the Borough with a heart for supporting our kind of activity.

In conclusion, everyone is feeling poorer at the moment with inflation and the knock on's from the 2024 budget, which is why we are so very grateful for all the financial support we have received. However, as with many other charities, we are being squeezed by income stagnation and costs increases. Reserves can take us so far but what we need is to reignite donations. The challenge is there, we are determined to rise to it.

Statement of Financial Activities

For the period from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

		Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Last year £
Income from					
<i>Charitable activities</i>					
Donations	1	204,683	0	204,683	239,827
Church funding	2	9,463	0	9,463	10,306
Grants	3	22,783	98,615	121,398	77,535
Fund raising		0	0	0	2,149
Interest	4	21,723	0	21,723	5,183
Sub total		258,652	98,615	357,267	335,000
Expenditure on					
<i>Charitable activities</i>					
Staff	5	135,474	52,785	188,259	164,375
CAB contract	6	72,609	24,501	97,110	92,981
Property		31,856	556	32,412	32,558
Voucher scheme	7	109,000		109,000	70,000
Sundry activities		45,342	960	46,302	47,822
Sub total		394,281	78,802	473,083	407,736
Net income/ (expenditure)					
		-135,629	19,813	-115,816	-72,736

Reconciliation of funds

Total funds brought forward	597,763	32,608	630,371	703,107
Total funds carried forward	462,134	52,421	514,555	630,371

Balance Sheet

End March 2025

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Last year
Current Assets				
Banks:				
NatWest current	0	45,394	45,394	33,985
NatWest saving	4,379	112	4,491	61,207
Flagstone Group	457,755	6,915	464,670	535,179
Net assets	462,134	52,421	514,555	630,371

Funds

Unrestricted funds		469,049	597,763
Restricted funds		45,506	32,608
		514,555	630,371

* Warehouse lease contract until 15th July 2031 with break clause 15th July 2026

* No guarantees have been given whereby any potential liability is outstanding

* There are no debts outstanding secured by an express charge on assets

Signed on behalf of
the trustees

Signature

Date of
approval

Simon Lees



22nd May 2025

Accounting Policies

- a) Basis of preparation. The accounts have been prepared on an accrual basis.
- b) Grants receivable. Grant monies are only included once the funds have been received. Where grants given are linked to specific activities or expenditure, they are accounted for as Restricted Funds.
- c) Fixed assets. There are no significant fixed assets.
- d) Reserves targets. See section on Reserves Policy.

Notes to the Accounts

1. Although donations were down by some £35,000 from the previous year, they were still at a very good level with particular contributions from partner companies. Individual donors number about 300 per month.
2. Church support by donating food items, space when needed and opportunities for community mobilisation, as well as funding, remains an important source of encouragement.
3. A number of grants were received during the year, most being for supporting specific staff costs, and where appropriate these are shown as restricted. Through Trussell Trust we received £42,627 as a top up of the funding for our OLM employee, £18,816 for our new Client Support Worker and £37,172 as a final payment for our CAB contract.
4. A large portion of our funds are invested through the Flagstone Group and this has been a good year with interest earned of £21,723.
5. Staff costs are higher, as we developed our employed team in response to a significant increase in our client base and the level of help needed. All staff are offered medical insurance cover and all are part of the Government Auto-enrolment Pension scheme.
6. The contract with the Citizens Advice Bureau provides a significant skilled resource which we cannot cover ourselves.

7. The Voucher Scheme continues to prove very popular among clients as it gives them more choice of food available to them and a more positive experience of seeking help.

Benefits not included in the financial report.

-Well over 190 volunteers undertook some 14,000 hours of unpaid work providing a benefit of at least £200,000.

-Various premises were again provided free of charge to be used as distribution centres and this is a further benefit of at least £15,000.

-Generally, all items given out to clients are donated free to the Foodbank, although occasionally emergency purchases are undertaken. During the year, approximately 100,000Kgs of food were distributed with an assumed value of £250,000.

Restricted funds - £

	Opening	Incoming	Outgoing	Closing
TT CAB support	0	37,172	24,501	12,671
Client Support Officer	0	18,816	11,285	7,531
Warehouse lease	556	0	556	0
TT Winter payment	4,020	0	960	3,060
TT OLM funding	28,032	42,627	41,500	29,159

Reserves Policy

The Charity Commission expects trustees to decide, publish, implement and monitor their charity's reserves policy so that they can comply with their legal duties to:

- *act in the interests of their charity and its beneficiaries*
- *protect and safeguard the assets of their charity*
- *act with reasonable care and skill*
- *ensure their charity is accountable*

In practice, this means that trustees should:

- *develop a reserves policy that:*
 - *fully justifies and clearly explains keeping or not keeping reserves*
 - *identifies and plans for the maintenance of essential services for beneficiaries*
 - *reflects the risks of unplanned closure associated with the charity's business model, spending commitments, potential liabilities and financial forecasts*
 - *helps to address the risks of unplanned closure on their beneficiaries (in particular, vulnerable beneficiaries), staff and volunteers*
- *publish the reserves policy (even if not required to by law) and ensure it is tailored to the charity's circumstances. It should explain to funders, beneficiaries, the public and the Commission exactly what reserves are kept (or not kept) for and when they are to be used*
- *make sure that their reserves policy is put in place and operated*
- *regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the policy in the light of the changing funding and financial climate and other risks*

The Commission does not suggest what level of reserves should be held, rather indicating that it is for the Trustees to justify how the reserves have been set.

Reserves are there to be used in the event of either; a significant drop in income leading to an unsustainable funds flow or some unplanned large expenditure which drains our finance position.

In setting a reserves level for Bromley Borough Foodbank, there are a number of factors to be considered in order to provide the Trustees with the information needed to address the

issues suggested by the Charity Commission. These factors have a mix of hard and soft elements:

- Staff contracts
- The warehouse lease agreement
- The CAB contract
- Other possible contracts

Staff contracts involve a commitment to the employees which could be effectively managed within a reasonable timescale. This timescale has been set as 3 months and this implies a payroll cost reserve of £50,000.

The **warehouse** is leased for 10 years from 2021 with a rent review clause in mid-2026. The agreed position to manage this is to set a reserve level equal to the lease commitments for the time left on the agreement. This would suggest a current level of £150,000

The contract with **CAB** is renegotiated each calendar year so the current commitment is £70,000

Other contracts include utilities so this is covered by a reserve of some £5,000

Taking all this into account, we have decided to set a BBF Reserves Level at 31st March 2025 of £275,000.

As the main aim of the charity is to use its funds for the benefit of the those in food poverty, it does not intend to keep reserves beyond those prudently required to meet fluctuations in the timing of receipts and expenditures, to the ensure that operations are not disrupted by unexpected events and to enable necessary capital and other expenditures to be made when required.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
BROMLEY BOROUGH FOODBANK**

I report on the accounts of the Bromley Borough Foodbank for the year ended 31st March 2025.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43 (2) of the Charities Act (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts (under section 43 (3) (a) of the 1993 Act);
- To follow procedure laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 43 (7) (b) of the 1993 Act); and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

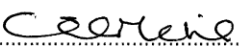
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Act, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act

have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: 
Name: Catherine Emma Gower Melia
(Non-serving Elder), The Temple United Reformed Church,
High Street, St Mary Cray,
Kent, BR5 4AX

Address: 34 Lee Church Street
Lewisham
London SE13 5SF

Date: 13th May 2025

BROMLEY BOROUGH FOODBANK

England & Wales - Charity number 1167961

Accounts



Report and Accounts of Bromley Borough Foodbank

For the period
1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

*"a community led charity, helping
local people to get back on their feet
and improve their financial
independence"*

c/o Orpington Baptist Church
Station Road
Orpington
Kent
BR6 0RZ

www.bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk

Contents

	Page
Chair of Trustees' Statement	3
Objectives and Activities	5
Challenges, Achievements & Performance	7
Public benefit	10
Structure, Governance, Management	11
Trustees' details	12
Risk Management	13
Financial Review	14
Receipts and Payments statement	15
Accounting Policy & Notes to accounts	16
Reserve Policy	18
Independent examiner's report	20

Chair of Trustees' Statement

The Board of Trustees are clear that our first priority must be to our staff and volunteers, as if we get that right, our support and service to our clients will flow naturally. Conversely, unhappy and demotivated teams have no chance of success.

Therefore, my report focuses on our people.

In September, our COO, Amanda Stone, decided it was time to move on. Amanda had been with us for 3 ½ years, during a large part of which we were either in or experiencing the aftermath of the pandemic. A difficult time with much stress and long working hours. Amanda led BBF through this with commitment and dedication, having to make quick and sometimes difficult decisions, and we are extremely grateful for her time with us.

We then had the task of recruiting a new Foodbank Manager. We were blessed with a number of really good candidates but Kate, who joined us at the beginning of 2024, stood out as very much the best person for the job. Her experience, abilities and great interpersonal skills have already had a very positive impact on our teams and operations. We certainly look forward to working with her as we move forward.

Then in October 2023 we recruited Ray as Community Mobilisation Coordinator, part of a Trussell Trust programme and funded by them. This role is to take on working across the Borough Communities and beyond to raise awareness of the issues of poverty and mobilise people to do something about it. Ray's enthusiasm and energy are infectious, which is what is needed to create upward pressure on governing bodies.

Finally in terms of departures and arrivals, Dora who was our Operations Coordinator, left at the end of 2023. Dora had brought to BBF discipline and rigour which enabled us to ensure our processes are fit for purpose. Her work was particularly important during a time when we were without a warehouse manager and laid the foundation for setting up the warehouse operations.

We have 2 staff working as warehouse and supply logistic coordinators, Steven & Claire, both of whom do a terrific job of making sure the warehouse runs smoothly, taking action when stocks are not sufficient and delivering to the various centres. We could not continue our work without a well-run warehouse. It is also the facility that most corporate volunteers experience.

Then Gwen & Gabby hold the posts of Admin Assistants. Not sure their title really sums up their roles as in addition to their administrative responsibilities they are a critical link to CAB and ensure clients are properly served. We want all clients to be able to access the right kind of help they need. Gwen and Gabby not only respond to requests but also act in a proactive way; an important point.

Jen, as our Volunteers Coordinator, holds together our host of volunteers, over 150. Without them we could not operate and Jen has the role of recruiting, training, supporting and generally looking after them. She is always looking for ways to recognise the work of our volunteers.

Jen has managed to bring in a wide range of talent to the volunteer pool including a number who have specialist skills in specific areas of activity. We greatly value the help of these specialist volunteers in areas such as safeguarding & data privacy, as they help us ensure we are taking these issues seriously enough.

And then the volunteers, many of whom work directly with our clients and have to deal with the difficult stories they hear. Others work remotely or at the warehouse. I know that all of them are totally committed to work of BBF. It is always a delight to meet with volunteers as they are enthusiastic and very caring. They provide many '000s of hours of support. We held a buffet & dance in January as a thank you to them and I want to offer my thanks now.

Of course, people also includes all those clients we see and while they are not part of our organisation, we need to treat them with the consideration they deserve. They do not choose to be in food poverty and I know they can feel very embarrassed to have to rely on charity. We are constantly seeking ways to make their contact with us as pleasant and productive as possible.

So, I am proud of our staff and volunteers, and as trustees we will do what we can to support and develop them so they can continue to enjoy their jobs and have fun. Work without fun is barren.

However, we still need to ask the question, "why is our role is still necessary and how will this change?" It will happen when society, and that includes all of us, refuses to accept that a nation such as the UK still tolerates having people in a state of poverty.

Together we can create a future where nobody goes hungry because nobody will allow it.

Simon Lees

Chair of Trustees

Objectives and Activities

Bromley Borough Foodbank (BBF) is formed and shaped by Christian principles, in response to Jesus' command to "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Math 22:39), and is linked to many churches in the Borough. It is a member of the Trussell Trust (TT) franchise that has as its vision "a UK without the need for foodbanks", thus ending hunger resulting from poverty. Underpinning this vision is the BBF objective, to relieve hardship amongst people within the Borough of Bromley, in particular, but not exclusively:

- a) Providing emergency food and essential toiletries to individuals and families in need;
- b) Using such other means including the provision of support or signposting to relevant information and other advisory services supported by the churches in the Borough.

The clear aim of b) is to move our clients away from the need to use the services of a foodbank. We see this as fundamental to all we do.

The charity's affiliation to TT provides it with many tools, supply sources and in addition, TT has developed strategic links to a variety of organisations that enables a wide range of grants to be made available. Critically, anonymous client information is sent to TT so it can build a database across the UK in order to inform and challenge Government policy.

Our strategic objectives continue to develop as necessitated by changes in client conditions or to exploit new opportunities that present themselves. A particular growing aspect of the work of TT and its connected organisations is to work across different organisation in order to mobilise communities to become more involved in the elimination of food poverty.

We see this as a key aspect of our work as it is really important for people to understand why food poverty exists and how it might be eliminated. While government and council action is essential, it needs upward pressure to make this happen. TT is providing funding for this work.

The main operating activities of BBF include:

- Ensuring supplies given out are appropriate to the people receiving them
- Signposting clients to appropriate professional help agencies
- Helping clients to navigate benefit applications and follow professional advice
- Running a number of distribution centres which are opened at different times during the week depending on the availability of the premises and volunteers
- Operating a warehouse for collecting, recording, sorting and organising distribution to the various centres
- Linking with agencies which are entrusted to provide food vouchers to clients
- Working with schools which recommend families needing BBF support

- Liaising with supermarkets which provide food or financial support
- Developing relationships with churches and schools that commit to providing harvest festival supplies to the foodbank
- Gaining funding through presentations to a range of organisations, making collections, applying for grants and running fund raising events

While day to day operations largely focus on treating the symptoms of poverty, it is very clear that without addressing the causes of such poverty, there is little hope of improvement. This is borne out by the increase in client numbers we are experiencing along with many other foodbanks. Therefore, we are keen to develop relationships which have the power to target the levers of poverty.

Strategic objectives include:

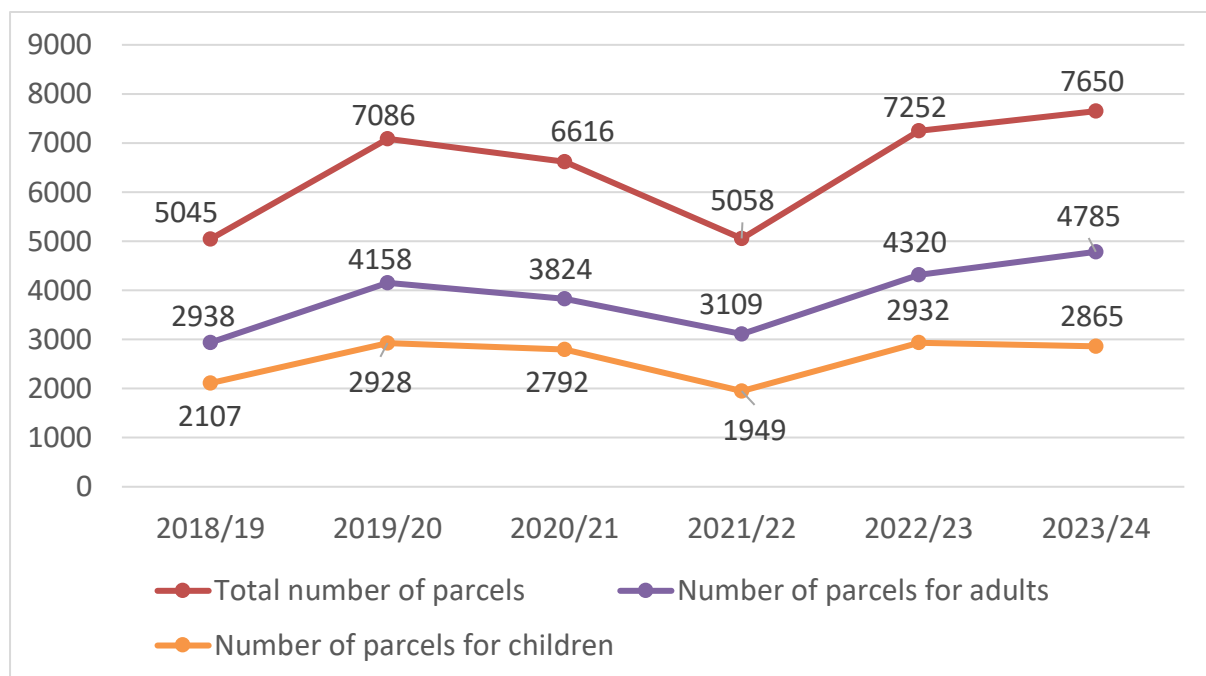
- Networking with other local foodbanks to establish cooperating actions
- Presenting the issues of food poverty to schools, churches and other organisations
- Developing relationships with corporate partners
- Working with the local Council, when possible, to review relevant information and explore mutual cooperation
- Meeting with Borough MPs to discuss issues relating to our work
- Seeking new openings for wider cooperation
- Deepening our support for clients by providing more targeted staffing at our centres

Challenges, Achievements and Performance

Bromley Borough Foodbank runs 6 food distribution sessions from our 4 centres every week. Our centres are based in St Paul's Cray, Orpington, Bromley and Penge.

Our figures tell a tough story, one that is reflected across the UK, that the Trussell Trust network have distributed more than 3.1 million food parcels in the last year. We know that there are also thousands of independent food banks supporting people in their communities, including many in Bromley Borough.

Bromley is an affluent borough with the 2nd lowest rate of deprivation in London. This means we are lucky to receive fantastic support from those who are able to donate stock and raise money for us. However, 15% of residents live in poverty and there are pockets of huge need, particularly in the Cray Valley, Penge and north Bromley. Needs pop up everywhere and in an affluent borough it is easy to overlook.



2023 – 2024 has been our busiest ever period at Bromley Borough Foodbank, as the team have distributed over 7500 food parcels. Each food parcel represents 7 days' worth of food, which represents around 150 years of food, a staggering amount.

This is the most parcels that Bromley Borough Foodbank has ever distributed and represents a 5% increase from the same period last year (2022/23). This is over 50% higher than five years ago. Over 2800 of these parcels were for children.

The levels of need seen this year are part of a longer-term trend which pre-dates the cost-of-living crisis, and even the COVID-19 pandemic. We are also recognising that with the removal of the cost-of-living payments, people claiming Universal Credit will actually be worse off this year, despite the recent benefit uprating. A client told us that he now receives an extra £20 per month in benefits but with the rise in bills and food prices he is still behind.

We distributed 112 tonnes of stock in the past year; 57% of this is donated through supermarket collection points and food drives in our supermarkets, 13% comes from local churches, both regular and harvest donations and 10% comes from local schools, particularly through generous harvest giving. We are also immensely grateful to be supported by other groups, corporates, individuals and other local charities. This year, for the first time, we have had to purchase stock to make up the donation shortfall, which amounted to 2 tonnes - a trend we expect to continue.

The demographics of those we support in Bromley are unique to our area. Two thirds of our support last year (63%) was for adult only households. Over half of our parcels (53%) went to single adult households, a further 24% to single parent households. Households managing on one adult income find making ends meet more challenging. Since 2018/19 the number of parcels for single adults has almost doubled (91% increase) compared to a 44% increase for families with children. 60% of our clients only receive one parcel from us so of the 7800 parcels distributed this represents some 4500 unique individuals. Given that the population of the London Borough of Bromley is 330,000, this represents a small proportion, which means solutions to this issue should be achievable.

In the last year just 3% of parcels were provided to people aged 65+ in Bromley despite them accounting for 18% of the Bromley population. However, poverty rates amongst pensioners have started to grow in recent years, and there is a concerning emerging trend of pension age households needing to turn to foodbanks. Between 2018/19 and 2023/24 food bank support for these households has more than tripled (an increase of 232%), compared to a 49% rise amongst households without someone of pension age. We have also seen increasing numbers of working households requiring support, in the last year this accounted for more than 1100 of our parcels.

We have 139 referral partners of which 71 were active in referring to us last year. Our referrals come from Bromley Citizens Advice, housing associations, the Trussell Trust Help through Hardship phone line, Bromley Homeless, other food projects around the borough, specialist projects (such as drug and alcohol support and domestic violence), NHS services such as mental health support, GPs and health visitors and schools. Referrals for Bromley Job Centre stopped in late 2023 as the guidance for job coaches changed and they were no longer allowed to refer. Our partnership with Bromley CAB means that those without other means of referral can come directly to us, either by phone, email or directly to the centre – they are then sent through to Bromley CAB for triage and the issuing of a food voucher.

Three significant cost-of-living payments in the last year all had a significant but short-term impact on the need for food banks. We saw a 16% decrease in usage in the weeks following the Spring payment, 10% decrease in usage after the Autumn payment and 47% decrease after the Winter payment. However, in the weeks following this, usage gradually crept back up to previous levels. The fact that these periods of respite were short-lived shows that one-off payments are unable to make a lasting difference when people's regular income (from social security and work) is just too low to enable people to afford the essentials.

Our challenge this year was to respond to both increasing need and deepening hardship. In addition, we faced unprecedented stock challenges with stock donation volumes 7% down on previous years and the volume of stock in our warehouse 30% less than 2022/23. We are facing a change to our operations with the acceptance that purchase of stock will be a regular feature going forwards. As well as supporting more people, those we are supporting are facing deepening hardship and distress, with deep concern for the depth of hardship experienced – often a combination of lack of food, fuel and spiralling debt.

40% of users are coming back for multiple visits, a figure that is creeping up each year. 66% of our clients are solely reliant of social security payments, 49% are struggling with the cost of living, 23% have priority debt and 20% have ongoing health conditions. Many clients are in temporary housing, or have housing in poor repair, others are moved out of the area and away from support networks.

We continue to strive to improve the wraparound support we can offer clients. Our partnership with Bromley Citizen's Advice has supported 878 households in the past year. This has resulted in income gain of nearly £900,000 and debt write off of nearly £13,000. We have also continued our supermarket voucher scheme, offering households of 2 people or more the option of emergency food alongside a voucher for them to purchase their own choice of food. This enables not only more dignity and choice in the process but allows households to access fruit and vegetables, fresh and frozen items which supplement our store cupboard staples. This year, 969 households have received £66,408 of supermarket vouchers, generously funded by our corporate partners and individual donors. We are also blessed with a network of fantastic third sector organisation in Bromley and we plan to increase partnership working to bring more benefit to our clients.

We are hugely thankful to our 189 current volunteers who between them have contributed over 15,000 hours of labour this year. Our supporters have given us 105 tonnes of stock and generous financial donations which means we have been able to keep the foodbank running and offer supermarket vouchers to larger households. Our corporate partners have fundraised, donated stock and volunteered their time. A final thanks to a wonderful host of churches who let us use their space to support the local community, thank you to the Salvation Army in Penge, United Reform Church in Bromley, Oak Community Church in St Paul's Cray and Hope Church in Orpington.

Public benefit

As a charity for the relief and prevention of poverty, BBF only needs to satisfy the “benefit” requirement of charity law; the “public” aspect then being automatically satisfied provided benefits are identifiable.

The Borough of Bromley is relatively wealthy; however, there still exists a significant number of people and families within the Borough who are in need of emergency supplies of food and other essential items. Analysis shows that the main causes of this are low income, benefit changes, debt, no recourse to public funds and sickness. Much of this situation could be alleviated if national governments and local councils saw this as a priority and responded appropriately. Without foodbanks such as BBF there would be no help for those finding themselves in food poverty, a direct consequence of financial poverty.

The BBF centres are set up to provide a whole range of food items and other supplies that are carefully packaged into appropriate parcels. There are standards that specify the best mix of foods to provide nutritious meals for individuals and families of different sizes. These take account of dietary needs as well as ages and number of children. In addition, various household goods are provided where needed to help with hygiene.

All but a small proportion of the items distributed by BBF are donated by a wide range of individuals and organisations around the Borough. These donors and others often also make financial gifts to ensure BBF is financially secure. In addition, various grants are available from grant organisations or others, e.g., supermarkets.

Provisions are only given out on the basis of foodbank vouchers which, in order to provide the most appropriate help, are obtained from local agencies. If the agent feels someone is struggling to put food on the table due to financial hardship, they will issue them with a foodbank voucher. The local agency can also provide long-term support if needed to help address some of the issues behind the reasons for the crisis.

BBF works with a number of different agencies, such as Citizens Advice, children’s centres, housing associations, schools, social services, Hestia, health visitors and many others. They help identify the cause of the crisis, offering practical guidance and allow BBF to prepare suitable emergency food for the right number of people.

If we receive fresh fruit or vegetables, which we are unable to store, we can pass these items onto other food agencies.

From this, it is clear that the BBF is providing extremely valuable benefits.

Structure, Governance and Management

Bromley Borough Foodbank is governed by our Constitution and an agreed governance document and overseen by 5 Trustees. It is part of a nationwide franchise network of foodbanks operating under the umbrella of the Trussell Trust.

There are 4 distribution centres operating within the Borough and run by the BBF:

Central Orpington

Unit 7-9
Walnuts Shopping Centre
Orpington High Street
Orpington
BR6 0TW

Penge

The Salvation Army
172-176 Maple Road
London
SE20 8JB

Central Bromley

United Reformed Church
Widmore Road
Bromley
BR1 1RY

Orpington

Oak Community Church
345 Chipperfield Road
St Paul's Cray
BR5 2LJ

All these facilities are offered to BBF cost free except for a contribution to heating costs during the winter months.

In addition, a warehouse is operated from premises in Ashgrove Industrial Estate, Bromley, which is leased to us. It is used to collect donated goods that are then weighed, recorded and stored. This warehouse distributes items to the 4 distribution centres and is a key part of our operations. To facilitate this, we run a delivery van.

We also have access to the basement of the old Orpington Library, which is used for storing long dated stock.

BBF operates with a salaried Foodbank Manager, 2 Warehouse Coordinators, Community Mobilisation Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator and 2 Admin Assistants. Some of these roles are part time. In addition, there are over 150 volunteers who run the various distribution centres, work within the warehouse and provide specialist support in various aspects of our operations.

To assist the Trustees in their role, we operate a Trustee Sub-Committee structure which expedites decision making and provides a clear framework in which the Foodbank Manager can work.

Trustees' Details

Mr Simon Lees – chair

Mr Stephen Walsh – secretary

Mr Duncan Aitkins

Mrs Jasmin Sen

Mrs Basak Aziz

New Trustees are provided with information about UK foodbanks and the Trussell Trust that supports BBF and introduced to the various BBF distribution centres and warehouse. They are made aware of any legislation that is relevant to charities and foodbanks, including training where appropriate, and of our governance framework, including the use of Trustee sub-committees. Trussell trust provides a wide range of documentation relevant to trustees' responsibilities.

No trustee has received any remuneration or benefit from their position within the charity.

The Trustee Board meets formally every 2 months, with ad hoc meetings in between if necessary.

Risk management statement

We recognise that risk management is an important element of good management practice and we encourage an open and receptive approach to identifying, discussing and addressing risks. We accept that risk can never be fully eliminated but the scale of most risks can be reduced by appropriate action and where residual exposure exists, ways to mitigate can often be identified.

We are particularly conscious that our premises are run mostly by a wide range of volunteers, some of whom may only be with us for a short time, and this can bring its own level of risk for older helpers or less experienced members. In addition, the clients who visit our distribution centres are often anxious and stressed, which can produce situations where risks are possible for them and us. Regular conversations among the Centre Coordinators and the Foodbank Manager highlight any specific actions that are needed and any particular issues are reported to the Trustee Board.

We have developed risk assessment processes and actions are taken when risk reviews indicate it is necessary. In some cases, we have found it necessary to bring in consultants to help us update our processes and we continue to work through various action plans.

Our Health & Safety Sub-Committee is responsible for reviewing the risk register, with high-risk items considered by the Trustee Board on a regular basis.

Financial Review

This year has continued to demonstrate the firm commitment of the public in the Borough of Bromley to our cause. Our spend was up on the previous year and we had anticipated a bigger drop in funds than actually happened. However, a number of significant donations from companies and individuals gave us an unexpected boost so that funds at the end of the financial year stood at some £630,000.

We have had a number of staff changes and we are continuing with our partnership with CAB and issuing supermarket vouchers to clients in lieu of food. We have also, for the first time in our operations, had to spend a considerable amount of money on buying in food as donations have not been meeting demand. Something that we fear will continue through this year as people find it more difficult to afford buying extras to donate to us.

All this resulted in our expenditure reaching some £407,000, around £83,000 of which was covered by restricted grant funding. There may be the opportunity to seek further grants if needed in the future.

On the income side, our numbers were down to £335,000. This included £31,000 as restricted grant fund to cover some of our staff costs. Most other categories were down from last year but we did earn interest of over £5,000 on our investment portfolio.

We ended with a deficit of around £72,000, the first time we have seen a deficit in a year since we started BBF in 2016. As predicted, after a good run of very significant donations driven mostly by the period during and post pandemic, we are seeing a more sustainable level of giving which we will manage as appropriate.

It is very clear that the pandemic was a pivotal moment for our finances, and for a number of foodbanks, and acted as a springboard for us. Without this big increase, it is most likely we would have been unable to continue, as we would have been without a warehouse and totally understaffed to cope with the way the food poverty situation has worsened.

It is important to consider our funds position projection into the future. We have a number of new plans and while we will seek grant income from Trussell Trust to cover some of these developments, we do expect our funds to continue to reduce over the next years. It is only because we were able to strengthen our funds position over the last 3 years that we can now embark on new exciting developments. We will do this carefully to ensure we do not overstretch ourselves, but conscious that we want the money people donate to us to be used in a timely manner.

With all this in mind, we could see our funds down below £500,000 by the end of 2024, although this is assuming only a relatively conservative view of income, and we will look to apply for grants to cover new initiatives.

Receipts and Payments Accounts

For the period from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

	note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Last year £
Receipts					
Donations	1	215,692	0	215,692	256,202
Gift Aid	2	24,135	0	24,135	32,888
Church funding	3	10,306	0	10,306	16,164
Grants	4	45,952	31,583	77,535	119,777
Fund raising		2,149	0	2,149	1,674
Interest	5	5,183	0	5,183	68
Sub total		303,417	31,583	335,000	426,773
Payments					
Staff	6	132,915	31,460	164,375	116,601
Vehicle costs		3,877	0	3,877	45,705
Property	7	18,114	14,444	32,558	32,501
CAB secondment	8	63,435	29,546	92,981	36,567
Voucher scheme	9	63,865	6,135	70,000	20,500
Other	10	42,362	1,583	43,945	39,040
Sub total		324,568	83,168	407,736	290,914
Net of receipts/ (payments)		-21,151	-51,585	-72,736	135,859
Opening cash funds		618,914	84,193	703,107	567,248
Closing cash funds		597,763	32,608	630,371	703,107

Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Cash funds

Banks	NatWest current	33,985	
	NatWest saving	61,207	
	Flagstone Group	535,179	spread funds
Total Cash		630,371	

* Warehouse lease contract until 15th July 2031 with break clause 15th July 2026

* No guarantees have been given whereby any potential liability is outstanding

* There are no debts outstanding secured by an express charge on assets

Signed on behalf of
the trustees

Signature

Date of
approval

Mr S Lees



23rd May 2024

Accounting Policies

- a) Basis of preparation. The accounts have been prepared on a Cash Receipts and Payments basis.
- b) Grants receivable. Grant monies are only included once the funds have been received. Where grants given are linked to specific activities or expenditure, they are accounted for as Restricted Funds.
- c) Fixed assets. There are no significant fixed assets.
- d) Reserves targets. See section on Reserves Policy.

Notes to the Accounts

1. Although donations were down by some £40,000 from the previous year, they were still at a very good level with particular contributions from partner companies. Individual donors number about 300 per month.
2. Gift Aid has been claimed for everyone who has confirmed their eligibility for such tax refunds as well as anonymous gifts under the HRMC small gift scheme.
3. Church support by donating food items and funding remains an important underpinning of our activities.
4. A number of restricted grants were received during the year. Through Trussell Trust we received £7,652 as a top up of the funding for our OLM employee, a final payment of £15,000 towards the warehouse lease and £8,931 as support for our Volunteer Coordinator.
5. A large portion of our funds are invested through the Flagstone Group which has generated some £5,000 of interest.
6. Staff cost are higher due to the need to extend our employee base to cope with increasing demand and to develop our community mobilisation presence.
7. Property costs relate mainly to the warehouse lease.
8. Covers the costs of Citizens Advice Bureau secondees & newly appointed Advisors.

9. Full year of the supermarket Voucher Scheme.

10. The main areas of expenditure included in the “other” category are; utilities, fuel & Christmas vouchers, food purchases.

Benefits not included in the financial report.

-Well over 150 volunteers undertook some 16,000 hours of unpaid work providing a benefit of at least £200,000.

-Various premises were again provided free of charge to be used as distribution centres and this is a further benefit of at least £15,000.

-Generally, all items given out to clients are donated free to the Foodbank, although occasionally emergency purchases are undertaken. During the year, 112,000Kgs of food were distributed with an assumed value of £270,000.

Restricted funds - £

	Opening	Incoming	Outgoing	Closing
TT CAB support	29,546	0	29,546	0
TT Volunteers support	8,952	8,931	17,883	0
Warehouse lease	0	15,000	14,444	556
TT Winter payment	4,810	0	790	4,020
Bank of America (vouchers)	6,135	0	6,135	0
TT OLM funding	34,750	7,652	14,370	28,032

Reserves Policy

The Charity Commission expects trustees to decide, publish, implement and monitor their charity's reserves policy so that they can comply with their legal duties to:

- *act in the interests of their charity and its beneficiaries*
- *protect and safeguard the assets of their charity*
- *act with reasonable care and skill*
- *ensure their charity is accountable*

In practice, this means that trustees should:

- *develop a reserves policy that:*
 - *fully justifies and clearly explains keeping or not keeping reserves*
 - *identifies and plans for the maintenance of essential services for beneficiaries*
 - *reflects the risks of unplanned closure associated with the charity's business model, spending commitments, potential liabilities and financial forecasts*
 - *helps to address the risks of unplanned closure on their beneficiaries (in particular, vulnerable beneficiaries), staff and volunteers*
- *publish the reserves policy (even if not required to by law) and ensure it is tailored to the charity's circumstances. It should explain to funders, beneficiaries, the public and the Commission exactly what reserves are kept (or not kept) for and when they are to be used*
- *make sure that their reserves policy is put in place and operated*
- *regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the policy in the light of the changing funding and financial climate and other risks*

The Commission does not suggest what level of reserves should be held, rather indicating that it is for the Trustees to justify how the reserves have been set.

Reserves are there to be used in the event of either; a significant drop in income leading to an unsustainable funds flow or some unplanned large expenditure which drains our finance position.

In setting a reserves level for Bromley Borough Foodbank, there are a number of factors to be considered in order to provide the Trustees with the information needed to address the

issues suggested by the Charity Commission. These factors have a mix of hard and soft elements:

- Staff contracts
- The warehouse lease agreement
- Client welfare
- Trussell Trust reputation

Starting from the point of view of the clients, it would be difficult to find other organisations able to provide them with the support they need and transition to them, in less than a 6–9 month period. Therefore, this defines the timescale to be covered and provides a framework for calculating reserves.

Staff contracts involve a commitment to the employees which could be effectively managed within the timeframe indicated. While this would involve a phased wind down, we would expect to cover the payroll costs for this period - £100,000.

The **warehouse** is leased for 10 years from 2021, but given there is the possibility of break clauses, it would seem appropriate to hold 5 years' worth of lease costs - £150,000

By setting a period of 6-9 months, it is believed this would, as far as possible, safeguard **client welfare** and protect the **Trussell Trust reputation**.

Taking all this into account, we have decided to increase the BBF Reserves Level from April 2024 to £250,000.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
BROMLEY BOROUGH FOODBANK**

I report on the accounts of the Bromley Borough Foodbank for the year ended 31st March 2024.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43 (2) of the Charities Act (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts (under section 43 (3) (a) of the 1993 Act);
- To follow procedure laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 43 (7) (b) of the 1993 Act); and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

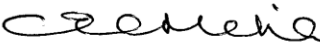
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Act, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act

have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: 
Name: Catherine Emma Gower Melia
(Non-serving Elder), The Temple United Reformed Church,
High Street, St Mary Cray,
Kent, BR5 4AX

Address: 34 Lee Church Street
Lewisham
London SE13 5SF

Date: 9th May 2024

BROMLEY BOROUGH FOODBANK

England & Wales - Charity number 1167961

Accounts



**Report and Accounts of
Bromley Borough Foodbank**

**For the period
1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023**

***“a community led charity, helping local
people to get back on their feet and improve
their financial independence”***

c/o Orpington Baptist Church
Station Road
Orpington
Kent
BR6 0RZ
www.bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk

Contents

	Page
Chair of Trustees' Report	3
Objectives and activities	5
Achievements & performance	6
Public benefit	9
Structure, governance, management	10
Trustee details	11
Risk Management	12
Financial review	13
Receipts and Payments statement	14
Accounting Policy	15
Independent examiner's report	17

Chair of Trustees' Statement

Let me say that the position of Chair of Trustees draws its strength from the whole trustee team. In this regard, BBF is extremely fortunate in having a Trustee Board made up of 5 people with proven track records in their fields of expertise and willing to volunteer high levels of time and energy to our work. What is more, as a team, we are united in our leadership of and commitment to supporting our clients. I could not wish for a better group.

We have a hard working team of salaried staff who manage and run our operations effectively and efficiently which means we can offer the best kind of service to our clients. They give more than just their paid hours and this is very much appreciated as everything seems to be very busy at the moment.

Then our army of volunteers provide a range of services from running the distribution centres to driving around making deliveries and much more. It is the volunteers who face the clients and listen daily to very sad stories of how poverty is affecting so many.

Our aim is to give immediate help in terms of food and other items, and then go the extra mile by signposting clients to help agencies who can provide potential ways to pull out of food poverty. We do not believe there is virtue in locking people into a reliance on hand-outs, nor is this how a nation such as ours should behave.

Over the last few months, we have met with the MPs who represent the Borough and had good conversations with them, which hopefully will continue. They have also visited our distribution centres to see how we operate. Having good relationships with local MPs, no matter which party they represent, is important for us as it greatly helps mutual understanding.

We have also been working on developing our relationship with Bromley Council, identifying which members are the most appropriate contacts. Our desire is to establish with them a strong working relationship where ideas can be discussed, data can be shared and joint actions agreed on how to make the best use of available resources in the fight against poverty. So much happening at a local level is linked to the Council, which makes this an essential partnership.

The continued generosity of the general public suggests there is an appetite for pushing national and local governments to act, by increasing significantly funds available for tackling poverty. We believe it is important to strengthen our relationship with local MPs and the Bromley Council so we can emphasise the public position and influence their thinking.

And it's very true that the generosity of the people of the Borough is so important for our work. Not just individuals but businesses, schools, charity organisations and others. It is only through this generosity that we are able to develop and grow our offer to clients.

The vision of Trussell Trust and all its networked food banks is simply for a UK without the need for foodbanks. We believe it is not right that many people cannot afford their own food. Last year, in the Trussell Trust network alone, more than 328,000 families (760,000 people) were forced to turn to food banks for the first time, there was a 37% increase in demand and 3 million food parcels were given out; not statistics showing Britain at its best. It is not right that anyone should experience hunger or poverty, and we know we all have a responsibility to stand alongside people in crisis.

And some basic numbers; a few years ago, the number of people who couldn't top up their Pre-pay meters was relatively low. There was a dramatic increase last year and this year already, the number is higher than for the whole of 2021. Universal Credit provides £85 pw for a single adult whereas the Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimates the cost of essentials is around £120 pw. This highlights one of the reasons why many of those on benefits need to turn to foodbanks.

It is bodies such as Trussell Trust and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation that collect, analyse and investigate all this data, thus providing a proper base for discussion with the Government and others. Understanding and action comes from facts not just feelings.

My thanks go out to all who work for, within, around and in support of BBF. If it wasn't for you, there would many 000's of hungry and despondent people and families around with little help to become financially independent.

We continue to work towards a just, compassionate future, where no one should have to use a food bank to get by. Together, we can end the need for foodbanks.

Simon Lees

Chair of Trustees

Objectives and Activities

Bromley Borough Foodbank (BBF) is formed and shaped by Christian principles, in response to Jesus' command to "Love your neighbour as yourself" Math 22:39, and is linked to many churches in the Borough. It is a member of the Trussell Trust (TT) franchise that has as its vision "a UK without the need for foodbanks", thus ending hunger resulting from poverty. Underpinning this vision is the BBF objective, within the Borough of Bromley, to relieve hardship amongst people by, in particular, but not exclusively:

- a) Providing emergency food and essential toiletries to individuals and families in need;
- b) Using such other means including the provision of support or signposting to relevant information and other advisory services supported by the churches in the Borough.

The clear aim of b) is to move our clients away from the need to use the services of a foodbank. We see this as fundamental to all we do.

The charity's affiliation to TT provides it with many tools, supply sources and in addition, TT has developed strategic links to a variety of organisations that enables a wide range of grants to be made available. Critically, anonymous client information is sent to TT so it can build a database across the UK in order to inform and challenge Government policy.

The main activities of BBF include:

- Running a number of distribution centres which are opened at different times during the week depending on the availability of the premises and volunteers
- Operating a warehouse for collecting, recording, sorting and organising distribution to the various centres
- Ensuring the supplies given out are appropriate to the people receiving them
- Linking with agencies which are entrusted to provide food vouchers to clients
- Working with schools which recommend families needing BBF support
- Liaising with supermarkets which provide food or financial support
- Developing relationships with churches and schools which commit to providing harvest festival supplies to the foodbank
- Gaining funding through presentations to a range of organisations, making collections, applying for grants and running fund raising events

Achievements and Performance

Trussell Trust is continuing to develop a practical roadmap for achieving the vision of “the UK without the need for foodbanks”. This includes 8 areas of attack with necessary action at all levels of society, meaning it is not just a government responsibility but requires the public to accept their role in realising the vision. The roadmap is summarised in the following diagram:



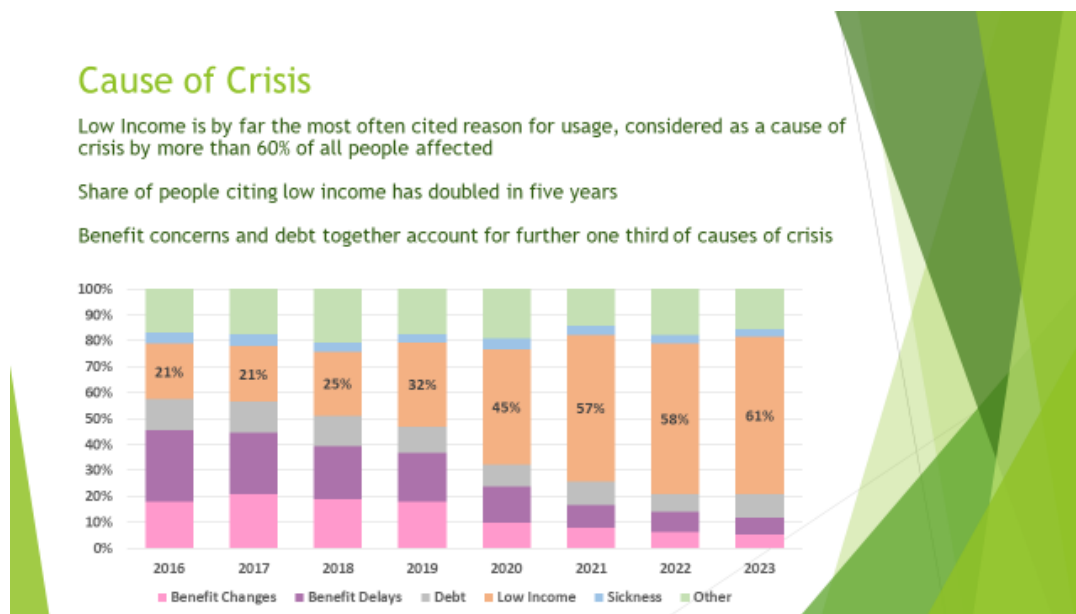
This provides us with a base for our development of BBF as we are fully behind these initiatives and will do all we can to play our part in this, taking account of local conditions and how well our funds hold up. Our intention to create a new post, Organising & Local Mobilisation Coordinator, is driven by the need to create staff space for strategic relationship building, engagement of local communities and communicating within the Borough.

The demand for our services has seen a big increase over the last year with the usage of vouchers by adults up 40%; for pensioners the increase being 10%. For children the increase has been over 50%, which puts this demand back up to the peak level during Covid.

During the year 120 tonnes of stock were given out, some 5 tonnes more than donations received. This puts a strain on the supply chain but we have managed to avoid buying in a lot of stock by reviewing how much stock we need to hold.

Our volunteer pool is nearing 200 and they gave a staggering 15,840 hours of their time to help our clients. Without this help we could not operate. It's a reminder of the fantastic value of volunteers in the charity sector but also the fact that so many areas of life in Britain depends on the hard work of unpaid workers.

If we look at the causes of food poverty, we can see how they have shifted over time with low income now the predominant reason. We are seeing more and more clients who work, sometimes full time, needing support as their wages are just not sufficient to cover everyday costs.



Probably the most significant issue affecting people with low income is the inadequate support proved by Universal Credit. The basic level is just not enough to fund essentials, let alone any extras. Until the level of support through this benefit is more in line with what is needed to provide essential living items, it will not be possible to wind down foodbanks.

We continue to sponsor CAB advisers who offer remote and outreach voluntary services to our centres and speak directly to clients who need their help. This has proved extremely successful in speeding up the process of gaining the correct type of assistance for people in need and reassuring clients that they are being listened to. For the last year, this helped clients gain access to over £700,000 in income uplift. However, CAB has been under extreme pressure as they experienced a 300% increase in demand for their services in December, which is, of course, unsustainable.

We believe it is important to seek improvements in the service we deliver and be willing to consider new ways to support our clients. Fortunately, our funds position has allowed us to implement two new initiatives that we see as delivering significant benefits to the clients.

The first initiative is a Supermarket Voucher Scheme

Our normal practice is to give out 7 days of food in a standard package. We have noticed that this can be difficult for families of 4 or more as the weight of the food makes travelling difficult. Perhaps more importantly, we believe our clients should be able to have more control on what they eat and be able to have a wider choice of what they have. We are therefore experimenting with, for larger families, providing only 3 days of food plus a supermarket voucher for the other 4 days. This has only been in operation for a few months but is already proving popular with clients and actually reduces the work at the various distribution centres. It also comes at a time when food donations have been reducing. How long we can offer this change of service depends on the strength of future financial donations.

The second initiative involves CAB gateway assessors

With the big increase in demand for the services of CAB and BBF, there have been times when staff have been overwhelmed and clients unable to obtain the help they need. The only way to solve this was for CAB to recruit 2 gateway assessors to work exclusively for the BBF client stream. This way, clients can be assessed quickly and correctly triaged before being given a voucher for BBF supplies. Unfortunately, the Council is not able to cover the costs of such recruitment, even though it is their responsibility. Therefore, BBF has committed for a period of 1 or 2 years to cover the associated costs. This only began in late Q1 2023 but has already had a significant impact of the total operations, particularly in BBF centres.

Public benefit

As a charity for the relief and prevention of poverty, BBF only needs to satisfy the “benefit” requirement of charity law; the “public” aspect then being automatically satisfied provided benefits are identifiable.

The Borough of Bromley is relatively wealthy; however, there still exists a significant number of people and families within the Borough who are in need of emergency supplies of food and other essential items. Analysis shows that the main causes of this are low income, benefit changes, debt, no recourse to public funds and sickness. Much of this situation could be alleviated if national governments and local councils saw this as a priority and responded appropriately. Without foodbanks such as BBF there would be no help for those finding themselves in food poverty, a direct consequence of financial poverty.

The BBF centres are set up to provide a whole range of food items and other supplies that are carefully packaged into appropriate parcels. There are standards that specify the best mix of foods to provide nutritious meals for individuals and families of different sizes. These take account of dietary needs as well as ages and number of children. In addition, various household goods are provided where needed to help with hygiene.

All the items distributed by BBF are donated by a wide range of individuals and organisations around the Borough. These donors and others often also make financial gifts to ensure BBF is financially secure. In addition, various grants are available from grant organisations or others, e.g. supermarkets.

Provisions are only given out on the basis of foodbank vouchers which, in order to provide the most appropriate help, are obtained from local agencies. If the agent feels someone is struggling to put food on the table due to financial hardship, they will issue them with a foodbank voucher. The local agency can also provide long-term support if needed to help address some of the issues behind the reasons for the crisis.

BBF works with a number of different agencies, such as Citizens Advice, children’s centres, housing associations, schools, social services, Hestia, health visitors and many others. They help identify the cause of the crisis, offering practical guidance and allow BBF to prepare suitable emergency food for the right number of people.

If we receive fresh fruit or vegetable, which we are unable to store, we can pass these items onto other food agencies.

From this, it is clear that the BBF is providing extremely valuable benefits.

Structure, Governance and Management

Bromley Borough Foodbank is governed by an agreed governance document and overseen by 5 Trustees.

It is part of a nationwide franchise network of foodbanks operating under the umbrella of the Trussell Trust.

There are 4 distribution centres operating within the Borough and run by the BBF:

Central Orpington

Unit 7-9
Walnuts Shopping Centre
Orpington High Street
Orpington
BR6 0TW

Penge

The Salvation Army
172-176 Maple Road
London
SE20 8JB

Central Bromley

United Reformed Church
Widmore Road
Bromley
BR1 1RY

Orpington

Oak Community Church
345 Chipperfield Road
St Paul's Cray
BR5 2LJ

All these facilities are offered to BBF cost free.

In addition, a warehouse is operated from premises in Ashgrove Industrial Estate, Bromley, which is leased to us. It is used to collect donated goods that are then weighed and recorded. This warehouse distributes items to the 4 distribution centres and is a key part of our operations. To facilitate this, we run a delivery van.

We also have access to the basement of the old Orpington Library, which is used for storing long dated stock.

BBF operates with a salaried Chief Operating Officer, 2 Warehouse Coordinators, Operations Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator. Some of these roles are part time. In addition, there are over 150 volunteers who run the various distribution centres and work within the warehouse.

Early in 2022 we introduced a new Trustee Sub-Committee structure in order to expedite decision making where trustees are involved and provide a clear framework for the Chief Operating Officer to work within.

Trustees Details

Mr Simon Lees – chair

Mr Stephen Walsh – secretary

Mr Duncan Aitkins

Mrs Jasmin Sen

Mrs Basak Aziz

New Trustees are provided with information about UK foodbanks, the Trussell Trust that supports BBF and introduced to the various BBF distribution centres and warehouse. They are made aware of any legislation that is relevant to charities and foodbanks, including training where appropriate. Trussell trust provides a wide range of documentation relevant to trustees' responsibilities.

No trustee has received any remuneration or benefit from their position within the charity.

The Trustee Board meets every 2 months and is supported by, as Minute Secretary, Andy Goddard.

Risk management statement

We recognise that risk management is an important element of good management practice and we encourage an open and receptive approach to identifying, discussing and addressing risks. We accept that risk can never be fully eliminated but the scale of most risks can be reduced by appropriate action and where residual exposure exists, ways to mitigate can often be identified.

We are particularly conscious that our premises are run mostly by a wide range of volunteers, some of whom may only be with us for a short time, and this can bring its own level of risk for older helpers or less experienced members. In addition, the clients who visit our distribution centres are often anxious and stressed, which can produce situations where risks are possible for them and us. Regular conversations among the Centre Coordinators and the COO highlight any specific actions that are needed and any particular issues are reported to the Trustee Board.

We have developed risk assessment processes and this year, a range of actions have been taken following a number of risk reviews. In some cases, we have found it necessary to contract a consultant to help us update our processes and we are working through various action plans.

Our Health & Safety Sub-Committee is responsible for reviewing the risk register, with high-risk items considered by the Trustee Board on a regular basis.

Financial Review

The people of the Borough of Bromley, along with businesses, schools, shops and charity organisations, have continued to be most generous. We receive each month some 300 donations, most of which are regular, and plenty of on-off gifts. It has surprised us on many occasions the level of financial support we attract, especially from some organisations we had not heard of before. We are getting to know these businesses and have a number of partnerships working closely with us.

As can be seen from the accounts, we finished the year in a healthy financial position and this has enabled us to develop new initiatives.

Having a good level of income and reserves means we are able to pay the lease on our warehouse (£30,000 pa) without worrying where the next payment will come from. We have needed to spend quite a sum of money on important upgrading of our H & S capabilities, including fire safety at the warehouse. Running a professional distribution business is not cheap and being a charity does not lessen the responsibilities, especially with so many vulnerable clients and a large team of volunteers.

Our old van was proving to be too small to make the sort of deliveries we need to carry out and was not compliant with ULEZ! We therefore bought a new (2nd hand) van and went for an electric model, which all our drivers enjoy, and a local business installed a charger at the warehouse free. We sold the old van for a little more than we paid for it 3 1/2 years ago!

Our staff organisation has expanded in order to deal with the increasing demands for food support and to lessen the stress on all the teams. Two part-time administration assistants have greatly enhanced our ability to respond quickly to a large number of messages coming in each day and by introducing a job share for managing the warehouse, we are much better equipped to operate at full capability every day. We also now have someone working part-time, recruiting, training, supporting and coordinating all the activities of our important team of volunteers.

Donations got a boost towards the end of 2022 as the publicity over the cost of living galvanised those that could afford to give more. This then filtered through to Gift Aid. Donations have now returned to a more even level. We also continued to receive grants, mainly from TT but also other agencies.

Increased expenditure during the year included £40,000 for the new van, the first quarter's costs of the supermarket voucher scheme, our expanded staff team and we have taken the opportunity to upgrade a number of pieces of equipment, including IT items, so we can work more efficiently and effectively in supporting our clients.

Receipts and Payments Accounts

<i>For the period from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023</i>					
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Last year
	note	£	£	£	£
Receipts					
Donations	1	256,202	0	256,202	186,027
Gift Aid	2	32,888	0	32,888	25,830
Church funding	3	16,164	0	16,164	10,747
Grants	4	20,270	99,507	119,777	79,512
Fund raising		1,674	0	1,674	492
Interest		68		68	0
Sub total		327,266	99,507	426,773	302,608
Payments					
Staff	5	98,619	17,982	116,601	62,500
Contractor	6	0	0	0	6,758
Vehicle costs	7	45,705	0	45,705	4,434
Property	8	24,723	7,778	32,501	36,002
CAB secondment	9	9,113	27,454	36,567	45,393
Voucher scheme	10	20,500	0	20,500	
Other	11	36,571	2,469	39,040	46,269
Sub total		235,231	55,683	290,914	201,356
Net of receipts/ (payments)		92,035	43,824	135,859	101,252
Opening cash funds		526,879	40,369	567,248	465,996
Closing cash funds		618,914	84,193	703,107	567,248
Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period					
Cash funds					
Banks		NatWest current	40,407		
		NatWest saving	80,200		
		Flagstone Group	582,500	<i>spread funds</i>	
Total Cash			703,107		
* Warehouse lease contract until 15th July 2031 with break clause 15th July 2026					
* No guarantees have been given whereby any potential liability is outstanding					
* There are no debts outstanding secured by an express charge on assets					

Mr S Lees



23rd May 2023

Accounting Policies

a) Basis of preparation. The accounts have been prepared on a Cash Receipts and Payments basis.

b) Grants receivable. Grant monies are only included once the funds have been received. Where grants given are linked to specific activities or expenditure, they are accounted for as Restricted Funds.

c) Fixed assets. The new van was charged to expenditure rather than capitalised.

d) Reserves targets. The general reserve level has been uplifted to £60,000 in recognition of advice from Trussell Trust and also Charity Commission expectations. This policy will be kept under review.

e) Warehouse Lease Fund. We are committed for a minimum of 5 years rental for the new warehouse at a cost of about £30,000 per annum. Acting prudently, we have set a reserve of £150,000 to cover this 5 year period.

Notes to the Accounts

1. Individual donations, some from companies, saw a boost at the end of 2022, probably due to the publicity over the cost of living situation. The number of regular donors, both as standing orders and online giving, is close to 300 per month.
2. Gift aid has been claimed for everyone who has confirmed their eligibility for such tax refunds as well as anonymous gifts under the HRMC small gift scheme.
3. Church funding remains an important underpinning of our activities.
4. A number of restricted grants were received during the year. Through Trussell Trust we received £30,760 as further funding for a CAB secondee, £17,862 for use against expenditure on staff £34,750 to cover the costs of a future post for local mobilisation. A number of general grants were also received.
5. Staff cost are higher due to the need to extend our employee base to cope with ever increasing demand.
6. The contractor role has now ceased.
7. Vehicle costs include the expenditure on a new van at a cost of £40,560.

8. Property costs relate mainly to the warehouse lease.
9. Covers the costs of Citizen's Advice Bureau secondees.
10. This is the first quarter's costs of the new Voucher scheme.
11. The main areas of expenditure included in the "other" category are; fuel & Christmas vouchers, centre rental, IT equipment.

Benefits not included in the financial report.

-Well over 150 volunteers undertook some 16,000 hours of unpaid work providing a benefit of at least £200,000.

-Various premises were again provided free of charge to be used as distribution centres and this is a further benefit of at least £15,000.

-Generally, all items given out to clients are donated free to the Foodbank, although occasionally emergency purchases are undertaken. During the year, 120,000Kgs of food were distributed with an assumed value of £280,000.

Restricted funds - £

	Opening	Incoming	Outgoing	Closing
TT CAB support	21,240	30,760	27,454	24,546
TT Volunteers support	10,721	17,862	19,631	8,952
Warehouse lease	7,778	0	7,778	0
Rotary Club	500	0	500	0
LDF	130	0	130	0
TT Winter payment	0	5,000	190	4,810
Bank of America (vouchers)	0	6,135	0	6,135
TT OLM funding	0	34,750	0	34,750

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
BROMLEY BOROUGH FOODBANK**

I report on the accounts of the Bromley Borough Foodbank for the year ended 31st March 2023.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43 (2) of the Charities Act (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts (under section 43 (3) (a) of the 1993 Act);
- To follow procedure laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 43 (7) (b) of the 1993 Act); and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Act, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act

have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: Catherine
Name: Catherine Emma Gower Melia
Non-serving Elder, The Temple United Reformed Church,
High Street, St Mary Cray,
Kent, BR5 4AX

Address: 34 Lee Church Street
Lewisham
London SE13 5SF

Date: 4th May 2023

BROMLEY BOROUGH FOODBANK

England & Wales - Charity number 1167961

Accounts



**Report and Accounts of
Bromley Borough Foodbank**

**For the period
1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022**

c/o Orpington Baptist Church
Station Road
Orpington
Kent
BR6 0RZ
www.bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk

Contents

	Page
Chair of Trustees' Report	3
Objectives and activities	5
Achievements & performance	6
Strategic Alliances	7
Public benefit	8
Newspaper articles	9
Structure, governance, management	10
Trustee details	11
Financial review	12
Accounts	13
Independent examiner's report	16

Chair of Trustees' Statement

Did you know there are some 4-5,000 foodbanks in the UK, with about 1,400 being part of the Trussell Trust (TT) franchise? To use some words from a recent Prime Minister, Liz Truss “this is disgraceful”. The vision of TT, which we fully support, is a UK without the need for foodbanks. How are we at BBF helping to achieve this?

We believe that the TT way of operating is far better than just providing a source of free food. So what makes Bromley Borough Foodbank (BBF) and other TT foodbanks special? We describe ourselves as “a community led charity, helping local people to get back on their feet and improve their financial independence”. Of course, we are passionate about helping those in food poverty and providing them with suitable food items. From the Bible, James 2: 15/16 ‘If you know someone who doesn’t have any clothes or food, you shouldn’t just say “I hope all goes well for you. I hope you will be warm and have plenty to eat” what good is it to say this, unless you do something to help’.

However, we do not want people to be left reliant all the time on charity. It is much better to help them access all the different forms of assistance available to them, including benefits, job opportunities, mental health assistance etc. This helps them help themselves. This why we have a close relationship with CAB, Bromley Well and other key help agencies.

What we also hope is that people recognise that bringing families out of food poverty actually generates value to society in many ways, including reduced use of medical and mental health facilities.

Looking back over the last year, we saw that during the second year of the pandemic we began to experience a certain amount of stability in our operations but by no means, business as usual. It was not really until towards the end of the year that we could say all our activities were working as normal. A sigh of relief. We then had the task of moving to our new warehouse, which was welcome, as we have found a good home for the next few years.

And, we have made changes to our teams. A whole new Trustee Board, new staff including a new Operations Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator and many additions to our pool of eager volunteers. Such a regeneration has both benefits and stresses but we are getting there.

Now, with all the economic pressures that we face over the next year or so, we are exploring ways we should develop and change how we support clients. Is the model we have followed over the last years still the best or are there new opportunities? In particular, we were very fortunate to receive a big boost to our funds over the pandemic period and we want to ensure we use these monies wisely and effectively. We need to be ready to accept and embrace new paradigms.

And lastly, the people of Bromley Borough continue to surprise and delight us with their generosity from the very young to the not so young. Donations of food, other products, money and time give us real encouragement.

In conclusion, my thanks go out to all who work for, within, around and in support of BBF. If it wasn't for you, there would many 000's of hungry and despondent people and families around with little help to become financially independent.

Simon Lees

Chair of Trustees & Accounts Manager

Objectives and Activities

Bromley Borough Foodbank (BBF) is formed and shaped by Christian principles, in response to Jesus' command to "Love your neighbour as yourself" Math 22:39, and is linked to many churches in the Borough. It is a member of the Trussell Trust (TT) franchise that has as its vision "a UK without the need for foodbanks", thus ending hunger resulting from poverty. Underpinning this vision is the BBF objective, within the Borough of Bromley, to relieve hardship amongst people by, in particular, but not exclusively:

- a) Providing emergency food and essential toiletries to individuals and families in need;
- b) Using such other means including the provision of support or signposting to relevant information and other advisory services supported by the churches in the Borough.

The clear aim of b) is to move our clients away from the need to use the services of a foodbank. We see this as fundamental to all we do.

The charity's affiliation to TT provides it with many tools, supply sources and in addition, TT has developed strategic links to a variety of organisations that enables a wide range of grants to be made available. Critically, anonymous client information is sent to TT so it can build a database across the UK in order to inform and challenge Government policy.

The main activities of BBF include:

- Running a number of distribution centres which are opened at different times during the week depending on the availability of the premises and volunteers
- Operating a warehouse for collecting, recording, sorting and organising distribution to the various centres
- Ensuring the supplies given out are appropriate to the people receiving them
- Linking with agencies which are entrusted to provide food vouchers to clients
- Working with schools which recommend families needing BBF support
- Liaising with supermarkets which provide food or financial support
- Developing relationships with churches and schools which commit to providing harvest festival supplies to the foodbank
- Gaining funding through presentations to a range of organisations, making collections, applying for grants and running fund raising events

Achievements and Performance

How do you measure the success of BBF?

Is it the number of people for whom we have provided food packages? If so, the number was 6,500.

Is it the amount of goods we have given out? If so, the number was 96 tonnes.

If it is the number of hours our volunteers have given to help our clients? If so, it was 13,000.

Is it our ability to stir up donors to give products and funds? If so, we received over 100 tonnes of product and £200,000.

What we really want to see is the number of clients reduce because they have managed to move into a situation where they no longer need our services. Unfortunately, this has not been achieved as we are seeing the number of clients increase.

So what has been happening to create this situation? Interestingly, as time has gone on, the issues around the roll out of Universal Credit have begun to recede as the process beds down. What has happened however, is that clients are finding that UC just doesn't provide enough funding for families and so they are suffering from low levels of income. At the same time, the number of people in employment who earn very small amounts has risen, often due to zero-hours contracts or poor wage levels. Low income is fast becoming the main reason for the need for our services.

This is a challenge to the Government, the local Council and Society as a whole. Unless society takes note of the unacceptability of having people in work or on benefits being unable to afford basic living costs, there will be insufficient pressure on central and regional governments. BBF plays a role in this by engaging locally in an appropriate way and providing data to TT that can then educate central government on the extent of the problem.

We will continue to do all we can to meet the immediate needs of our clients as well as signposting them to other help agencies, often CAB but also other agencies such as MIND. A prime part of this is the strength of our staff team, the enthusiasm of our volunteer force and the skills of the Trustee board. When it comes down to it, it's our people that are key to the success of our organisation.

Strategic Alliances

Our strategic alliance partners continue to play a critical role in our ability to provide our clients with more than just food. They help us to provide direct help to our clients, with the main links being; The Citizens' Advise Bureau in conjunction with Bromley Well and The Fuel Bank.

The Citizens' Advise Bureau (CAB) is a long established public body that is able to work alongside people to help them understand how to access appropriate help and in many cases, extra funds. It gives people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward; whoever they are and whatever their problem. This national charity and network of local charities offers confidential advice all free.

We have always used CAB as a referral agent as they are a focal point for many in difficulties. In 2020, we agreed to fund the secondment of a full time CAB employee who is available to our clients for advice. During lockdown this has mainly been via telephone contact but the intention is this will involve CAB being located at our distribution centres once they reopen. Clients will then be able to be put in contact with this representative when they visit to receive their food supplies.

The Fuel Bank is a relatively new organisation and probably not that well known. It has as its vision "a UK where everyone has access to energy for heating and eating." The Foundation was set up to develop sustainable solutions to support homes in fuel crisis, unable to top up their prepayment meters. Fuel Bank is currently available in selected foodbanks and advice agencies across Great Britain and provides a top up voucher that provides approximately two weeks' worth of fuel to clients who use a prepayment meter to heat their home and to cook with, and who have been deemed as in crisis need by an independent referrer.

Many of the families seeking help from foodbanks are often also in fuel crisis and have to make the choice between heating or eating. People shouldn't have to make this choice and this is why the Fuel Bank movement was set up.

We also link to debt recovery agents where appropriate, although this is usually managed through CAB.

Public benefit

The Borough of Bromley is relatively wealthy; however, there still exists a significant number of people and families within the Borough who are in need of emergency supplies of food and other essential items. Analysis shows that the main causes of this are low income, benefit changes, debt, no recourse to public funds and sickness. Much of this situation could be alleviated if national governments and local councils saw this as a priority and responded appropriately. Without foodbanks such as BBF there would be no help for those finding themselves in food poverty, a direct consequence of financial poverty.

The BBF centres are set up to provide a whole range of food items and other supplies that are carefully packaged into appropriate parcels. There are standards that specify the best mix of foods to provide nutritious meals for individuals and families of different sizes. These take account of dietary needs as well as ages and number of children. In addition, various household goods are provided where needed to help with hygiene.

All the items distributed by BBF are donated by a wide range of individuals and organisations around the Borough. These donors and others often also make financial gifts to ensure BBF is financially secure. In addition, various grants are available from grant organisations or others, e.g. supermarkets.

Provisions are only given out on the basis of foodbank vouchers which, in order to provide the most appropriate help, are obtained from local agencies. If the agent feels someone is struggling to put food on the table due to financial hardship, they will issue them with a foodbank voucher. The local agency can also provide long-term support if needed to help address some of the issues behind the reasons for the crisis.

BBF works with a number of different agencies, such as Citizens Advice, children's centres, housing associations, schools, social services, Hestia, health visitors and many others. They help identify the cause of the crisis, offering practical guidance and allow BBF to prepare suitable emergency food for the right number of people.

If we receive fresh fruit or vegetable, which we are unable to store, we can pass these items onto other food agencies.

From this, it is clear that the BBF is providing extremely valuable public benefits.

Newspaper Articles

BBF appeared in a number of newspaper articles highlighting the challenges and successes of foodbanks across the UK. One such article appeared in the *London News online* - extract

Ukrainian refugee who fled war with three children now volunteering at food bank

A Ukrainian woman forced to flee her country with young children is now a regular volunteer at BBF, which supported her family when they first arrived in South London.

She arrived in the UK with her husband, two young daughters and stepson to live with extended family in Orpington. With no means to support themselves in the UK, she sought out the nearest branch of the BBF and received an emergency food parcel to help feed her young family.

On that first visit, she offered her services as a volunteer, just weeks after arriving in the UK. She saw it as a way to improve her English and give back to the community that, she says, has been so welcoming. "Lots of people have helped us – they really have been unbelievably supportive – so this was my opportunity to do something in return," she said.

She is able to act as an interpreter for other Ukrainian refugees and is in an ideal position to advise them, having arrived in the UK so recently herself. There are a number of Ukrainian refugees in the Bromley area so this is a valuable service.

The family are eligible for Universal Credit, which means that they only had to resort to using the foodbank once when they first arrived in Orpington.

The couple made the decision to flee when Russian troops came within 1km of their home. It took more than 12 hours to reach Poland on a packed train. As soon as the war ends, it is their intention to go back to Ukraine, although they have no idea when that might be. All three children have settled well in Bromley schools despite the language barrier.

Structure, Governance and Management

Bromley Borough Foodbank is governed by an agreed governance document and overseen by 5 Trustees.

It is part of a nationwide franchise network of foodbanks operating under the umbrella of the Trussell Trust.

There are 4 distribution centres operating within the Borough and run by the BBF:

Central Orpington

Unit 7-9
Walnuts Shopping Centre
Orpington High Street
Orpington
BR6 0TW

Penge

The Salvation Army
172-176 Maple Road
London
SE20 8JB

Central Bromley

United Reformed Church
Widmore Road
Bromley
BR1 1RY

Orpington

Oak Community Church
345 Chipperfield Road
St Paul's Cray
BR5 2LJ

All these facilities are offered to BBF cost free.

In addition, a warehouse is operated from premises in Ashgrove Industrial Estate, Bromley, which is leased to us. It is used to collect donated goods that are then weighed and recorded. This warehouse distributes items to the 4 distribution centres and is a key part of our operations. To facilitate this, we run a delivery van.

We also have access to the basement of the old Orpington Library, which is used for storing long dated stock.

BBF operates with a salaried Chief Operating Officer, 2 Warehouse Coordinators, Operations Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator. Some of these roles are part time. In addition, there are over 120 volunteers who run the various distribution centres and work within the warehouse.

Early in 2022 we introduced a new Trustee Sub-Committee structure in order to expedite decision making where trustees are involved and provide a clear framework for the Chief Operating Officer to work within.

Trustees Details

Mr Simon Lees – chair

Mr Stephen Walsh – secretary

Mr Duncan Aitkins

Mr Toby Reid

Mrs Jasmin Sen – from March 2022

Mrs Basak Aziz – from March 2022

Mrs Eileen Childs – until March 2022

Mr Andy Clare – until October 2021

New Trustees are provided with information about UK foodbanks, the Trussell Trust that supports BBF and introduced to the various BBF distribution centres and warehouse. They are made aware of any legislation that is relevant to charities and foodbanks, including training where appropriate. Trussell trust provides a wide range of documentation relevant to trustees' responsibilities.

No trustee has received any remuneration or benefit from their position within the charity.

The Trustee Board meets every 2 months and is supported by, as Minute Secretary, Andy Goddard.

Financial Review

Despite the continuation of the pandemic, the people of the Borough maintained their support for BBF and this meant we were able to cover all our cost and still save some money for future use. In fact, we ended the year with £567,000 in the bank, which is a great position to be in as the financial outlook for 2022/23 is deteriorating. We anticipate a reduction in donations, whereas much of our expenditure is fixed, or at least driven by the number and complexity of client needs. Having a good level of reserve secures our ability to serve our clients for as long as we are needed.

With this healthy funds position, we recognised that the FCA regulations only protects bank holdings up to £85,000. Therefore, we investigated a strategy for providing protection for our current cash holdings, while offering some interest. To this end, we contracted with Flagstone, an FCA regulated organisation that facilitates splitting funds into smaller amounts, located in individual bank accounts. It also offers interest that more than covers their fees. This contract began towards the end of the financial year so only £90,000 had been managed this way by the end of the financial year.

TT continued to make available some generous grants in partnership with a variety of organisations and we were successful in acquiring funds through this route. While we cannot rely on grants for general running costs as they are not guaranteed for the future, we understand there are likely to be a regular range of grants available for the foreseeable future and we will bid for these when appropriate.

Gift aid remains an important funding resource and we always encourage donors to fill in a Gift Aid declaration no matter which channel they use to send funds to us.

The main operating costs relate to the employment of the salaried staff plus the long-term commitment for the warehouse lease costs, which we need to keep in mind when we allocate funds. We have taken the opportunity to upgrade a number of pieces of equipment, including IT items, so we can work more efficiently and effectively in supporting our clients.

Receipts and Payments Accounts

For the period from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022

	note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Last year £
Receipts					
Donations	1	186,027	0	186,027	308,839
Gift Aid	2	25,830	0	25,830	44,762
Church funding	3	10,747	0	10,747	24,348
Grants	4	14,372	65,140	79,512	100,860
Fund raising		492	0	492	742
Sub total		237,468	65,140	302,608	479,551
Payments					
Staff		45,492	17,008	62,500	52,647
Contractor	5	6,758	0	6,758	16,606
Vehicle costs		4,434	0	4,434	2,428
Property	6	13,780	22,222	36,002	0
CAB secondment	7	7,074	38,319	45,393	0
Other	8	46,269	0	46,269	27,045
Sub total		123,807	77,549	201,356	98,726

Net of receipts/ (payments)	113,661	-12,409	101,252	380,825
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Opening cash funds	413,218	52,778	465,996	85,171
Closing cash funds	526,879	40,369	567,248	465,996

Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Cash funds

Banks	NatWest	477,248
	Barclays	90,000
Total Cash		567,248

* No guarantees have been given whereby any potential liability is outstanding

* There are no debts outstanding secured by an express charge on assets

Mr S Lees



14th September 2022

Accounting Policies

a) Basis of preparation. The accounts have been prepared on a Cash Receipts and Payments basis.

b) Grants receivable. Grant monies are only included once the funds have been received. Where grants given are linked to specific activities or expenditure, they are accounted for as Restricted Funds.

c) Fixed assets. The charity does not hold any material fixed assets.

d) Reserves targets. The general reserve level has been uplifted to £60,000 in recognition of advice from Trussell Trust and also Charity Commission expectations. This policy will be kept under review. £5,000 has also being set aside for a future vehicle purchase.

e) Warehouse Lease Fund. We are committed for a minimum of 5 years rental for the new warehouse at a cost of about £30,000 per annum. Acting prudently, we have set a reserve of £150,000 to cover this 5 year period.

Notes to the Accounts

1. Individual donations, some from companies, have maintained at a high level although down on the extraordinary giving during the height of the pandemic. The number of regular donors, both as standing orders and online giving, is close to 300 per month.
2. Gift aid has been claimed for everyone who has confirmed their eligibility for such tax refunds as well as anonymous gifts under the HRMC small gift scheme and reflects the general level of donations.
3. Church funding remains an important underpinning of our activities but there has been a fall off, mainly we believe, as churches have suffered reduced levels of giving.
4. A number of grants were received during the year. Through Trussell Trust we received £30,353 as further funding for a CAB secondee, £15,000 for use against expenditure on our new warehouse and £19,787 to help pay for our newly appointed Volunteers' Coordinator and mental health training for volunteers.
5. The contractor position has now converted to a staff member.
6. Property costs relate to the new warehouse lease payments and a number of items that had to be purchased to ready the building for operations.

7. A member of the Citizen's Advice Bureau has been seconded to work in our centres, ready to engage directly with clients as needed. This has proved extremely valuable and we have secured funds from TT in order to support this work.
8. The main areas of expenditure included in the "other" category are; fuel & Christmas vouchers, centre rental, IT equipment, warehouse lift, new boiler, crates, set up costs.

Benefits not included in the financial report.

-Some 80 volunteers undertook 4 hours per week free of charge providing a benefit of at least £180,000.

-Various premises were again provided free of charge to be used as distribution centres and this is a further benefit of at least £15,000.

-Generally, all items given out to clients are donated free to the Foodbank, although occasionally emergency purchases are undertaken. During the year, 96,000Kgs of food were distributed with an assumed value of £180,000.

Restricted funds - £

	Opening	Incoming	Outgoing	Closing
Strategic facilities	15,000	15,000	22,222	7,778
TT CAB support	29,206	30,353	38,319	21,240
TT Volunteers support	0	19,787	9,066	10,721
ASDA	7,941	0	7,941	0
Rotary Club	500	0	0	500
LDF	130	0	0	130

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
BROMLEY BOROUGH FOODBANK**

I report on the accounts of the Bromley Borough Foodbank for the year ended 31st March 2022.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43 (2) of the Charities Act (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts (under section 43 (3) (a) of the 1993 Act);
- To follow procedure laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 43 (7) (b) of the 1993 Act); and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

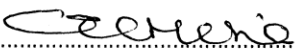
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Act, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act

have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: 
Name: Catherine Emma Gower Melia
Non-serving Elder, The Temple United Reformed Church,
High Street, St Mary Cray,
Kent, BR5 4AX

Address: 34 Lee Church Street
Lewisham
London SE13 5SF

Date: 4th July 2022

BROMLEY BOROUGH FOODBANK

England & Wales - Charity number 1167961

Accounts



Report and Accounts of Bromley Borough Foodbank

**For the period
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Contents

	Page
Chair of Trustees' Report	3
Objectives and activities	5
Achievements and Covid-19 response	6
Event Pictures	9
Pandemic support from organisations	10
Strategic Alliances	11
Public benefit	13
Stories/Testimonies	14
Structure, governance, management	15
Trustee details	16
Financial review	17
Accounts	18
Independent examiner's report	21

Chair of Trustees' Statement

What a year! No-one, as we started our last year, thought that over a year later we would still be dealing with the effects of the Covid pandemic. If we had known, I wonder whether we would have panicked more than we did. As it was, at BBF we took matters one step at a time, adapting to the changing situation and Government regulations without taking much time to think where we would end up. Well, we have got through it all and it has forced change on us and other foodbanks which is likely to be beneficial long term.

We have become a lot more technical in the way we operate, with electronic vouchers rather than paper ones and increased use of IT equipment such as laptops, phones, tablets. For our volunteers this has been a significant development as it has meant learning new skills and thankfully, they have been keen to learn.

On top of all this, we had appointed a new Project Manager, Amanda Stone, just as the pandemic hit and to say she hit the road running would be an understatement. Amanda did not get the chance to see the foodbank operating in normal mode, but in a way this helped because she had no preconceived ideas about how things should be done. Trussell Trust as usual provided considerable support and gave us encouragement.

It has been a bit of a revelation to see the support we received from all around the Borough. Not just extra food and money but help in terms of drivers and new volunteers. Supermarkets were very generous in their allocation of food to us and many organisations that had not had any link to us before came up trumps. Whatever you think about Bromley Borough, I can confirm that people respond incredibly well to calls for help. Without this response, we could not have carried on with our service to our clients. So thank you Bromley!

The supermarkets donated tonnes of foodstuff that we were able to take with our large warehouse. This also meant we were able to pass large amounts to other food banks when we had sufficient surplus. We can assure you that no good food or other items were wasted.

A number of sole traders gave us monies they had earned through their work, children passed over their pocket money, people ran sponsored events and organisations put us to the top of their list of charity donations. Not to mention schools, Rotary Clubs, sports groups, shops and of course churches around the Borough.

The Trustees, Robin, Norman, Eileen and Andy had to take decisions without having a lot of information on which to act and having to meet virtually just made the situation more stressful. We were forced at times to move out of our comfort zone and a lot of learning went on. Contacts with other TT foodbanks also proved to be very valuable.

So there were some “ups”, rather more “downs”, and bad hair days, but everyone worked hard to keep the teams cheerful. Our volunteers, as always, worked hard although many of the older members were themselves having to isolate so they were not able to offer their usual service. Going the extra mile became the norm. We also had to close our distribution centres for most of the year and deliver by car to clients. This may sound OK but put a lot more stress on our teams and created a new requirement for drivers. So going back to having the centres open for receiving clients could not come soon enough.

The big sadness came in December when our Chair of Trustees, Robin Ware died suddenly. This hit us all as he had been there at the beginning of BBF and he was highly regarded in the foodbank networks. He was passionate about the aim of Trussell Trust to see a “Hunger Free Future”, by “creating a UK without the need for foodbanks”. The current trustees will hold his legacy dear.

We were delighted that the then Mayor of Bromley, Hannah Gray, was so supportive of our work and visited our warehouse to present Amanda with the Borough of Bromley’s Certificate of Commendation. Then in October, the MP for Orpington, Gareth Bacon, also visited our warehouse and recognised the unfortunate need for foodbanks and was thankful for the work of BBF. So we are not working in isolation.

What about the future? We have seen some big swings in the number of clients we serve but see an upward trend that we anticipate continuing for some time with the fallout from job losses and financial pressures. We are confident we are in a good position to meet the challenges ahead and at least we are more used to adapting to changing conditions. Developing communications and data handling, within the constraints GDPR, will be an important part of this and this signals a very interesting future.

A particular challenge in the new year is the move to a new warehouse, necessitated by the Council’s redevelopment of the current site location. There is some logistics work to make the move but the main challenge is the financial impact. The Council has been generous letting us use an empty building in the Stockwell Park complex free but our new warehouse is going to cost us some £30,000pa in lease fees. It was very difficult to find new premises and we were horrified by the costs involved, so we have taken a relatively small building on a long lease. Fortunately, the money raised over the past year gives us the ability to feel relatively secure as long as financial support for our work stays at a high level.

On behalf of my fellow Trustees, staff, volunteers and most importantly, our clients I want to thank all those within the Borough and beyond who continue to walk with us in our journey. It is absolutely true that we could not meet our objectives without you.

Simon Lees

Chair of Trustees & Accounts Manager

Objectives and Activities

Bromley Borough Foodbank (BBF) is formed and shaped by Christian principles, in response to Jesus' command to "Love your neighbour as yourself" Math 22:39, and is linked to many churches in the Borough. It is a member of the Trussell Trust (TT) franchise that has as its vision "a UK without the need for foodbanks", thus ending hunger resulting from poverty. BBF pursues this within the London Borough of Bromley.

Underpinning this vision is the BBF objective to relieve hardship amongst people in the Borough and surrounding area by, in particular, but not exclusively:

- a) Providing emergency food and essential toiletries to individuals and families in need;
- b) Using such other means including the provision of support or signposting to relevant information and other advisory services supported by the churches in the Borough.

The charity's affiliation to TT provides it with many tools, processes, supply sources and in addition, TT has developed strategic links to a variety of organisations that enables a wide range of grants to be made available. Critically, anonymous client information is sent to TT that enables it to build a data-base across the UK, which it uses to inform and challenge Government and Local Council policy.

The main activities that BBF undertakes include:

- Running a number of distribution centres which are opened at different times during the week depending on the availability of the premises and volunteers
- Operating a warehouse for collecting, recording, sorting and organising distribution to the various centres
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- Linking with agencies which are entrusted to provide food vouchers to clients
- Working with schools which recommend families needing BBF support
- Liaising with supermarkets which provide food or financial support
- Developing relationships with churches and schools which commit to providing harvest festival supplies to the foodbank
- Gaining funding through presentations to a range of organisations, making collections, applying for grants and running fund raising events

Achievements and Performance

In one sense, the dominant feature of this year has been the pandemic, Covid-19. Government regulations and specifically lockdowns necessitated a number of significant changes to the way we operate. Some of these were difficult to implement and quick decisions forced upon us created uncertainties for staff, volunteers and our clients. It was only through the commitment and long working hours of all involved that we were able to continue servicing our clients in a safe way. More on this is included in the Covid-19 section.

However, it would be better to highlight the plight of the many families who were suffering food poverty while caught in the restrictions caused by Covid-19. This had serious knock on effects for the availability of food supplies and the number of clients needing help.

We had recruited a new Project Manager in March 2020 and extended the role of the Schools Liaison Officer to cover Community Liaison. The resulting additional hours of paid staff provided a stronger team for managing and developing the activities of the foodbank. Alongside these staff, we have a wonderful large pool of volunteers who are willing to take on a varied range of tasks and are enthusiastic about our objectives.

In October, we took on 2 part-time interns to help with a significant increase in activity which would have been hard to cover with volunteers. We were delighted that we have been able to provide this sort of opportunity for these interns.

Clients continue to be so thankful for the service we provide, which not only carries them through difficult times but also can help them to see a way out of their problematic situation.

During the year, we fed around 6,600 people in the Borough with some 2,800 being children. About a third of the adults are single or single parents. These numbers are stark reminders of a problem that exists even within our local community and must not be ignored or swept under the table.

Furthermore, at harvest time, many schools, churches and other organisations gave very generously even though restrictions were in place that limited meetings. However, our traditional food collections outside Tesco at Christmas were cancelled because of the ongoing health situation but we were still able to supply Christmas hampers to over 500 families. The normal event of providing lunches during the summer holidays was another casualty of Covid-19m restrictions.

In total, we were able to give out about 132,000Kg of stock to families and also supply some 20,000Kg to other foodbanks due to our receiving large deliveries from various supermarkets.

The reasons people visit foodbanks are very varied, including the universal credit system, mental health problems, dysfunctional families, homelessness and job loss. We provide the emergency supplies they need and through signposting to appropriate help agencies, try to improve their chances of moving to a more sustainable situation. Clients that visit us once they are back on their feet give us the reassurance that BBF does make a big difference.

Our volunteers who normally run the distribution centres and have the main contact with our clients, were not able to operate the centres but many were involved at the warehouse or delivering to clients. Clearly, without them the work of the foodbank would be greatly restricted. Clients come to us from over 150 referral agencies and when appropriate, send clients to them for help with underlying issues that have led to a food crisis. As most agents had their offices closed for the year, this activity was rather frustrated.

Covid-19 response

It started in the second half of March 2020, only 2 weeks after employing a new Project Manager who had to hit the road running. Suddenly all ways of working had to be reevaluated and changes had to be made, often on a weekly basis. While this was a very stressful time, it is interesting to note that a number of the changes we had to make have actually strengthened us for the future.

Food distribution

- *All centres had to close as a result of government regulations but also as many of the volunteers were isolating or in the “at risk” category. So how to get food to clients? We had to move into a system of deliveries by car. Very kindly Octopus Energy offered their local drivers to help with this, free of charge. We also put together teams of drivers. This generated a number of data protection issues and meant we had to increase our mobile phone count to 24!*

Voucher system & referral agents

- *The existing paper based voucher system proved difficult to operate with no centres open and many referral agents closing their offices. TT introduced a new electronic e-voucher systems that eliminated paper and meant the necessary information could be accessed easily. It took some while for the agents to be comfortable with this process but we imagine it will become the standard way to operate into the future.*

Volunteer database

- *Having many volunteers on file, not much short of 200, meant it was difficult to manage and ensure we matched people’s skill’s with requirements. TT had developed a piece of software called Assemble, which enables all volunteer information to be collected and held in a secure manner. We started to introduce this in November and found it not as easy to get up and running as we thought.*

However, it now works well and can be accessed by volunteers to ensure their data is current and greatly improves our ability to react to new requirements.

Team organisation

- *Social distancing was difficult to maintain in the warehouse as a lot of volunteers were involved in receiving and sorting stock. This was not helped when we experienced a Covid outbreak that meant we had to close the warehouse for some time. Fortunately, the Council came and fumigated the building to provide a quick cleaning process. We then decided to divide teams into bubbles and split the day into separate bubble slots.*

Extra food deliveries

- *When lockdown started, many shops and restaurants were left with stock that they could not use and offered many items to foodbanks around the country, including BBF. We well remember the whole floor of a hall in Orpington Baptist Church being covered with massive of items from TKMaxx. And more came flooding in over the months. In addition, TT made a deal with Tesco that sent pallet loads of food to our warehouse and we also had a deal with Morrisons for the same service. This was extremely important, especially when shops were short of stock. Having a large warehouse made us a focal point for these large deliveries and we were able to redistribute tonnes of items to other foodbanks, not always in the Bromley area.*

Incoming funds

- *From the beginning of the pandemic the public and organisations stepped up and donated significant funds to BBF. Our monthly donors went from 80 to 180 and we often received over 300 one-off gifts in a month. Churches made some major gifts and in addition, organisations that had not been involved with BBF before, were extremely generous. This all meant we did not suffer a funding problem and has provided us with a strong base as we go forward.*

Extra expenditure

- *In common with many other organisations, we had to purchase a range of PPE and other extra items to ensure the health of our teams. We also took on 2 part time interns to help with the extra works we had to cover.*

Links to Citizen Advice Bureau

- *We have always worked closely with CAB, which is critical to the success of getting people out of food poverty. With the help of a grant from TT we were able to commit to having a full time CAB person available to us for a year, both online and as we pull out of lockdown, at our distribution centres.*

Event Pictures



Visit by Bromley Mayor, Hannah Gray, presenting the Borough of Bromley's Certificate of Commendation to Amanda Stone, Project Manager - July 2020



Visit by the MP for Orpington, Gareth Bacon - October 2020

Organisations that helped/supported BBF during the Pandemic

Thousands of individuals regularly support our work by donating food or other supplies and money. During the worst periods of the pandemic, many more recognised the importance of what we do and got involved in a variety of ways. In addition, we link to dozens of member churches within the Borough which budget to fund our work and provide a conduit for food and other donations. Many were able to increase their commitment over the difficult Covid period even though they had their own problems to manage.

Such generosity was particularly important as the various lockdowns and restrictions that became necessary threatened to limit our effectiveness. Through campaigns and publicity of various kinds, the profile of the Trussell Trust Foodbanks was significantly enhanced and helped us to continue serving our clients when they most needed us.

Moreover, it was extremely encouraging that many companies and other organisations offered us real help through funds, extra food deliveries, free or reduced cost services and linking with us. Here is a list, and apologies to any that have been missed, of those that walked with us through the dark days of the pandemic.

Access Storage	Faulkner House	Octopus Energy
Anna Moody Photo	Forsters solicitors	Orpington FC
Antonio Carluccio Foundation	Harris Academy	PRA Group
Ardent Recruitment	Hayes Conference	Property World
Bickley Park School	Howdens Joinery	Rotary Beckenham
Bromley & Sheppards	Ipipeline TCP	Rotary Chislehurst
Bromley College	Keniston Housing	Rotary Crofton
Bromley Lions Club	Kurios Integrated	Rotary Langley Park
Bromley Metal	KY Wells Ltd	Rotary Orpington
Bromley Scrap	London Resea	Rotary Ravensbourne
Cannon Cars	Lund Trust	Rotary West Wickham
Cernoch Energy	Maidstone Pallet Company	SafeStore
Chislehurst & Sidcup School	Masonic Charity	Soroptimist
Claxton Associates	Maurice Fry	Tangent Club
Coppards	Morrisons	Tesco
Crofton Bakery	National Education Union	The Grand Charity
Crofton Residents	Nexus Education SC	The Reinventory Co
Deva Yoga	Norris Skips	TKMaxx
Explosive Alan	NW Kent Graduate Women	Waitrose
		West Midlands Crate and Dolly Company

Strategic Alliances

BBF does not operate in isolation. Over the years we have forged relationships with various organisations to support our work and particularly provide direct help to our clients. Three particular such links are with The Citizens' Advice Bureau, The Fuel Bank and Christians Against Poverty.

The Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) is a long established public body that is able to work alongside people to help them understand how to access appropriate help and in many cases, extra funds. They give people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward - whoever they are, and whatever their problem. This national charity and network of local charities offer confidential advice online, over the phone, and in person, all for free.

We have always used CAB as a referral agent as they are a focal point for many in difficulties. In 2020, we agreed to fund the secondment of a full time CAB employee who is available to our clients for advice. During lockdown this has mainly been via telephone contact but the intention is this will involve CAB being located at our distribution centres once they reopen. Clients will then be able to be put in contact with this representative when they visit to receive their food supplies.

Since this secondment began, CAB has worked with 84 clients and helped them gain over £22,000 in income or reduced debt. These clients represent a wide range of circumstances and ages, most with unsupportable debts.

An illustrative case study:

A client came to Citizens Advice via Bromley Borough foodbank – a direct referral. He had used foodbanks previously; in fact a 3rd time in a 6-month period. He had a full time that he lost after the first lockdown in 2020 and has had irregular work since then. While on Universal Credit, he has been struggling, partly as home schooling had resulted in higher energy consumption.

He was issued with a food and fuel voucher as well as information on Council Tax Support that he would be eligible for but had not made a claim. He was also advised about applying for school dinner assistance for when his children went back to school; which he applied for and received.

The client was empowered to request suspension of car finance payments until his income increased, and the lease company granted this. He cancelled his broadband service as he was paying excess amounts per month for this, but still being in contract, he was empowered to request this early cancellation and it was granted. He was informed about the fact that grants for energy and water are available and

that he could apply for these. Finally, he was also given information on doing a benefits check to ensure all financial support available was being received.

The client was very grateful for the food and fuel vouchers and was left feeling better about the family's situation and felt encouraged to contact both the loan company and broadband provider to request relief. He was pleased that assistance with school meals for the children was granted. Overall he was feeling much better about their situation and had made contact with an agency about some work which was looking very promising. He felt that things were improving.

As follow up he was made aware of Bromley Well's number for additional help if required and he thanked the advisor for holistic advice, guidance and support and found the service invaluable.

The Fuel Bank is a relatively new organisation and probably not that well known. It has as its vision "a UK where everyone has access to energy for heating and eating." The Foundation was set up to develop sustainable solutions to support homes in fuel crisis, unable to top up their prepayment meters. Fuel Bank is currently available in selected foodbanks and advice agencies across Great Britain and provides a top up voucher that provides approximately two weeks' worth of fuel to clients who use a prepayment meter to heat their home and to cook with, and who have been deemed as in crisis need by an independent referrer.

Many of the families seeking help from foodbanks are often also in fuel crisis and have to make the choice between heating or eating. People shouldn't have to make this choice and this is why the Fuel Bank movement was set up.

In 2020, BBF agreed an alliance with the Fuel Bank whereby vouchers are given to clients who are in fuel crisis and they can then receive the necessary help. So far, 64 vouchers have been approved and this means 64 families did not have to manage without heating. In support of this BBF has committed to providing funds to the Fuel Bank. In order to be able to do this we have been able to use a grant made by DEFRA.

Christians' Against Poverty (CAP) is a national network of local groups that work with people in debt and has been providing free professional debt help through local churches since 1996. CAP also runs community groups offering help with money management, life skills, breaking habits and finding work. Thousands become debt free every year through the services of CAP and many more empowered to move forward in life. As many in food poverty are there because of pressures of debt, it has been strategically important for BBF to link with the local CAP group, London Bromley, and at the same time CAP operates as a referral agent for BBF. This is an important part of signposting by the foodbank to ensure clients have a route out of food poverty.

Public benefit

The Borough of Bromley is relatively wealthy; however, there still exists a significant number of people and families within the Borough who are in need of emergency supplies of food and other essential items. Analysis shows that the main causes of this are low income, benefit delays & changes, debt, no recourse to public funds and sickness. During 2020 the pandemic helped to raise the profile of foodbanks as the public saw for themselves how people could be suddenly put in a position of need. They also observed the failure of national governments and local councils to respond sufficiently. Without foodbanks such as BBF there would be no help for those finding themselves in food poverty, a direct consequence of financial poverty.

The BBF centres are set up to provide a whole range of food items and other supplies that are carefully packaged into appropriate parcels. There are standards that specify the best mix of foods to provide nutritious meals for individuals and families of different sizes. These take account of dietary needs as well as ages and number of children. In addition, various household goods are provided where needed to help with hygiene.

All the items distributed by BBF are donated by a wide range of individuals and organisations around the Borough. These donors and others often also make financial gifts to ensure BBF is financially secure. In addition, various grants are available from grant organisations or others, e.g. supermarkets.

Provisions are only given out on the basis of foodbank vouchers which, in order to provide the most appropriate help, are obtained from local agencies. If the agent feels someone is struggling to put food on the table due to financial hardship, they will issue them with a foodbank voucher. The local agency can also provide long-term support if needed to help address some of the issues behind the reasons for the crisis.

BBF works with a number of different agencies, such as Citizens Advice, children's centres, housing associations, Christians Against Poverty, schools, social services, Hestia, health visitors and many others. They help identify the cause of the crisis, offering practical guidance and allow BBF to prepare suitable emergency food for the right number of people.

We also support a Community Fridge organisation in the Borough that is able to give out foodstuffs, not part of our remit, eg fresh fruit or vegetable.

We were delighted by the enthusiasm for our work shown by the current Mayor of Bromley, who has visited our warehouse and been an encouragement to our teams.

From this, it is clear that the BBF is providing extremely valuable public benefits.

Stories/Testimonies

"I lost my job in September and have now got to the point where I'm on my last legs so I rang Bromley Foodbank. Within a couple of days I had three big bags of food delivered by a lovely, smiley man which included porridge, tins of soup/vegetables/fruit/rice pudding, a box of tea, some toothpaste etc. and there was even a little box of Celebrations and a packet of chocolate digestives - my fave! I was so happy - it felt like Christmas! The people I spoke to on the phone and via e-mail were so very kind and helpful and it was so easy to arrange so thank you again, very much." – *from client helped in Feb 2021*

"Bromley Foodbank has literally been my lifeline since the pandemic started, having three young children and not working has hit us all hard like many families. All the staff are very efficient and helpful. Received the food parcel, which was amazing my kids thought Christmas has come early seeing the cupboards full. Also, some weeks I can manage to fill the cupboards but never have enough to top the gas and electric up, the fuel voucher scheme is soo good. It helps me so much and it's one less worry at the moment. Can't praise this system enough!!" – *from client helped in March 2021*

"From the bottom of my heart, thank you. Matt from Citizens Advice Bromley has been superb. I'm totally overwhelmed with the food parcel. I was expecting one bag. I got four. The Christmas hamper is divine. I now have stuffing, pickles and even chocolate treats for Christmas day. Nearly everything is items I would buy myself and needed. It will keep me going into the New Year. To everyone involved, my sincere thanks." – *from client who received a Christmas hamper in 2020*

"My 18-year-old son lives in a semi-independent accommodation as he is on the autistic spectrum with adhd. He is in receipt of universal credit and this isn't a lot to live on and tough to budget for. It was a week before my son's next payment and he had run out of funds and food 4 days prior, I too was struggling. I reached out to the food bank, with anticipation, and embarrassment that I could not help my son.

I will never forget the response from Holly; friendly, helpful, non-judgemental, she was lovely and all my worries changed to relief, she quickly arranged a call to my son. The lady he spoke to could not have been better at speaking to Joe and he too was happy. Later that day the most wonderful food package was delivered, Joe sent me a photo and was over the moon and I was genuinely touched by the thoughtfulness; toilet roll, toothpaste, some Nutella and some treats as well as lots of things to make meals, the things that make you feel human not someone who is begging for food, I felt that this was recognised. I think the biggest thing I can say is the dignity that we experienced meant a lot." – *from client helped in March 2021*

Structure, Governance and Management

Bromley Borough Foodbank is governed by an agreed governance document and overseen by 6 Trustees.

It is part of a nationwide franchise network of foodbanks operating under the umbrella of the Trussell Trust.

There were 4 distribution centres operating within the Borough and run by the BBF:

Central Orpington

The Goodmead Centre
36 Chislehurst Rd
Orpington
BR6 0DG

Anerley

Christ Church
Anerley Road
SE20 8ER

Central Bromley

United Reformed Church
Widmore Road
Bromley
BR1 1RY

Orpington

Oak Community Church
345 Chipperfield Road
St Paul's Cray
BR5 2LJ

All these facilities are offered to BBF cost free.

In addition, a warehouse is operated from a Council owned building in the Stockwell Centre in Bromley (provided free), which is used to collect donated goods that are then weighed and recorded. This warehouse distributes items to the 4 distribution centres and is now a key part of our operations. We have enjoyed the use of this facility on a relatively short lease, although this has been extended a couple of times. However, we know we will have to vacate it in mid-2021, so have been seeking a new site which will not be free of charge.

2 self-storage units are used for long dated stock and supplied to BBF for free.

BBF operates with a salaried Project Manager and a part time Community Liaison Officer as well as using the services of a warehouse contractor. For support during the pandemic 2 interns were contracted part time to cover a range of necessary developments. In addition, there are many volunteers who run the various distribution centres and warehouse.

Trustees Details

Mr Robin Ware – Chairman, sadly died in December 2020

Rev Norman Dix

Mrs Eileen Childs

Mr Andy Clare

Andy Clare has a focus for the warehouse.

Eileen Childs manages the Orpington Centre.

New trustees are being sought and should be appointed in April 2021.

New Trustees are provided with information about UK foodbanks, the Trussell Trust that supports BBF and introduced to the various BBF distribution centres and warehouse. They are made aware of any legislation that is relevant to charities and foodbanks, including training where appropriate. Trussell trust provides a wide range of documentation relevant to trustees' responsibilities. There is no requirement for the Trustees to have DBS checks.

No trustee has received any remuneration or benefit from their position within the charity.

Financial Review

It is amazing how the local population responded to the call for help once the pandemic became established. Indeed, the first call went out just at the end of the last financial period and immediately we started to see the number of donations increase rapidly. Some months we received over 300 donations on top of our regular contributors. Accompanying the donations, we also received messages of hope and encouragement.

Especially moving were a number of people donating from their personal businesses and even children collecting sponsorship. Businesses and charitable organisations were also extremely generous, responding to increased publicity for foodbanks, in some cases their donations amounted to £000s. With this level of income we ended the year with a bank balance of some £465,000, something we could not have imagined a year ago.

This has put us in a position where we are able to cover not only the general running costs of BBF but also purchases of items that become in short supply. It has in addition enabled us to set up a separate fund in anticipation of the need to begin paying substantial rent on a new warehouse when we are obliged to vacate our current premises. As we expect the effects of Covid-19 will play out over a long period and create many more families unable to afford food, being secure in a warehouse will be a critical element of our future operations.

TT continued to make available some generous grants in partnership with a variety of organisations and we were successful in acquiring funds through this route. While we cannot rely on grants for general running costs as they are not guaranteed for the future, we understand there will be considerable amounts for the foreseeable future.

The number of regular, monthly donations stands at about 150, a big increase over the previous year, and we expect this to continue although some donors might need to review their giving. Churches around the borough were also very generous at a time when they themselves were going through a hard time with no physical services and therefore few opportunities to collect offerings. We have expanded the number of channels available for funding and this has made it easier for the public to support our work.

Gift aid was claimed on all giving by individuals who have provided a confirmation of their appropriate tax situation and we claimed under the Government's small gifts scheme. Many who provided one-off donations for the first time during the year didn't make any gift aid declarations so we may not have captured as much tax refund as might be possible.

The main operating costs relate to the Project Manager, the Community Liaison Officer and the contract with the warehouse manager. We had to spend various amounts to ensure the safety of our staff during the Covid-19 pandemic as well as some electronic equipment, laptops and phones in order to improve communications among our staff and volunteers.

Receipts and Payments Accounts

For the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021

	note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Last year £
Receipts					
Donations	1	307,589	1250	308,839	67,933
Gift Aid	2	44,762	0	44,762	5,206
Church funding	3	24,348	0	24,348	10,351
Grants	4	48,713	52,147	100,860	19,431
Fund raising		742	0	742	1,110
Sub total		426,154	53,397	479,551	104,031
Payments					
Staff		45,040	7,607	52,647	28,761
Contractor	5	16,606	0	16,606	14,630
Vehicle costs	7	2,428	0	2,428	3,245
Other	8	26,295	750	27,045	16,462
Sub total		90,369	8,357	98,726	63,098
Net of receipts/ (payments)		335,786	45,040	380,825	40,933
Opening cash funds		77,433	7,738	85,171	52,498
Closing cash funds		413,218	52,778	465,996	85,171

Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Cash funds

Bank	465,996
Total Cash	465,996

* No guarantees have been given whereby any potential liability is outstanding

* There are no debts outstanding secured by an express charge on assets

Signed on behalf of
the trustees

Signature

Date of
approval

Mr S Lees



17th September 2021

Accounting Policies

a) Basis of preparation. The accounts have been prepared on a Cash Receipts and Payments basis.

b) Grants receivable. Grant monies are only included once the funds have been received. Where grants given are linked to specific activities or expenditure, they are accounted for as Restricted Funds.

c) Fixed assets. The charity does not hold any material fixed assets.

d) Reserves targets. The general reserve level has been uplifted to £20,000 in recognition of increased commitments for staff and contractual charges. This policy will be kept under review.

e) Warehouse Lease Fund. In anticipation of a need to lease a new warehouse facility in early 2021 as our current location is due for redevelopment, we have set up a new Fund. We are likely to have to commit to 5 years rental for the new warehouse at a cost of about £30,000 per annum. To be prudent we have set this new fund at a level of £150,000.

Notes to the Accounts

1. Individual donations, some from companies, increased very significantly when Covid-19 became a pandemic and continued to grow throughout the year. The number of regular donors went up from some 70 to 130 while we received gifts from over 240 people. In addition, many organisations donated funds ranging from £10s to £10,000, in a lot of cases companies which had not been involved with BBF before.
2. Gift aid has been claimed for everyone who has confirmed their eligibility for such tax refunds as well as anonymous gifts under the HRMC small gift scheme. The big increase over last year reflected the large increase of individual donations.
3. Church funding remains an important underpinning of our activities, with levels of support growing during the year despite many churches suffering loss of income due to their forced closure due to Covid-19.
4. A number of grants were received during the year. Through Trussell Trust we received £29,206 toward funding a CAB secondee and £15,000 for use against expenditure on our new warehouse. ASDA gave their 2nd year contribution to cover some staff costs. A DEFRA grant of £41,000 was obtained as a non-restricted contribution.

5. We covered a full year's cost of a Project Manager, a Community Liaison Officer and 2 part time interns.
6. Various purchases were made during the year, mainly in relation to protection from Covid-19 plus £4,000 for new storage crates.
7. Our closing funds show a very substantial increase over the previous year and means we are in a secure position as we move forward, especially as it is expected that donations are likely to be affected by the ongoing economic situation.

Benefits not included in the financial report.

-Some 80 volunteers undertook 4 hours per week free of charge providing a benefit of at least £160,000.

-Various premises were again provided free of charge to be used as distribution centres and this is a further benefit of at least £15,000.

-Generally, all items given out to clients are donated free to the Foodbank, although occasionally emergency purchases are undertaken. During the year, 132,000Kgs were distributed with an assumed value of £230,000.

Restricted funds - £

	Opening	Incoming	Outgoing	Closing
Strategic facilities	0	15,000	0	15,000
TT CAB support	0	29,206	0	29,206
ASDA	7,608	7,942	7,608	7,942
Soroptomists	0	750	750	0
Rotary Club	0	500	0	500
LDF	130	0	0	130

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
BROMLEY BOROUGH FOODBANK**

I report on the accounts of the Bromley Borough Foodbank for the year ended 31st March 2021.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43 (2) of the Charities Act (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts (under section 43 (3) (a) of the 1993 Act);
- To follow procedure laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 43 (7) (b) of the 1993 Act); and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.


INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Act, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act

have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: 
Name: Catherine Emma Gower Melia
Non-serving Elder, The Temple United Reformed Church,
High Street, St Mary Cray,
Kent, BR5 4AX

Address: 34 Lee Church Street
Lewisham
London SE13 5SF

Date: 10th August 2021