



# Trustees' Annual Report Dorchester FoodBank

1<sup>st</sup> Oct 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> September 2023

**Charity Name:** Dorchester FoodBank

**Charity Number:** 1200552

**Principal Office:**

Dorchester FoodBank, The Dorford Centre, Bridport Road, Dorchester. DT1 1RR

We were registered as a **Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)** on 3rd October 2022.

**Our objectives are:**

The prevention or relief of poverty in Dorchester and surroundings by providing grants, items and services to individuals in need and/ or charities or other organisations working to prevent or relieve poverty.

**Governance.**

Our **governing body**, the Board of Trustees, consists of five people, Rosemary Hardwicke (Chair), John Burn (Secretary), Tracy Hughes (foodbank manager), Stuart Dawson (Safeguarding Officer) and John Hilton (Treasurer). These five individuals have served throughout the year and also constitute the total membership of the charity. Board meetings are held at least every two months, depending on the need. We hold an annual meeting of supporters and collaborators at which the annual report and accounts are presented.

**Accounting:** as a charity with an income of less than £250,000 we operate with a simple receipts and payments accounting system and we have our annual accounts examined by an independent examiner, appointed by the board. The Charity has no capital assets, no endowments or investments and is totally dependent on grants and, more importantly, donations (in both cash and kind) for its income.

**How charity fulfilled its charitable purposes for public benefit**

The trustees have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in the following ways.

- We currently open three mornings a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) from 10.00am to 12.30pm for clients to collect their parcel(s).
- Many of our clients are in food poverty as a result of other issues, including low income and debt, poor mental and/or physical health, rent or housing problems, etc. We therefore look to “signpost” those clients to local organisations, who are best suited to provide support and advice with the underlying issue, such as Citizens Advice, Dorset Council, etc.

**Brief summary of achievements during the year.**

Our priorities for the year were:

- To continue to assist those people in Dorchester and surrounding areas suffering from food and fuel poverty and meet any increased demand for our services.
- To develop a number of key policies and procedures

- To register for Gift Aid status.
- To work together with other groups, such as Dorchester Family Support, to help publicise our services to a wider audience.
- To continue to work with our partner organisations, such as, Foodshare and Citizens Advice.

### **Assisting clients who are suffering from food and fuel poverty.**

Over the year we distributed 1251 food parcels: 222 family parcels; 321 small family/ couple parcels and 708 single person parcels. This constitutes a 41% increase in total parcels distributed, from 809 in 2021-2022.

The table below shows client usage for 2022-23, and for the previous twelve months. In addition to meeting the increase in demand for our services we have also worked with a number of partners (such as Citizens Advice, Dorchester Family Support and Foodshare) to help those experiencing food and fuel poverty try to balance their finances.

	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>
Number of referrals	890	1251
Number of adults helped	1160	1620
Number of children helped	674	817
Number of families helped	205	222
Number of couples helped	215	321
Number of single people helped	470	708

The data above show that there was a 41% increase in the number of referrals received in 2022-23, when compared with the previous year. Demand for assistance from families and couples increased by 8 and 49%, respectively, whilst demand from single people increased by 51%.

We have noticed an increase in the number of clients who are in full time work and who may not have accessed a Foodbank before. We have also seen an increase in demand for household cleaning items and toiletries.

We have estimated that the value of our food parcels is £20.00 for single clients, £30.00 for couple/small families and £47.75 for a family. Multiplying these parcel values by the number of each parcel type issued (see above) and summing gives an estimate of £34,390 for the total value of parcels distributed during the year.

In addition to supplying clients with ambient food items (such as packet and tinned goods) we also provide a range of toiletries (such as shower gel, toothpaste, deodorant, sanitary products, etc) and household cleaning items (such as laundry detergent, , washing up liquid, kitchen cleaner, etc). Although the majority of our clients ask for toiletries and household cleaning items it is difficult to estimate the average value per client, as not everyone needs the same items. However, we believe that an average value would be in the region of £8.20. Assuming one household cleaning/toiletries pack per food parcel the total cost of the additional items is £10,258. This suggests that the total value of all the parcels, including cleaning and toiletries is £44,649 for the year.

Our impression is that the amount of donated food, cleaning and toiletry items decreased significantly over the year 2022-2023, but we are not able to estimate by how much. Since we spent £23,172 on extra items to top up the shortfall of physical (as opposed to monetary) donations required to make up the food parcels, the physical donations have an estimated value of £21,476, i.e. 48% of the value of each parcel. Clearly, donated food and hygiene/ cleaning items contribute a significant proportion of the total goods

given out in food parcels. However, within the physical donations of goods, we also receive, some items that are not generally included within the “stock items” which make up our food parcels. For example, in the lead up to the festive period, we usually receive a lot of Christmas food, such as Mince Pies, Christmas Puddings and Advent Calendars. We make these items available to clients as “extras”. Since it is difficult to estimate the value of these “extra” items we have not included them within the estimated value of donated goods.

Analysis of spending on food parcel top-ups has shown that at the beginning of March there was a rapid increase in spend on food items from £153 per week to £678; an increase of 440%. This was, presumably, as a result of reductions in donations of food items, increases in numbers using the food bank and inflation. Although there are signs of a slight drift downward in this spend, it still remains high.

We are grateful for the generosity of our community and have been blessed by an increase in financial donations. This has enabled us to purchase food items, as well as household cleaning items and toiletries, and continue to meet extra demand.

### **Develop a number of key policies and procedures**

The Charity Commission recommend that charities establish specific policies and procedures to help ensure good governance arrangements. Over the last year we have developed a number of policies and procedures including safeguarding, complaints, managing unreasonable behaviour, etc. This is an ongoing objective and we plan to develop further appropriate policies and procedures in 2023-24.

### **Registering for Gift Aid status**

We registered for Gift Aid status during the year and encourage those donors, who are taxpayers, to complete our Gift Aid form.

### **Working with Partner organisations**

We are proud of our ongoing relationships with partner organisations (such as Foodshare, Citizens Advice and Dorchester Family Support). During the year we continued to both work with and support these organisations and have committed to providing funding of £14,000 to help with food and energy poverty initiatives (see accounts)

### **Reserves policy**

The Charity Commission encourages charities to have a Reserve Policy in place. This is an attempt to secure the future of a charity, in case of the unexpected reduction in funding, and allow either the development of plans to reverse the reduction or to allow controlled closure of the charity should the former plan not be viable.

The Charity Commission suggests an amount, equivalent to six months’ working, capital to be held as reserves. Our current accounts show that, in the financial year 2022-2023 we spent £36,000 per year, to fund and manage the FoodBank. Since the amount spent on food increased significantly over the year, a reserve of £22,000 was agreed by the Board in November 2023.

### **Future aims and objectives**

As laid out in our current Business Plan, we intend to:

- 1) Continue to administer the food collection and distribution service as efficiently and effectively as possible.

- 2) Continue to work with partner organisations to help address food poverty
- 3) Consolidate good governance arrangements by:
  - Developing an appropriate range of policies and procedures.
  - Reviewing all our policies and business plan regularly.
  - Implementing all necessary changes to remain compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and other legal requirements
- 4) Undertake initiatives designed to increase awareness of Dorchester Foodbank in the local community
- 5) Review our volunteer arrangements, including the development of succession planning arrangements.
- 6) Investigate other funding opportunities, particularly expanding the uptake of Gift Aid.

## Financial information

### Statement of Assets Income and Liabilities Expenditure October 2022 to September 2023

	2022-23 £		2021-22 £	
Opening balance		31,959.74		19,765.42
Income				
- grants	5000.00		2,500.00	-
donations	50,587.88		20,254.80	
<b>Total income</b>		<b>55,587.88</b>		<b>22,754.80</b>
Less:				
expenditure – food	23,171.72		9,161.90	
expenditure –Xmas& Boots vouchers <sup>1</sup>	10,535.00		600.00	
expenditure – other	2,085.41		798.58	
		<b>35,792.13</b>		<b>10,560.48</b>
<b>Other foodbank &amp; CA support</b>				
- Citizens Advice for energy poverty aid	5,000.00			
-Dorchester Foodshare	2,000.00			
-Dorchester Family Support	5,000.00			
-Portland Foodbank	2,000.00			
		<b>14,000.00</b>		
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>49,792.13</b>		
<b>Closing balance</b>		<b>37,755.41</b>		<b>31,959.74</b>

Note:

1. Xmas & Boots vouchers: in year 2021-2022 this row only included boots vouchers, which are given out to clients with specific requirements, mainly nappies, formula milk, where we do not have the space to store such items. In 2022-2023 this heading included Xmas vouchers as well. (See main report for details.)

## **Accounts – Analytical Review**

We are very grateful to our donors who have supported us so generously with both money and gifts of canned and packeted foodstuffs and cleaning and hygiene products. We have been fortunate to increase our income to over £55,000, from £22,755 last year. People have been extraordinarily generous and, although about £11,000 came from a few large donors (Cerne Abbas open gardens, Roberts Charitable Trust, the Rock Choir, the Coca Cola Trust, British Aerospace, Dorchester Round Table and a few private individuals), the rest has come from the summation of hundreds of donations, many small, some larger, some regular and some one-offs all adding together to make the magnificent total.

However, to counter-balance this, our spending on stock has increased to about £26,600 (an increase of almost 280%) as a result of both a decrease in the amount of actual food items donated and a major increase in the number of clients supported. All this as a result of the energy crisis and the rapid increase in inflation, particularly of food items.

In order to give our clients some personal control over creating their own Christmas, we spent £6,235 on supermarket vouchers which were distributed to our clients (one per person) in the weeks running up to Christmas. This money was greatly appreciated, as it gave the opportunity for some of the families to buy small Christmas presents for their children. Without these vouchers the children would have had nothing. It was humbling to see how this gesture brought several clients to tears. We intend to repeat this for Christmas 2024 and £2500 Coop vouchers have been bought forward in preparation. This year £1800 were also spend on Boots vouchers (see note 1).

FoodBank can only ever be a short term “sticking plaster” to the problem of food poverty. As a result, it has always been our policy to try and address some of the causes of food poverty experienced by our clients, by encouraging them to engage with organisations that try to identify the specifics of their financial problems and advise on how to address them To this end we donated £5000 to CA (Citizens Advice) to provide help with energy vouchers for our clients.

We also donated £5000 to Dorchester Family Support, who provided food parcels during the summer and Christmas holidays to families of school children receiving free school meals. This reduced the call on our services over these periods.

We recognise that, as the largest and highest profile foodbank in Dorchester, we do get the lion’s share of donations. So, when finances allow, we try to help out our smaller partner foodbanks in Dorchester and environs, who sometimes struggle to make ends meet and where a relatively small amount of money makes a big difference.

To conclude, we have been blessed with financial donations to meet our needs this year and, again, we thank all our donors.

## **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Dorchester FoodBank**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Dorchester FoodBank (the FoodBank) for the year ended 30 September 2023.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the FoodBank 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 FoodBank'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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the FoodBank as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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:



Name (PRINT):

DAVID LEIGH.

Address: Address available on request

Date:

17.1.2024