

PANTRY FOR BLACON CIO (Known as Blacon Beacon)

Registered charity number 1183763

Annual Report



Blacon Beacon

Food • Advice • Support

for the year ending 31st December 2024

Pantry for Blacon is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registration number 1183763

Governance and management

The trustees of the charity in 2024 were as follows:

- Rev Christina Upton (Chair)
- Ms Sheila Little
- Mr Edwin Green
- Mr John Reid (retired September 2024)
- Ms Kerry Cook
- Mrs Julieanne Carine (since May 2024)

We employed a full-time General Manager, and 5 part-time staff: Store Assistant, Computer Mentor, Well-being Mentor, Administrator and Healthy Eating Coordinator (who left us in September 2024).

This has been made possible by grants from Steve Morgan Foundation, Cheshire Community Foundation, Westminster Foundation, The National Lottery, Household Support Fund, Asda Foundation, Swettenham Foundation, Co-Operative Community Fund, UKSPF, Cheshire West and Chester Council and Avenue Services, Welcome Network, Yorkshire Building Society, Cancer Alliance, Lord Mayor of Chester, Arnold Clarke, Holy Trinity Church and Churton Bequest.

Our work would also not be possible without the great support of over 20 regular enthusiastic volunteers, who are involved with many different roles, including maintaining stock in the store, serving members when they attend, packing fruit and veg into bags ready for collection, sharing cooking skills in our classes, preparing and serving the food for families attending for holiday meals.

Objectives

The charity exists to relieve food poverty in Blacon, Chester, and also to promote health, through the provision of good quality food at an affordable price, and encouraging healthy diet through education on food preparation.

Activities in 2024

2024 was a whirlwind year at Pantry for Blacon! We're thrilled to have welcomed over 130 low-income households to our Pantry family. This translates to an astounding 19,890 instances where individuals received a week's worth of essential food assistance.

Our partnership with Citizens Advice is crucial in providing immediate food support through our Foodbank hub. We've observed that many seeking emergency food assistance benefit more from long-term empowerment strategies. Consequently, we value Citizens Advice's decision to prioritise comprehensive support, such as budgeting, advice on benefits, and non-food essentials, over solely providing Foodbank vouchers. Our Computer Mentor, plays a key role in this empowerment,

especially through his current online work with multilingual residents to develop their English language proficiency and patience when helping older people to fill in forms online.



Our regular cooking sessions and recipe bags were highly valued within the Blacon community, providing practical skills and resources for preparing nutritious, budget-friendly meals. It has been great to have funding to be able to give out recipe bags to hundreds of families each month. In 2024, 7093 meal portions were made from these recipe bags. 100% of households who have been involved with making slow cooker bags have said that they are using slow cookers, and other cooking methods that cut down on the cost

of gas and electricity, more regularly.

We believe that lasting positive lifestyle changes are cultivated through confidence and support, where setbacks are viewed as opportunities for growth. This philosophy is reflected in the deeply moving feedback we receive, such as 'Thank you for everything you have done to help me through my darkest time' and 'You have been a lifeline for me; a place where I feel comfortable and know I can get help,' demonstrating the transformative impact of our programs.

Through the year we have prioritised expanding opportunities for older people, addressing both food poverty and loneliness. It has been wonderful to see our new 'Happy and Healthy' project flourish, providing older people the chance to regularly socialise over a healthy meal, which they then prepare themselves. Our 'Warm Up Tuesday' project has also been highly appreciated by our regular attendees, who come for a warm meal, a chat, and signposting to helpful resources.

PANTRY FOR BLACON CIO
Charity No 1183763

Trading & Profit & Loss Account to:

31st December 2024

		Restricted £s	Unrestricted £s	Total £s
Income				
	Grants	77983.53	8558	86541.53
	Donations	0	7900.38	7900.38
	Members Contributions	0	11676.32	11676.32
	Fundraising activities	0	711.15	711.15
	Interest & Other Income	0	1216.05	1216.05
	Other Operating Income	0	1813.74	1813.74
	Total Income	77983.53	31875.64	109859.17
Direct Costs				
	General Food & Toiletries Costs	32666.32	8251.59	40917.91
	Holiday Meals and Special Activities	2321.24	1072.25	3393.49
	Educational Activities	18239.73	133	18372.73
	Staffing	72669.82	0	72669.82
	Premises	18318.2	2482	20800.2
Total Direct Cost		144215.31	11938.84	156154.15
Expenses				
	Insurance, Office, Motor & travel	736.12	282.56	1018.68
	Building Repairs, Maintenance & Utilities	40	406.68	446.68
Total Expense		776.12	689.24	1465.36
Total Direct Cost & Expenses		144991.43	12628.08	157619.51
Excess Income over		-67007.9	19247.56	-47760.34

Signed

H. Dobson

Date

9/8/25

H Dobson Independent Examiner

PANTRY FOR BLACON CIO

Charity Number 1183763

Balance Sheet as at

31st December 2024

Current Assets

Current Account	3593.33
Savings Account	44233.88
Petty Cash	24.5
Total Current Assets	47851.71

Funds of the Charity

Restricted	18718.76
Unrestricted	9132.95
Contingency Reserve	20000
Total funds	47851.71

Finance Report 2024

Another busy year has shown an increase in pantry sessions providing for significantly more households in 2024. The overall income received in year has reduced by 10%. This is due to many grants for expenditure in 2024 being received in 2023. Total contingency and unrestricted reserves at the year stand at £29132.95 which is within the level of the reserves policy, of 3-6 months running costs.

Signed



H Dobson Independent Examiner

Date

9/8/25.