



Helping Whittlesey CIO

Trustee Report

March 2025

Governance & Status

Helping Whittlesey was set up in 2018 as an online community support group. In 2023 Helping Whittlesey formalised its activities and became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission focussed on environmental and community activities.

This includes the protection and preservation of the environment through promoting sustainable waste management, in particular but not exclusively by re-distributing surplus food and household item waste that would otherwise go to landfill.

Those on the Helping Whittlesey Committee have a range of expertise including waste and environmental projects, local community support and knowledge, health and social wellbeing, finance, education, communications, grant applications and charitable organisation management.

Key Facts and Results

- Community Pantry opened in September 2023
- 51.11 tonnes of surplus food re-distributed in year one.
- 232 tonnes of carbon saved.
- Over 6000 users in the first year of operation.
- Collections from 6 different shops & any surplus from Whittlesey food bank on a Thursday and Thorney food bank on a Saturday.
- Collecting 7 days a week, some days twice a day.
- Only food not taken by food banks or other initiatives is collected
- Increased opening in September 2024 to 3 days a week due to extra collections plus on a Saturday we go to local villages to hand out requested food bags.
- Pop up's when needed to distribute more food, including premade bags that have been handed out in Coates and from the Pantry. When available we have permission

to use the Coates Village hall and The Eastrea Centre free of charge as well as having the option of the Feldale site.

- 22 volunteers
- 2 chest freezers, 1 fridge and 1 fridge freezer at the pantry and 3 tall backup freezers at volunteers' houses.
- 6 volunteers with food hygiene level 2 certificate
- 5 star food hygiene rating from Fenland District Council
- Available to collect food from companies 7 days a week
- All packaging waste from the activities recycled.
- 2.1k followers on the Community Pantry Facebook page
- Pride of Fenland 2024 Award

The Community Pantry Project Summary

The community pantry project from Helping Whittlesey minimises food waste by receiving and re-distributing surplus food that would otherwise go to waste (primarily from retailers and producers) to the local community of Whittlesey and the surrounding villages.

Food waste is a big contributor to climate change with significant resources used to grow, process, pack and transport food. 6.4 million tonnes of edible food is wasted each year in the UK by retailers, manufacturers, caterers, restaurants and in people's homes. (WRAP). The latest annual report on UK surplus food showed approximately 170,000 tonnes of surplus food was received by UK redistribution organisations in 2022 equating to just over 400 million meals with a value of more than £590 million.

Benefiting The Environment & The Community

The pantry saved 34.5 tonnes of food in the first year of opening. The busiest month to date was December 2023 where we collected and redistributed 3.87 tonnes of surplus food. 1.3 tonnes of that was collected and redistributed by four volunteers in one day - Christmas Eve.

The project is also educating residents on the key environmental issue of food waste reduction and making use of surplus food. By asking the community to share the food they have collected and meals made using the #thepantrycookbook we are developing a virtual cook book on social media.

Information is also held in the pantry from Fenland Council and third party groups relating to food waste impacts and also other social support and wellbeing information. The local community are keen to do their bit for the environment, and this project provides an easy, visible way to get involved. It attracts a diverse range of people and creates positive interaction in person and on social media through sharing of recipe ideas and also more general community support. There are 22 volunteers who help with running the pantry and collecting food. Anyone requiring help due to poverty and cost of living issues are guided towards local authority support and the relevant food bank services.

This activity only collects and redistributes food that the shops do not sell, and that local food banks do not access. However, we also take surplus from the food banks that would otherwise be wasted when requested. All surplus food is redistributed.

We also receive surplus from allotment users and home grown produce which is offered to us for redistribution.

The packaging waste is recycled and the shop crates used for collections are re-used and returned. The strength of the volunteer network and the willingness of local shops to support this environmental project in its first year has been beyond expectations and provided a very positive environmental and community project for Helping Whittlesey and those organisations associated with it. It will continue long term and still has lots of potential to evolve and grow.

Providing food for local good causes

In addition to providing food and other items directly to the local community, we also provide food for other initiatives as long as no profit is made from the activity.

- Up to August 2023, we had the cook at The Falcon prepare meals, with food that we had saved that could be re-heated easily for the services users at the Good Company Day services who provided care for older people, enabling carers to have a break. This was twice a month and was a main meal and pudding.
- We freeze and pass over food for local groups on request and when we can, to help them save money and use as part of their fundraising efforts. This includes Phoenix youth group, Whittlesey Church - messy play group, Come and play holiday group (Park Lane) FFFG (Coates School) bingo night, Coates village hall afternoon tea and ploughman's lunch / auction.
- At the time of the report we support the following groups weekly:
 - Monday, Coates village hall stay & chat with 20 pastries
 - Monday youth group – fruit for 15
 - Tuesday youth group – fruit & pastries/cakes for 10
 - Wednesday youth group – bread/rolls, sandwich fillings, cakes/pastries, fruit and if enough savoury items for 50
 - Friday open football group – fruit and cakes/pastries for 30
- When we receive excess surplus bananas and flowers we have passed them onto local care homes, nurseries and schools, Local WI or handed the flowers out in the community.
- Any in date items get put in a box and get passed to Whittlesey Emergency Food Bank

- The local nursey receives pumpkins, flowers (past their best) and herbs to use as sensory and arts and crafts for the children. They also have potted herbs and now have a herb garden growing.
- We received 264 Easter eggs from Ferry Meadows that were still in date and left over – these got passed to Phoenix youth group, Defibrillators for all, Fen Hands. Whittlesey home educators, Scaldgate Club, Women's institute, Good company day services, Thorney & Whittlesey food banks.

Coates Community Cabin

We are proud to be working with Coates Primary School and launched Helping Whittlesey Community Cabin in July 2024. The community cabin is open during school hours and selected times in school holidays for anyone to access. The idea is for people to donate items to be passed on to others free of charge. This may be clothes and toys or food/drinks items. This will also be used for the pantry to put surplus food in that doesn't need to be chilled such as bread items, eggs, fruit/veg, flowers etc.

It has been a huge success with a donation box outside that people leave their items for us to add to the Cabin. You don't have to leave anything to take anything, but to think of us when you have a clear out.

We get a large number of clothes, so we pass to cash to clothes in the village and the money raised goes towards the Helping Whittlesey Christmas appeal.

Whittlesey Community Hub

We have partnered with Whittlesey Athletic Football Club and Phoenix Youth Group to become the Whittlesey Hub, which is registered with companies house and based at the Feldale site on Drybread Road.

We currently have 4 storage containers on site,(1 owned and 3 rented) that we can use for the Christmas appeal, storage of cabin items, items offered by the public ready for when an appeal comes in and items ready for future initiatives.

We can also use the building for pantry sessions when needed.

Helping Whittlesey Christmas Appeal

Any items from food collections and donations throughout the year have been stored for the Christmas appeal.

We have approached all the local school, youth groups, food banks, health care practitioners, church leaders as well as people we know needing support through Helping Whittlesey.

Pride of Fenland

The Pantry won the 2024 Pride of Fenland award for the Community Group Volunteers Project and there has been newspaper, radio, social media and local magazine coverage.

What's next?

A number of additional funding pots have been identified and proposals submitted to continue and scale up the charitable activities around both food and non food waste minimisation, environmental and community projects in line with the community and charitable objectives. We have secured the current pantry location and activities with a development plan until at least the end of 2025.

The Helping Whittlesey Re-use and Repair Hub plans are developing. In practice, the aim is to run a repair café (people bring their household items for repair) , a repair hub (repairing items given to Helping Whittlesey) and a Sharing Shed (local community rent and return occasional use household items). This is now also connected to the wider Whittlesey Community Hub.

Helping Whittlesey has been built on a strong community spirit over the past six years. The development of new activities including the Community Pantry and gaining official charitable status has strengthened the evidence of the need and benefits locally. While it leads on saving resources, reducing waste and environmental benefit, the organisation also brings important community and society benefits. A survey completed in June 2024 with a combination of face to face and online responses (72 responses) showed; 96% said that the project does positively impact the community and 86% said that the project is worth while. 71% recognised the main benefit as preventing waste and landfill, and 46% as helping the community and people in need. The biggest feedback was the support to continue and expand the Helping Whittlesey project. The challenge of reaching surrounding rural villages as well as the town of Whittlesey is built into the future plans of the organisation.

Quotes Taken From Launch Press Release

Chair of Helping Whittlesey Anna Foster said that 'we are dedicated to making a positive impact on our local environment and society. In the first three week trial period alone, we rescued and re- distributed over three quarters of a tonne of food that would have otherwise gone to waste. The pantry is inclusive to all in the local community and food that is perfectly usable will be available. All the food is free, and a voluntary donation can be given to help with running costs. All the surplus food we have collected has been taken which really proves the potential. Furthermore, this is just phase 1 of the plan with more exciting developments to come.'

Nik Johnson, Mayor of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough who is supportive of the Helping Whittlesey activities stated that 'Food waste is recognised as a key environmental issue nationally so it is great to see this new local initiative that will rescue perfectly good surplus food from going in the bin and get it re-distributed into the local community. I wish Helping Whittlesey and the growing network of food waste prevention initiatives across Cambridgeshire every success.'

Anna Foster, Chair, Helping Whittlesey

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from

10/27/2023



To

3/31/2025

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 £
A1 Receipts					
Pantry Contributions	5,322	-	-	5,322	-
Cambs CC Grant	-	21,600	-	21,600	-
Postcode Lottery Grant	-	2,500	-	2,500	-
Other grants	2,837	8,970	-	11,807	-
PECT Fenland Grant	-	7,680	-	7,680	-
McCains Grant	3,000	-	-	3,000	-
National Lottery Grant	-	19,912	-	19,912	-
LOT grant	-	1,500	-	1,500	-
Whittlesey Hub grant	-	3,557	-	3,557	-
Christmas appeal 2023/24	-	3,473	-	3,473	-
Sub total(Gross income for AR)	11,159	69,192	-	80,351	-
Total receipts	11,159	69,192	-	80,351	-
A3 Payments					
Site and facility preparation	-	9,267	-	9,267	-
Pantry, Shed and Cabin operations	1,603	26,342	-	27,945	-
Rent and Utilities	-	2,030	-	2,030	-
Other helping whittlesey support funds	-	100	-	100	-
Christmas appeal 2023/24	-	6,419	-	6,419	-
Salary	-	9,408	-	9,408	-
Sub total	1,603	53,566	-	55,169	-
Total payments	1,603	53,566	-	55,169	-
Net of receipts/(payments)	9,556	15,626	-	25,182	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	9,556	15,626	-	25,182	-

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Bank	9,556	15,626	-
	Total cash funds	9,556	15,626	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	Hub Solar Project	Restricted		31st May 2025
	Forward rent, wages and utilities	Restricted		31st December 2025
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		Anna Foster	7/8/2025	
		Layla Waters	7/8/2025	



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
Helping Whittlesey

On accounts for the year
ended

31st March 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1205448

Set out on pages

2

(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 / 2025**.

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 (other than that disclosed below *) 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:

Eamonn Durling

Date:

29/7/2025

Name:

EAMONN DURLING

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

Address:

1 DAVIE LANE
WHITTLESEY
PETERBOROUGH
PE7 1YZ