

BRIDGING THE GAP (MANCHESTER)

England & Wales · Charity number 1170952

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2017-01-03

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

Contact

Address The Wesley Centre
Royce Road
Manchester
M15 5BP

Phone 07842093922

Email info@manchestersouthcentral.foodbank.org.uk

Website www.manchestersouthcentral.foodbank.org.uk

Activities

Objects: THE PREVENTION OR RELIEF OF POVERTY AND THE RELIEF OF THOSE IN NEED, HARDSHIP OR DISTRESS IN GREATER MANCHESTER, IN PARTICULAR BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY THE CITY OF MANCHESTER AND TRAFFORD, BY PROVIDING SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING THE OPERATION OF A FOODBANK) AIMED AT ALLEVIATING THE SOCIAL EXCLUSION OF THOSE DISADVANTAGED BY THEIR SOCIAL AND/OR ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES, REDUCING INEQUALITY AND BUILDING STRONG, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES THAT EMPOWER PEOPLE TO BE INDEPENDENT AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR LIVES. NOTHING IN THIS CONSTITUTION SHALL AUTHORISE AN APPLICATION OF THE PROPERTY OF THE CIO FOR THE PURPOSES WHICH ARE NOT CHARITABLE.

Activities: The prevention or relief of poverty and the relief of those in need, hardship or distress in Greater Manchester by providing services and activities aimed at alleviating the social exclusion of those disadvantaged by their social and/or economic circumstances, reducing inequality and building strong, sustainable communities that empower people to be independent and in control of their lives.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, Disability, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Economic/community Development/employment
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** LOCAL
- Manchester City
- Trafford

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£184,563	£109,874	-	-
2024-03-31	£238,447	£214,375	-	-
2023-03-31	£244,739	£156,762	-	-
2022-03-31	£101,063	£74,356	-	-
2021-03-31	£153,611	£70,713	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
MICHELLE MCHALE BEM	Chair	2017-01-03
Brian Nicholson		2024-06-18
Chris Copestake		2022-04-01
Jennifer Usiobo		2024-06-18
MARIE GRACE BRINDLE HAWKINS		2017-01-03
Martin Pilkington		2023-12-14

Accounts



Bridging The Gap

Annual Report 2024 - 2025



A message from our Chair

Welcome to our Annual Report and Accounts for 2024–2025, a year in which our food bank responded to a 22% increase in demand and the Trussell community of food banks provided more than 3.1 million emergency food parcels to people facing hardship across the UK.

Imagine not knowing if you'll be able to feed your children this week. That's the reality for thousands of families in Manchester. The cost-of-living crisis has brought unimaginable hardship and poverty is now at alarming levels. 37% of children in Greater Manchester, and 44.7% of children in Manchester itself, are classed as living in poverty, making Manchester council the 6th highest level of child poverty in the county.

The statistics represent more than just numbers. They tell the stories of the lives of our families forced to make impossible choices between food, heating, and other essentials. Yet, despite the ongoing hardship, this report will show the incredible work that has been done and support that has been given to push for change and maintain hope.

Alongside providing an immediate lifeline for people in our communities, we have continued to support our clients towards longer-term change with our financial inclusion service and new volunteer Assist and Support Role. These services ensure that people on the lowest incomes can get support on money matters and are less likely to need our food bank in the future.

The support and generosity of all our funders and donors continues to amaze us and the dedication and tirelessness of our staff and volunteers is incredible. I want to extend my personal thanks, your belief in our mission, your generosity and your hard work makes a real difference to the lives of those we support, and we are profoundly grateful.

As we look ahead, it is clear that our service will face more challenges with the number of people needing our support continuing to rise. We will continue to work together with our partners, influence positive change for our communities and be guided by the lived experience of our clients to ensure we are working towards our vision of ending poverty and social exclusion within Greater Manchester.

Signed:



Michelle McHale, BEM





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Administration Details

Charity Name: Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

Charity Number: 1170952

Principal Address: Wesley Enterprise Centre, Unit 10, Royce Road, Manchester, M15 5BP

Telephone: 0161 226 3143

Email: info@manchestersouthcentral.foodbank.org.uk

Governance Structure

Bridging the Gap (Manchester) was constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, on 3 January 2017. Previous to this the assets and activities came under Bridging the Gap (Manchester) as an unregistered charity, established on 17th March 2014.

Management of Risk

Risk management is the process of identifying, evaluating and controlling risks. The responsibility for the governance and management of Bridging the Gap (Manchester) rests with its Trustee Board. We have identified and measured those risks that could have an impact on the on-going operation of the Charity. Bridging the Gap's trustees have given careful consideration to the major risks, which the organisation could be exposed to, and have satisfied themselves that systems and procedures are in place in order to manage those risks.

An annual risk audit is conducted to identify potential risks, and their likelihood. Using the audit results we draw up a new action plan each year to mitigate and reduce risks, where necessary, and to enable us to improve on our management of all risks. Progress with the action plan is then monitored at each Board meeting.



Our Vision

Working towards ending poverty and social exclusion within the Greater Manchester communities of Hulme, Moss Side, Whalley Range and Old Trafford.

Our Mission

To support people in immediate crisis by providing emergency food provisions and to seek longer term solutions to address the underlying causes of financial hardships, enabling communities to build resilience and a life free from poverty.

Our Strategic Priorities

- To respond to the cost of living crisis
- To alleviate poverty
- To reduce social isolation
- To build greater partnerships
- To be active leaders and influencers for positive change
- To raise awareness of the underlying causes of poverty
- To develop resilient communities, with the community as active partners

Our Staff and Trustee Board

Our Board of Trustees is made up of people with a range of knowledge, experience and understanding of the local community and voluntary sectors. Their breadth of expertise includes 30 years' experience of working and volunteering within youth and community settings, business and project management expertise and personal experience of poverty, living with and caring for family members with disability.

Michelle McHale, BEM Chair of Trustees

Marie Hawkins, Treasurer

Chris Copestake, Secretary

Lynda Mason, Trustee

Martin Pilkington, Trustee

Bryan Nicholson, Trustee

Jennifer O Usiobo, Trustee

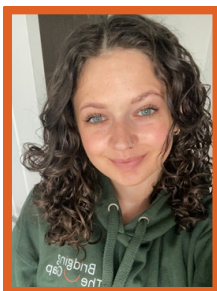
The expertise of our staff team has been as crucial as ever - the care that they show to our clients and the way in which they bring our values to life in every interaction they have. Our staff team is a total of one full-time and four part-time members of staff who between them ensured that the Charity continued to move forward positively and navigate what continues to be a challenging context.



Heidi Exell
Project Manager



Helena Canavan
Project Manager



Emily Jeremy
Session Lead &
Volunteer Coordinator



Corinne Davenport
Warehouse
Coordinator



Mark Styles
Warehouse
Assistant

Our Volunteers

The generosity and commitment of our volunteer team of over 50 people remains a constant source of inspiration to us. Each person gives their time, expertise and compassion to support people in our communities – and we simply could not deliver emergency food, offer further support, or campaign to end the need for food banks without them.

Throughout the 2024/25 year they provided **6490.3 hours** of free labour. As a 'real living wage' employer these volunteer hours amounted to a staggering **£81,777.98** of in-kind donation of time.



“I really enjoy working at the foodbank because I feel that I am doing something useful and rewarding although we shouldn't need foodbanks. I work with a great team of people who are competent, friendly and have the good of the people at heart. I enjoy helping at the warehouse preparing parcels and I am impressed with how well it is organised. Mostly, I prefer to deliver parcels to clients and I enjoy meeting and speaking with a wide range of people.”

Cat, volunteer

New Assist and Support Role

Assist and Support volunteers offer a compassionate presence, sitting down with clients over a brew to listen, chat, and help them feel heard. These conversations often lead to signposting towards other vital services in the local area, such as mental health support, housing advice, debt counselling, and immigration services.

Assist and Support volunteers help us to support clients holistically by reducing isolation, and connect individuals and families with a broader network of support.

Embedding lived experience knowledge across our work

Some of our volunteer team have previously accessed food banks themselves, bringing an understanding, and relatability to the support they provide. Their first-hand experiences help shape a more compassionate and inclusive environment.

These volunteers not only ensure the smooth running of the foodbank, but also play a crucial role in informing how we run our services, ensuring our approach remains rooted in dignity and respect. Their contributions highlight the importance of creating volunteering pathways for people who have used our services, reinforcing the idea that everyone has something to offer.

As part of our commitment to break down barriers and increase accessibility to volunteering, we've taken proactive steps to make our training and support more inclusive by translating key training materials, ensuring that volunteers and clients who do not speak English as their first language can still access the support they need.

Summer Intern

Over the 2024 summer we hosted a Manchester University intern, alongside Manchester Central foodbank. She played an indispensable role in ensuring that our busy school uniform project ran efficiently. Through processing referrals, contacting parents, and ordering school uniforms, hundreds of children were able to attend school with the correct uniform thanks to Summaya's support.

Corporate volunteering

This year we relied on corporate volunteers more than ever to support us with the running of our busy service. They played crucial roles in bringing in donations, supporting the holiday hunger project and assisting with our office move. Volunteering at 14 supermarket collections our corporate teams helped to bring in over 3030kg of food and £950.

"Volunteering at the food bank is such a simple way to give back, and it's amazing how just a few hours can make someone's day a little easier.... And knowing all that energy and fun was going toward helping others made it even better. It was volunteering, teamwork, laughter, and doing good all wrapped into one."

San Carlo volunteer



San Carlo Volunteers

Our Supporters

Everything we do as a charity is only possible because of our generous supporters. We are hugely grateful for the contributions of individual supporters, our community and corporate partners, trusts and foundations. Thanks to their support, we were able to meet the immediate needs of people facing hunger and financial hardship in our communities.

Here we highlight just a few other examples of the amazing support we have had this year and apologise to those we just haven't had the space to name

School, Church and Mosque collections

Every year we are blown away by the generosity of our communities.

The local schools, churches and mosques continue to support our work and their neighbours by not only holding food collections for us but challenging the society we are living in to work towards a more just and equal society where everyone can afford the essentials.



Rummage in the Range

For the second year, we are the chosen charity for this monthly car boot event in Whalley Range. Special thanks to Andy, the founder of Rummage and Janet, our monthly volunteer. Their continued support has enabled us to continue running our stall selling pre-loved items, holding a monthly raffle and collecting food donations. Last year the stall raised just under £800. This brilliant community event provides the perfect opportunity to talk about and raise awareness about our work with the local community.



Manchester United Supporters Trust

We are absolutely thrilled to be supported by this amazing football supporters trust. Not only do they raise vital funds to help our services continue but also work alongside us to challenge the policies and mindsets that drive an increase in food bank need. This year they have donated an incredible £12,480



Albert Hall

Chosen charity for their annual Give Back campaign. As well as financial donations, their venue staff chose to take part in our Reverse Advent Calendar.



Veg Box People

We partnered with this local fruit and veg producer who very kindly offered us their surplus fruit and veg. Enabling us to offer our clients fresh, organic, locally grown produce to compliment their emergency food parcels.



Our Services

Bridging the Gap (Manchester) provides a number of services to the community. These include our emergency foodbank provision and our 'More Than Food' projects.

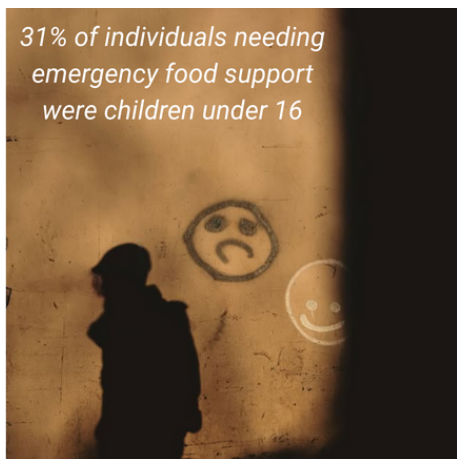


During 2024–2025, our emergency food provision saw a **22% increase** in demand. While the impact of the cost of living crisis continues to be felt among our communities, our weakened social security system is also simply ill-equipped to protect people from the most severe forms of hardship.

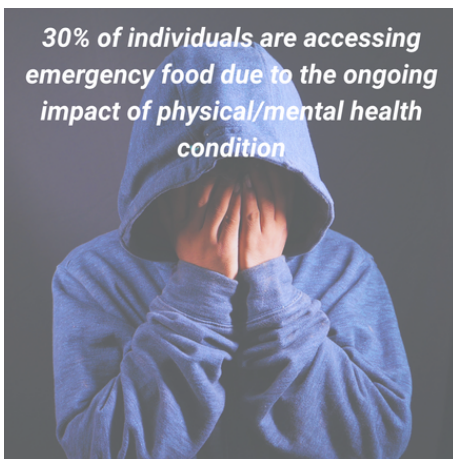
The staff and volunteer teams in our foodbank hubs have continued to negotiate and adapt to the challenges we face with resilience, strength and compassion. They provide a warm, dignified and welcoming space which enables us to deliver our More Than Projects, supporting our clients with food as well as financial and fuel related advice and support.

Alongside increases in demand we are now faced with the twin challenges of decreasing donations of food – as people who would normally give food generously have faced their own pressures – and higher prices when purchasing our own stock. Over the last 2 years we have been forced to purchase more and more food, with the total amount of stock that was purchased rather than donated almost doubling, from **17% to 33%**

31% of individuals needing emergency food support were children under 16



30% of individuals are accessing emergency food due to the ongoing impact of physical/mental health condition



1 in 2 of our households access food support because their income doesn't come the essentials



"Foodbank have been excellent, I am so grateful. There is wonderful support, lovely service and fantastic people."

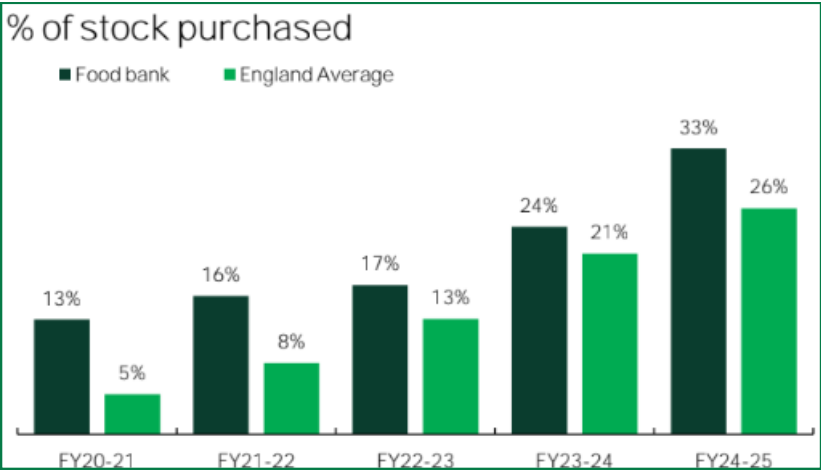
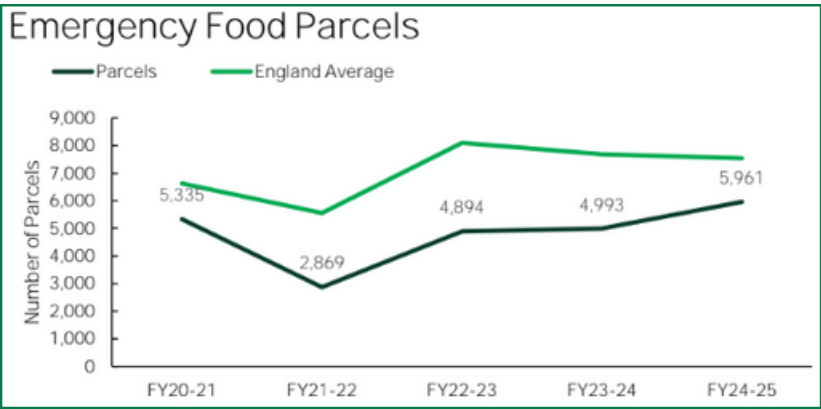
Food bank client

Foodbank Statistics 2024/2025

Foodbank Centre	Food Vouchers issued	Adults Fed	Children Fed	Total Individuals supported
Hulme	1307	1816	874	2690
Old Trafford	913	1195	496	1691
Whalley Range	845	1127	453	1580
TOTALS	3065*	4138	1823	5961

*62593.0 Kg of food distributed

22% increase in the number of individuals supported compared with our 2023-24 figures



"[Manchester South Central] food banks have been a lifeline for the families I work with and we have built a very positive relationship with them. Families who have struggled financially due to changes in benefits, employment and those in working poverty have all benefited from accessing emergency food supplies at times of crisis or change and also heightened stress and anxiety. Food banks are my 'go to' support service for families in need and I am very appreciative of the partnership we have and the genuine relationships we have developed over the years."

Referral Partner

• More Than Food •

Our 'More Than Food' projects provided support to our clients beyond our standard emergency food provision. Many of our 'More Than' projects are delivered in partnership with other organisations.

Financial Inclusion Services

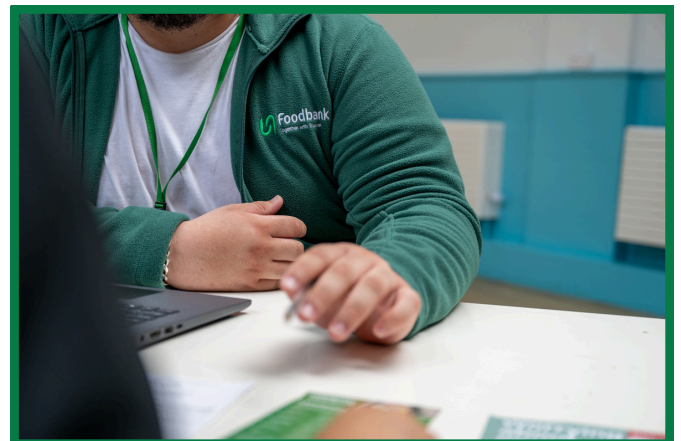
This was the second year of our Financial Inclusion project, which placed an advisor at each of our weekly foodbank sessions, ensuring our clients were able to speak to a professional about the underlying cause of their crisis, at the same time as accessing food support. Our advice workers delivered advice and support around income maximisation, specifically in respect of the benefits system, as well as offering debt and housing advice.

This project was delivered in partnership with the six Trussell Trust affiliated foodbanks across Manchester City Council. It used grant funding to employ Citizens Advice and Manchester Mind advisers who work across our foodbank sessions.

Our end of year reporting showed an amazing **£403,678** of financial gains for our clients.

"I love the service and that you can get help without feeling that you are being judged"

Client



Following a road traffic accident, client X had significantly reduced mobility and was particularly unwell. After working with our advisor to log a successful appeal for an incorrect health assessment and years of underpayment, X was awarded an extra £416 per month, nearly doubling his current income, and a £13,399 back pay for the money X should have had since his accident.

Manchester Mind Advice worker

Winter and Christmas support

From November 2024 to March 2025 provided support and advice to our clients to help combat energy costs during the winter months.

We distributed '**Staying Warm Through Winter**' advice leaflets and **348** blankets



COOP team Volunteers

260 Christmas Toy Sacks Delivered

Families identified by schools and local community centres as living in poverty were provided with a toy sack. Each sack was tailored to the child's age and gender to ensure that all local children were able to wake up to a present from Father Christmas.

140 Seasonal Care Hampers Delivered

Christmas can be particularly isolating for older people. As a way of offering support and spreading some festive happiness, we distributed seasonal care hampers to older residents in our community. These hampers included baked treats, toiletries and winter essentials. Our special thanks goes to our partners in this initiative, including Manchester Metropolitan University, Big Life, One Manchester and People First.



"This is a little note with a huge thanks attached. I am a single mum of 2. This time of year is incredibly hard and emotionally and financially demanding. These parcels were unexpected but very much appreciated.

Client

On behalf of us all at St. John Vianney School, I would like to extend our deepest thanks and appreciation for your incredible support this Christmas. Your generosity in providing food hampers and toys for our families has made a truly meaningful difference in their lives during what can be a difficult time of year. We are truly grateful for your continued support and for the invaluable role that South Manchester Food Bank plays in supporting families. Your compassion and commitment to making a positive impact on the community are inspiring, and we are privileged to have partners like you. I have enclosed some of the thank you messages I received from our parents and carers.

Thank you once again for your generosity.

Family Liaison Officer

Family Support Projects

Poverty is now at alarming levels. 37% of children in Greater Manchester and 44.7% of children in Manchester itself, are classed as living in poverty.

The ongoing cost-of-living crisis has brought unimaginable hardship to our families. These statistics represent more than just numbers. They tell the stories of families forced to make impossible choices. As such, Bridging the Gap continued to operate multiple projects that supported families, through partnerships with schools and other community projects, to ensure that we reached the families most in need.

Holiday Hunger

Our Holiday Hunger parcels provide 5 days worth of food for families. We provide these to every primary school in our area during each holiday and half term. The parcels are distributed to families considered most in need by our partner schools to ensure targeted support.

Because of the educational disadvantage for children living in poverty, we also provide creative art and science packs, as well as books and play activities in our Holiday Hunger parcels, to address the educational attainment gap.

1069 'Holiday Hunger' parcels
distributed to families in our
communities.

4,115 individuals were supported.



Pharmacist Support volunteers

"The food parcel makes a big difference and if I didn't get it I wouldn't have the money to feed myself"

'It would be even more expensive. You're doing more driving in the holidays and more washing, everything. It's double trouble!'

Family

School Uniform Services

2024/25 saw the continuation of our school uniform project, which we ran in collaboration with One Manchester and Peter Kershaw Trust who provided the grant funding.

Through this project Bridging the Gap purchased uniform items for children living in poverty who were referred to us by schools, the early help/social care service, housing associations or community organisations. School uniform items were then bought that were specific to each child's needs.

**369 children supported
with new school clothing**

Average £60 per child

"We live in a single income household, and I have three young children... The cost of living crisis has affected us as a family... The rise in utility bills on one income has been something which has been hard to navigate, [this school uniform grant] will support me in ensuring that my children will have their uniform and I will have the money to go towards essential bills."

Parent

Pre-loved School Uniform Provision

This service supplemented the high demand for our school uniform grant programme. It helps to ensure our work is as cost effective and sustainable as possible, as well as assisting additional families finding it hard to buy school uniforms for their children. Pop up shops were hosted over the summer at the local refugee hotel, National Play Day in Hulme Park and Stretford Public Hall.

Through our pre-loved provision we were able to provide additional items to other families, some of whom self-referred to us for school uniform support.

**Over 100
children
supported
with
preloved
uniform**



Digital Inclusion

Continuing for a second year with our partners One Manchester we provided digital access for children aged 4-18 years who were in education but were digitally excluded.

Families were provided with laptops and access to information regarding social tariffs ensuring families are able to access affordable broadband.

39 children supported with recycled laptops through our partners Community Computers

Total cost £4609

"The laptop really helped, my eldest daughter wouldn't have been able to complete her homework without it. We really appreciate the support"

Parent



Strategic Partnerships

Through a shared vision to end the need for food banks we have partnered with a number of companies to provide additional support for our food bank clients.



Our partnership with The Cadent Foundation continued with a £1000 grant to issue supermarket vouchers to clients accessing food support. A cash initiative of this type enabled our clients to have the freedom of choice to purchase whatever essentials they needed during the extremely difficult winter months and was invaluable, additional income.



New for 2024-25. Their Mobile Advice Centre was located outside our St. Bride's hub with the YES team who provide energy saving advice, tailored checks and confidential income maximisation help.



The Fuelbank Foundation is the only UK charity to focus on the challenges of people living in fuel crisis.

Through this partnership clients facing fuel poverty can be issued a voucher which provides ten days of energy. The voucher amount varying between £30-£89, depending on the price of energy and average consumption projections for each month.

486 Fuelbank vouchers issued

providing a critical lifeline to many of our clients, more and more of whom were reporting being unable to afford to keep themselves warm during the winter months.

The logo for The Hygiene Bank, featuring a yellow background with the text "THE HYGIENE BANK" in bold, black, uppercase letters.

**THE HYGIENE
BANK**

We continued to be a 'community partner' for The Hygiene Bank, a national charity that collects and distributes hygiene products to front line organisations.

1051kg toiletries and cleaning products
donated and distributed to our clients.



Our partnership with Tesco Mobile allowed us to distribute pre-loaded Sim cards to our clients. Each card provides six months of free text messaging, calling credit and mobile data.

These Data Sims act as a lifeline for digital inclusivity for many of our clients who would otherwise be unable to stay connected to services, family and friends. Digital inclusion is vital to avoid social isolation.

Over 100 sim cards
donated and distributed to our clients.

Community and Partnership Work

Lasting change happens when wider society thinks and acts differently about an issue, by building understanding and empathy about the drivers of food bank use, we can empower people to take action. Our community work in 2024/25 continued to focus on helping to build empathy and an understanding of why people were still struggling to afford the daily essentials of life and their need to access emergency food.

School Workshops

Following on from the success of last year, we have continued to develop a half day workshop with our local school partners. Students are given the opportunity to run a food collection campaign within their school community, deliver the donations to our warehouse, then process and pack the food items ready for distribution.

Alongside understanding the operations of our service, our staff team helps facilitate a discussion around why people are left with no choice other than to turn to a food bank for support and how we believe that together, we can campaign for change through the Trussell Guarantee our Essentials campaign.



"Thank you again for having the children! They had a great time and it's really opened their eyes to why foodbanks are so important...."

Teacher, William Hulme's Grammar

Work Experience Opportunities

Hosting work experience placements at the food bank is a powerful way to educate young people about food insecurity while fostering a sense of social responsibility and community engagement. It gives students hands-on experience in a charitable environment, helping them develop valuable skills, while directly contributing to their community.

We were delighted that young people from our community attending Trinity High School, Manchester University and Digital Independent Specialist College took up opportunities to work alongside us.

Hulme Partnership Network

Alongside Hulme's Neighbourhood Officer, Pauline Campbell, Bridging the Gap coordinates the Hulme Partnership Network. The network consists of a number of community organisations committed to building anti-poverty communities. This year the partnership has hosted a number of events including:

- International Women's Day
- Unsung Heroes
- Great British Spring Clean
- Active Street Activities
- National Play Day
- Hulme Winter Festival



Through these events BTG is able to carry out Community Conversations to gather feedback and first-hand experiences of the challenges our community member's encounter. The collated feedback is shared with the partnership to enable discussions around supporting the community to address and develop services to address local needs. All activities are fully funded by the partners and local supporters enabling us to provide all activities free of charge for community members.

"I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to you and your colleagues at Ascension Church Hulme for your understanding and accommodating approach during the recent event. Your support allowed my daughter and me to fully participate in the experience with Santa, which meant a great deal to us. Your staff's recognition of my autism and anxiety significantly reduced my stress, enabling my daughter to enjoy the occasion."

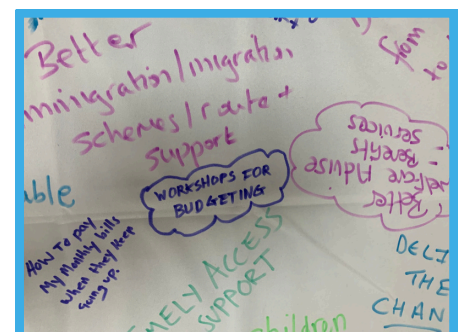
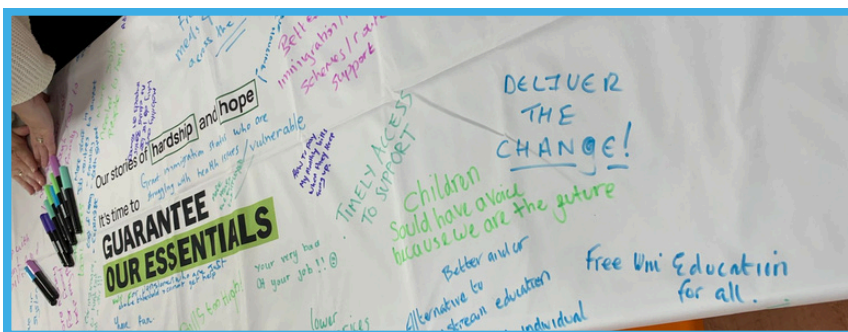
SEND Parent

Partnership Work

Partnership work is vital to ensure a holistic and strategic local support system. We work closely with partners in delivering our services across our many projects. Importantly, we also actively network through local partnership meetings and work as active community leaders that advocate for our clients.

Our staff and Trustees participated in the following during 2024/25:

- Health Equality Network
- Pathways to Work Roundtable
- Feeding Britain Network
- Trussell Trust Regional Forum
- Old Trafford Community Collective
- Manchester Foodbank Consortium
- Hulme Partnership Network
- Our Manchester Food Partnership
- Making Manchester Fairer Anti-Poverty Insight Group
- Greater Manchester Food Security Action Network
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority Network
- Hulme, Moss Side & Rusholme Partnership
- Manchester Anti-Poverty Research Community



Supporting National & Local Campaigns

During 2024/25 Bridging the Gap was active in its support of various campaigns that highlighted some of the inequalities in our society that in turn increased the demand for our services. These included: -

Guarantee Our Essentials

Bridging the Gap supported the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Trussell Trust's 'Guarantee Our Essentials' national campaign. Guarantee our Essentials calls for a strengthened social security system, with an Essentials Guarantee embedded, that ensures everyone can afford the essentials.

It's time for change and to guarantee the essentials of life for everyone.

No Child Left Behind

Bridging the Gap supported the No Child Left Behind campaign, fighting to break down the barriers poverty puts up around equal access to education. The campaign calls on the Government to commit to eradicating child poverty in the UK and offer free school meals to all so no child is left behind.

We believe that no child should be left behind and every child should have an equal chance to succeed in education, free from the barriers of poverty.

Manchester School Uniform Campaign

Our ever increasing work around school uniform provision highlighted the need for an educational change around the cost of school uniforms.

We know that the required amount of school clothing items, especially with a school's logo on it, drives up uniform prices and impacts heavily on family incomes.

Bridging the Gap therefore joined with its local uniform partners to call for local councils and the government to review the 'Schools' Guidance on School Uniform Costs'.

Ensure the affordability of school clothing for all parents.

Finance and Accounting

Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

We ensured our sustainability by using a diverse range of income streams, these included trust funding, partnerships with local supermarkets, schools, churches, individual and corporate donations.

Due to the growth of and demand on the charity services it became apparent that our current method of excel accounting needed reviewing and modernising. The board of trustees consulted with the Charity's finance officer and Beever and Struther Accountants to explore alternative methods of accounting. The Trustees agreed to move the current accounting practices over to the Xero Accounting Platform. This transition provides the Charity with the ability to better manage the increase in financial receipts and payments. In addition the new platform also enables the Charity to provide more in-depth financial reporting to trustees at board meetings allowing trustees to exercise their financial duties more effectively.

The trustees would like to extend their gratitude to Beever and Struther staff and the Charity's finance officer for their support and assistance in managing the movement of accounts and for the financial training provided to both staff and trustees. The Charity's accounts were prepared under the receipts and payments method and were scrutinised by an independent examiner in line with Charity Commission requirements.

Principle sources of funding

Principle sources of funding Notable sources of funding (£5,000 and above) for year ending 2024/25:

Funder	Amount
The Trussell Trust	£55,036.67
One Manchester	£40,528.75
Local Giving	£33,254.25
Crowd Funding	£13,236.43

	UNRESTRICTED (2025)	RESTRICTED (2025)	DESIGNATED (2025)	2024
Account Overview				
Income	(39,162)	(140,453)	(12,968)	(226,505)
Expenditure	64,369	147,331	-	202,433
Surplus/ (Deficit)	25,207	6,878	(12,968)	(24,072)
Retained Earnings	10,742	(34,813)	-	-
Unrestricted Funds	(4,862)	-	-	(74,097)
Restricted Funds	-	-	-	(157,077)

Finance and Accounting (Part 2)

Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Reserves Statement

The purpose of our reserves policy is to safeguard the charity's operations against unforeseen financial challenges, such as unexpected drops in income or sudden increases in costs, while also ensuring that we have a stable foundation to support ongoing activities, invest in future development, and seize opportunities that align with our charitable objectives.

Our reserves are calculated by subtracting restricted funds, which are allocated for specific purposes and cannot be used for general operations, and designated funds, which have been set aside for particular projects or future needs, from our total unrestricted funds, ensuring that the remaining amount accurately reflects the resources available for the charity's ongoing activities and financial stability."

We continue to work towards building our target for reserves equivalent to six to twelve months of operating costs, which is approximately £45,000 to £90,000. This level ensures we can meet our obligations, respond to unexpected events such as sudden drops in income or unforeseen expenses, and provide a financial buffer that supports the continuity of our services and the achievement of our long-term objectives.

Our reserves policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees to ensure it remains appropriate for the charity's needs, taking into account any changes in the charity's financial position, operational requirements, or external economic conditions that may impact its sustainability.

Our reserves policy ensures transparency and accountability to our stakeholders, providing them with a clear understanding of how we manage our financial resources and demonstrating our commitment to responsible governance and financial stewardship.

Food and Hygiene Assets

The charity continues to substantially rely on donations of food and hygiene products from the general public, including local business and corporate partners. Donated items for 2024/2025 amounted to 38,744.45kg (£91,824.35), compared to 47,270.74kg (£112,031.65) in 2023/2024. These figures demonstrate a continuous year on year decline in donations, which we attribute to the cost of living crisis and the impact of increased food costs to donors. A further 6,688.79kg (£15,852.38) of food was kindly donated via other foodbanks.

The total amount of stock purchased rather than donated almost doubled, from 17% to 33%. A further 22,412.46kg of stock was purchased at a notable value of £53,117.53 to assist the Charity to meet the demands in emergency food support.

Throughout 2024/2025 a staggering 67,845.68kg of food and hygiene products were distributed through our projects, compared to 53,650.17kg in 2023/2024.

At year end 31/03/2025 the total food and hygiene assets holding amounted to 9,914.62kg at a value of £23,497.65

The trustees are extremely grateful to all our funders, donors, fundraisers, members of the public and the food providers that supported us throughout the year. It is because of their generosity and trust in our Charity that we were able to support those in need during 2024/25.

Declaration

The Board of Trustees declare that this is a true reflection on services provided and have approved the report.

Signature



Name: Michelle McHale, BEM

Position: Chair of Trustees

Dated: 28/01/26

Profit and Loss

Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	DESIGNATED	RESTRICTED	UNRESTRICTED	UNASSIGNED	2025	2024
Trading Income						
Core Costs Donation - Financial	3,972	6,078	(1,446)	483	9,087	10,117
Inclusion Donations - External	-	31,590	-	-	31,590	-
Venue Hire Donations - Food Bank	-	-	-	-	-	10,234
Donations - Partnership Donations -	400	5,130	-	3,000	8,530	30,506
Holiday Hunger Donations - School	-	7,370	-	2,779	10,148	2,250
Uniform Donations - Staffing/	-	18,701	-	447	19,148	18,987
Salaries Donations - Unrestricted	-	31,543	-	-	31,543	49,010
Donations - Volunteer/ Trustees	8,596	34,537	-	6,528	49,662	52,141
Donations - Winter Warmer Items & Xmas	-	-	40,608	-	40,608	47,922
Van Purchase Donations -	-	1,429	-	-	1,429	3,292
Fundraising	-	4,075	-	-	4,075	2,045
Total Trading Income	-	(21,495)	-	-	(21,495)	11,942
	-	239	-	-	239	-
	12,968	119,197	39,162	13,236	184,563	238,447

Cost of Sales

Financial Inclusion	-	24,652	-	-	24,652	21,657
Foodbank, Food & Costs	-	18,937	23	653	19,613	18,086
Holiday Hunger	-	4,500	-	-	4,500	11,879
Partnerships	-	9,432	-	-	9,432	1,666
School Uniform	-	41,910	-	-	41,910	49,388
Trustee/ Volunteer Costs	-	542	-	700	1,242	1,268
Unrestricted	-	-	354	-	354	935
Winter Warmer Items & Xmas	-	8,172	-	-	8,172	14,759
Total Cost of Sales	-	108,144	376	1,353	109,874	119,637

Gross Profit	12,968	11,052	38,786	11,883	74,690	118,809
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Operating Expenses

Audit & Accountancy Fees	-	-	4,131	-	4,131	-
General Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	9,614
Insurance	-	-	2,063	-	2,063	-
IT Software And Consumables	-	-	989	-	989	-
Pensions Costs	-	-	2,313	-	2,313	-
Postage, Freight & Courier	-	-	12	-	12	994
Salaries	-	17,532	51,502	-	69,034	75,032
Staff Training	-	150	402	-	552	-
Subscriptions	-	-	35	-	35	-
Telephone & Internet	-	10	427	-	437	-
Transport Costs	-	-	2,119	168	2,287	9,098

	DESIGNATED	RESTRICTED	UNRESTRICTED	UNASSIGNED	2025	2024
Costs - Fundraising	-	520	-	-	520	-
Total Operating Expenses	-	18,212	63,993	168	82,373	94,738
Net Profit	12,968	(7,160)	(25,207)	11,715	(7,683)	24,072

Balance Sheet

Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

As at 31 March 2025

	31 MAR 2025	31 MAR 2024
Assets		
Bank		
Current Account	241,711	255,112
Petty Cash	10	134
Total Bank	241,72	255,24
Total Assets	1	6
Liabilities	241,72	255,24
Current Liabilities	1	6
NIC Payable	(10,115)	-
Pensions Payable	(588)	-
Total Current Liabilities	(10,704)	-
Total Liabilities	)	-
Net Assets	(10,704)	255,246
	252,424	
	)	
Equity		
Current Year Earnings	(7,683)	24,072
Restricted Funds	157,077	157,077
Retained Earnings	24,072	-
Unrestricted Funds	78,959	74,097
Total Equity	252,424	255,246

Income by Contact

Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

For the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

Type contains Income

CONTACT	2025	2024	TOTAL
The Trussell Trust	55,037	-	55,037
One Manchester	40,529	-	40,529
Local Giving	33,016	-	33,016
Crowd Funding	13,236	-	13,236
I-Must	12,482	-	12,482
Manchester City Council	11,896	-	11,896
Edward Holt Trust	10,000	-	10,000
The Neighbourly Fund	6,280	-	6,280
LQ HT General	5,000	-	5,000
Manchester Central	4,760	-	4,760
Vernon Building	3,950	-	3,950
CG Benevity	3,650	-	3,650
Stripe Payments	3,075	-	3,075
Arnold Clark	2,599	-	2,599
Revelation Church	2,400	-	2,400
Cash Donations	2,187	-	2,187
MCFC	2,000	-	2,000
Rosgal Ltd	2,000	-	2,000
The Hobson Charity	2,000	-	2,000
Asda	1,861	-	1,861
Unknown	1,634	-	1,634
Manchester & Salford University	1,223	-	1,223
Rotary Club of MCR	1,150	-	1,150
Manchester Credit MCU	1,032	-	1,032
Mazars	1,000	-	1,000
Standing Orders	950	-	950
Something To Aim For	630	-	630
Zecol Thomas	619	-	619
Hanbury Holdings	600	-	600
Just Sharepoint	500	-	500
Next Energy Ltd	500	-	500
Salford Van Hire	500	-	500
People First Housing	450	-	450
M Style	350	-	350
CAFGYE	343	-	343
The Equilibrium	300	-	300
Post Office	283	-	283
CAF	256	-	256
Charities Trust	239	-	239

ONLINE GIVING LTD ENTHUSE	239	-	239
Adhoc	135	-	135
Levenshulme Methodist	125	-	125
Feed Feed	100	-	100
Smith S Stores	60	-	60
Courtesy Shoes	53	-	53
Ascension Church	50	-	50
First Customer Con	25	-	25
E Jeremy	22	-	22
Institute of Chartered Accountants	18	-	18
School Money	18	-	18
Total	231,362	-	231,362



CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

On accounts for the year
ended

31st March 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1170952

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/03/2025**.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Irum Khan

Date:

22/01/26

Name:

IRUM KHAN

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

ACCA - Part Qualified

Address:

Flat 9 Bacara Court
4 Charlton Drive

Manchester

M332BJ

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

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Accounts



Bridging The Gap

Annual Report 2023 - 2024



A message from our Chair

The state of hunger in the UK continues to rise unacceptably, with the North West identified as one of the worst impacted regions. Research suggests that Greater Manchester has a 37% child poverty rate, but in Manchester itself rates are even higher at 44.7%. We know from our partnerships with schools that teachers are worried about the impact hunger has on children's educational attainment and their future life prospects.

Alongside this there has been a downturn in food donations as many look to tighten their own purse strings in order to survive the cost-of-living crisis. This has had a financial impact on our charity, with 23.98% of stock having to be purchased in 2023/24, at an estimated cost of £35,349, a sum up 17% from the previous year.

In response to both the growing demands on our service and our clients' financial insecurity, Bridging the Gap has sought a greater understanding of what forces and keeps people in poverty. Clients themselves highlight benefit issues and rising living costs as significant factors, such that they struggle to afford life's essentials. It is therefore with great satisfaction that I can report that Bridging the Gap was successful in securing multi-year funding from the Trussell Trust, which enabled us to employ a session lead/volunteer coordinator in November 2023. Furthermore this gave us the capacity to look beyond just providing emergency food parcels and to establish a financial inclusion project at each of our three community hubs. Working alongside welfare rights advisers from Manchester Mind and Manchester Citizens Advice, we are proud to report that, in its first year this project has made a staggering £225,914.08 of financial gains for our clients.

As various government support schemes come to an end, it is envisaged that there will be a greater dependence on food banks now more than ever. We therefore urge the government going forward to take action to 'guarantee life's essentials'.

Finally, on behalf of Bridging the Gap (Manchester), I want to express our heartfelt appreciation to all our funders and donors, as well as our staff and volunteers. Your belief in our mission and your generosity and hard work makes a real difference to the lives of those we support, and we are profoundly grateful.

Signed:



Michelle McHale, BEM





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- 20-24. Community and Partnership Working
25. Finance & Accounting



Administration Details

Charity Name: Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

Charity Number: 1170952

Principal Address: Wesley Enterprise Centre, Unit 3, Royce Road, Manchester, M15 5BP

Telephone: 0161 226 3143

Email: info@manchestersouthcentral.foodbank.org.uk

Governance Structure

Bridging the Gap (Manchester) was constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, on 3 January 2017. Previous to this the assets and activities came under Bridging the Gap (Manchester) as an unregistered charity, established on 17th March 2014.

Management of Risk

The responsibility for the governance and management of Bridging the Gap (Manchester) rests with its Trustee Board. We have identified and measured those risks that could have an impact on the on-going operation of the Charity. Bridging the Gap's trustees have given careful consideration to the major risks, which the organisation could be exposed to, and have satisfied themselves that systems and procedures are in place in order to manage those risks.

An annual risk audit is conducted to identify potential risks, and their likelihood. Using the audit results we draw up a new action plan each year to mitigate and reduce risks, where necessary, and to enable us to improve on our management of all risks. Progress with the action plan is then monitored at each Board meeting.



Our Vision

Working towards ending poverty and social exclusion within the Greater Manchester communities of Hulme, Moss Side, Whalley Range and Old Trafford.

Our Mission

To support people in immediate crisis by providing emergency food provisions and to seek longer term solutions to address the underlying causes of financial hardships, enabling communities to build resilience and a life free from poverty.

Our Strategic Priorities

- To respond to the cost of living crisis
- To alleviate poverty
- To reduce social isolation
- To build greater partnerships
- To be active leaders and influencers for positive change
- To raise awareness of the underlying causes of poverty
- To develop resilient communities, with the community as active partners

Our Trustee Board

Our Board of Trustees is made up of people with a range of knowledge, experience and understanding of the local community and voluntary sectors. Their breadth of expertise includes health, social housing, community development, children and young people, financial administration and positive activism.

During the year we said goodbye to four of our trustees due to other commitments: Katy Bourne, Tallia Atti, Caroline Wickens and Jilly McKiernan-Bruce. We would like to thank them all for their time and input over the years.

In November 2023 we welcomed one new trustee (Martin Pilkington) who brought new skills to the Board in the form of transformational change, financial administration, risk and issue management.

In January 2024 we conducted a review of our Board membership, by carrying out a skills audit to identify what additional areas of expertise and knowledge the Board might benefit from. As a result we actively advertised for additional Board members and were pleased to make four new appointments who are due to take up their roles in the new financial year, following due diligence checks having been completed.



Michelle McHale, BEM
Chair of Trustees



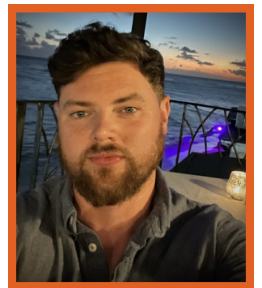
Marie Hawkins
Treasurer



Chris Copestake
Secretary



Lynda Mason
Trustee



Martin Pilkington
Trustee

"I'm delighted to have been recently welcomed to the BTG Board of Trustees. I wanted to volunteer as I was inspired by the range of services provided to the community, the foodbank being at the centre, and the huge impacts these have on the community we serve. I'm looking forward to sharing some of the experience built from my professional career to support the continued success of the charity into the future."

Martin, Trustee

Our Staff

Over the course of the year we said goodbye to one of our warehouse assistants, Sean Connors. As this warehouse assistant role was implemented as a result of moving to a delivery only model during Covid-19 which has since been replaced with the implementation of our hub model, no new employee was recruited. As a result of this departure we successfully trialled using volunteer drivers to carry out warehouse assistant duties, which enabled us to increase our volunteer offer and provide support for the warehouse team. Our remaining staff team continued to work with dedication whilst growing in both experience and confidence.

In November 2023 we were pleased to welcome to the team an additional part-time member of staff, Emily Jeremy, as Session Lead & Volunteer Coordinator. The post was generously funded by the Trussell Trust through their Strategic Resources programme for a 2-year period. This has not only given us the opportunity to improve our volunteer co-ordination and training programme but has released other staff to take on additional duties, more appropriate to their roles.

The year-end saw Bridging the Gap employing a total of one full-time and four part-time members of staff who between them ensured that the Charity continued to move forward positively and to expand our 'More Than Food' services further. We can't praise the staff team enough and are so grateful to them all for their hard work, flexibility and initiative shown in developing and providing professional services.



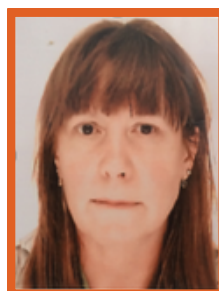
Heidi Exell
Project Manager



Helena Canavan
Project Manager



Emily Jeremy
Session Lead &
Volunteer Coordinator



Corinne Davenport
Warehouse
Coordinator



Mark Styles
Warehouse
Assistant

Our Volunteers

Our volunteers remain at the heart of our organisation and the generosity and commitment of our team is a constant source of inspiration to us. Each person freely gives their time, expertise and compassion to support people in their community, without which we simply could not deliver our emergency food and additional support services.

Some 50 volunteers actively engaged in supporting our services and provided **6,183 hours** of free labour during the year. As a 'real living wage' employer these volunteer hours amounted to a staggering **£74,196** of in-kind donation of time.

Our volunteers fulfil an array of pivotal roles, including packing food parcels, sorting and shelving food donations and supporting the running of foodbank sessions. During the year our volunteer roles expanded to include 'signposting' volunteers who worked with food bank clients to explore any issues they might have and to support them as appropriate.



Bridging the Gap Volunteer

"Volunteering at a food bank reminds us of our connection with a wider community. Coming and volunteering here has given me a sense of purpose: I feel privileged to be able to share my time and make a difference -however small- with such an amazing group of people."

Bridging the Gap volunteer

Through our corporate volunteer programme, teams from local businesses helped us make up 'Holiday Hunger' food parcels and assisted with supermarket food donation collections, as well as Christmas events. Alongside volunteering their time, we had fantastic support through fundraising events and office food collections.

"It was a pleasure for MSV Housing, Neighbourhood Central Team to support this essential cause.

We found the day to be a valuable and heartwarming experience while engaging with all Asda's customers on the day. Supporting Manchester South Central Foodbank enables us to give back to the communities within which MSV Housing works very closely with"

MSV Housing volunteer



MSV Housing Volunteers

Our Supporters

We are grateful for every penny and item of food that we receive, from our supporters - the general public, corporate businesses, trusts and foundations. Permanent collection points and monthly collections at our partner supermarkets provide a continuous stream of food donations from the local community who have continued to be incredibly generous even when faced with their own increased food costs.

Here we highlight just a few other examples of the amazing support we have had this year and apologise to those we just haven't had the space to name individually.

CO-OP Fundraising Walks

The Manchester CO-OP Property Team walked an incredible 40 miles from Manchester to Sheffield raising £2,850 AND walked the equivalent of two marathons in 48 hours, raising a further £1,500.

The team continues to support us via their employer's corporate social responsibility volunteering days by assisting us in packing our winter hampers.



Rummage in the Range

As the chosen charity for this monthly car boot event in Whalley Range, Bridging the Gap runs a regular stall selling pre-loved items, holds a monthly raffle and collects food donations. Last year the stall raised just under £800. This brilliant community event provides the perfect opportunity to talk about and raise awareness about our work with the local community.



Evoke Mind Plus

The Manchester Branch of Evoke Mind Plus supported our work with a fantastic donation of 31 generously packed and beautifully hand designed wash bags, as well as a crate of essential hygiene products for our clients.



Sal's Shoes

Sal's shoes collect and distribute shoes to frontline charities, this year they generously donated boxes of brand new shoes to redistribute through our school uniform projects.



Rotary Club of Manchester Breakfast

As one of the club's chosen charities we have been supported with grant funding towards the purchase of our own van, regular cash donations towards our operational costs and volunteer time from its members.



Our Services

Bridging the Gap (Manchester) provides a number of services to the community. These include both our emergency foodbank provision and our 'More Than Food' projects.



Following on from the 71% increase in emergency food provision in 2022/23, the high demand continued throughout the 2023/24 financial year and rose by a further 9%.

This increased need was accompanied by challenges around food stock. Whilst our donors continued to be extremely generous, due to the extra food needed to meet demand, Bridging the Gap was left with no alternative but to purchase food to cover the shortfall.

The cost of living crisis continued to have a devastating impact on people on the lowest incomes in our communities, leaving more people simply unable to afford the essentials that we all need to live comfortably. Our three food bank hubs and our team responded with unwavering compassion and commitment by providing a welcoming and trusted space for our clients to receive food support and access a range of extra services that can provide long term support to our clients. The development of our More Than Projects through the hubs allowed us to respond to our clients needs and help them through this very difficult year.



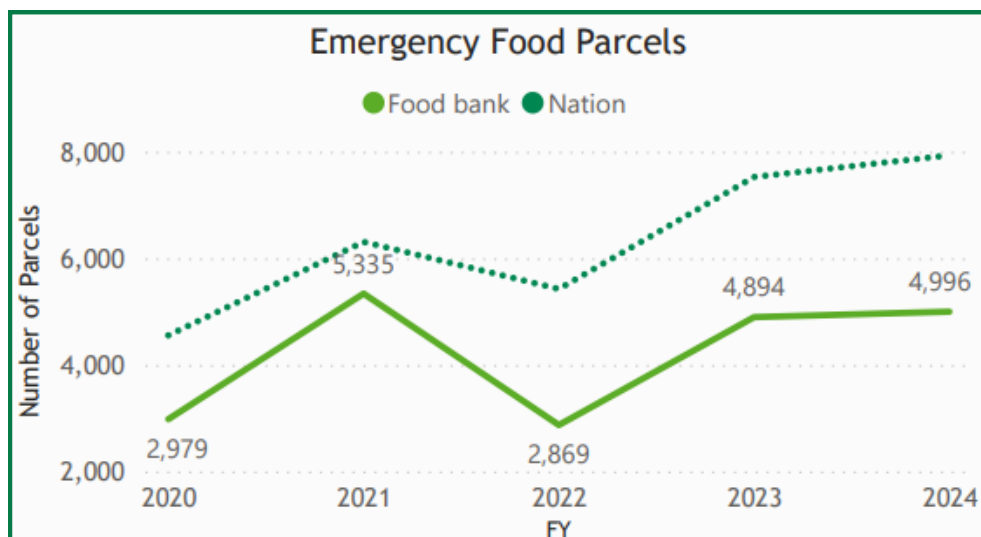
"The food parcel makes a big difference and if I didn't get it I wouldn't have the money to feed myself"

Food bank client

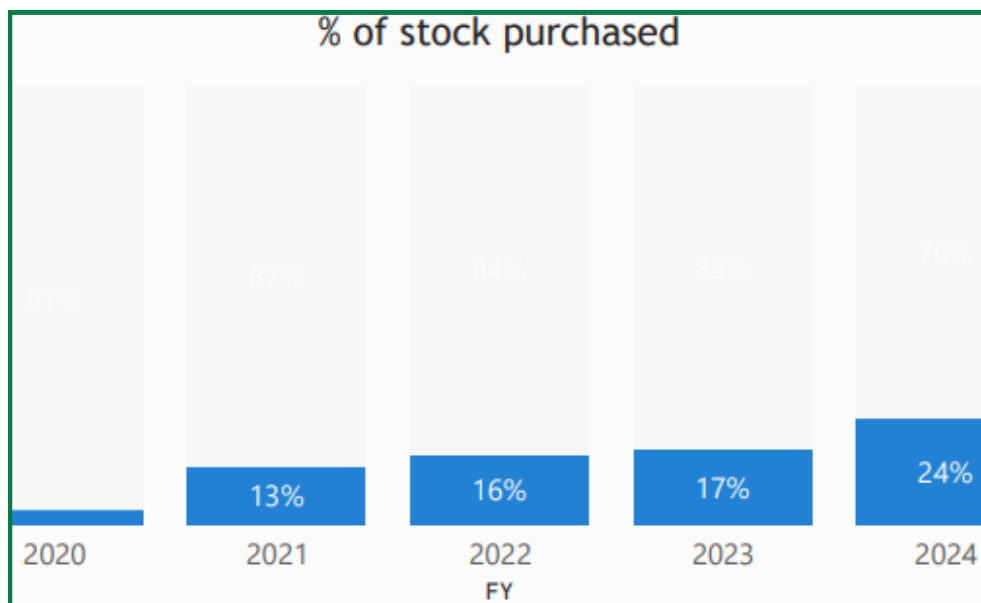
Foodbank Statistics 2023/2024

Foodbank Centre	Food Vouchers issued	Adults Fed	Children Fed	Total Individuals supported
Hulme	952	1,359	695	2,054
Old Trafford	916	1,218	484	1,702
Whalley Range	639	869	372	1,241
TOTALS:	2,507*	3,446	1,551	4,997

*63495.3 Kg of food distributed



9% increase in the number of individuals supported compared with our 2022-23 figures



"I have worked with Manchester South Central Foodbank for several years now. This is an invaluable service to our families and the community they go above and beyond to meet the individual needs. Central district couldn't be without this service."

Central Cluster Team Leader, MCC

• More Than Food •

Our 'More Than Food' projects provided support to our clients beyond our standard emergency food provision. Many of our 'More Than' projects are delivered in partnership with other organisations.

Financial Inclusion Services

In March 2023 we launched our Financial Inclusion project, which placed an advisor at each of our weekly foodbank sessions, ensuring our clients were able to speak to a professional about the underlying cause of their crisis, at the same time as accessing food support. Our advice workers delivered advice and support around income maximisation, specifically in respect of the benefits system, as well as offering debt and housing advice.

This project was delivered in partnership with the six Trussell Trust affiliated foodbanks across Manchester City Council. It used grant funding to employ Citizens Advice and Manchester Mind advisers who work across our foodbank sessions.

This new service was vital to support our clients to find a way out of poverty. We are so grateful to our amazing advisors and all the work they did during the year.

Our end of year reporting showed a whopping **£225,914.08** of financial gains for our clients through the first year of this project's operation

Because of these amazing results we are delighted to have confirmed grant funding for a further 2 years for this important project.

"Client X now receives £416 extra per month. The family now no longer need to use the food bank and told us they used some of the money to buy their son a bike. Something that had never been possible before"

Manchester Mind Advice worker



Manchester Mind Advice worker

Winter and Christmas support

From November 2023 to March 2024 we provided support and advice to our clients to help combat energy costs during the winter months.

We distributed '***Staying Warm Through Winter***' advice leaflets.
816 hot water bottles and **284** blankets



MCC Energy team Volunteers

563 Christmas Toy Sacks Delivered

Families identified by schools and local community centres as living in poverty were provided with a toy sack. Each sack was tailored to the child's age and gender to ensure that all local children were able to wake up to a present from Father Christmas.

99 Christmas Meals-in-a-Box Delivered

Our Meal-in-a-Box, with all the fresh ingredients, festive trimmings and a £10 gift card, ensured that local families were able to celebrate Christmas. We were incredibly grateful to our supporters, including Unicorn Grocery and Fareshare, who donated fresh produce and vouchers for this project.



140 Seasonal Care Hampers Delivered

Christmas can be particularly isolating for older people. As a way of offering support and spreading some festive happiness, we distributed seasonal care hampers to older residents in our community. These hampers included baked treats, toiletries and winter essentials. Our special thanks goes to our partners in this initiative, including Manchester Metropolitan University, Big Life, One Manchester and People First.



Christmas Support Feedback

We love to get feedback from the users of our services because it informs us what we are doing right and where we might improve.

"I can just about buy the basic dinner for us this year, the little treats are so precious and extra food will help me save on shopping so it's going to help me put a bit extra money in the gas to keep us warm."

"Things have been bad for a few years now but this year has to be our worst by far, the dinner in a box and the food hamper is going help us feel part of Christmas, thank you"

"I live alone, no family close by, Christmas can feel sad for me and a bit lonely. This is a lovely pick me up thank you."

"I have lived in this country for 45 years. This is the first time I ever got a gift, truly my heart is touched, it's beautiful."



COOP Volunteers

Family Support Projects

A shocking 29% (Joseph Rowntree Foundation UK Poverty Report 2024) of children were living in poverty nationwide in 2023/24, with Manchester having one of the highest levels of child deprivation in the country.

Bridging the Gap continued to operate multiple projects that supported families, through partnerships with schools and other community projects, to ensure that we reached the families most in need.

Holiday Hunger

For many households the school holidays are a time of anxiety and stress, budgeting to cover extra food costs, increased energy bills and providing entertainment for the family. To help alleviate some of the financial pressure Bridging the Gap continued to operate its 'Holiday Hunger' programme, which distributes holiday food parcels containing breakfast and lunch items for each member of a family for 5 days.

In addition to essential food items, we provided essential hygiene items, such as washing powder, and play resources including reading books and science and art packs to engage children during their time away from school.

1033 'Holiday Hunger' parcels
distributed to families in our
communities.

4,271 individuals were supported.



Capco volunteers

"The support provided is invaluable. The foodbank really is a beacon of hope for many families that feel completely alone and lost, with nowhere else to turn. It's a safety net, that despite many hurdles risking the financial certainty of the organisation, is always there to support families in their time of need. We really would be lost without the support, and there are huge concerns from everyone that works with families and communities struggling at the moment, if this support will be able to continue in the same capacity."

Safeguarding Officer, Claremont Primary School

School Uniform Services

New School Uniform

2023/24 saw the second year, and expansion, of our enormously successful school uniform project, which we ran in collaboration with One Manchester, Moss Care St. Vincent's (MSV) and the Open Philanthropy Fund who provided the grant funding.

Through this project Bridging the Gap purchased uniform items for children living in poverty who were referred to us by schools, the early help/social care service, housing associations or community organisations. School uniform items were then bought that were specific to each child's needs.

324 children supported with new school clothing

Average £98 per child

"I just wanted to say a massive thank you to [Bridging the Gap]...I'm a qualified social worker, but I'm currently not working. Like most people, I'm struggling financially, emotionally, and mentally. I felt so worried about how I would be able to provide my son with his new school uniform. I was so grateful for the help from this service."

Parent

Pre-loved School Uniform Provision

This add-on service became necessary to supplement the high demand for our school uniform grant programme and has been running for two years. It helps to ensure our work is as cost effective and sustainable as possible, as well as assisting additional families finding it hard to buy school uniforms for their children.

Through our pre-loved provision we were able to provide additional items to other families, some of whom self-referred to us for school uniform support.

78 children supported with preloved uniform

"I would just like to express my thanks on behalf of our parents as they were delighted with the uniforms/coats/shoes that you were able to provide for our pupils this year, our parents were very grateful. Thank you for providing such an outstanding service to our parents who are struggling with the cost of living crisis, this has made such a difference to them."

Wilbraham Primary School

Refugee School Uniform Provision

Through our partnership with the Education Migrant Lead in Manchester City Council, Bridging the Gap continued for a second year to deliver its school uniform provision specifically for newly arrived refugee and asylum seeking children living in hotels within the City of Manchester.

Access to timely school uniform support was a vital lifeline to ensure that children were able to attend school as soon as possible after arrival in the area. Similar to our standard uniform grant scheme, we purchased new school uniform items, including school coats, bags and underwear tailored specifically for the child.

**105 refugee children supported
with new school clothing**

Average £130 per child

"Bridging the Gap has been instrumental in ensuring our asylum and refugee families are supported and integrated into mainstream education as quickly as possible. The team has worked with great care, dignity and respect to cultural boundaries at all times, building positive working relationships and inspiring faith and hope in humanity."

Narinder Harvey, MCC



Digital Inclusion

In 2023 our partners One Manchester asked if we would consider extending our school uniform provision to include digital access for children aged 4-18 years who were in education but were digitally excluded.

As a result, we established a pilot project to ensure children had the appropriate equipment required to complete their homework, including access to information regarding social tariffs ensuring families are able to access affordable broadband.

35 children supported with recycled laptops through our partners Community Computers

Total cost £4136

"Thank you so much for the effort and the brilliant service, we appreciate it. I received the parcel this morning."

Parent



Strategic Partnerships

Through a shared vision to end the need for food banks we have partnered with a number of companies to provide additional support for our food bank clients.



The Fuelbank Foundation is the only UK charity to focus on the challenges of people living in fuel crisis.

Through this partnership clients facing fuel poverty can be issued a voucher which provides ten days of energy. The voucher amount varying between £30-£89, depending on the price of energy and average consumption projections for each month.

340 vouchers issued

providing a critical lifeline to many of our clients, more and more of whom were reporting being unable to afford to keep themselves warm during the winter months.



The Cadent Foundation aims to help households find sustainable solutions to fuel poverty and to help households improve their financial wellbeing. Cadent winter support fund provided supermarket vouchers to clients accessing our food services.

A cash initiative of this type enabled our clients to have the freedom of choice to purchase whatever essentials they needed during the extremely difficult winter months and was invaluable, additional income.

207 vouchers issued

vouchers ranged from £50 for individuals, £70 for families of up to 4 and £100 for families of 5+

The logo for The Hygiene Bank, featuring a yellow rectangular background. At the top, there are three horizontal white lines of varying lengths. Below these lines, the words "THE HYGIENE BANK" are written in a bold, black, sans-serif font, centered.

**THE HYGIENE
BANK**

We continued to be a 'community partner' for The Hygiene Bank, a national charity that collects and distributes hygiene products to front line organisations.

831 kg toiletries and cleaning products
donated and distributed to our clients.



Our partnership with Vodafone & Tesco Mobile allowed us to distribute pre-loaded Sim cards to our clients. Each card provides six months of free text messaging, calling credit and mobile data.



These Data Sims act as a lifeline for digital inclusivity for many of our clients who would otherwise be unable to stay connected to services, family and friends. Digital inclusion is vital to avoid social isolation.

Over 100 sim cards
donated and distributed to our clients.

Community and Partnership Work

Bridging the Gap understands the need to engage with our wider community partners to highlight the work that we are doing. Our community work in 2023/24 continued to focus on helping to build empathy and an understanding of why people were still struggling to afford the daily essentials of life and their need to access emergency food. During the year we had the pleasure of hosting both workshops and work experience placements.

William Hulme Grammar Workshop

It was an honour to work alongside a group of year 6 students from one of our partner schools - William Hulme Grammar School. The two-part workshop involved the group spending an afternoon with Bridging the Gap staff to learn about how a food bank works and, more importantly, why people are left with no choice other than to turn to a food bank for support.

After a brilliant session playing the Trussell Trust's 'Play Your Path' game, the students went away and developed a week-long campaign that focused on raising awareness about the national 'Guarantee our Essentials' campaign, as well as collecting food donations. During their second visit the group helped to process the 167kg of food their school community had donated and also packed parcels ready for the next food distribution session. Their project culminated in a trip to Oxford University to present their project as part of their 'Student Leadership Celebration Day'. What an amazing group of young people!



Thank you so much! The children have loved coming to see how it all works and they've gained a huge understanding of the need for foodbanks/the need for better support for families.

Teacher, William Hulme's Grammar

Work Experience Opportunities

Following the success of the previous year, Bridging the Gap offered placements to local high school and university students. We were delighted that young people from our community attending Trinity High School, Manchester University and also Jame'ah Masjid E Noor Mosque took up opportunities to work alongside us. Such placements give us a way to begin to change minds and narratives around the causes and impact of poverty and financial hardship.

Hulme Winter Festival

Each year Bridging the Gap assists in coordinating the Hulme Winter Festival, working alongside our local partners Z-Arts, Big Life Centres, Ascension Church and Biffa. This year we were joined by our Civic Lord Mayor Yasmin Dar, local council members and Hulme Neighbourhood Officers. We even had a special visit from Santa himself. Children from our local primary schools and the children's centre sang beautiful carols around the Christmas tree.

Families were provided with opportunities to participate in cost-free seasonal arts & craft sessions, including community recycling crafts, storytelling, a family photoshoot with Santa, and to boogie-on-down at the family disco.



Hulme Winter Festival

Community Lunches

Over the course of the year we have supported a number of community lunches at events such as Family Active Streets Events, the King Charles III's Coronation Event, the Ascension Church Festival, Big Life Centre's Blackpool trip and Hulme Park Green Space event. These activities all provided opportunities for our community to engage as active partners with Bridging the Gap and other organisations.

International Women's Day - Hulme's 'Unsung Hero's'

This was the first year that Bridging the Gap had been involved in this activity, with Hulme's 'Unsung Heroes' being launched as part of marking International Women's Day 2024. Its aim was to recognise women who have had a lasting impact in the community. Through community nominations, along with much deliberation from the Unsung Heroes' panel, nine women were selected as finalists to be recognised for their selfless dedication and impact on the Hulme community.

The panel consisted of representatives from the Neighbourhood team, Big Life Group, Bridging the Gap and local Councillors in partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University, Brookes Building. Sally Casey, MBE presented the nine women with their awards.

Later in the summer a plaque with the names of some deceased heroes nominated will be installed in Hulme Park to honour their dedication and lasting legacy.



Hulme's unsung hero event



Partnership Work

Partnership work is vital to ensure a holistic and strategic local support system. We work closely with partners in delivering our services across our many projects. Importantly, we also actively network through local partnership meetings and work as active community leaders that advocate for our clients.

Our staff and Trustees participated in the following during 2023/24:

- Anti-Poverty Strategy Taskforce
- Old Trafford Community Collective
- Cost of Living Network Meetings
- GM Food Security Action Network
- Trussell Trust Regional Forum
- Manchester Foodbank Consortium
- GM Participation Group
- Neighbourhood Partnership meetings
- Our Manchester Food Partnership
- Rafiki Network
- Manchester Co-Production Working Group
- Trafford North Neighbourhood Network
- Challenge Poverty Week England and Wales
- GMCA Food Security Action Network
- Financial Inclusion Working Group

Supporting National & Local Campaigns

During 2023/24 Bridging the Gap was active in its support of various campaigns that highlighted some of the inequalities in our society that in turn increased the demand for our services. These included: -

Guarantee Our Essentials

Bridging the Gap supported the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Trussell Trust's 'Guarantee Our Essentials' national campaign that believes that a Universal Credit system should guarantee a basic rate of income that covers household essentials. This seems like the best way to protect people from falling into poverty and having to make difficult decisions between essentials like food, fuel, utility bills or transport. Whilst people continue to go without enough money to pay for the basic essentials, demand on services like ours will continue year on year.

It's time for change and to guarantee the essentials of life for everyone.

No Child Left Behind

Shockingly 29% of children, some 4.2 million, across Britain are trapped in poverty. Bridging the Gap supported the National Education Union of teachers in their call upon the government to take urgent action to break down the barriers to education that poverty creates

We believe that no child should be left behind and every child should have an equal chance to succeed in education, free from the barriers of poverty.

Manchester School Uniform Campaign

Our ever increasing work around school uniform provision highlighted the need for an educational change around the cost of school uniforms.

We know that the required amount of school clothing items, especially with a school's logo on it, drives up uniform prices and impacts heavily on family incomes.

Bridging the Gap therefore joined with its local uniform partners to call for local councils and the government to review the 'Schools' Guidance on School Uniform Costs'.

Ensure the affordability of school clothing for all parents.

Finance and Accounting

We ensured our sustainability by using a diverse range of income streams, these included trust funding, partnerships with local supermarkets, schools, churches, individual and corporate donations.

The Charity’s accounts were prepared under the receipts and payment method and were examined by an independent examiner in line with Charity Commission requirements.

Principle sources of funding

Notable sources of funding (£5,000 and above) for year ending 2023/24: -

Funder	Amount
Local Giving (Restricted Funds)	£41,484
Manchester City Council	£54,454
Trussell Trust	£73,052
One Manchester Thrive Team	£16,700

Account Overview

	Accounts 2023/2024			2022/2023
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Last Year
	£	£	£	£
Income	-	£238,447	£238,447	£244,739
Expenditure	(£20,859_	(£193,516)	(£214,375)	(£159,762)
Surplus/ (Deficit)	(£20,859)	£44,931	£44,931	£87,977
Transfers	-	-	-	-
At 2 nd April 2023	£74,097	£157,077	£231,174	-
At 31 March 2024	£53,238	£202,008	£255,246	£231,174

Reserves Policy

The Charity continued to operate restricted reserves whereby funds are raised for a specific activity/service or at the request of a donor. The trustees continued to build unrestricted reserves to enable the Charity to ring-fence a dedicated pot of reserves from unrestricted monies. This will ensure sustainability and assist with operational costs in the event of another pandemic, disaster or reduction of monetary income. It is envisaged that Bridging the Gap will continue to build restricted monies in the future to ensure we have 12-18 months of reserves at any given time.

Food and Hygiene Assets

The charity continues to substantially rely on donations of food and hygiene products from the general public, including local business and corporate partners. Donated items for 2023/2024 amounted to **47,270.74kg**, at a nominal value of **£112,031.65**.

A further **14,915.24kg** (23.98%) of stock was purchased at a value of **£35,349.12**.

These figures demonstrate a reduction of **9,159.32kg** in donations this year, which we attribute to the cost of living crisis. We needed to purchase almost 7% more stock to meet the demands for emergency food support in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23. Throughout the year a staggering **53,650.17kg** of food and hygiene products were distributed through our projects.

At year end the total assets holding amounted to **4,830.5kg** at a value of **£11,448.29**.

The trustees are extremely grateful to all our funders, donors, fundraisers and members of the public. It is because of their generosity and trust in our Charity that we were able to support those in need during 2023/24.

Declaration

The Board of Trustees declare that this is a true reflection on services provided and have approved the report.

Signature 

Name: Michelle McHale

Position: Chair of Trustees

Dated: 27/11/24



CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name

Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

On accounts for the year
ended

31 March 2024

Charity no
(if any)

1170952

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD / MM / YYYY.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

S. King

Date:

15/10/24

Name:

Sandra King

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

CICM Level 3

Address:

33 Wainhouse Road
Haywood
OL10 2NH

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Designated funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
AMAZON	-	151	-	151	-
ANS GROUP LIMITED	-	1,242	-	1,242	-
ARAWAK W'TON HA LTA RAWAK WTON HA LTD BG C	-	500	-	500	-
ASDA	-	377	-	377	-
Banking	-	-	-	-	3,555
BEEVER & STRUTHERS	-	280	-	280	328
BENEVITY BGC	-	462	-	462	380
CAFGYE	-	815	-	815	-
CHARITABLE GIVING	-	2,739	-	2,739	20
CHARITIES TRUST	-	218	-	218	-
CROWDFUNDER LTD	-	-	-	-	1,120
COURTESY SHOES/WYNSORS	-	222	-	222	-
FEED - Baby Milk	-	250	-	250	-
FRONTLINE NW WATES	-	1,000	-	1,000	-
General fundraising	-	1,025	-	1,025	-
I-MUST LIMITED	-	4,710	-	4,710	-
Just Sharepoint Co	-	1,100	-	1,100	300
LEVENSFULME METHODIST	-	92	-	92	-
LOCALG IVIN G	-	41,484	-	41,484	67,183
MADL - MAKING A DIFFERENCE LOCALLY	-	-	-	-	650
MAIN GRANTS	-	10,000	-	10,000	-
MAKING A LOCALLY	-	80	-	80	-
MANCHESTER BME NETWORK	-	-	-	-	1,000
MANCHESTER CENTRAL	-	538	-	538	4,362
MANCHESTER CITY	-	-	-	-	17,750
MANCHESTER CITY - LEVELLING UP FUND	-	-	-	-	3,500
MANCHESTER CITY CO	-	44,860	-	44,860	-
MANCHESTER CITY CO - FISGS	-	1,094	-	1,094	-
MANCHESTER CITY CO - Cost of Living	-	8,500	-	8,500	-
MANLEY PARK METHOD Manley Park	-	130	-	130	-
MAZARS CHARITABLE	-	1,000	-	1,000	-
MCDA NO. 2	-	-	-	-	750
MCFC - CITY IN THE COMMUNITY	-	2,500	-	2,500	1,250
MSV HOUSING	-	1,536	-	1,536	1,000
MUST	-	-	-	-	2,533
NEU MANCHESTER DIS	-	-	-	-	3,000
NEW PHILANTHROPY NPC GRANT	-	-	-	-	10,000
NORTHERN MARKING	-	1,000	-	1,000	-
OCADO	-	3	-	3	-
ONE MANCHESTER HOUSING	-	16,700	-	16,700	5 00
ONE MANCHESTER HOUSING - WELLNESS FUND	-	-	-	-	9,937
ONE Manchester Thrive Fund	-	-	-	-	8,750
Other Grants	-	-	-	-	-
PAYPAL	-	-	-	-	-
PENNY APPEAL	-	105	-	105	-
PEOPLE FIRST HOUSING	-	-	-	-	7,500
PLACES FOR PEOPLE	-	595	-	595	400
POST OFFICE	-	2,000	-	2,000	1,500
PROSPERE LEARNING	-	7,207	-	7,207	-
REHOBOTH 1 112405099 BGC	-	94	-	94	-
ROTARY CLUB OF MCR	-	-	-	-	409
SOUTH MANCHESTER AOS	-	450	-	450	150
THE CHARITY SERVICE	-	680	-	680	-
THE EQUILIBRIUM FO Community Scheme	-	2,940	-	2,940	3,000
THE GARDEN PROD LT	-	-	-	-	500
THE MANCHESTER GUA	-	1,000	-	1,000	-
THE NEIGHBOURLY	-	2,000	-	2,000	-
THE TRUSSELL TRUST	-	1,055	-	1,055	4,200
THT - Trafford Housing Trust	-	73,051	-	73,051	59,844
	-	-	-	-	29,249
UNISON NORTH WEST U NISON WOMENS BGC	-	125	-	125	-
UNIV OF MANCHESTER	-	680	-	680	-
WATES PROPERTY SER	-	857	-	857	-
WE LOVE MCR CHARIT	-	1,000	-	1,000	-
ZION ARTS CENTRE	-	-	-	-	120

Sub total (Gross income for AR)	-	238,447	-	238,447	244,739
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	-	238,447	-	238,447	244,739
A3 Payments					
Salaries Partnership/Financial	-	75,032	-	75,032	56,220
Inclusion Transport Core Costs	-	21,657	-	21,657	126
Foodbank (Food/Costs) Other	9,098	-	-	9,098	9,335
FB Costs Holiday Hunger	9,614	-	-	9,614	14,659
School Uniform Winter Xmas	-	18,086	-	18,086	12,152
Other costs Trustee Costs	-	-	-	-	1,009
Other Levelling Up Volunteer	-	11,879	-	11,879	5,457
Costs Petty cash withdrawral	-	49,388	-	49,388	39,792
	-	14,759	-	14,759	17,091
	994	-	-	994	130
	218	1,050	-	1,268	287
	935	-	-	935	-
	-	1,665	-	1,665	-
	-	-	-	-	205
	-	-	-	-	300
Sub total	20,859	193,516	-	214,375	156,762
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	20,859	193,516	-	214,375	156,762
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 20,859	44,931	-	24,072	87,977
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	74,097	157,077	-	231,174	143,197
Cash funds this year end	53,238	202,008	-	255,246	231,174

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

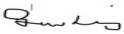
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted to nearest £	Designated to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Barclays Bank plc	53,238	202,008	-
	Petty cash	-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	53,238	202,008	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted to nearest £	Endowment to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets		Fund to which asset	Cost (optional)	Current value
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use		Fund to which asset	Cost (optional)	Current value
			-	-
			-	-

		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability	Amount due	When due
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

	Michelle McHale	27-Nov-24
	Sandra King	15-Oct-24

Accounts



Bridging The Gap

Annual Report 2022 - 2023



A message from our Chair

2022-2023 has been a challenging year for many reasons. The charity said farewell to three of our founding Trustees and at the same time welcomed three new Trustees to our Board. Alongside changes to our Board we also welcomed new staff members and volunteers. This re-set provided an opportunity to review governance and update our policy and procedures. In addition our staff and volunteers were able to access training for the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic set in.

Poverty remains multi-faceted and a significant issue within our communities. Both the Covid-19 pandemic and the current cost of living crisis continue to have adverse effects on many low income households. Many families reported being unable to afford the basic household essentials. The removal of the governmental Universal Credit uplift plummeted families further into poverty. Leaving many families having to make tough decisions between food and other household priorities such as fuel bills, rent, internet access and school uniforms. With many families self disconnecting from services.

As a direct response to the increasing need for our foodbank services, we reviewed our delivery model and felt it was important to move forward with the opening of three face-to-face community hubs. Through consultation with clients we were able to gain a greater understanding of their needs and hopes for the future, whilst providing additional support services to maximise incomes.

For the first time in two years we were able to bring our volunteers together as a wider group to hold a thank you event to acknowledge the selfless commitment and hours they had given to support people in crisis.

We are truly indebted to all our staff, volunteers, donors and supporters. It is through them that all our work has been possible. We look forward to further working together to bridge the gaps and economic divides.

Signed



Michelle McHale, BEM

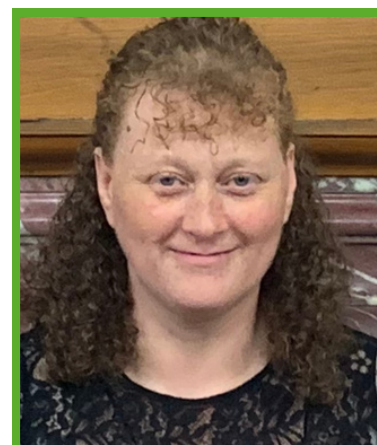


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Administration Details

Charity Name: Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

Charity Number: 1170592

Principal Address: Wesley Enterprise Centre, Unit 3, Royce Road, Manchester, M15 5BP

Telephone: 0161 226 3143

Email: info@manchestersouthcentral.foodbank.org.uk

Governance Structure

Bridging the Gap (Manchester) was constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, on 3 January 2017. Previous to this the assets and activities came under Bridging the Gap (Manchester) as an unregistered charity, established on 17th March 2014.

Management of Risk

The responsibility for the governance and management of Bridging the Gap (Manchester) rests with its Trustee board. We have identified and measured those risks that could have an impact on the on-going operation of the Charity.

Bridging the Gap's Trustees have given careful consideration to the major risks, which the organisation could be exposed to, and have satisfied themselves that systems and procedures are in place in order to manage those risks. An annual risk audit is conducted to identify potential risks, and their likelihood. We have drawn up an action plan to mitigate and reduce risks where necessary, enabling us to improve on our management of all risks. The action plan is regularly reviewed and updated.



Our Vision

Working towards ending poverty and social exclusion within the Greater Manchester communities of Hulme, Moss Side, Whalley Range and Old Trafford.

Our Mission

To support people in immediate crisis by providing emergency food provisions and to seek longer term solutions to address the underlying causes of financial hardships, enabling communities to build resilience and a life free from poverty.

Our Strategic Priorities

- To recover from the COVID-19 pandemic
- To respond to the ensuing cost of living crisis
- To alleviate poverty
- To reduce social isolation
- To build greater partnerships
- To be active leaders
- To raise awareness of the underlying causes of poverty
- To develop resilient communities, with the community for the community

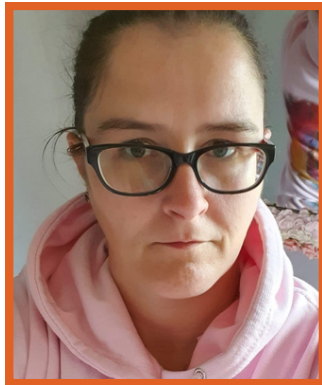
Our Trustee Board

Our Board of Trustees is made up of people with a wealth of knowledge, lived experience and understanding of the local community and voluntary sectors, with expertise in health, social housing, community development, children and young people and positive activism.

This year we welcomed four new trustee members (Talia, Jilly, Chris and Lynda) who enhanced the Board with their additional skills and knowledge in volunteer development, finance and governance.



Michelle McHale, BEM
Chair of Trustees



Marie Hawkins
Vice Chair of Trustees



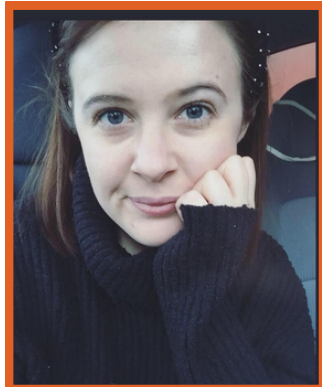
Tallia Atti
Treasurer



Chris Copestake
Secretary



Lynda Mason
Trustee



Jilly McKiernan-Bruce
Trustee



Caroline Wickens
Trustee



Katy Bourne
Trustee

"Giving something back to the community has always been important to me. I volunteered for the foodbank for 3 years before becoming a Trustee. It has been good to put my knowledge and energy into doing something worthwhile & helping to improve the service we provide."

Lynda, Trustee

Our Staff

Over this financial year there were considerable staff changes. We said goodbye to our temporary Foodbank Project Manager, who was covering for maternity leave, and we welcomed Heidi as Foodbank Project Manager in April 2022. Three months later we were delighted to be able to expand the team and bring Helena on board in the new role of More Than Food Project Manager.

The year-end saw Bridging the Gap employing four part-time members of staff who between them ensured that the Charity moved from strength-to-strength and that our services were able to expand our 'More Than Food' programme. We are so grateful to them all for their hard work and dedication to the service we provide.



Heidi Exell
Project Manager



Helena Canavan
Project Manager



Corinne Davenport
Warehouse
Coordinator



Mark Styles
Warehouse
Assistant



Sean Connors
Warehouse
Assistant

Our Volunteers

We are similarly incredibly lucky to have a very experienced, skilled and passionate team of volunteers who work tirelessly to support our communities. Our volunteers remain at the heart of our organisation; living locally and representing the diversity of the communities we support. We are incredibly proud of the wealth of knowledge and lived experience our volunteers bring to us and which helps inform the work we do.

Some fifty volunteers actively engaged in supporting our services and provided **4,606 hours** of labour during the year. As a 'real living wage' employer these volunteer hours amounted to a staggering **£50,205** of in-kind donation of time.



Bridging the Gap Volunteer

Our volunteers fulfil a wide array of pivotal roles, including packing our food parcels, sorting and shelving our food donations and supporting the running of our foodbank sessions. This year our volunteer roles expanded to include van drivers who deliver food parcels and pick up donations, which has reduced staff costs in this area of our activity.



Bridging the Gap Volunteer

"I enjoy volunteering because it gives me the opportunity to learn and do new skills. I can meet new people doing the task and also members of the public and learn of their challenges"

Bridging the Gap volunteer

As COVID-19 restrictions were lifted we were able to develop our corporate volunteering opportunities. We are extremely grateful for the support of many local Manchester teams who helped us with our 'Holiday Hunger' food parcels, supermarket collections and Christmas events. Alongside volunteering their time, we had fantastic support through fundraising events and office food collections.

This year we also developed opportunities for other third sector, charitable organisations. For example, we hosted a group of young people from National Citizen Service (NCS) who created a campaign around poverty and collected sponsorship money from family and friends. They used these funds to buy and donate food items and then took part in a half-day workshop at our warehouse,. This included dating, sorting and shelving food items ready for distribution, whilst being educated on the underlying causes of poverty.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all volunteers, who have supported us throughout the year. By working together we have been able to reach out to our communities and offer support in times of need. None of which would have been possible without the support of volunteers.

"The team at Voicescape are always happy to support organisations that are doing important work in the community, and we are especially proud to support the foodbank. I know that you are making a real difference in the lives of people in need, and we are honoured to be a part of that"

Voicescape volunteer



Sedulo Volunteers



NCS Volunteers

**THREE
CHEERS FOR
VOLUNTEERS**

Our Supporters

We are grateful for every penny and every item of food that we receive, from our supporters - the general public, corporate businesses, trusts and foundations. However, we are particularly grateful to our long-term supporters that donate to us year on year. Their ongoing support enables us to continue with and to expand our services. We would particularly like to mention and give thanks to those individuals and organisations for their contribution in 2022-23:



Community Donations

Monthly direct debits and one-off donations from community members, enable us to ensure we have the resources needed to carry out our work and contribute towards our core costs.

Manchester United Supporters Trust (MUST)

regularly support our projects. This year we have focused their donations on supporting families to access school uniforms, footwear, and winter coats. Ensuring children are able to thrive in education

City In The Community (CITC)

continue to support our winter work, enabling us to provide additional food support and winter hampers to the local community.

Supermarkets

Each year we undertake annual summer and winter food drives within our local Asda and Tesco stores. Enabling us to increase both food and cash donations at our busiest times of the year.. In addition, we have permanent collection points based in Asda, Tesco, Co-op, Lidl and Aldi which assist us to maintain stock levels throughout the year.

Co-op continues to support us through staff fundraising events to support our winter food based projects.

Furthermore, staff volunteer also support via their employer corporate social responsibility volunteering days to assist us in packing our winter hampers.

Lidl, in partnership with customers, also supported us with Christmas toy donations towards our toy sack appeal. enabling us to ensure our families had christmas gifts under the tree.

Grant Makers

Housing providers (Trafford Housing Trust, One Manchester, MSV and Places for People) have been crucial in providing support for the expansion of our More Than Services

Penny Appeal who provided us with funding to expand our school uniform pilot

New Philanthropy NPC Grant and Manchester City Council, supporting us to develop our school uniform project.

Trussell Trust supported us to reopen our face to face foodbank sessions across three new distribution hubs.

Partnership Work

Hulme Neighbourhood Team continues to work in partnership with us providing funding for Active Street events, Winter festival and community events

The Toy Appeal partners with us each year to provide toy sacks for children, ensuring that local families have gifts under the Christmas tree

Cambridge Science Centre provides science booklets to distribute with our holiday hunger parcels, which enables parents and children to engage in educational activities together



Hulme Winter Festival



Hulme Jubilee Festival

Our Services

Bridging the Gap (Manchester) provides a number of services to the community. These include our foodbank project and More Than Food programme.



We are very proud of our response to COVID-19 and the delivery model we adopted that ensured the safety of our staff and volunteers, whilst still providing much-needed food parcels to those in crisis during this extremely difficult time.



However, as lockdowns were lifted, demand for our food bank service remained high and our local referral agents struggled to support the deeper needs of our clients. We therefore, felt it was important to return to our original collection model, to allow us to provide additional support services to clients.



By the end of October 2022 we had fully returned to client-facing work through the development of three community hubs across our localities. Each hub offered a friendly space, with the opportunity to enjoy a hot drink and snack. Whilst receiving support through signposting to partner organisations and helping to fill out forms.

Following consultation with clients, during the winter months of 2022/23, we quickly responded to the cost of living crisis by promoting our sessions as warm hub spaces. These provided a free, safe, warm and inviting space for clients to spend time during the colder months.

Meeting with clients through this new face-to-face service gave us a fantastic opportunity to better understand their needs and to give a voice to our local communities.

"Thank you so much for your help in this. What you did for me ... exceeded all expectations and I am very grateful."

Food bank client



Bridging the Gap Volunteers



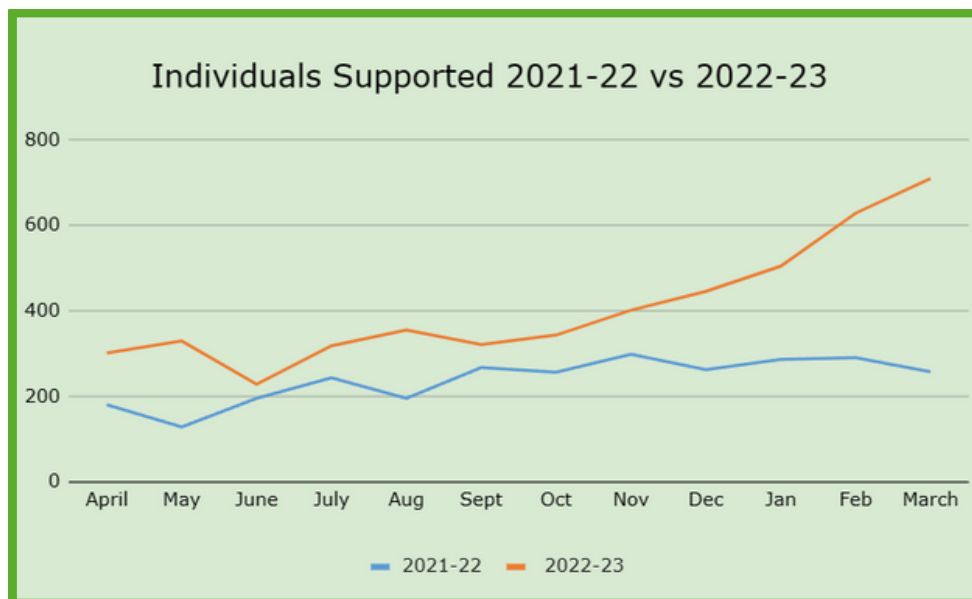
"I'll never forget all you have done, and it was by no means small. You have made it possible for me to live, and to support my kids. I don't know what I would have done without your support."

Food bank client

Foodbank Statistics 2022/2023

Food Bank Centre	Food Vouchers Issued	Adults Fed	Children Fed	Total Individuals Supported
Hulme	1,447	2,064	1,019	3,083
Old Trafford	467	688	289	977
Whalley Range	374	516	318	834
Total	2,288*	3,268	1,626	4,894

*Total Food Distributed: 25,736.48 Kg



71% increase in the number of individuals supported compared with our 2021-22 figures

The cost of living crisis had a huge effect on the demand on our services and our staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure we were able to keep enough food on the shelves to satisfy the increased need in our community.

A massive thank you to all our volunteers, donors and supporters who allowed us to meet this hugely increased service demand and ensure that every client in our community that needed an emergency food parcel was able to receive one.

• More Than Food •

Our 'More Than Food' projects provided support to our clients beyond our standard emergency food provision. Looking ahead we hope to continue to expand this programme to provide more support to our community in respect of poverty relief and routes out of poverty.

Winter items distributed

112 hot water bottles
150 thick winter socks
180 hats
180 gloves
409 blankets

Alongside this provision we supported and signposted our clients to access fuel vouchers and energy tips. **Over 200 'Keeping Warm Through Winter' leaflets** distributed.

Winter Warmers

Rising fuel costs was a key issue affecting our clients over 2022-23 due to the impact of the cost of living crisis. More and more of our clients reported that they were in the position of being unable to afford to keep themselves warm. To combat this we provided emergency winter warmer items to help our clients keep warm and safe at home.

"This is exactly what we need"

Food bank client

"I've benefited a lot with winter items so I can keep myself warm"

Food bank client



Bridging the Gap Volunteer

Christmas Support

Christmas can be a financially difficult and socially isolating time of year for many. Our Christmas projects are important to ensure social inclusion and wellbeing throughout the community at what can be a very challenging time of year.



Toy Appeal Volunteers

563 Christmas Toy Sacks Delivered

Families identified by schools and local community centres as living in poverty were provided with a toy sack. Each sack was tailored to the child's age and gender to ensure that all local children were able to wake up to a present from Father Christmas.

113 Christmas Meals-in-a-Box Delivered

Our Christmas Meal-in-a-Box with all the fresh ingredients, festive trimmings and a £10 gift card ensured that local families were able to celebrate. We are incredibly grateful to our supporters, including Unicorn Grocery and Fareshare, who donated fresh produce and vouchers for this project.



Bridging the Gap Volunteers



140 Seasonal Care Hampers Delivered

Christmas can be particularly isolating for older people. As a way of offering support we distributed seasonal care hampers to older residents in the community. These hampers included baked treats, toiletries and winter essentials. With special thanks to partners, including Manchester Metropolitan University, Big Life, One Manchester and People First.

Christmas Support Feedback

We love to get feedback from the users of our services because it informs us what we are doing right and where we might improve. The following snippets were taken from a long, thank you letter from a partner service provider about a family struggling to purchase food and toys for their children last Christmas:

"...the reality of the situation was these children were going to wake up on Christmas morning with nothing under the Christmas Tree – believing that Father Christmas had forgotten them..."

"A packet of biscuits for this family was considered a luxury."

"Supporting the family in this way has not only improved their mental health and wellbeing, but it also ensured that as a family they created positive memories together."

"Manchester South [Central] Foodbank really understands the needs of families and the pressures that they are under...."



Holiday Hunger

With soaring living costs our clients faced impossible decisions in 2022/23: whether to pay bills, stay warm or feed themselves. This is always a significantly harder decision for families during school holidays. As a result, we operate a 'Holiday Hunger' programme, which distributes holiday parcels containing breakfast and lunch items for each member of a family for 5 days.

959 'Holiday Hunger' parcels distributed to families in our communities.

49% distributed during the Christmas School Holiday; a time of extreme pressure, particularly for families.

In addition to essential food items, we provided some essential non-food items such as toothpaste and soap. It is with thanks to our corporate partner organisations, such as Beauty Bank and Earth Breeze, that we were able to provide these hygiene items as part of our 'Holiday Hunger' parcels.

Furthermore, it was with great pleasure that we were teamed up with the Cambridge Science Centre, Story Scouts, Old Trafford Creatives and the Manchester Library Services to provide families with age-appropriate reading books and science and art activities to engage families during their time away from school.

"We are incredibly grateful for our link with [Bridging the Gap] as we do not have access to another foodbank service that provides the quality and quantity of food hampers that you provide. There would be a huge gap in the support for the families we are supporting within the early help team in Trafford...Not only does it provide the basic needs for families within the rising cost of living crisis, it aids with our relationship with the families we support"

Trafford Early Help Team



"The [Bridging the Gap] scheme has been hugely beneficial to some of our families that are really struggling to make ends meet in the current climate...The families are really grateful for the food that is provided and the thought that lies behind it. Thank you!"

Seymour Park Community Primary School, Old Trafford

School Uniform Services

In 2020-21 we identified that many families accessing our food services also required support getting school uniforms for their children. Many parents reported that they were unable to send their children to school for lack of the correct uniform.

Manchester has one of the highest levels of child deprivation in the country and the high cost of school uniform is unmanageable for many families. In response we launched a pilot school uniform project, following the success of which we significantly expanded our school uniform provision in 2022-23 to include three separate projects.

Our school uniform project purchased uniform items for children living in poverty. Families in need were identified through referrals from schools, early help/social care, housing associations and community organisations. School uniform items were then bought that were specific to the child's needs and included coats, footwear and even underwear when needed.

306 local children supported to access new school uniforms through our grants project.

"Thank you again for organising the uniforms, I can't thank you enough as I didn't know how I was going to pay for them."

Parent



School Uniform Grants

Bridging the Gap have small grants available to purchase new school uniform items for families in need in South Manchester & North Trafford



To refer a family for school uniform support email: uniforms@manchestersouthcentral.foodbank.org.uk

Professionals working with families are invited to submit referrals for parents struggling to afford school uniform costs.

Bridging The Gap

This work was made possible through the generous support of grant makers, including One Manchester, Cash for Kids, Trafford Housing Trust and Penny Appeal. We are also very grateful to the local organisations that worked in partnership with us to identify and support families accessing this project.

Preloved School Uniform

To supplement the high demand on our school uniform grant programme, and to ensure our work was as cost effective and sustainable as possible, we also developed preloved primary school uniform provision. Through our preloved stock we were able to provide additional items to families referred for school uniform support and also to support any families that self-referred for school uniform support.

Refugee School Uniforms

Following the successful establishment of our school uniform grant scheme, the Educational Migrant Lead for Manchester City Council asked Bridging the Gap to develop a school uniform project specifically for refugee children arriving in the UK. Many of these children were living in refugee hotels in South Manchester and had limited access to funding to purchase school uniforms.

Similar to our standard uniform grant scheme, we purchased new school uniform items for refugee children, ensuring that children were able to attend school as soon as possible upon arriving in the UK.

45 children supported with preloved school uniforms. This work was made possible thanks to the generous donation of uniforms from parents and schools in our local community.

"I could not believe how handsome my son looked in his uniform and how happy he looked when we picked it up, I could not have done this without this support, I am so very grateful"

Parent



204 refugee children supported with school uniforms. We are grateful to Manchester City Council for funding and developing this project in partnership with us.

555 children supported with school uniform items.

Community and Partnership Working

"Manchester South [Central] Foodbank is one of our most valuable and respected providers."

" Without support from Manchester South [Central] Foodbank I honestly do not know how we could have helped these individuals/families, many who are living with deficit budgets. The staff at Manchester South [Central] Foodbank all deserve recognition for their hard work, dedication and tenacity for supporting vulnerable people, they certainly provide shelter from the storm with a smile, positivity and a can-do attitude."

BlueSci, an organisation that supports people with their mental health and wellbeing

Working with and for our community is important to us. As such we work hard to develop and maintain strong positive relationships with members of our community and other local organisations. We endeavor to do this in our daily practice, and we also support specific community events, activities and local partnership groups.



Bridging the Gap Volunteers

Community Events

During the year we worked in partnership with other local organisations to support and celebrate our community. We participated in events and celebrations, such as the Hulme Winter Festival and the Queen's Jubilee, with partners including Hulme Neighbourhood team, Friends of Hulme Park, Big Life and Z Arts.



The community events we support are free and a great opportunity for local families to come together and celebrate. These events also gave us the opportunity to have community conversations that ensure that our service development is driven by community needs.

Community Lunches

We additionally supported community activities as well as events by providing free lunches and refreshments. This work included providing 90 packed lunches for children's activity days and snack and refreshment tables at various community events, such as Active Street Events, Outdoor Gym events, and a community event for the Queen's Jubilee.



Bridging the Gap Project Manager



Partnership Work

Partnership work is vital to ensure a holistic and strategic local support system. We work closely with partners in delivering our services across our many projects. Importantly, we also actively network through local partnership meetings and work as active community leaders that advocate for our clients.

Our staff and Trustees participated in the following during 2022/23:

- Anti-Poverty Strategy Taskforce
- Challenge Poverty Week England and Wales
- Cost of Living Network Meetings
- GM food security Action Network
- Healthy Start Taskforce
- Holiday Hunger Taskforce
- Trussell Trust Regional Forum
- HMR Neighbourhood Partnership
- Manchester Foodbank consortium
- Neighbourhood Partnership meetings
- Old Trafford Community Collective
- Our Manchester Food Partnership
- Rafiki Network

"The Bridging the Gap team work tirelessly on various projects for the benefit of the wider community... [They have] a deep understanding of the issues faced by the residents of Hulme and surrounding wards, including our neighbouring authority Trafford... Bridging the Gap are the first port of call when Manchester City Council or our other stakeholders need support for an event or a resident or family in crisis."

Pauline Campbell, Neighbourhood Officer for Hulme

Digital Inclusion

Digital inclusion is an issue that strongly affects our community. It is important because digital exclusion impacts individuals' ability to access services, engage in their community and function self-sufficiently. This year we again teamed up with Vodafone to distribute preloaded SIM cards to our service users. They provided six months of free text messaging, calling credit and mobile data.

Bridging the Gap is specifically looking to expand its digital inclusion support service in the coming year.



Over 50 preloaded SIM cards distributed to our service users.

A report produced in 2020 suggests that as many as 1.2m residents in Greater Manchester could be excluded in some way to access the benefits digital brings.

The Good Things Foundation and Liverpool University

Awards and Recognitions

It is always good when the work we do is positively recognised and during 2022/23 no greater honour can have been bestowed on Bridging the Gap's Chair, Michelle McHale for services to the community of Manchester and Trafford especially during Covid-19 pandemic. For this valuable work she received a British Empire Medal in the Queen's last Birthday Honours list.

Not satisfied with one accolade in the year Michelle was then named as one of Trafford Metroborough Council's Inspiration Woman volunteers on International Women's Day.



Michelle McHale BEM receiving her award from L to R in photo - Cllr Laurence Walsh, the then Mayor of Trafford Council, Lord-Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, Mrs Diane Hawkins. JP. LLB; official representative of King Charles. Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, Mrs Sharman Birtles. MBE, JP, DL

Finance and Accounting

We ensure our sustainability by using a diverse range of income streams, these include Trust Funding, partnerships with local supermarkets, schools, churches, individual and corporate donations.

The Charity's accounts were prepared under the receipts and payment method and were examined by an independent examiner in line with Charity Commission requirements.

Principle sources of funding

Notable sources of funding (£5000 and above) for year ending 2022/2023

Funding	Amount
Local Giving	£67,183
Manchester City Council	£21,250
New Philanthropy NPC Grant	£10,000
One Manchester Wellness Fund	£9,937
One Manchester Thrive Fund	£8,750
Penny Appeal	£7,500
Trussell Trust	59,249

Account Overview

	Accounts 2022/2023			2021/2022
	Unrestricted	Restricted	TOTAL	Last Year
	£	£	£	£
Income	£47,843	£196,896	£244,739	£101,063
Expenditure	(£67,935)	(£88,827)	(£156,762)	(£74,356)
Surplus/(Deficit)	(£20,092)	£108,024	£87,977	£26,708
Transfers	-	-	-	-
At 1 st April	£42,860	£100,338	£143,197	£116,489
At 31 March	£22,767	£208,407	£231,174	£143,197

Reserves Policy

The Charity continues to operate restricted reserves whereby funds are raised for a specific activity/service or at the request of a donor. The Trustees will continue to build unrestricted reserves to enable us to ring fence a dedicated pot of reserves from unrestricted monies to ensure sustainability and to assist with operational costs in the event of another pandemic, disaster or reduction of monetary income. It is envisaged that we will continue to build restricted monies to ensure we have 12 – 18 months of reserves at any given time.

Food and Hygiene Assets

The Charity relies substantially on donations of food and hygiene products from the general public, including local business and corporate partners. Donated items for 2022/2023 amounted to 56,430.07Kg, at a nominal value of £133,739.26. A further 11723.62kg was purchased at a value of £27,784.98.

Throughout the year a staggering 67715.24kg of food and hygiene products were distributed through our projects. At year end the total assets holding amounted to 6294.69kg at a value of £14,918.42

The Trustees are extremely grateful to all our funders, donors, fundraisers and members of the public. It is because of their generosity and trust in our Charity that we have been able to support those in need.

Declaration

The Board of Trustees declare that this is a true reflection on services provided and have approved the report.

Signature 

Name: Michelle McHale

Position: Chair of Trustees

Dated: 16.01.24



CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name

BRIDGING THE GAP (MANCHESTER)

On accounts for the year
ended

31st March 2023

Charity no
(if any)

1170952

Set out on pages

2-3

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above
charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2023

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation
of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act
2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out
under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I
have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission
under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have
come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with
the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material
respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of
the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection
with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a
proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Sam King

Date:

31/1/24

Name:

Samuel King

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

CICM LEVEL 3

Address:

33 NEWTHOUSE ROAD, HEYWOOD
OL10 2ND

Section A Receipts and payments					
	Unrestricted to the nearest £	Restricted to the nearest £	Designated to the nearest £	Total to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Banking	243	3,312	-	3,555	-
BEEVER & STRUTHERS	328	-	-	328	-
BENEVITY BGC	-	380	-	380	-
CHARITABLE GIVING	20	-	-	20	-
CROWDFUNDER LTD	1,120	-	-	1,120	-
General fundraising	-	-	-	-	54,182
Just Sharepoint Co	300	-	-	300	-
LOCALGIVING	45,682	21,501	-	67,183	500
MADL - MAKING A DIFFERENCE LOCALLY	-	650	-	650	-
MANCHESTER BME NETWORK	-	1,000	-	1,000	1,000
MANCHESTER CENTRAL	-	4,362	-	4,362	-
MANCHESTER CITY	-	17,750	-	17,750	8,163
MANCHESTER CITY - LEVELLING UP FUND	-	3,500	-	3,500	-
MCDA NO. 2	-	750	-	750	-
MCFC - CITY IN THE COMMUNITY	-	1,250	-	1,250	-
MSV HOUSING	-	1,000	-	1,000	2,500
MUST	-	2,533	-	2,533	2,602
NEU MANCHESTER DIS	-	3,000	-	3,000	-
NEW PHILANTHROPY NPC GRANT	-	10,000	-	10,000	-
ONE MANCHESTER HOUSING	-	500	-	500	3,000
ONE MANCHESTER HOUSING - WELLNESS FUN	-	9,937	-	9,937	-
ONE Manchester Thrive Fund	-	8,750	-	8,750	-
Other Grants	-	-	-	-	19,752
PENNY APPEAL	-	7,500	-	7,500	2,500
PEOPLE FIRST HOUSING	-	400	-	400	-
PLACES FOR PEOPLE	-	1,500	-	1,500	-
REHOBOTH	-	409	-	409	-
ROTARY CLUB OF MCR	150	-	-	150	-
THE CHARITY SERVICE	-	3,000	-	3,000	-
THE EQUILIBRIUM FO Community Scheme	-	500	-	500	-
THE NEIGHBOURLY	-	4,000	-	4,000	-
THE NEIGHBOURLY FUND	-	200	-	200	-
THE TRUSSELL TRUST	-	59,844	-	59,844	6,864
THT - Trafford Housing Trust	-	29,249	-	29,249	-
ZION ARTS CENTRE	-	120	-	120	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	47,843	196,896	-	244,739	101,063
A2 Asset and investment sales,					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	47,843	196,896	-	244,739	101,063
A3 Payments					
Salaries	56,220	-	-	56,220	38,753.64
Partnership	-	126	-	126	2,000
Transport	9,335	-	-	9,335	9,521
Office Costs	14,659	-	-	14,659	-
Foodbank (Food/Costs)	-	10,211	-	10,211	3,865
Other FB Costs	-	1,009	-	1,009	-
Holiday Hunger	-	5,457	-	5,457	7,241
School Uniform	-	39,792	-	39,792	628
Winter Xmas	-	17,091	-	17,091	6,480
Office Phone & Top Ups	1,940	-	-	1,940	-
Other costs	130	-	-	130	-
Trustee Costs	287	-	-	287	654
Book tokens for parcels	-	-	-	-	1,728
Overheads	-	-	-	-	3,080
Other	-	-	-	-	405
Volunteer Costs	205	-	-	205	-
Petty cash withdrawal	300	-	-	300	-
Sub total	83,076	73,686	-	156,762	74,356
A4 Asset and investment					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	83,076	73,686	-	156,762	74,356
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 35,233	123,211	-	87,977	26,708
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	42,860	100,338	-	143,197	116,489
Cash funds this year end	7,626	223,548	-	231,174	143,197

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period					
Categories	Details		Unrestricted to nearest £	Restricted to nearest £	Designated funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Barclays Bank plc		7,626	223,548	-
	Petty cash		-	-	-
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
	Total cash funds		7,626	223,548	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))		OK	OK	OK
	Details		Unrestricted to nearest £	Restricted to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets			-	-	-
			-	-	-
	Details		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets				-	-
				-	-
				-	-
				-	-
				-	-
	Details		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use				-	-
				-	-
				-	-
				-	-
				-	-
				-	-
				-	-
				-	-
				-	-
				-	-
	Details		Fund to which	Amount due	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities				-	
				-	
				-	
				-	
				-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all	Signature		Print Name		Date of approval
			Michelle McHale, BEM		14-Dec-23

Accounts



BRIDGING THE GAP (MANCHESTER)
ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 2021 – March 2022

STATEMENT ACTING CHAIR

As we continue to grow our More Than Food offer and Foodbank service it is important to reflect on our work in the last year. Introduction of School Uniforms to name but one.

We saw a change to our Trustee Board and a couple members of staff moved on to new exciting opportunities.

Our Trustees, members of staff alongside our volunteers are so important to the running of our charity, without them we couldn't deliver any of our wonderful activities.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MH' or similar, located below the text of the statement.

MARIE HAWKINS

Acting Chair

Administration Details

Charity Name: Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

Charity Number: 1170592

Principal Address:

Wesley Enterprise Centre

Royce Road, Hulme, Manchester, M15 5BP

Governance Structure

Type of governing document:

Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Constitution dated 3 January 2017

Previous Organisation:

On 3 January 2017 the Charitable Incorporated Organisation took over the assets and activities of Bridging The Gap (Manchester) an unregistered Charity established on 17 March 2014.

Our Vision & Mission

Vision:

Working towards ending poverty and social exclusion within the communities of Hulme, Moss Side, Whalley Range and North Trafford.

Mission:

We support people in crisis by providing emergency food provisions and beyond this, aim to help them access the support needed to build resilience and to live a life free from poverty

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- To alleviate poverty
- To reduce social isolation
- To build greater partnerships
- To be active leaders
- Campaigning and awareness raising
- To develop resilient communities, with the community for the community

Our Trustee Board



Evelyn Asante-Mensah OBE
Chair
Whole Period



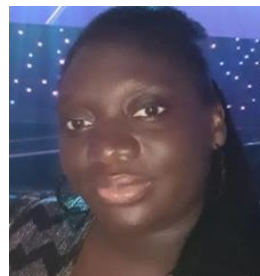
Marie Hawkins
Vice (Acting) Chair
Whole Period



Gill Darling
Treasurer
Whole Period



Michelle McHale BEM
Secretary
Whole Period



Sade Phillip
Member
Whole Period



Kathryn Bourne
Member
Whole Period



Caroline Wickens
Member
Whole Period

RESIGNATIONS

Evelyn Asante-Mensah OBE, Gill Darling and Sade Phillips ended their appointment as trustees on 31 March 2022. The remaining Board members wish them well in their future endeavours. Four new Trustees were recruited to join the Trustee Board and commenced their roles as of 1 April 2022.

INCOMING TRUSTEES



Jilly McKiernan-Bruce
Member



Lynda Mason
Member



Chris Copestake
Member



Tallia Atti
Member

OUR STAFF

Jo Warmington – Project Manager, remained on maternity leave until December 2021 before moving on to new employment.

Jon Sands – Acting Project Manager, Jon was a former volunteer who stepped up to cover maternity leave for a period of 12 months. Jon departed the charity in March 2022

Corinne Davenport – Warehouse Co-ordinator

Mark Styles – Warehouse Assistant

Sean Connors – Warehouse Assistant

OUR VOLUNTEERS

We are hugely indebted and thankful to our volunteers who are the unsung heroes of the Covid-19 pandemic. Their dedication, commitment and selfless acts enabled the Charity to continue operating its services through the many lockdowns and restrictions, ensuring that access to emergency food support was available to those in crisis when needed.

This year our volunteers clocked up a staggering 7576 hours of volunteer time. The financial worth of volunteer hours equates to a cost saving of £79,548 in salaries alone based on the rates of pay for the Manchester real living wage.

Our volunteer teams are all locally to us and bring a wide range of skills and knowledge supporting social media, website and internal communications, fundraising and day to day activities required to operate the Charity. This strong organisational structure gives us the foundation to react to the needs of our communities and offer continuity and quality of care.

We would further like to thank all our corporate volunteers, Local Councillors and Neighbourhood officers for their time and support over this past year, who have helped with our food drives, stock take, warehousing, winter hamper packing and delivery of parcels.



OUR IMPACT

61,909.45Kg of Food Distributed



146,894 Meals Provided



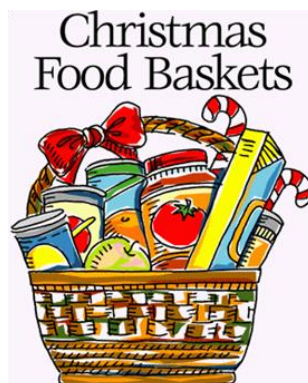
4546 Adults Supported



3408 Children Supported



635 Christmas Hampers



902 Toy Hampers



122 Older Persons Care packages



17 School Uniforms provided



COVID-19 RECOVERY PLANS



The Covid-19 pandemic continued to have an impact on our operational procedures throughout 2021-2022. Our services continued to receive requests for support from households affected by Covid-19. In order to safeguard our service users, staff and volunteers, we continued to operate the delivery model, enabling those in crisis to continue accessing vital food support.

Our volunteer workforce remained in bubbles and small working groups and only through consultation with our volunteers have we begun increasing the number of volunteers on rota at any given time. We have continued with regular lateral flow testing and the wearing of face masks in communal areas of the building. Due to the lack of ventilation and clean air within our centre it was felt that moving back to face-to-face method of delivery at this present time would be too risky.

As part of our recovery from Covid-19 we plan to adapt our work in phases going forward,

Phase 1:

To slowly introduce a face-to-face collection service, whereby service users call into the centre to collect their food parcel at an agreed time.

Phase 2:

To move our food distribution services to a more suitable but local community venue to increase our level of face-to-face work with the community. Introducing a community café to bring people together and begin breaking down barriers and social isolation. Building community confidence.

Phase 3:

To introduce a Community Hub model to provide greater access to wider community services and wrap around support. Working with the community to identify and address community needs.

OUR SERVICES

In 2019 Manchester rated in the top 6 most deprived local authorities based on rank, score, and proportion of LSOAs in the most deprived 10% nationally respectively, rating 2nd nationally by rank (The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 (publishing.service.gov.uk)). Manchester has one of the highest rates of child poverty by local authority area with 41.8% of children under 16 living in poverty, an increase from 35.4% five years ago.

Two factors were vital in ensuring that the Foodbank could meet the increasing need. Firstly, the commitment of our volunteer workforce and secondly, the general public's generosity and kind donations.

At the start of the financial year our stock reserves were stable at 5.8 tonnes of food and hygiene products. Through generous acts of kindness from the general public and corporate donors we received a further 58.4 tonnes of donated items. This enabled us to distribute 61.9 tonnes of food and hygiene products to those in financial crisis.

Bridging the Gap (Manchester) has remained a key front-line organisation during the many Covid-19 lockdowns. Our foodbank services remained operational three days per week. This allowed us to distribute 61.55 tonnes of food and hygiene products to the communities of Hulme, Moss Side, Whalley Range, Trafford North and beyond.

Feedback from our clients highlights the impact our services have: *"Thank you again for the box of food. I love the recipes on the paper too, very helpful and straight forward meal recipes and a massive help so thank you very much."*

We know from feedback given by the people we support that without our services they would struggle to feed their families. *"I've not had to worry about how I'm feeding the kids this weekend. I'm so thankful for help filling in that application for the gas and electric grant. Thank you."*

Through our More Than Food Projects we have been able to provide additional help and support, for example pre-loaded mobile sim cards, school uniforms and Christmas toy sacks. Our intention is to further develop More Than Food services to enable family's greater access to support. We know this work is vital in assisting families, one parent stated,

"I just want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for what you have done for me and my boys today. Took me off my feet with kindness. I'm so use to doing everything myself and having all we need so to be miles away from home with nothing but the clothes on our back is a massive shock for us. What you have done today I will never forget! There should be more people like you in the world. It would be a much better place!"

EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPORT

Our foodbank services were able to provide emergency food parcels to 2869 individuals referred to our services. 1805 were adults aged between 17 years and 90 years, 1064 were children aged under 16years.

Our standard parcels remain at three meals per day per person. However, in exceptional circumstances we provided a 7-day parcel containing three meals per day for seven days.

In addition to our emergency foodbank model, we also supported a further 137 adults through our partnership work with a local pastor, enabling us to provide a further 1233 meals to older residents within our local communities.

The main reasons for people accessing our services related to benefit delays, low income and sickness/ill health.



SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROVISIONS

We have an excellent working relationship with schools within our operational localities. Schools we work with to reach our families within Manchester include St Marys C of E Primary, Claremont Primary, Rolls Crescent, Holy Name Primary, Martenscroft Nursery, St Wilfrid's Primary, St Philips Primary, St. Margret's Primary and Castlefield Campus. We also work with the following Trafford schools, St Alphonsus, Old Trafford Academy, St Hilda's, Kings Road, Seymour Grove and St John Vianney's.

Further to our work with schools we also provide support through local community services such as Home Start, Health visitors, social workers and early help hubs.

To date this year, we have supported 2187 children and 1197 adult with parcels to assist with school holiday hunger. We know that school holidays are a period of time where parents struggle with the additional costs of feeding their children, as well as providing suitable activities to keep children entertained at home.

Without our support these families would not have had the food they needed to support themselves during these holiday periods. Having access to our 5-day parcel which contained breakfast, lunches and snacks families benefited from the alleviation of food poverty, faced less pressure on household finances and increased ability of being able to feed themselves and their children. Furthermore, recent research has reported that one in five children in England between the ages of five and eight do not have access to books at home. Our Holiday parcels included reading books, art packs and science packs enabling parents to interact with their children and provide suitable age-appropriate activities, further reducing the financial costs to parents.



SUMMER ACTIVITY LUNCHES

During the summer months we also partnered with local youth organisation 84 Youth and neighbourhood officers by means of providing 250 packed lunches to children attending half term play activities within the local parks and green spaces and the Active Street Games.

We would like to thank Big Life Centre, Hulme for use of their kitchen facilities and extend our thanks to their volunteer Sam for the supply of freshly grown tomatoes and cucumbers which we used on the children's lunches.

WINTER FOOD INITIATIVES

Aside from our generic foodbank services, during Christmas 2021 we distributed a total of 635 seasonal food Hampers to older residents, care leavers, families and individuals living within our localities.

Without the generous support of our corporate partners and sponsors Co-op, Asda Hulme, Tesco Stretford, Chinese Christian Church, City in the Community, One Manchester, BT Open Reach and the general public many families would have struggled this year. We thank all those involved in supporting us with our winter food initiatives. Without this support these individuals and families would not have had the food they needed to support themselves during the holiday season. Both Covid19 and the cuts to the Universal Credit uplift had a hugely problematic impact on many within our communities. With demand on our services growing significantly on previous years. This in itself illustrates the ongoing need for our services which, sadly, shows no sign of abating.



Through our partnership work with schools and local care providers we were able to reach out to families struggling financially at this time. We anecdotally know the importance of our winter food initiatives - for example One parent stated *"What a brilliant reminder that people care about my family. The box of food and goodies lifted our hearts."*



Inclusive of our seasonal food hampers we provide 125 Christmas meals in a box containing all the fresh ingredients needed to make a Christmas day meal. Each box also contained a £10 gift card to enable families to purchase fresh meat or vegetarian alternative to compliment the items provided. This work was supported through donations of fresh produce from Unicorn Grocery, Chorlton and Fareshare Manchester. We know from feedback this initiative was well received. One family wrote to say *"Thank you so much. My family have never had a Christmas Dinner with all the trimmings before. We really appreciate it."*

MORE THEN FOOD PROJECTS

SCHOOL UNIFORM PILOT

During the summer months of July and August the foodbank received a number of telephone calls from stressed parents, worrying about the cost of school uniforms versus the need to pay bills and provide food for their families. Although we tried to link families in with existing uniform providers it quickly became apparent that parents had missed the deadline for referrals. As a direct response to the identified needs, we sought funding and set up a pilot school uniform project.



The pilot consisted of seven local primary schools, a community Sure Start Centre and pupil referral unit with whom we already had close working relations. Through the pastoral care teams, we were able to work with the schools to identify the families in need of support. The pilot was launched in October 2021. In January 2022 we extended the uniform project to cover an additional five local high schools.

Between October 2021 and March 2022, we supported 17 individual children with school uniform support. The reasons for support varied for example in one family the children were missing from education because the children only had one set of uniform and the washing machine had broken so mum was unable to clean the uniforms. An additional set of uniform was provided to enable the children to return to school.

Another child was truanting from school as he did not have the correct uniform and didn't want to attend school for fear of being in trouble for having incorrect uniform or being made fun of by his peers for being poor. Uniform items were provided to enable the child to return to education in the correct uniform.

Feedback from parents has been positive with many parents reporting how grateful they were for the support. *"Thank you for helping with the uniforms, I don't know what I would have done without this support."* Another parent reported *"you don't know how much this means. I can stop stressing now knowing my children have all they need."*

PRE-LOADED MOBILE SIM CARDS

This year we have seen a significant number of individuals disconnecting from support services. Upon exploration it came to light that many individuals were struggling financially to afford access to telecommunications. Many individuals no longer had a landline telephone and had swapped to pay as you go mobile providers as an alternative means to staying connected. However, the Covid 19 pandemic and the reversal of the Universal Credit uplift left many struggling. As a result, we came across more and more individuals self-disconnecting. This proved extremely challenging when trying to assist individuals with support. The lack of means to communicate impacted on the speed in which services could be delivered. In order to combat these challenges, we teamed up with Vodaphone who provided us with pre-loaded sim cards. We were able to use these sim cards to enable families to reconnect to services. The sim cards provided them with six months of free text messaging, calling credit and mobile data.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Christmas 2021 we received unprecedented referrals for Christmas toy support, 902 toy sacks were provided to struggling families compared to 360 in the previous year. It is with thanks to The Toy Appeal and Network Rail who donated gifts that we were able to meet the demand this year. It is becoming increasingly apparent that year on year this support is much needed.



Feedback from our schools and community care providers is vital in informing the support we offer our residents: *"I received support for a family with three young children, one of whom had complex needs. The support from the foodbank was vital as a means of support for Mum, who was a single parent, following a house move."*

The new home meant that Mum had more space for furniture and toys however there was a cost implication. As Mum was a carer for her child, her income was low and she found it

difficult to manage purchasing necessary items, for example new school uniform as the children had moved school, and other items for the new house as well as everyday essentials. Support from the foodbank by way of food and toys at Christmas, meant that Mum was able to buy items the family required, such as new uniform for the children without the need to consider how she would prioritise this along with buying food and other essential items. Christmas gifts were also given to the family, and Mum expressed her heartfelt gratitude that the children would have toys and books. These were played with on Christmas day, and moving forward. Providing enough suitable toys for the children had been extremely difficult due to the low income and a distinct lack of space in the previous home. It was great to see the difference that having stimulation and different things to play with made to the children.

Without the help of the foodbank, Mum would have struggled to manage and I feel that the stress and anxiety that she experienced would have been exacerbated. The help that she received was therefore vital at this time. As I was able to help Mum applying for the correct benefits, she is now in a better position to manage moving forward.

This is one of a number of families who have been supported by the foodbank - I cannot explain the significant, positive difference that it makes to children and families and hope that this will continue”

In addition to toy sacks and in partnership with Manchester Power House and Trafford Placed Based Integration team we were also able to support 67 care leavers with food hampers and Gifts sets kindly provided by Lush, Trafford centre.

We also received referrals for support for older residents. 122 received winter Care Hampers filled with treats and winter essentials. These were partially resourced and prepared by staff and students at Manchester Metropolitan University. With assistance from our local Ward councillors and neighbourhood officers the care packages were delivered in time for Christmas.



RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

Through our contacts in the ambulance services, we learnt of an older resident who had been assaulted and mugged within the local community. The paramedics raised funds to replace money stolen, whilst Bridging the Gap provided a Fruit hamper. The resident was pleasantly surprised and stated her *“faith in humanity had been restored.”* She was pleased to see there were *“still good people around.”*



Another older resident came to our attention, through partnership working with local Councillors and care provider. We discovered the gentleman had been isolated due to Covid19 and was turning 90 years of age. The community rallied together to arrange a small surprise birthday gathering to help celebrate the special day. With thanks to local Charity Cake 4 Kids, we were able to put in a special request for the resident to receive a celebratory birthday cake.

FINANCE & ACCOUNTING

We ensure our sustainability by using a diverse range of income streams, these include partnerships with local supermarkets, schools, churches, individual and corporate donations and grant funding.

During this financial year our income decreased slightly compared to previous year. However, a large proportion of our income remains as a direct response to the covid19 pandemic. Expenditure has also continued to rise due to our increased activities and staff requirements, also as a direct impact of the Covid19 pandemic and pressure placed on services and provisions.

The Charity's accounts were prepared under the receipts and payment method and were examined by an independent examiner.

PRINCIPLE SOURCES OF FUNDING

Notable source of funding (£1000 and above) for year ending 2021/2022

FUNDING	AMOUNT
Manchester City Council	£8,163
Trussell Trust	£6,864
Coop	£5,052
Fareshare	£5,000
One Manchester	£3,000
MCFC Community Fund	£2,500
Yapp Charitable Trust	£2,500
Penny Appeal	£2,500
Arnold Clark	£2,500
84 Youth	£2,000
Manchester United Supporters' Trust	£2,602
Semble Network	£1,800
Manchester BME Network	£1,000
84 Youth	£2,000
Local Giving Donations	£36,978

ACCOUNT OVERVIEW

	Accounts 2021/2022				2020/2021
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Designated	TOTAL	Last Year
	£	£	£	£	£
Income	£54,182	£46,882	-	£101,064	£153,611
Expenditure	(£20,008)	(£54,348)	-	(£74,356)	(£70,713)
Surplus/(Deficit)	£34,174	(£7,466)	-	£26,708	£82,808
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-
At 1 st April	£18,008	£15,981	£82,500	£116,489	£33,591
At 31 March	£52,182	£8,515	£82,500	£143,197	£116,489

RESERVES POLICY

The Charity continues to operate restricted reserves in the instance whereby funds are raised for a specific activity/service or at a request of a donor. The trustees have ringfenced a dedicated pot of reserves from unrestricted monies to ensure sustainability and to assist with operational costs in the event of another pandemic, disaster or reduction of monetary income. It is envisaged that we will continue to build restricted monies to ensure we have 12 – 18 months of reserves at any given time.

FOOD AND HYGIENE ASSETS

The Charity relies substantially on donations of food and hygiene products from the general public, including local business and corporate partners. Donated items for 2020/2021 amounted to 61,909.45Kg (61.9 tonnes), at a nominal value of £146,725

The trustees are extremely grateful to all our funders, donors, fundraisers and members of the public. It is because of their generosity and trust in our Charity that we have been able to support those in need.

AWARD AND RECOGNITIONS 2021-2022

In November 2021 our Trustee Michelle McHale received a Thank You Award from Manchester Mayor Cllr Tommy Judge in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the Hulme communities during Covid-19 pandemic.



Manchester Be Proud Finalists 2022 Hulme Food response Partnership

In March 2022 Bridging the Gap (Manchester) and the Hulme Food Response Partnership were nominated for a Manchester Be Proud Award. The partnership was recognised for its response, services and commitment to the community of Hulme during the Covid-19 pandemic.



This is for you... the finest example of what Manchester is and what it stands for.

You are a pillar of your community – someone who does everything to help, without expecting anything in return.

You make a real difference and we want you to **Be Proud**



DECLARATION

The Board of Trustees declare that they have approved the report above and that this is a true reflection on services provided and funding obtained.

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees

Signature:



Name:

Marie Hawkins

Position:

Acting Chair of Trustees

Date:

01 December 2022



**CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**

**Independent examiner's report on
the accounts**

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name:
Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 March 2022

**Charity no
(if any)**

1170952

Set out on pages

2-3

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 March 2022.

**Responsibilities and basis of
report**

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent examiner's
statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Felicity King

Date:

05/12/2022

Name:

Felicity King

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body (if
any):**

ACA

Address:

18 Station Court, Bovey Tracey

Devon TQ13 9GA



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

1170952

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	1st April 2021	To	31st March 2022
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Designated funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Manchester City Council		8,163	-	8,163	14,430
Trussell Trust		6,864	-	6,864	10,545
Coop		5,052	-	5,052	-
Fareshare		5,000	-	5,000	-
One Manchester		3,000	-	3,000	1,500
MCFC Community Fund		2,500	-	2,500	2,500
Yapp Charitable Trust		2,500	-	2,500	2,500
Penny Appeal		2,500	-	2,500	-
Arnold Clark		2,500	-	2,500	-
84 Youth		2,000	-	2,000	-
Manchester United Supporters' Trust		2,602	-	2,602	-
Semble Network		1,800	-	1,800	-
Manchester BME Network		1,000	-	1,000	-
Local Giving grants		500	-	500	7,130
Other grants		900	-	900	31,420
General fundraising	54,182	-	-	54,182	83,586
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	54,182	46,882	-	101,063	153,611
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	54,182	46,882	-	101,063	153,611
A3 Payments					
Staff	10,189	28,564	-	38,754	31,175
Payments to partners	-	2,000	-	2,000	-
Food	-	1,671	-	1,671	11,342
Other Foodbank costs	1,295	899	-	2,193	2,227
Holiday hunger	-	7,241	-	7,241	4,491
Christmas	-	6,480	-	6,480	2,914
Book tokens for parcels	-	1,728	-	1,728	-
School uniform	-	628	-	628	-
Storage	1,236	-	-	1,236	9,488
Transport	6,694	2,827	-	9,521	4,729
Trustees & volunteers	492	162	-	654	226
Equipment	-	-	-	-	779
Overheads	-	1,845	-	1,845	2,697
Other	102	303	-	405	645
Sub total	20,008	54,348	-	74,356	70,713
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	20,008	54,348	-	74,356	70,713
Net of receipts/(payments)	34,174	- 7,466	-	26,708	82,898
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	18,008	15,982	82,500	116,489	33,591
Cash funds this year end	52,182	8,516	82,500	143,197	116,489

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Designated funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Barclays Bank plc	52,182	8,381	82,500
	Petty cash	-	134	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	52,182	8,516	82,500
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
			Michelle McHale BEM	05 Dec 2022

Accounts

Bridging The Gap

BRIDGING THE GAP (MANCHESTER)

ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 2020 - MARCH 2021



STATEMENT ACTING CHAIR

The UK has a long standing history of poverty issues within communities. Deprivation is often higher amongst areas with a disproportionately high black and ethnic population. It is often these communities that have been largely affected by decades of public services cuts spiralling families into further hardships.

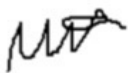
Bridging the Gap (Manchester) operates within the wards of Hulme, Moss Side, Whalley Range and North Trafford all of which are diverse and multicultural communities.

The Covid-19 pandemic further contributed to the hardships many people were already facing. Throughout the pandemic we supported families who lost income due to redundancy or who were placed on furlough schemes. Families who's children were also now in lockdown at home, significantly raising living costs and driving families further into poverty as they were unable to provide themselves with basic essentials. Some faced the harsh realities of deciding whether to pay the mortgage payments or to put food on the table, forcing them to rely upon foodbanks for support. Throughout the course of the year we saw many individuals self disconnecting from energy providers and telecommunications due to lack of affordability and support networks.

Children living in poverty are more at risk of being exploited by or becoming victim to criminal gangs, Furthermore those living in poverty are more likely to experience significant health problems,

At the start of the Pandemic the Charity had to continually adapt to the ever-changing situation, legislations and the change in needs of our clients. This year has been challenging and without the continued efforts of our Volunteers, Staff and Board of Trustees none of the work we do would be possible. The Charity has strengthened the work we do in Partnership with other agencies and is something which we will continue to develop in the years to follow. We are looking at ways to extend our Board to cover a broader skills basis to make us even more robust to enable the Charity to develop further with the aim to help even more clients going forward.

We believe it is time for change and that no one should be hungry or unable to afford basics living costs. As a Charity we are committed to supporting an holistic and asset based approach to working with people so that they can build resilience and a life free from poverty.



MARIE HAWKINS
Acting Chair



Administration Details

Charity Name: Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

Charity Number: 1170592

Principal Address:

Wesley Enterprise Centre

Royce Road

Hulme

Manchester

M15 5BP

Governance Structure

Type of governing document:

Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Constitution dated 3 January 2017

Previous Organisation:

On 3 January 20217 the Charitable Incorporated Organisation took over the assets and activities of Bridging The Gap (Manchester) an unregistered Charity established on 17 March 2014.

Our Vision & Mission

Vision:

Working towards ending food poverty and social exclusion within the communities of Hulme, Moss Side, Whalley Range and North Trafford.

Mission:

We support people on crisis by providing emergency food provisions and beyond this, aim to help them access the support needed to build resilience and to live a life free from poverty

Our Board



Evelyn Asante-Mensah
Chair
Whole Period



Marie Hawkins
Vice (Acting) Chair
Whole Period



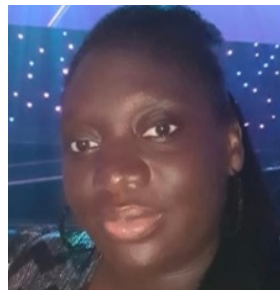
Gill Darling
Treasurer
Whole Period



Michelle McHale
Secretary
Whole Period



Caroline Wickens
Member
Whole Period



Sade Phillip
Member
Whole Period



Kathryn Bourne
Member
Whole Period

Our Staff

We have four part time members of staff:

Jo Warmington (Project Manager) is currently on maternity leave. Her post is being covered by a former volunteer Jon Sands

Corinne Davenport (Warehouse Co-ordinator) is supported by Warehouse assistants Mark Styles and Sean Connors both of whom also undertake delivery work.

Our Volunteers

We also have a dedicated and diverse team of volunteers (approximately 50) who have assisted our services providing warehouse support, stock management, administration, fundraising and catering services.

The Board of Trustees would like to thank all of the Charity's Staff, volunteers for their hard work, enthusiasm and commitment during what has been an in president year.

Response to Covid-19 Pandemic



The Charity has had to make considerable changes to its operational procedures and service delivery as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

This included:

- Introducing new working practices in line with Covid-19 guidance to ensure our staff, volunteers and clients remained as safe as possible. This included centralising our services to operate from our head office
- Moving from face to face service provisions for emergency food to delivery only services enabling those in crisis to remain safe and follow public health advice and guidance .
- Taking on a new member of staff to assist with warehouse duties and provide delivery services
- Working closely with a wide range of voluntary and statutory services to ensure that the community we support were able to access the essential support they needed.
- Working in partnership with corporate partner to bring in much needed donations, collaborative working and the sharing of resources enabling sustainability across the sector
- Rapidly responding and adapting to changes required in an efficient and timely manner.
- Purchasing additional items such as foods and packing boxes to meet the demand for our services.
- Leasing a vehicle to enable us to deliver food to those experiencing food crisis

Our Impact

Our overall impact in helping to reduce food poverty and hunger is summarised below

Food Distributed



Meals Provide 98,684



370 Christmas toy sacks
provided to vulnerable children



85 Care Packages provided to isolated
older community members

Breakdown of support across all projects

	Meals provided	Children Supported	Adults Supported
Child holiday provision	26794	1657	1149
Client Christmas hamper	17415	875	537
Other in-house client service	1460	0	221
Vouchers	48,015	1874	3461
Older residents Winter Care Packages			85
Toys Sacks		370	
TOTALS	93,684	4776	5456

Emergency Food Parcels

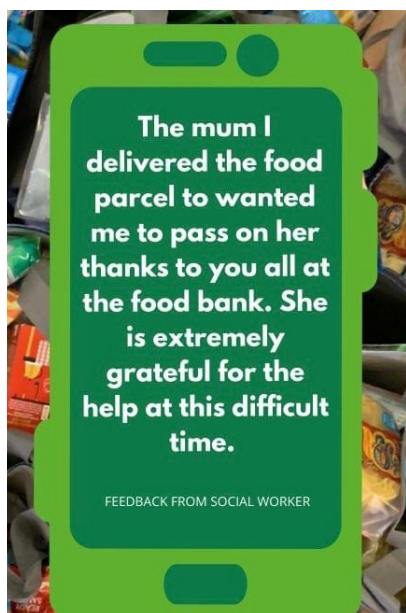
As a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic the demand for our emergency food parcels rose significantly compared to previous year. Throughout the year 2527 vouchers were received from agencies requesting support on behalf of clients. From these we were able to ensure food was provided to 3461 adults and 1,874 children

Throughout the pandemic we built upon our connections and partnerships working with specialist agencies to ensure that clients were able to access practical services to assist in alleviating the underlying causes of food poverty. We worked closely with both Manchester and Trafford Emergency Food Response Hubs to provide food parcels to those in need as a direct result of Covid-19.

Our standard parcels are three meals per day for three days however, during Covid-19 pandemic we provided an option for 7 day parcels based upon assessments of on-going need. This enabled us to reduce the number of deliveries we needed to undertake.

In addition to our emergency foodbank model we also supported a further 221 adults with food via our in house provisions, providing 1,400 meals.

The main reason for people accessing our services related to low income, benefit delays, ill health/disability and no recourse to public funds.



School Holiday Provisions

In the past we have provided face to face holiday clubs for families. As a result of Covid19 and Public Health advice and guidance we were unable to deliver such activities this year.

Therefore, we creatively adapted our model and provided school holiday parcels to ensure families remained supported during these periods.

The Charity worked closely with pastoral care leads within local primary schools, pupil referral unit and Surestart Centres within the ManChester Wards of Hulme, Moss Side and Whalley Range. In addition the Charity also worked with Trafford Councils Place Based Integration, Early Help Champions.

Our package of support included a range of products to enable families to cook together using easy to follow recipe cards and to eat healthily. Over the course of the year through support from partner agencies we were able to develop the offer further to include art packs, science packs and reading books to families.

In total the Charity provided 26,794 meals to 1,657 children and 1,149 parent/carers through our School holiday provisions. The weight of food distributed amounted to 11.2 tonnes of food.



Christmas Provisions

Christmas for many families can be particularly financially difficult, especially for families living in poverty. For Christmas 2020 we worked in partnership with pastoral care teams within schools and Early Help Teams from both Manchester and Trafford Wards to ensure parents were provided with gifts for their children. Assisting families from spiralling into further debt in order to afford Christmas. Reducing stress, anxiety and improving mental health and well-being for parents/carers.

Our partnership with The Toy Appeal and Rayburn Trading enabled us to provide a toy sack full of gifts for 370 children across our localities.



In addition the Charity also provided over 500 seasonal hampers to those in crisis. Hampers included basic food items plus additional seasonal snacks and treat.

85 Care Packages were provided to isolated and vulnerable older residents which included letters and Christmas cards from local nursery and school children, fostering intergenerational work to break down barriers of loneliness and isolation which were compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic.

125 'Christmas Meal in a Box' were provided to individual, couples and families who would ordinarily have had an option to attend our community Christmas Day meal. These boxes included all the ingredients to create a three course Christmas meal at home and a gift card to purchase the desired meat or vegetarian centrepiece for the meal.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

During this financial year we saw a significant increase in income from our supporters and donors, much of which was as a direct response to the COVID19 pandemic.

Expenditure has risen due to our increased activities and staff requirements also as a direct impact of the Covid19 pandemic and pressure placed on services and provisions. This year we have employed new staff members namely a project manager and warehouse assistant. In addition to keep up with demand we needed to purchase much more food than in previous years due to a drop in public donations.

The Charity's accounts were prepared under the receipts and payment method.

	2020/21			2019/20	
	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Designated £	Total £	Last year £
Income	83,586	70,025	-	153,611	50,961
Expenditure	(645)	(70,068)	-	(70,713)	(24,021)
Surplus/(deficit)	82,941	(43)	-	82,898	26,940
Transfers	(82,500)	-	82,500	-	-
At 1 April	17,567	16,024	-	33,591	6,651
At 31 March	18,008	15,981	82,500	116,489	33,591

Reserves Policy:

The Charity operates restricted reserves in the instance whereby funds are raised for a specific activity/service or at a request of a donor. The trustees have ringfenced a dedicated pot of reserves from unrestricted monies to fund salaries and overheads for a period of one year.

Principle sources of funding:

Notable source of funding (£1000 and above) for year ending 2020/2021

Manchester City Council	£14,430
Trussell Trust	£10,545
Forever Manchester	£8,100
Local giving grants	£7,130
Antonia Carluccio Foundation	£5,000
National Lottery	£4,682
We love Manchester Charity	£4,000
MCFC Community Fund	£2,500
Yapp Charitable Trust	£2,500
Souter Charitable Trust	£2,250
Trafford Housing Trust	£2,088
One Manchester	£1,500
Trafford MBC	£1,500
Jigsaws Home Group	£1,000
Children Relief In Need	£1,000

The Charity relies substantially on donations of food from the general public, including local business and corporate partners. Donated food for 2020/2021 amounted to 85,922.18kg (85.9 tonnes), at a nominal value of £152,941.48

The trustees are extremely grateful to all our funders, donors and members of the public. It is because of their generosity and belief in our Charity's that we have been able to support those in need

Feedback Survey

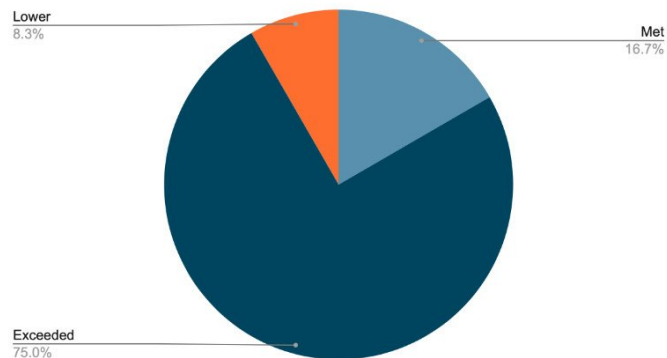
We issued a feedback survey to all referral agencies supported throughout the year. 13 of which responded.

- All agencies agreed that the referral process was easy to navigate.
- All agencies stated they would work with us again in the future
- 8 agencies were supporting vulnerable families
- 8 agencies were supporting older residents
- 4 agencies were supporting isolated individuals

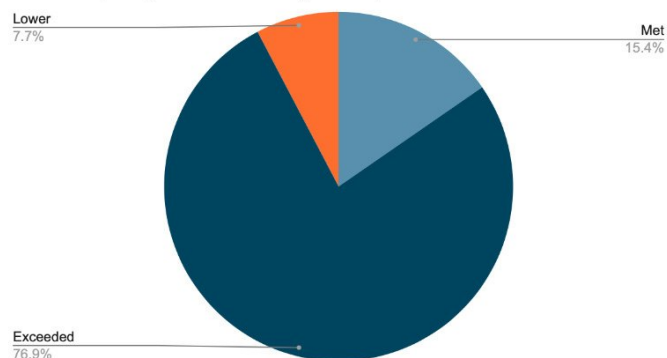
We asked for feedback on the quantity and quality of our food provisions

Quality and Quantity:

Did the quantity of food meet your expectations?



Did the quality of food meet your expectations?



Quotes from clients

"I've never had anything given to me before. It was a wonderful surprise and to be honest it really helped me out."

"All the support I received over Christmas was a life saver for me and my 4 kids. What we were offered was very thought out and practical."

"Am grateful for the food parcel, this would tidy me over Christmas."

"Wow first time receiving a gift....I will have a good Christmas."

"This will save me from going without food this Christmas."

"Thank you so much, delivering a parcel has made me smile. My daughter can't wait to eat the chocolate."

"We have had a difficult year with Covid and unemployment, this will help."

"Thank you so much. My family have never had a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings before. We really appreciate it."

"What a brilliant reminder that people care about my family. The box of food and goodie lifted our hearts."

"The hamper surpassed my expectations and brightened up what has been an incredibly difficult year."

"It was fabulous. It was good quality and it was greatly appreciated."

"Thank you so much this will come in handy over the holidays"

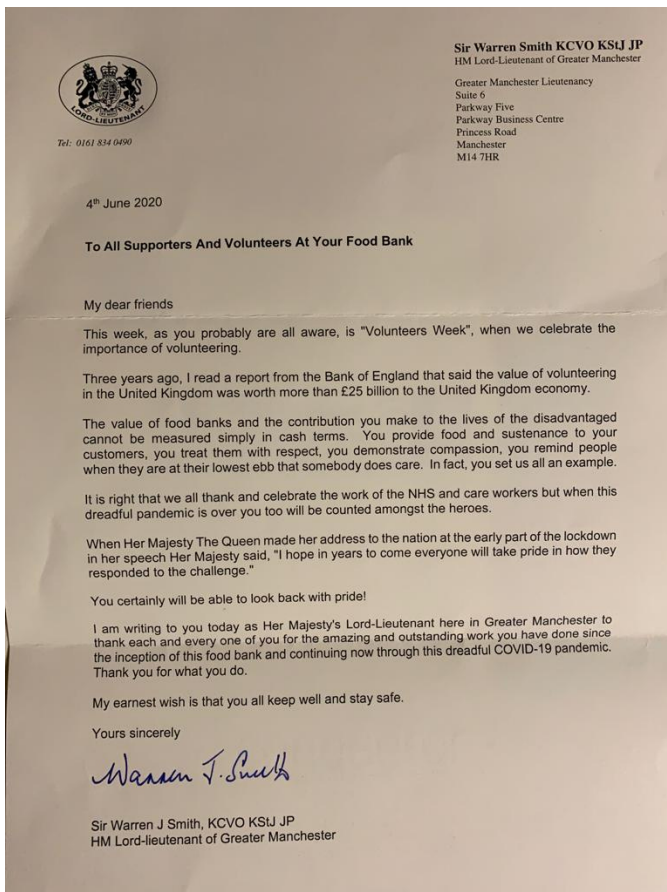
"Absolutely delighted with the wonderful hamper. Very overwhelmed and pleasantly surprised with the lovely Christmas food hamper."

"Goodnight, I have just stepped in from a long day at court, to find your food gift. Thanks so much it's very much appreciated."

"Morning just want to say a big thanks for my food parcel yesterday. I appreciate it loads its such a big help for me and my kid."

Recognition

The Charity is extremely grateful to receive letters of recognition for our services to the community.



Declaration

The Board of Trustees declare that this is a true reflection on services provided and have approved the report.

Signature: 

Name: Marie Hawkins

Position: Acting Chair

Date: 05 December 2021





Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

On accounts for the year
ended

31 March 2021

Charity no
(if any)

1170952

Set out on pages

2-3

(Remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of
report

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's
statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Felicity King

Date:

5 December 2021

Name:

Felicity King

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body (if
any):

ACA

Address:

61 Tudor Road, Newton Abbot

Devon TQ12 1HT



Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	1st April 2020	To	31st March 2021
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Designated funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Manchester City Council	-	14,430	-	14,430	4,350
Trussell Trust	-	10,545	-	10,545	8,244
Forever Manchester	-	8,100	-	8,100	1,200
Local Giving grants	-	7,130	-	7,130	-
Antonio Carluccio Foundation	-	5,000	-	5,000	-
National Lottery	-	4,682	-	4,682	-
We Love Manchester Charity	-	4,000	-	4,000	-
MCFC Community Fund	-	2,500	-	2,500	-
Yapp Charitable Trust	-	2,500	-	2,500	2,500
Souter Charitable Trust	-	2,250	-	2,250	-
Trafford Housing Trust	-	2,088	-	2,088	7,246
One Manchester	-	1,500	-	1,500	-
Trafford MBC	-	1,500	-	1,500	2,167
Jigsaw Homes Group	-	1,000	-	1,000	-
Manchester Relief in Need	-	1,000	-	1,000	1,000
Other grants	-	1,800	-	1,800	9,471
General fundraising	83,586	-	-	83,586	14,783
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	83,586	70,025	-	153,611	50,961
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	83,586	70,025	-	153,611	50,961
A3 Payments					
Staff	-	31,175	-	31,175	7,660
Food	-	11,342	-	11,342	833
Other Foodbank costs	-	2,227	-	2,227	2,453
Holiday hunger	-	4,491	-	4,491	1,546
Christmas	-	2,914	-	2,914	1,358
Storage	-	9,488	-	9,488	6,224
Transport	-	4,729	-	4,729	-
Trustees & volunteers	-	226	-	226	975
Equipment	-	779	-	779	576
Overheads	-	2,697	-	2,697	1,360
Other	645	-	-	645	1,036
Sub total	645	70,068	-	70,713	24,021
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	645	70,068	-	70,713	24,021
Net of receipts/(payments)	82,941	- 42	-	82,898	26,940
A5 Transfers between funds	- 82,500	-	82,500	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	17,567	16,024	-	33,591	6,651
Cash funds this year end	18,008	15,982	82,500	116,489	33,591

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Designated funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Barclays Bank plc	18,008	15,788	82,500
	Petty cash	-	194	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	18,008	15,982	82,500

	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Marie Hawkins	05-Dec-21



Section A

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ended

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Signed:

Felicity King

Date:

5 December 2021

Name:

Felicity King

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body (if
any):

ACA

Address:

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Devon TQ12 1HT