

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

LEIGHTON LINSLADE HELPERS



Serving our community in the relief of those in need, by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other social or economic disadvantage

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OUR CONTACT DETAILS

LEIGHTON LINSLADE HELPERS

Charity Number: 1196332

Emergency Telephone No: 07543 540 997

Email: help@leightonlinsladehelpers.org.uk

Web: www.leightonlinsladehelpers.org.uk

Address: Community Fridge
30 Waterborne Walk
Leighton Buzzard
Beds
LU7 1DH

Community Fridge Opening hours:

Monday	11:00am to 2:30pm
Tuesday	11:00am to 2:30pm
Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	11:00am to 2:30pm
Friday	11:00am to 2:30pm
Saturday	10:00am to 1:00pm

OUR SERVICE OFFER



Leighton Linslade Helpers is a collective of volunteers who formed during the Covid-19 lock-down period to help those who found it difficult to manage accessing food and general provisions. We very quickly grew into a locally recognised charity with over 60 volunteers.

Over the years we have continued to grow and become steadily more sustainable. We continue to provide a community food bank to our town and surrounding villages. As well as providing food parcels, we embarked on an exciting development of opening the first community fridge in our town in October 2021, In 2024 we exceeded our ability to operate our storage from temporary accommodation so undertook the rental of a warehouse unit from which to operate the foodbank and storage of our donated Amazon stock.

We continue to assist local schools, our local authority, other local agencies, and other foodbanks, with a range of requests including responding to emergencies across the Central Bedfordshire area. We are now an established local charity, operating a Community Fridge, Foodbank, Social Supermarket via a Market Stall and the Community Fridge and of course providing support services to local residents in need.

OUR PEOPLE

During the period of 1 April 2024 to March 2025, we had at any one time 70-75 volunteers giving up their free time to volunteer in various roles within our organisation. We have a team of drivers, who collect the supermarket surplus for our Community Fridge. The charity also operates a van for larger collections, deliveries and setting up the market stall. We have a dedicated team who work in the warehouse sorting our Amazon donations and producing food parcels on a fortnightly basis. In addition we have a small but dedicated team operating our market stall which requires a 6:30am start each Saturday. Lastly we have a team who oversee the daily operations of sorting food and opening the community fridge to the public.

Our volunteers come from a range of backgrounds, communities and with a range of abilities. We pride ourselves that we support and encourage volunteers with special needs. People volunteer with us for various reasons, including to:

- Make a positive impact on their own and other people's lives
- Gain new skills and knowledge and build experience for employment
- Improve health, wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem
- Meet new people from a range of backgrounds and ages and make friends
- Get to know the local community and give something back
- Experience support and to feel part of a team

We are extremely grateful to have such a dedicated, knowledgeable and friendly team of volunteers.

We have a small management team who look after areas such as: Our web site, social media presence, interaction with the press and public relations, schools liaison, and our Duke of Edinburgh Volunteers .

OUR COMMITMENT

We have an emergency telephone number that is manned 7 days a week 7 hours a day by a duty officer. One of our Trustees is a BLEVEC commander which means we are in contact with the local resilience organisation (BLRF). We can respond to emergency requests from BLRF within 1 hour and local requests within 2 hours. We also have a website where the public can make a self-referral through an online form, or they can call or email our help desk, which is also manned 7 days a week.

TRUSTEES, ACCOUNTANT and BANKERS

This year saw some changes in our management structure. However we maintained a strong management committee, recruiting new people with targeted skills.

Officers and Trustees		
Adam Fahn	Chair	
Steve Jones	Secretary	
Andrew Cursons	Treasurer	
Chris Lockett	Trustee	
Candys Hunter	Trustee	
Martin Harris	Trustee	From March 2025
Dawn Farnell	Trustee	From April 2024
June Tobin	Secretary	Until July 2024
Karen Cursons	Trustee	Until April 2024
Chris Richardson	Trustee	Until July 2024
Esther Baron	Trustee	Until May 2024
Ryan Battams	Trustee	Until April 2024
Avis Fowler	Trustee	Until July 2024

Independent Accountant

Simon Cyna (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants)

48 Gateshead Road

Borehamwood

WD6 4NQ

Bankers

Barclays Bank UK PLC

Leicester

LE87 2BB



YEAR REPORT

The Leighton Linlade Helpers provide a much-needed service to our community and surrounding villages. We have had a successful year in which we have issued around 1900 Food Parcels, and 120 emergency parcels, providing individuals with at least 5500 meals. This could not be achieved were it not for the support of the local community donating food items in supermarkets and via our can-drive initiatives. We also supplement the donated food by purchasing from the local supermarkets, this is made possible due to generous financial giving by members of the public and a number of organisations and businesses.

We were also provided with funds from the local authority to administer as part of the governments Household Support Fund. This funding was aimed at those in the local community who were struggling with the higher cost of living in the last year. The support provided supermarket vouchers and cash awards to help pay gas and electric bills.



Our wonderful green environmental initiative of Leighton Linlade Community Fridge continues to thrive with a regular clientèle many of whom are happy to queue to access the facility. The fridge has grown with the provision of items to sell at discounted rates from our Amazon donations.

The fridge operates with a team of volunteers visiting many of the local supermarkets late evening or early morning to collect dry goods, fresh produce, meats, fish and dairy. This food is then taken back to the Fridge for quality sorting and freezing where necessary. Members of the public then access the Fridge 5 days a week at different times. We have a fair usage policy that allows users to visit twice a week and take one regular size shopping bag of food. This service is very popular with our customers, the supermarkets are also enjoying being part of the scheme as it helps them reduce their waste costs.

This year we have made at least 1430 collections from local supermarkets, amounting to 19,627Kg of food. This would yield around 67,300 meals and constitutes a saving of 71,637Kg of CO2 over sending the food to waste.

The fridge has been so successful that it was decided to improve the provision, this was done by adding an upright freezer with glass doors to make it more customer accessible. We also replaced some of the original fittings to make the displays look more enticing.



The partnership with Amazon continued this year and we have continued to operate a twice weekly market stall as part of the social supermarket provision offering discounted goods to the public. This market stall is very popular with the local residents and we often sell out of goods before the market close time. The proceeds from the market combined with can drives and grant funding help with the running costs of the Charity.



The continued success and growth of our organization, which is an independent charity and an independent foodbank, is largely down to the dedication of our wonderful teams of volunteers.



We are looking forward to the next year with continued growth and to meeting all challenges head on.

So it's a massive thank you to all who help Leighton Linslade Helpers, whether it be as a volunteer, a customer of the market stall or community fridge, or a financial donor. All of these people are a wonderful asset to the community of Leighton Linslade.



Treasurer's Report

The year 2024-25 saw a much smaller growth in our funds in the bank. This is indicative of us becoming a stable community resource with an income stream broadly matching our expenditure. The pressures on the cost of living in the country at large continued. We received a small grant from the local authority to help with those struggling with their fuel bills. Our accounts continue to call out cost of living and utility bill support as restricted funds as these are provided by the local authority for the support of those on lower incomes. Due to the lower figure received this year we have used all the funds for supermarket vouchers but have carried over a sum on the fuel support. The intention is to continue to provide these services for as long as we are able, irrespective of ongoing government funding.

Whilst this year has seen a significant drop in income and an increase in expenditure we are demonstrating a more balanced ratio of income to expenditure. This has halted the rapid growth in finances which were a feature of the first two or three years of the charities existence. This is not a bad thing and has not impacted on the services we provide. Broadly speaking balancing income and expenditure with a healthy reserve is a good situation to be in as it suggests we can have a degree of confidence in our ability to continue to provide services into the future. It is worth calling out that we had to return funding for our 'Meal in a box' project which did not get off the ground, this is no longer shown in restricted funds and is incorporated in the higher reimbursements figure for the year.

The community fridge, now located centrally in the town centre continues to be well used. In fact it has a regular clientèle who are willing to queue up awaiting its opening to see what we have available. This provides a regular income stream which comes close to paying the rental on a monthly basis. The community fridge was revamped during the year, involving the purchase of a glass fronted freezer and new display shelving. Most of the costs were covered by grants raised specifically to cover the project and the carried forward restricted funds from last year. This year saw us move out of Meadow Way as it was no longer fit for the purpose of storing food for a foodbank. Additionally insufficient space was available for the storage of our Amazon donations. As such we have taken on a warehouse to house the foodbank and the Amazon storage, giving us a flexible space far more suited to our needs. During the year we received a couple of corporate donations which enabled us to take this step with confidence in our ability to fund the additional rent and utility bills.

We continue to receive surplus/damaged stock from local Amazon warehouses. The goods are provided to us for resale into the domestic marketplace, as such we have taken up a stall in the local market on both Tuesdays and Saturdays. This stall is very popular with the local community and is in keeping with our objectives to be a social supermarket. It also serves to keep the charity in the local public eye. Some of the products are also sold online through Facebook to local people for collection from the warehouse.

Given the charities aim of helping in the local community it seems appropriate to call out the fact that close on 20% of our income was returned to the community directly. A proportion of this was passing on funding for the 'cost of living crisis' from local and central government. The funding was through the provision of heating support, cost of living support, foodbank provisions and other initiatives. In addition, the value of the community fridge to the community is not directly measurable in a meaningful financial manner. However the rental costs of the building could be factored into the benefit to the community category along with a portion of the electricity costs.

In summary the group had a good year and has continued to deliver on its support to the community. Our fourth year has shown a healthy level of grant and donation based income, however we are seeing a reduction in the surplus of income over expenditure. We have continued to run the market stall, foodbank and community fridge. We enter the 2025-26 year with sufficient in the bank to cover our liabilities (debts + restricted funds).

Andrew Cursons – Treasurer Leighton Linslade Helpers

CONSOLIDATED ACCOUNTS

Income and Expenditure As at 31 March 2025

	2023-24	2024-25
Income		
General donations	£27,917.54	£4,618.33
Credit/Debit card	£16,089.24	£26,655.21
Small cash donations	£10,785.14	£11,215.13
Cheque donations	£652.00	£1,425.00
Online donations	£2,243.29	£70.10
Sale of goods	£46,142.10	£64,251.92
Regular giving	£2,680.00	£2,895.00
	£106,509.31	£111,130.69
Events Income	£633.15	£626.25
Gift Aid	£3,377.10	£3,454.13
Can drives	£700.46	£659.51
Grants/Corporate income	£58,833.09	£29,453.20
Food parcel sponsorship	£2,708.68	£3,243.68
Miscellaneous	£15.68	£212.83
Total Income	£172,777.47	£148,780.29
Expenditure		
Check-in-chat	£1,360.19	£0.00
Foodbank provisions	£8,846.02	£10,812.62
Client direct support	£2,669.07	£5,031.64
Heating support	£3,272.21	£1,190.00
Cost of living support	£7,620.62	£8,690.00
	£23,768.11	£25,724.26
General Expenditure	£12,112.46	£5,713.92
Moving expenses		£6,343.51
Community Events	£84.33	£166.64
Warm Space initiative	£2,663.97	£0.00
Community Fridge	£1,605.34	£9,524.83
Amazon Expenses/profit share	£16,247.84	£28,271.51
Payroll	£7,939.56	£12,169.53
Utility Expenditure	£5,543.09	£5,038.96
Rent/Rates Expenditure	£13,409.86	£34,913.38
Vehicle running costs	£3,187.15	£3,195.32
Liability Insurance	£395.23	£475.15
Sundries	£739.07	£311.64
Reimbursements	£951.01	£5,496.74
Publicity	£1,882.29	£355.00
Loan repayments (Vehicle)	£2,705.64	£4,546.49
Building Maintenance	£882.27	£1,402.48
Total Expenditure	£94,117.22	£143,649.36

I and E balances

Excess of income over expenditure	£78,660.25	£5,130.93
Balance brought forward previous year	£47,992.66	£126,652.91
Balance carried forward	£126,652.91	£131,783.84
Actual balance c/f	£126,652.91	£131,783.84
Difference (note 1)	£0.00	£0.00

Assets and Liabilities As at 31 March 2025

	2023-24	2024-25
Assets		
Cash at Bank	£121,964.99	£130,119.87
Cash in hand	£2,232.60	£1,457.38
Paypal pending	£222.04	£120.56
SumUp pending	£2,233.28	£86.03
	£126,652.91	£131,783.84
Capital Assets (Vehicle)	£11,240.00	£7,240.00
Less depreciation	-£4,000.00	-£4,000.00
Capital assets (Fridges)	£3,400.00	£2,550.00
Less depreciation	-£850.00	-£850.00
Total Assets	£136,442.91	£136,723.84
Liabilities		
Outstanding Loan on vehicle	£4,375.09	£0.00
Restricted Funds		
Food parcel sponsorship	£0.00	£0.00
Meal in a box	£5,500.00	£0.00
MW Community Fridge	£688.00	£688.00
Community Fridge	£555.03	£0.00
Cost of living support	£8,466.22	£0.00
Utility bill support	£6,078.79	£7,398.79
Restricted funds	£21,288.04	£8,086.79
Total Liabilities	£25,663.13	£8,086.79
Excess Assets over Liabilities	£110,779.78	£128,637.05

Note 1: Difference between value based on current assets and the start position modified by the excess of income over expenditure.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS 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
Leighton Linslade Helpers

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 March 2025

**Charity no
(if any)** 1196332

Set out on pages

1-4

(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 / 2024.

**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 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.

Signed:

Simon Cyna

Date: 17 October 2025

Name:

Simon Cyna

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

Association of Chartered Certified Accountants

Address:

48 Gateshead Road

Borehamwood

WD6 4NQ

In Conclusion

We have come so far in the last 5 years, none of us who volunteer with the Leighton Linlade Helpers ever envisaged how big we would grow and how diverse the services we provide would get. Post Covid we questioned whether we would be needed and considered whether we should wind-up our operation. It has become apparent that our community faces a raft of new challenges and we as the Leighton Linlade Helpers can be part of the solution. A major part of our role particularly for the homeless is to signpost our service users to other services and organisations for help and support. We are no longer just about food!

Day after day and week after week, our volunteers turn up and give their time, energy and support to ensure that the wheels of our organisation keep turning. It is this group of dedicated volunteers who make such a difference to our service users. Without this group we could not continue to operate.

We have of course to say thank you to those who donate to our cause. As with any organisation income is paramount to cover our expenses and we should thank those who give regularly or use the market stall and community fridge or support any of our one off events. We are often surprised when another organisation turns up with a large cheque as they had chosen to support our work. All of which is gratefully received and put to good work in support of our service users.

Finally there are our service users. They are so humbled by our support and very grateful too. We receive wonderful messages via cards, emails, text messages and sometimes a baked cake or two made with ingredients from the Community Fridge of course!

Thank you to everyone involved.

Adam Fahn – Chair of Trustees