

LETCHWORTH FOODBANK
ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

LETCHWORTH FOODBANK
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YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

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LETCHWORTH FOODBANK ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR TO 31st MARCH 2024

Letchworth Food Bank, St Pauls Church, 179 Pixmore Avenue, Letchworth Garden City, is registered with the Charity Commissioners (No. 1197672) and constituted by a Declaration of Trust, dated 26th January 2022.

Chairman Mr P T Byrne
Treasurer Mr P M Hobson (appointed 8th October 2024)

Other members: Mr C F McGill
 Mrs E Bunker (resigned 8th January 2025)

Annual Summary

The twelve months ending 31 March 2024 have been quite a turbulent year. Post Covid we have seen demand slow, although not back to pre-pandemic levels. The effects of inflation and the Cost-of-Living crisis continue to have a profound effect on the ability of many in our local community to access adequate food. In addition, the clients we see have increasingly complex needs, and a significant proportion cite a new or long-term mental health need as part of the reason for referral. Our referral agencies are having to deal with families and individuals with ever-growing, intricate problems.

Our donors continue to be a great support to the Foodbank. Although during the past twelve months we have had to, on occasions, purchase food, the main stock supply line still comes from the local community, be it from the customers of supermarkets, churches, village communities and private donors.

Our Financial Inclusion project with Citizens Advice North Herts, where regular clients are signposted to budgeting, debt, and benefit services, continues to be a great success. Clients who are referred in this way do not become reliant on the Foodbank, therefore, helping families and individuals to be released from the poverty trap.

We have also noticed that when, for example, claimants are paid a Universal Credit uplift from the Government, the demand on the Foodbank is reduced for 2-3 weeks before returning to pre-payment levels.

We have seen a drop off in demand from all wards within Letchworth, Hitchin and Baldock. This is likely as a result of the Job Centres not referring clients to Foodbanks

Objectives

The Foodbank provides nutritionally balanced food parcels the contents of which (tinned and dried goods) are specified by the Trussell Trust. A typical package will contain around 9 kg of food and is designed to last for three days. We can also provide food for those with no access to cooking facilities and/ or hot water.

The provision of help for gas and electricity has again reduced significantly, not because we do not want to assist, but rather new phone/ app technology prevents us helping clients directly.

Aside from providing food for human consumption, we can also provide pet foods. We realise and understand that a pet is not only a source of warmth but also is a provider of company to the lonely.

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Achievements

In the year ending 31st March 2024, we distributed around 40 tons. Although our distribution volumes through the Baldock, Letchworth and Hitchin distribution centres were lower than the previous year, we have seen an increase in supply to other agencies within our operating area. To highlight this, we distributed to the King Cabin (2.6 tons), SADA (2.25 tons), Mrs Howard Day Care Centre (1.3 tons) and Settle (1.0 tons). In addition to that we distributed (1.9 tons) to smaller agencies.

We also distributed a further 2.5 tons of food hampers during the 2023 Christmas season.

In addition to food parcels, we also provide supermarket vouchers to enable clients to buy fresh produce such as vegetables, meat and fish. The Best Before Café and local allotment holders continue to support us with fresh produce. We are extremely grateful for their help.

During Christmas 2023, we also provided a total of £46,000 of supermarket vouchers for families nominated by schools and faith groups.

Our food comes from many sources: permanent collection points in supermarkets, local offices and churches, and harvest collections in churches and schools. Overall, food donations have decreased as donors themselves feel the effects of the Cost-of-Living crisis, and we have had to continue to purchase additional food items through this year to be able to cover the needs of our clients.

A total of 32 tons of food was donated and 3 tons purchased in the year ending 31st March 2024, whilst 40 tons of food parcels were distributed.

Referrals

We operate a referral system which allows community-facing organisations to assess the need of clients, and signpost them to us. We have formed particularly strong partnerships with Settle, and North Herts Citizens Advice, who are co-located in our Letchworth and Hitchin distribution centres. As stated previously, throughout the year we have signposted 147 clients to Citizens Advice, most of whom have been assisted to the extent that they have no need to return to the Foodbank.

Our team

We are fortunate to have a team of around 75 volunteers who are rostered to attend sessions at the warehouse and distribution centres. They collect and process donations, sort and pack these into food parcels, transport these to the distribution centres and meet with our clients to give them food. They give their time freely to help those in need in the community. We estimate that the financial benefit to the community is around £75,000.

Reason for Falling Numbers / Conclusion

As noted earlier in this report, the numbers attending the foodbank and the number of referral vouchers redeemed has fallen in the current period. We believe there are three main reasons for this:

1. The positive effect of our Financial Inclusion project where we have partnered with Citizens Advice North Herts to provide advisors in our distribution centres to whom we refer our clients for advice and guidance on how to recover from their crisis. This has proved to be a highly successful initiative with many clients recovering fully and no longer requiring our service.

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Reason for Falling Numbers / Conclusion (continued)

2. There are several other agencies distributing food to Letchworth people in crisis. We work with these agencies, where possible supporting them with food supplies when needed.
3. The Department for Work and Pensions has ceased to refer their clients to the foodbank. The DWP were one of our major referrers. We are unsure where their clients seek support currently but suspect that some are covered by our other referrers, some by other agencies distributing food and some, unfortunately, are lost somewhere in the maze.

We have not been able to quantify the individual effects of each of the above conclusions and feel it more important than ever to coordinate the efforts of as many charitable/ social/ statutory organisations as possible so that the combined results become more efficient and effective.

To this end, we worked with Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation during the year to explore the future of a Multibank in Letchworth. For several reasons, the initiative did not get off the ground. However, we believe the principle of having a Multibank/ Community Hub carries so many benefits we will continue to work with the HF through next year to try to establish such a multiservice facility.

We would very much welcome a joint meeting in early 2025, with all interested parties who could partner with us in establishing a Multibank that would serve families and individuals very much in the way that the Foodbank already does. We believe that the Multibank could become a great asset to the community

Final note

We are immensely grateful to the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation for the support and encouragement you give both financially and practically - we could not do what we do without you.

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ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR TO 31st MARCH 2024

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales, the Charities Act 2011, Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the Trust Deed requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the Charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the Trust Deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

.....
P T Byrne - Chairman
For and on behalf of the Trustees and Management Committee

28 January 2025

**LETCHWORTH FOODBANK
ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024**

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF LETCHWORTH FOODBANK

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024 set out on pages four to eight.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)) and that an independent examination is required.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view ' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

R S Harris FCCA
Nagler Simmons
Chartered Accountants
5 Beaumont Gate
Radlett
Herts
WD7 7AR

Date: 30 January 2025

**LETCHWORTH FOODBANK
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024**

	General Unrestricted Funds £	Other Restricted Funds £	2024 Total Funds £	2023 Total Funds £
RECEIPTS				
<u>Donations</u>				
People's fundraising	61,672	-	61,672	74,062
Individual donations	19,308	-	19,308	46,720
Corporate donations	33,513	-	33,513	42,022
Grants	27,531	46,987	74,518	21,000
Gift Aid	13,025	-	13,025	20,429
	<u>155,049</u>	<u>46,987</u>	<u>202,036</u>	<u>204,233</u>
<u>Other Income</u>				
Interest received	<u>7,411</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,411</u>	<u>899</u>
SUB TOTAL	162,460	46,987	209,447	205,132
Asset and investment sales, etc.	-	-	-	-
TOTAL RECEIPTS	<u>162,460</u>	<u>46,987</u>	<u>209,447</u>	<u>205,132</u>
PAYMENTS:				
<u>Direct Charitable Expenditure</u>				
Food vouchers	59,955	-	59,955	84,743
Subcontractors	-	56,956	56,956	-
	<u>59,955</u>	<u>56,956</u>	<u>116,911</u>	<u>84,743</u>
<u>Other Expenditure</u>				
Rent	37,183	-	37,183	6,624
Light and heat	300	-	300	507
Insurance	747	-	747	901
Telephone	424	-	424	1,113
Postage, Packaging and stationary	1,417	-	1,417	129
Repair and renewal	11,124	-	11,124	529
Donations	1,000	-	1,000	2,220
Bank charges	60	-	60	14
Sundry	40	-	40	35
Total payments	<u>52,295</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>52,295</u>	<u>12,072</u>
SUB TOTAL	112,250	56,956	169,206	96,815
Asset and investment purchases, etc.	-	-	-	-
TOTAL PAYMENTS	<u>112,250</u>	<u>56,956</u>	<u>169,206</u>	<u>96,815</u>
NET (PAYMENTS)/RECEIPTS	50,210	(9,969)	40,241	108,317
Bank balances at beginning of the year	281,661	60,613	342,274	233,957
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
Bank balances at end of the year	<u>331,871</u>	<u>50,644</u>	<u>382,515</u>	<u>342,274</u>

LETCHWORTH FOODBANK
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AT 31ST MARCH 2024

	2024 Total Funds £	2023 Total Funds £
CASH FUNDS		
CAF Cash bank account	9,068	81,767
CAF Gold bank account	410,000	250,000
Barclays	-	10,498
Barclays Savings	-	9
	<u>419,068</u>	<u>342,274</u>
MONETARY LIABILITIES		
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	36,553	-
	<u>382,515</u>	<u>342,274</u>
REPRESENTED BY: FUNDS		
Unrestricted funds	331,871	281,661
Restricted funds: Trussell Trust and Lottery Fund	50,644	60,613
	<u>382,515</u>	<u>342,274</u>

Approved by the Trustees and Management Committee on 28th January 2025.

.....
P M Hobson - Trustee

.....
P T Byrne - Trustee

LETCHWORTH FOODBANK
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

1. Designated and restricted funds

The Trussell Trust Fund

The Trussell trust provides substantial grant support to the Foodbank, including the amounts we pay to the Citizens Advice Bureau to attend our distribution sessions.

The Lottery Fund

To support the expansion of the Foodbank into the Multibank. As this project did not proceed, most of the funds were unused with the unused balance of £36,553 returned to the Lottery Fund on 21st May 2024. This balance is included within creditors.

2. Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, and in accordance with Charities Act 2011 and the requirements of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities.

3. Taxation

The Charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

4. Trustees' remuneration and benefits

There were no Trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31st March 2024 nor for the year ended 31st March 2023.