



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 6th April 2024 to 5th April 2025

Charity name: Bookbanks

Charity registration number: 1204919

Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	The advancement of education and literacy for the public benefit amongst people who are in financial hardship and who are attending food banks, food pantries, food support services, and other establishments addressing food insecurity by the provision of free, donated books, printed materials, and other literacy and educational support.
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	<p>The key activities for the charity are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Running existing Bookbanks' facilities within food banks and other establishments providing food to members of the public living in financial hardship;● Liaising with personnel within the publishing industry to enable the provision of books for existing book bank facilities;● Recruiting, training and coordinating volunteers to attend Bookbanks sites;● Organising book-related events, including author readings, writing workshops and librarian visits, within existing Bookbank venues for the participation of food bank attendees;● Sourcing new Bookbanks sites and liaising with food bank providers to agree new collaborations. <p>These activities benefit members of the public who attend food banks by providing opportunities for dialogue and discussion through books, increasing literacy, confidence and community.</p>

Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	The Trustees confirm that they have had due regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit when exercising their powers and directing the activities of the charity, as described in the next section.
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	<p>Our volunteers are integral to the success of each Bookbanks site. During the reporting period, Bookbanks grew its number of volunteers from a handful to 50. All volunteers undergo online training and an onsite induction. The training supports volunteers to look after Bookbanks stalls at food banks, where they advise on book choices and initiate discussions with members of the public. At least one volunteer looks after the Bookbanks stall every week.</p> <p>Each volunteer receives training, including in safeguarding and health and safety. Each volunteer commits to monthly shifts of at least 2 hours over a 6-month period at their local Bookbanks site.</p>

Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	<p>Achievements April 2024 - April 2025</p> <p>In June 2024, a team of regular volunteers were deployed at Bookbanks Dalston (formerly referred to as Bookbanks Newington Green) and the charity opened a second site, at the Wymondham Community Outreach Project in Norfolk. Two teams of volunteers began looking after the two Bookbanks sites, distributing 30-50 books to food bank guests at each site, each week.</p> <p>Later in 2024, two author talks were trialled at Bookbanks Dalston and a writing workshop, in partnership with Indie Novella Press, was held at both sites. 25 copies of the authors' books were distributed each time, and several guests engaged with the activities. One guest said: "It's the first time in a long time I've really enjoyed a social situation."</p> <p>Regular visits from local librarians have also been established at each site, with librarians feeding back that they recognise the 'very valuable service' Bookbanks provides, and also using the opportunity to encourage guests to access libraries. One guest at Hammersmith & Fulham is visually impaired and the visiting librarian was able to provide him with information about free audiobooks.</p> <p>In November 2024, the charity opened two more sites - one at the Hammersmith & Fulham food bank and another at the Norwich food bank.</p> <p>In February 2025 the charity welcomed new Volunteer Coordinators to the team, each based in one of the charity's key geographic hubs. Tasked with managing Bookbanks volunteers across that locality, they help to ensure the charity's smooth and responsible running as it grows.</p> <p>The first three Matthew's Talks events took place in March 2025 at the Dalston, Hammersmith & Fulham and Wymondham foodbanks. These events featured authors Andrew O'Hagan, Helen Whitaker and Hugh Aldersey-Williams respectively. 25 copies of the authors' books were distributed at each event. Author and Bookbanks ambassador Andrew O'Hagan said: 'I do live book events every other day and I love them. But my Bookbanks experience was truly magical — just a pause, for all of us, in our preoccupations, to help each other along as</p>

		<p>human beings. I felt inspired by the people who came today. It reminds me what writing and social engagement is really all about.'</p> <p>The impact on guests of Matthew's Talks was pronounced, inspiring one guest at Hammersmith & Fulham to say, 'I came for food and left with food for the soul', and another at Dalston to say: 'It was inspirational because I'm a potential writer myself.'</p> <p>Bookbanks Euston at the Euston Foodbank - the third largest Trussell Foodbank in the UK - opened its doors on the 1st April 2025 with 8 volunteers trained and available to attend the sessions.</p> <p>As at April 2025 on average 40 books are given out to food bank attendees from each site, every week.</p> <p>The Bookbanks stalls feel increasingly embedded in the food bank services, with guests looking forward to seeing what new books are displayed each week, enabling them to find something special at the food bank, alongside the essentials. Feedback from guests includes: 'I just keep getting great books,' and 'I've become my family's local library. I'd rather miss my bus and get to talk to you.'</p> <p>People also talk about the impact the books have that they take home with them to share with their families. One guest at Bookbanks Dalston talked about how getting a book recommended for her teenage son enabled her to talk to him about his school reading, and she was able to say she could find him 'more good books at Tuesday club', rather than describing it as a food bank.</p>
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	<p>During the period of this report, Bookbanks grew from operating at one pilot site in Dalston, London to a total of 5 sites - 2 in Norfolk, 3 in London.</p> <p>Bookbanks provided over 400 hours of voluntary services during which over 5,000 books were distributed for free.</p> <p>They hosted 5 author talks and 2 writing workshops and set up regular visits from local librarians at their partner food bank sites.</p> <p>They held 3 online training sessions, bringing the total number of volunteers up to 50, spread between London and Norfolk.</p>
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	<p>Bookbanks has seen significant achievement in fundraising activities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two substantial multi-year grants of unrestricted funds. - An initial donor repeating their donation the following year. - Two foundations increased their donations year on year. - Monthly donations of unrestricted funds from individuals totalling £1000 per month. - Significant fundraising drive for 'Matthew's Talks' which are Bookbanks themed events, raising £7,000, including some recurring donations. - Significant local fundraising, raising £6,500 to open in Manchester (which happened in May 2025). - A new partnership with book retail platform bookshop.org and the Indie Alliance of Publishers raising £2,500.
Other		<p>Activities and achievements April 2025 - August 2025</p> <p>A new Bookbanks site opened in Manchester (specifically Manchester Central Foodbank's Ardwick distribution centre) in May 2025.</p> <p>Three further Matthew's Talks events took place in June 2025 with authors Anne Sebba, Ruthie Collins and Hugh Aldersey-Williams at various Bookbanks locations.</p>

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	<p>Cash at bank on 5th April 2025 was £46,270.</p> <p>Five grants were won over the year, totalling £23,000.</p> <p>Donations from individuals totalled £47,000. Of this amount, £11,000 was donated by one individual. The charity received donations from over 150 individuals in the financial year to April 2025. By March 2025 there were 14 regular monthly donors.</p> <p>The majority of the expenditure to the end of the period was for contracted consultancy fees (founders and volunteer coordinators), comprising £20,000.</p>
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	<p>The trustees reviewed and amended the Reserves Policy in October 2025; an extract of the current policy is reproduced below:</p> <p>“Reserves will be funded with surplus unrestricted operating funds. The trustees aim to maintain free reserves in unrestricted funds which equate to the sum of the following amounts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash Flow: 1 month of staffing costs; • Contingency: 10% of all income in the last financial year; • Commitment: increase in costs due to new sites forecast to be opened within the next 18 months, as included within the Bookbanks Forecast Cash Flow document, and to fund operating each location for a minimum of one year; • Closure: a minimum of three months of total expenditure. <p>One month prior to the Reserves falling below the three-month total expenditure target referring to Closure, Bookbanks management must notify the Board and submit to the Board an action plan to return to a sustainable reserves level.</p> <p>The balances under each of the above categories at the financial year end will be included in the Bookbanks Trustees Annual Report.”</p>
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	Cash reserves were in excess of £3,000.
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	N/A

Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	N/A
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	N/A

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	<p>Bookbanks' funds are principally sourced from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular (monthly) and one-off donations from individuals; • Grants received from other charitable and public organisations.
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	<p>The risks facing Bookbanks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in donations do not keep pace with expansion plans; • Recruitment of volunteers does not keep pace with expansion plans; • Closure of food bank sites at which Bookbanks operates. • Safeguarding risks at food banks; risks to volunteers; both of which may increase as Bookbanks' expands to new sites

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	Foundation Constitution
How is the charity constituted? (e.g. unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	CIO
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	Appointed by current trustees

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Bookbanks
Other name the charity uses	Book Banks
Registered charity number	1204919
Charity's principal address	31 BERESFORD ROAD, London, N5 2HS

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Carla Priddon	Chair	7th February 2025	
2	Claire Davies	Treasurer		
3	Pete MacIntyre			
4	Asma Mani			
5	Annabelle Williams			
6				
7				

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name		
N/A		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	
N/A		

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	N/A
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	N/A
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	N/A

Additional information (optional)

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Emily Rhodes (Consultant)
Hattie Garlick (Consultant)

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

N/A


Other optional information

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)



Full name(s) Claire Davies

Position (eg Secretary,
Chair, etc)

Treasurer

Date

6th January 2026

Book Banks Registered Charity Number: 1204919

Receipts and Payments

For the Period 6th April 2024 to 5th April 2025

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total Funds
Receipts			
Donations	27,522	19,650	47,172
Grants	18,000	5,000	23,000
Gift Aid	3,553	0	3,553
Interest Received	0	0	0
	49,075	24,650	73,725
Payments			
Consultancy & Professional Fees	19,978	11,218	31,196
Travelling	194	163	357
Entertainment	90	0	90
Printing	258	481	739
Postage and Carriage	106	0	106
Office Stationery	16	0	16
Computer & Software	156	293	449
Bank Charges	580	467	1,047
Office Equipment and IT Depreciation	66	0	66
General Expenses	557	292	849
Subscriptions	35	750	785
Training Costs	238	1,201	1,439
	22,274	14,865	37,139
Net of Receipts and Payments	26,801	9,785	36,586

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at the end of the Period

	Unrestricted Funds to the nearest £	Restricted Funds to the nearest £	Total Funds to the nearest £
Cash Funds	36,485	9,785	46,270
Creditors			
Contractor remuneration invoices not paid March 2025	2,417	2,399	4,816

Unrestricted Reserves usage (according to Reserves Policy October 2025)

	Unrestricted Reserves to the nearest £	Restricted Funds to the nearest £
Cash Flow: 1 month of consultant costs unrestricted	1,665	
Contingency: 10% of total income unrestricted	4,908	
Commitment: Increased costs (net of forecast income) due to new sites forecast to be opened within the next 18 months	29,098	
Commitment (restricted funds): Further Matthew's Talks and expansion of specific sites		11,206
Closure: a minimum of three months of total expenditure.	5,568	
TOTAL ALLOCATED	41,239	11,206

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Report to the trustees

Bookbanks

On accounts for the year ended

April 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1204919

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 .

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:

22/12/25

Name:

BARBARA LE FLEMING

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

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

Address:

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MAIDENHEAD

SL6 8UE

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

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