

Uttlesford Foodbank Annual Report and Statement of Accounts 2024- 2025

Registered Charity Number 1176230 Registered in England and Wales

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“We provide emergency food and practical support to people in their hardest moments. We also work with partners and local communities to ensure everyone gets the right help long before they need a food bank”

Trustees' Report

Uttlesford Foodbank's objective is to relieve persons in Uttlesford and the surrounding area who are in financial hardship in such ways as the Trustees from time to time think fit by:

- Providing emergency food, essential toiletries, and household items to individuals and families in need and/or for distribution by charities or other organisations working to prevent or relieve poverty
- Such other means, including (but not limited to) the provision of support or signposting to relevant information and/or referral to other support services.

We achieve this by distributing parcels containing food and other essential items to last, on average, seven days. We also distribute food vouchers either to augment the food parcels provided or to provide immediate relief to those individuals identified as being in urgent need of support. During this financial year we have expanded our approach to include the provision of tailored advice and guidance.

The Trustees have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and are confident that we continue to meet these requirements. We do so by operating under the Trussell umbrella but as an independent charity.

The names of trustees who served during the financial year and of those appointed since the year end are as follows:

Gemma Copping
Katherine Douch
Jane Jones (resigned June 2024)
Edward Middleton (appointed October 2025)
Victoria Lockie (appointed January 2025)
William Pike (appointed December 2024)
Richard Porch (resigned October 2024)
Robyn Rankin (appointed October 2025)
James Shepherd (appointed October 2025)
Sophie Storey

To replace those trustees who left a wide search was conducted and appointments made in line with our trustee recruitment policy. This completes our programme of renewal of the Trustee Board. During this calendar year with the help of our new trustees we have also conducted a thorough review of our policies which have now largely been updated or rewritten. We are targeting completion of this process by the end of 2026.

Through the last financial year and since the year end we have continued to provide food parcels to those in need and we have experienced increases in demand and some shortfalls in the level of food donations received. As usual, we used some of our financial reserves to purchase and fill the shortfall last year and we will do so again this year. Our reserves policy has been revised now to cover six months of operational costs and to retain funding for strategic projects. Whilst we have a reserves surplus at present, we shall need to work hard to maintain our financial reserves over time.

Our longer-term strategy is to deliver all our services consistently across the whole Uttlesford District. As a Trussell food bank, we work in line with Trussell Trust processes, guidance and

strategic direction. We recognise that our facilities will require further development, and we have already set aside funds to support this. The Trussell Trust's Strategic Plan is built on the understanding that food poverty stems from income inequality rather than a lack of food. As part of this shared mission, we are committed to enabling access to advocacy and specialist financial advice by providing funding for these services, ensuring our support reflects both local need and the wider strategy of the Trussell network.

Providing services in line with the Trussell Strategic Plan will include continuing to adapt our operations, such as running campaigns and undertaking advocacy work within our community. We have also delivered a successful programme of funded financial advisory and support services for our clients. These initiatives have benefited from initial Trussell Trust grants, which enabled us to resource this work while still building a surplus by the end of the last financial year. Funding for our Financial Inclusion Officer from the Trussell Trust is expected to conclude in June 2026, after which we will need to support this service from our own resources, alongside ongoing development of our advocacy and campaigning activities. We do not expect to have a financial surplus in the current year.

We are deeply grateful for the generosity of all those who donate food and money to the food bank. We receive food donations via supermarkets, schools, churches and via private donations. The people of Uttlesford have again demonstrated how caring they are and that support is fundamental to what we do. Some of our financial funding comes from local businesses and other organisations raise money for us. In these difficult and uncertain economic times, we very much appreciate all those who continue donations to us. We are working hard to try to avoid future financial shortfalls as we try to provide as complete a service as possible, and we need to undertake more active fund-raising to achieve that.

Our small team of employed staff and our large team of volunteers do a fantastic job for us, keeping us operational and providing a valuable service to the local community throughout the year. Thankyou for all that you do. More information about how they do that is given in the Operational Review which follows.

The Trustee Board

Uttlesford Foodbank Annual Operational Report 2024-2025

Executive Summary

The 2024-2025 year was marked by sustained high demand. We reopened the warehouse for client collections in April 2024 alongside deliveries, introducing a walk-in safeguard for urgent cases. Uptake has been modest, likely due to rural transport barriers, but the model strengthens signposting and client engagement.

Volunteer commitment remained strong, with around 125 active volunteers supporting daily operations and seasonal peaks. We trained client-facing volunteers and ran appreciation activities to maintain morale. However, reduced donations led to occasional shift cancellations, posing a retention risk.

Advocacy and partnerships advanced significantly: we used combined data to influence local decisions, helped shape the Mobile Community Supermarket, and launched the "I AM MORE" exhibit. Internally, we formalised the Operations Manager role, introduced monthly stats updates, held quarterly hub meet-ups, and achieved J9 Safe Space recognition.

Looking ahead, priorities include stabilising supply, protecting volunteer engagement, deepening wrap-around support, and securing dedicated capacity for administration and fundraising.

1) Demand & Service Delivery

Cost-of-living pressures and inflation continued to drive need, with more parcels distributed. The warehouse reopened in April 2024 for client collections, fulfilling a key goal from last year. Footfall has been limited - likely due to rurality and transport costs - but on-site visits allow us to offer a hot drink, listen, and provide signposting similar to delivery follow-up calls.

We introduced a walk-in procedure for clients without referrals, offering a 48-hour emergency parcel and an immediate Citizens Advice referral for further support. This ensures urgent needs are met while connecting clients to longer-term help.

Client complexity increased, with longer booking calls and more safeguarding issues due the broader nature of the conversations. To strengthen wrap-around care, we created a client call-back role in the south to mirror provision in the north, ensuring follow-up and referrals for all clients.

2) Supply Chain & Inventory

Donation volumes increased from the previous year, which reduced the need for large quantities of stock to be purchased; those purchases that were made were to fill gaps in our inventory of staple items in our parcels. We continue to work hard on focusing our donations on items in need, updating our website, displaying new posters every two weeks at our donation points across the district and utilising/advertising the Bank The Food app which prompts the public that they are close to a donation point and what we are particularly in need of.

Stock management remains disciplined, but tighter and more focused supply management will be a priority for 2025-2026.

3) Volunteers & Workforce

Volunteer numbers held steady at approximately 125, reflecting strong community commitment. Fifteen volunteers were trained for client-facing roles, ensuring coverage Monday to Friday. Volunteers also supported supermarket collections and Christmas hamper deliveries.

We promoted inclusion by involving volunteers with additional needs, offering placements for six Year 10 students, and hosting corporate teams for special events. Appreciation initiatives included individual thank-you letters, a summer tea party, and a 10th Anniversary celebration in November.

Close coordination between Operations and the Volunteer Coordinator, plus flexible tasking and recognition, will be critical to sustaining engagement.

4) Partnerships, Advocacy & Outreach

We maintained a strong presence in local forums, including the Uttlesford Health & Wellbeing Board and Essex Children & Families Network. Our data-led advocacy combined food bank data with DWP StatXplore to produce packs for councillors and UDC officers, ensuring rural hardship informs planning and investment.

Community projects included Cook Club sessions in Wimbish and recipe cards such as “Pulse Power” and “Potato Power” added to parcels. We collaborated with Touchpoint Foodshare on “Ham For Tea” and continued circulating the “Worrying About Money” leaflet district-wide.

We helped steer £70k investment in a Mobile Community Supermarket, shaping its route of eight stops over two weeks. Nationally, we joined Trussell’s “Guarantee Our Essentials” Lobby Day at Parliament and launched the “I AM MORE” exhibit to challenge stigma and amplify lived experience.

Engagement highlights included an October day-rave fundraiser and the 10th Anniversary event, which strengthened partner collaboration. Quarterly hub meet-ups and monthly statistics emails improved communication and transparency with our volunteers.

5) Client Triage & Financial Inclusion

There has been an increasing emphasis in the current year on ensuring our clients are listened to and provided with onward referral and signposting to other organisations who can help them address both the financial circumstances that led to their food bank referral, and any other issue that they may be experiencing concurrently, for example domestic abuse, mental health issues or addiction. The ultimate aim being a return to self-sustainability and wellbeing. This support is offered to clients who collect via trained volunteers, and on the phone either at the point of referral call back by our Operations Manager or as a follow up call from a trained volunteer.

Many of our clients are facing significant debt issues which impacts their monthly outgoings and can also lead to insecure housing and poor mental health. We have continued to fund two part-time specialist debt caseworkers provided by Citizens Advice as part of a 3-year Financial Inclusion funding agreement with Trussell. This service is focused on current food bank clients and those at imminent risk of needing food bank support. This funding ends in June 2026.

6) Safeguarding & Safe Spaces

Longer and more in depth conversations with our clients has naturally resulted in a greater amount of safeguarding concerns; the safeguarding lead and deputy continue to follow these up with the relevant agencies. We continue to maintain up-to-date staff and volunteer safeguarding training. In June 2024, the Saffron Walden warehouse became a recognised J9 Safe Space after Alpha Vesta training. This provides a discreet environment for those affected by domestic abuse, with trained listeners, resources, and access to private phone calls.

7) Priorities for 2025-2026

1. Maintain supply through targeted fundraising and retail surplus partnerships.
 2. Protect volunteer engagement with purposeful rotas and inclusive recruitment; develop further client engagement roles.
 3. Maintaining our Financial Inclusion (debt casework) service
 4. Scale client call-back model and strengthen referral and signposting pathways.
 5. Continue data-led advocacy and monitor the impact of the newly launched Mobile Community Supermarket.
 6. Secure admin and fundraising capacity to relieve operational bottlenecks.
 7. Repeat high-impact volunteer engagement events and maintain monthly stats updates.
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8) 25/26 Progress to Date

1. We are anticipating an overall reduction in food donations this year, a trend that Trussell has been seeing across the country, and have been making regular purchases of stock. We are utilising the newly launched Affordable Food Hub to purchase low cost stock, partnering with other food banks to share bulk purchases and connecting with other local food providers such as the Country Food Trust to bolster stock.
2. We will be expanding our client engagement team as part of the development of our triage (signposting and referral) support.
3. We are currently reviewing the impact of Financial Inclusion over the duration of the 3-year agreement to take a view on maintaining the service, and if so, looking into funding options.
4. We are currently developing a new team of volunteers to follow up with all clients on the phone. This service and team will require a level of management and oversight that is unrealistic for our Operations Manager to undertake on a day-to-day basis and funding options for a part-time client support manager are underway.
5. Our Advocacy & Engagement Lead continues to communicate with local government, informing them of food bank statistics and developing a Data Task Group, bringing together representatives from the district council and local support organisations to share data to influence change and decision making. We attend services, such as the SOS Hubs (recently renamed Help Hubs) and either engage with or sit on various boards and subcommittees, for example the district council's Health & Wellbeing Board. Regular attendance at the Community Supermarket schedule stops is ongoing.
6. Recruitment for a part-time fundraiser has commenced, we have launched our Corporate Sponsorship Scheme.
7. Volunteer numbers remain stable; 1 recognition event is planned for February '26. Monthly stats emails continue and feedback has been unanimously positive from volunteers.

Treasurer's Report 2025 Accounts

From a financial perspective 2024/25 has been a satisfactory year for the food bank with gross income increasing by £90k and costs down by £6k resulting in a surplus for the year of £31k compared to a deficit of £65k in the previous year. Fund raising from all groups, Churches, Community Groups, Corporates and Individuals was higher as a result of better engagement. The Local Authority Grant of £28k in the year includes an amount of £16k due in 2023/24. We were also very fortunate that our grant from the Trussell Trust increased by £50k to an aggregate of £74k, although £67k of this was for Restricted purposes principally for the Financial Inclusion project. We are very grateful for all the support we receive from all our donors.

Tight cost control, careful buying of food stocks and the fact that we have not had to undertake the warehouse repair work of £11k incurred in 2023/24 has enabled us to reduce costs in the year by £6k. The overall salary costs in the year increased by £20k reflecting the additional cost of our paid employees for the whole year.

At the year-end our unrestricted cash reserves totalled £257k of which £125k is represented by our new reserves policy of 6 months expenses and £65k for strategic purposes. However, the level of our cash reserves need to be seen in the context of a probable deficit in the year 2025/26 as a result, primarily, of a forecast reduction in income.

During the preparation of the accounts it was observed that the 2024 closing bank balance was understated by £3k. As a result an amended statement has been prepared with the revised figures of bank balances and expenses now shown in the comparative position in these accounts.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Uttlesford Food Bank

1176230

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/04/2024

To

31/03/2025

Section A Receipts and

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	-	-	-	-	-
Fills	80	160		240	722
Church	6,155			6,155	3,227
Community Groups	13,507			13,507	9,301
Corporate	15,738	1,275		17,013	12,033
Individual (One-off)	14,070			14,070	9,290
Individual (Recurring)	17,437	720		18,157	17,901
Online giving	50,179	10		50,189	51,158
Parish council	800			800	1,754
Fundraising	3,944			3,944	
Charities	-			-	
Gift aid claimed	2,201			2,201	
Education	-	3,100		3,100	
	-				
Legacies	-				
Legacy giving	-			-	979
	-				
Grants	-				
Local authority grants	3,950	24,500		28,450	14,800
Trussel trust grants	7,351	66,902		74,252	24,854
	-				
	-				
Hire of hall and equipment	-				
Hire of hall and equipment	7,980			7,980	7,625
	-			-	-
Investment income	-				
Interest received	2,452			2,452	2,149
	-			-	
Additional income	-				
Volunteers (Fils Café)	-			-	
Refunds	-			-	
EventBright	1,275			1,275	
Project prom		2,000		2,000	
Accountancy refund	150			150	
Car boot refund	50			50	
Amazon refund	25			25	
Ashton Des	10			10	
				-	
				-	
				-	
	-		-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	147,353	98,667	-	246,019	155,793
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	147,353	98,667	-	246,019	155,793

A3 Payments

	-	-	-	-	-
Administrative costs		-	-	-	-
Misc. office expenditure	3,278		-	3,278	154
Telephone and Internet	329		-	329	328
Printing, Postage & Stationery	437		-	437	608
I.T Software	442			442	856
HR Costs	55			55	582
	-		-	-	-
Overhead costs	-		-	-	-
Rent/Meeting Venues	26,400		-	26,400	24,837
Insurance	651			651	236
Warehouse Equipment / Repairs	831			831	11,203
Building	3,987			3,987	2,143
Office equipment	299			299	
Lock ups	-			-	-
Light and heat	1,042			1,042	644
Cleaners	2,697			2,697	776
Donation points	76			76	365
	-			-	-
Grants Payments	-			-	-
Utilities	-			-	1,026
Direct grant payments	-			-	1,249
Financial Inclusion Project	-	42,369		42,369	40,934
Community Cook Projects	-	1,720		1,720	843
Project prom	-	210		210	
	-			-	-
Cook Club	-			-	-
Stock	-			-	2,504
Slow Cookers	-			-	240
Food	-	1,057		1,057	
	-			-	-
Misc. Costs	-			-	-
Livery	-			-	-
Fundraising	849			849	629
Home bargains not allocated	18			18	
Float for Fete De La Musique	191			191	
	-			-	-
Staffing costs				-	-
Salary	26,081	16,000		42,081	21,675
Payroll administration	450			450	576
HMRC PAYE and NIC	6,594			6,594	6,521
Pension	2,582			2,582	2,239
	-			-	-
Food costs	-			-	-
Fresh Food Vouchers	21,735	1,245		22,980	29,696
Stock	19,177	8,637		27,814	40,700
Christmas	1,987			1,987	5,066
Campaign					
Campaign Salary	-	17,043		17,043	16,253
Campaign expenses	-	186		186	1,408
	-			-	-
Volunteers	-			-	-
Volunteers misc. costs	540			540	236
Travelling	1,786			1,786	2,065
DBS	235			235	378
Training	-			-	-
Fils	-	309		309	845
	-			-	-
Van	-			-	-
Diesel	809			809	609
Repairs	388			388	1,157
Insurance	1,515			1,515	1,107
Tax	345			345	196
	-			-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	125,806	88,777	-	214,583	220,885

A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
Van Purchase	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	125,806	88,777	-	214,583	220,885
Net of receipts/(payments)	21,547	9,890	-	31,437	- 65,092
A5 Transfers between funds	5,155	- 5,155	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	229,926	2,890	-	232,816	297,908
Cash funds this year end	256,628	7,625	-	264,252	232,816

Section B Statement of

liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	BB Online Instant Access Charis Account 35 Day Notice Savings Account Saffron Building Society Treasurer's Account Total cash funds (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	59,292 506 80,343 80,254 36,232 256,628 OK	 - 7,625 7,625 OK	- - - - OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
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)
Laptop		500	-
Printer		2,000	-
Van		16,500	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
Trade creditors		2,216	
P.A.Y.E for M12		1,750	
Pension for M12		298	
		-	
		-	

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

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval

Independent Examiner's Report



**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
Uttlesford Food Bank

On accounts for the year
ended

31 March 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1176230

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:



Date: 27/01/2025

Name:

Elliot Field

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

FCCA (Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants)

Address:

Cambridge House, 16 High Street, Saffron Walden, CB10 1AX

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.

Disclosure: -

The accounts were prepared in house from my colleague Scott Lamoury and reviewed by a senior member of team.

I, Elliot, was not involved in the account's preparation and only were the accounts shared after our internal review procedure and confirmation between the client and the team involved.

Examination of findings: -

- During the drafting process, it was observed that the 2024 closing position did not accurately reflect the actual cash balance. As a result, an amended statement has been prepared, with the revised figures presented in the comparative position. It is noted that this is not material.
- Bank balances have been confirmed to statements.
- The fixed assets have been confirmed to still be retained by the charity.
- The liabilities have all had payment dates marked and are verified as correct to be shown as outstanding.
- A big thank you to everyone involved with providing the records in good time.
- A draft annual report has been provided and reviewed thoroughly and note no material misstatements.

Recommendation: -

- More diligent approach required to the funds within the entity. These need to be reconciled monthly to ensure restricted income which is received is being spent in the correct manner. This matter is still an outstanding issue to be sorted.
- The charity have adopted the income and expenditure accounting for many years but as income grows to above £250,000 this will not be available. Therefore, it is recommended that we adopt a full set of accrual accounts with the first year implemented from 31/03/2026. This will need to be minuted and passed in a meeting.
- It is important for the FY 2026, that the information is provided and made available latest middle this year.