

## **Baby Godiva Annual Report April 2021 to March 2022**

The purpose of the charity is the prevention or relief of poverty in Coventry and Warwickshire among socially and/or economically disadvantaged families who are unable to provide basic equipment, consumables, food and clothing for babies, particularly but not exclusively those aged under twelve months, by supplying them with such items free of charge.

### Continuing impact of the Covid pandemic.

As the impact of the pandemic overall continued well into 2022 it affected Baby Godiva in several ways. Demand for essentials continued to rise as more families were affected by financial strains brought on by job losses, ill health and the need to ensure the safety of others by self-isolation. We aim to support mothers in need for whatever reason by providing start ready kits for newborns and keeping young babies safe, clean, fed and warm. However, travel round the city and county was limited for some time and this impacted both on individuals who could not get out and about to buy items they needed for their babies, even if they could have afforded them, and professionals whose mileage was restricted so they were unable to collect and distribute as easily as before.

### Stock acquisition.

Understandably general equipment donations from the public reduced during this year. However specific appeals, such as that for double pushchairs or Moses baskets, received a good response. Sometimes serendipity played a part. For example, in September a request was received for cloth nappies, which we usually do not have and therefore cannot provide, but only a day or two later we were offered some from a donor and were delighted to accept these and pass them straight on, pleasing both parties.

Donations in kind were welcomed. We received a large milk donation from Bare Necessities and knitted and crocheted items from the Warm Baby Project among others. Coventry City Council donated new stairgates they no longer required; and in March 2022 gave us a grant which enabled the purchase of new Moses baskets and stands, cots and a further 10 stairgates to meet demand. Also, when Stronger Communities in Solihull, Warwickshire were offloading excess donations from their Afghan crisis response appeal in February Baby Godiva were able to pick up two full pallets of baby consumables. Good collaborative relationships with other service

providers continued to develop and, when we had surplus ourselves, we were happy to pass items on to fellow organisations. For example, when clothes bundles we received were for children aged two or older, or contained maternity or adult clothes, these were passed on to Grow Kids or Carriers of Hope. Clothing Coventry has begun a much needed school uniform service so any uniform is passed to them. Baby Godiva only provides a good supply of quality clothing for babies and toddlers up to 24 months.

There were such considerable clothing donations made throughout the year that we had to take the decision these needed to be limited by start and end dates for acceptance. From late April, when the first planned clothing drive was held, Baby Godiva gained two additional volunteers who agreed to sort the clothes into age groups and box them up. Together with the volunteer who boxed all newborn and premature baby clothes, this cleared and sorted all the existing loose bags and bundles, helping greatly with storage and access to the store, and the help was much appreciated. The same people helped sort again later in the year following a second clothing drive and this biannual approach has been agreed as a better way for dealing with clothing in future. Rather than taking clothing items in as and when they are offered, they will be accepted during April and September only and sorted thereafter when the volunteers have the capacity to do so.

Once again, the Amazon wish list was a great source of new items of equipment and of particular assistance during the Baby Godiva Santa appeal in December when 132 children across 50 families received Christmas gift bags. In addition, a donation was received from RV Telecoms Ltd. for Christmas hampers and some presents were also sourced from Coventry Salvation Army. SistaSista provided gift bags for the mothers and Morrisons Holbrooks Community Fund procured food hampers and accessories. This joint initiative was much appreciated by the families: -

“Thank you so much for making mine and my daughter’s Christmas special during the hard time we are going through. Couldn’t be any more grateful - you guys really are so wonderful.”

Local supermarkets gradually started to offer regular donation day opportunities as the year went on and life began to return to ‘normal’. Asda provided a grant of £750 to be taken in kind from the store in May which helped with consumables and both Asda and Morrisons allowed donation days to take place later in the year where shoppers could purchase items alongside their own shopping and donate them on the way out of the store. These days met with mixed results, but all contributed towards stocks. As a direct result of the events two volunteer drivers came forward on the day to offer their services and they have both remained active with the charity since, helping deliver donations to self-referrers. Organisations have also been supportive in raising funds for consumables. Godiva Lions Club, Stoke Green Community Fun Day Committee and

Splatter Kids Fun Day all contributed monies raised which were used to buy stock. In addition, the Director made and pursued several appeals for grant aid during the year and with it maintained a constant supply of essential items such as nappies, wipes and toiletries as well as some larger items of equipment. In this way, by either giving goods and/or equipment directly or offering advice and assistance about other sources of potential help, Baby Godiva was able to address every reasonable request to assist needy babies and toddlers which came from either professionals or parents themselves.

All items of equipment and clothing are freely given, if there is an identified need, with no expectation of return but now and then we receive equipment back, often through, professionals or care staff, which is a real bonus as it can always be recycled to help someone else out. We clean and check all donated equipment to ensure that it is safe to pass on, and always advise recipients to clean or wash items themselves before use.

### Storage arrangements

We continued to rent space from Safestore and discussions were held with them about acquiring a larger affordable unit for stock storage. This was to be separate from the established clothing store now full. The Director was eventually able to negotiate a discount on a 300 square foot unit for larger equipment and consumables and this allowed items to be moved into it from the two temporary facilities previously provided in trustees' homes. Both offered to continue taking donated items into their homes prior to moving them on to the stores as they have restricted access for security reasons. The smaller 125 square foot unit was retained for clothing only and, on receipt of grant funding in July, was paid for to March 2022 and the larger unit was leased to June 2022 in the first instance. The two units have proved to be entirely adequate for the stocks to date using both donated and purchased racking and shelving to stack and store goods and ensuring that lighting is adequate to identify requested items. Due to the regular turnover in donations in and out both the units and items within do require constant attention, and regular removal of rubbish, to maintain good standards.

The need for a vehicle to transport goods and equipment (and rubbish to the tip) was identified in the previous report and a small secondhand van was finally purchased in December 2021 following a generous grant award from the Clothmakers Foundation. The van enables both larger items to be moved more easily and donations days to be supported in a more effective way than with volunteer's cars alone. To further reduce the need for volunteers to use their cars, plans were pursued during the last quarter of the year to set up local collection points for those who self-referred through parking the loaded van for a couple of hours at a time at relevant locations in the city.

### Distribution of donations to families in need

Self-referrals increased in number during the year. Many of these referrals had to be redirected appropriately. Requests from migrants, refugees and asylum seekers continued to be identified separately where possible and they were asked to contact Carriers of Hope as the charity that is specifically funded to provide comprehensive support to such groups. Self-referrals continued to be accepted up to February when the qualified social worker trustee who assessed, managed and delivered goods to them obtained full time employment. The acceptance of self-referrals was suspended throughout March whilst arrangements were made to set up collection points as above. Negotiations were carried out with most Family Hubs, Clothing Coventry and the Willenhall Food Bank with a view to parking at their premises on an agreed day and time each week to distribute items that had been requested by families in that area and also offer basic consumables to those who were in need on the day. Family Hubs welcomed this initiative, and the pop-up outreach service was set to start in April 2022 when all services were planning to reopen fully as pandemic restrictions were lifted.

Professional referrals from both health and social services continued apace especially from workers dealing with unsupported pregnant teenagers, child protection and mothers fleeing domestic violence. Children's Services across the board referred families with new babies for whom the mothers could not provide. Health visitors were still coming across babies and toddlers without separate sleeping spaces or adequate bedding and the provision of cots and travel cots took off. Midwives identified more mothers with difficulties in providing for their babies leading to a steady demand for full Start Ready kits, including travel systems, to set them up with enough clothing to last the baby a week or so and consumables and equipment expected to last much longer.

Mothers to be in homeless accommodation remained a large group that Baby Godiva helped, with support staff collecting both equipment and consumables to ensure the babies were safe while benefits were applied for and secured. Other care providers also referred mothers and babies in need whom they were supporting. There was a steep increase in self-referrals around the school holidays in July due to external agencies advising people to self-refer (especially the Council crisis line because of the influx of refugees) however, whilst our checks ensured self-referrers were directed to more appropriate agencies, we still made 83 donations in that month ourselves – a record figure for one month.

Occasionally when rehoused the family would move on with the new baby, and now and then a baby went directly into care from hospital, but as far as we could we ensured they had the basics such as clothing and nappies with them. The overall need for milk, and food items for older babies, remained high and we liaised with food banks to

provide for this especially during school holidays when demand increased. The intention of Baby Godiva continues to be to offer the kind of support that wider family and friends would usually provide to expectant and nursing mothers in normal circumstances. As soon as we are made aware of the need for help, we try to respond flexibly and promptly as babies cannot wait. And at those times when our service closes – mainly during school holidays - we give professionals due notice to get their referrals to us in good time and offer a more generous supply of consumables to carry families over. By the anniversary of our founding in May 2022 we had recorded 1000 donations and by the end of our third full financial year Baby Godiva had made over 1600 donations in all.

### Achievements and performance

We now have a visible presence on social media. Our website has developed during the year and gets thousands of visitors from all over the world interested to know more about what baby banks, and Baby Godiva in particular, do and that helps to ensure that the need to support babies appropriately in their early months is better recognised. The word is spreading as public awareness of the need for this type of provision increases. Baby Godiva has had input into the development of other baby banks locally and nationally and contributed to information sharing between baby banks country wide. We work with and are in turn supported and used by a range of statutory and voluntary agencies across the area we cover which provide services for babies and children and their families. Regarding the specific guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit, the trustees have continued to ensure that Baby Godiva itself helps only those families who are living in Coventry or Warwickshire and expecting a baby or having a baby or toddler up to 24 months of age, and who are not able to afford to provide necessities for that child because of their economic circumstances. Our well-developed assessment process ensures the donations of clothing, consumables and equipment we provide fall within our stated charitable objectives and thus meet those public benefit requirements.

In July 2022 a meeting was held at Coffee Tots (a meeting place and service for mothers and children now sadly closed) to which all agencies providing services to children across Coventry and Warwickshire were invited. This confirmed and strengthened the collaboration between such agencies in which Baby Godiva has played an active part. It also confirmed that, as Coventry's dedicated baby bank, Baby Godiva continues to fill a major gap in local provision for babies and their parents. Whilst two other baby banks have now started up within Warwickshire since Baby Godiva was founded and Clothing Coventry, Carriers of Hope and Grow Kids provide similar assistance in the city, Baby Godiva is unique in its proactive yet considered

approach to supporting the wellbeing of babies, toddlers and young mothers in the area. Our reliable and practical service has been of benefit to professionals engaged in promoting the wellbeing of families, allowing them to develop positive relationships with them and to offer the support and advice required to families in need. One welfare professional commented

“Baby Godiva provides a vital service that enables us to care for our clients on a personal level. Being able to quickly source good quality baby items facilitates good relationship building tools to reach out to less forthcoming families. Thank you for all you do. “

Despite limitations on their wider activities during the pandemic, health and social care professionals have continued to refer families for help and to collect requested items for delivery and are appreciative of Baby Godiva’s contribution to their customers’ wellbeing. At the same time those who do not require professional support but are nevertheless in need have been encouraged to ask for assistance with obtaining items that directly promote their babies’ health and welfare. In understanding and providing those day-to-day baby essentials that promote the infant’s wellbeing Baby Godiva has a positive public impact.

Baby Godiva’s most public achievement in this year was to take part in the launch of Coventry as The City of Culture 2021. An event was held to celebrate modern day women in the city who had taken direct action towards positive social change in a similar way to the Lady Godiva of legend. Of the 140 women put forward as doing work in Coventry which championed the same spirit of activism and social justice just 14 were selected, among whom was the Director of Baby Godiva. This publicity not only proved helpful to the charity but also attracted a small financial reward. In the publicly available promotional material for the event the Director explained that she had identified a gap in local provision and, in establishing Baby Godiva, Coventry’s baby bank, had stepped up to try to put things right by offering support to women with, or expecting, babies to help them stay strong and independent. This was achieved by providing practical assistance in their moment of need in a way that maintained their dignity. The Director recognises that everyone needs help from time to time whatever their circumstances and all requests are treated equally and without discrimination. Later on, in the closing City of Culture event, Baby Godiva was voted a “Hero of Heroes” and a trustee was driven in a motorcade through the city. Such recognition, together with appreciative comments from families like the one below, only serves to encourage Baby Godiva to strive to achieve more to support local families, mothers and babies in need:-

“You guys and the people who donate have restored my faith in the Coventry community, thank you for your help this last year.”



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name  
Baby Godiva

No (if any)  
1186073

CC16a

## Receipts and payments accounts

For the period  
from

Period start date  
1st June 2021

To

Period end date  
31st May 2022

### Section A Receipts and payments

	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 £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
Grants Received	30,587	-	-	30,587	12,641
Donations	3,280	-	-	3,280	3,903
Other	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>33,866</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>33,866</b>	<b>16,544</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>33,866</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>33,866</b>	<b>16,544</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
Storage costs	8,639	-	-	8,639	3,203
Telephone costs	370	-	-	370	308
Consumables & equipment	12,222	-	-	12,222	9,379
Waste disposal	240	-	-	240	520
Motor expenses	1,259	-	-	1,259	-
Sundries	347	-	-	347	615
Website, hosting & computer	330	-	-	330	241
Subsistence	32	-	-	32	-
Mileage	683	-	-	683	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>24,123</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>24,123</b>	<b>14,266</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
Van	8,400	-	-	8,400	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>8,400</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,400</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>32,523</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>32,523</b>	<b>14,266</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>1,344</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,344</b>	<b>2,278</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>3,782</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,782</b>	<b>1,504</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>5,126</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,126</b>	<b>3,782</b>

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>		5,126	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	5,126	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>			Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	Van		8,400	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>		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	





Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name  
Baby Godiva

On accounts for the year  
ended

31<sup>st</sup> May 2022

Charity no  
(if any)

1186073

Set out on pages

1 - 2

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/05/2022.

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, 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 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 Charities 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:

Date:

16<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Name:

Michael Fairbotham

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

FCA, ICAEW

Address:

11 Simpkins Close

Leamington Spa

CV33 9GE

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

None