

**Craigavon Area Compassion Project
Company limited by guarantee**

Directors	Mr Christopher Leech Mr Philip Emerson Mr Martin Stevenson
Company number	NI615573
Registered office	Unit 5 Carn Business Park 19 Carn Road Portadown BT63 5WG
Business address	Unit 5 Carn Business Park Carigavon BT63 5WG
Accountants	JSR 44 Blackisland Road Annaghmore Portadown Co Armagh BT62 1NE
Bankers	Danske Bank PO Box 183 Donegal Square West Belfast BT1 6JS

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The Trustees are pleased to present their annual directors' report together with the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31st March 2024. This report has also been prepared to meet with the requirements for a director's report and accounts for the purposes of the Companies Act.

The Directors/ Trustees who served during the year were as follows:

Mr Christopher Leech
Mr Philip Emerson

Mr Martin Stevenson

Risk Management

The trustees actively review any major risks, which the charity faces on a regular basis and believe that maintaining reserves at current levels, combined with an annual review of the controls over key financial systems, will provide sufficient resources for the incoming year. The trustees have also examined other operational and business risks faced by the Charity and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the most significant risks.

Overview of Craigavon Area Compassion Project (CACP)

The purpose of Craigavon Area Compassion Project is to focus on the relief of poverty, financial hardship, sickness etc and to promote and protect health in the wider Craigavon Area. Currently, its main area of work is the operation of Craigavon Area Foodbank which is supported by the Trussell Trust UK. Additionally, CACP may carry out further poverty relief projects which fall outside the specific function of Craigavon Area Food Bank, in line with our stated charitable objects.

Craigavon Area Food Bank (CAF) continues to provide a valuable service in meeting a significant demand in the local community. Craigavon Area Food Bank works in partnership with the Trussell Trust on its standard foodbank operations.

It seeks to combat food poverty in the Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown area by providing 3-day emergency non-perishable food parcels and other essential items to individuals and families facing crisis due to low income, unemployment, benefits delays, domestic violence etc.

To ensure CAF targets the most vulnerable and marginalised it works with a wide range of agencies to identify and refer people and families to CAF; these include statutory, voluntary, church and community organisations. It is recommended a maximum three vouchers can be issued to a person within a six-month period but this will depend on the level of need. The vast majority of people referred will access the Foodbank once or twice only.

Our ability to continue our work is enhanced by our partnerships with local businesses eg Tesco & ASDA. Additionally, we receive donations from individuals, churches, schools and other organisations. Donations are mainly of food with some monetary donations.

The Trustees have had regard to the Northern Ireland Charity Commission's Public benefit requirements, as demonstrated through the following overview of the year's activities:

Foodbank operation

This report provides an overview of the work of the Craigavon Area Foodbank (CAF) from the 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. CAF has been in operation since 2012.

CAF has a Board of 3 Trustees, who are supported by 4 non-executive board members.

Its strength is its volunteer base with over 60 volunteering on a regular basis. We have a Project manager working 20 hours per week, an Operations Manager working 30 hours per week, a Warehouse Manager working 10 hours per week, and The Trussell Trust have provided funding for a Volunteer Coordinator who started in September 2021 on a two-year contract. Recently added to the team are two Referral Officers working 20 and 12 hours per week, and two Welcome & Wellness Officers, working 15 hours per week and a Strategic Engagement Manager who works 10 hours per

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week. Also during the year a Strategic Admin role, on a 14 hours per week contract, was employed by CAF.

CAF runs one central Warehouse in Carn, Portadown, and has distribution centres in Lurgan, Portadown and Craigavon.

Volunteers contribute a range of skills from administration to stock handling, providing a welcome and listening ear to those accessing the centres and providing signposting and support. The Trussell Trust, through a franchise model, provides support to enable this to happen by the provision of a database, operating manual, partnership agreements with Tesco, Asda etc. and also ongoing support from regional managers.

Due to the unfolding Covid crisis in March 2020, we redesigned all of our processes, shutting our Distribution Centres in Lurgan and Portadown. We then moved to a direct delivery of food to client's homes, using our Emergency Food Box processes.

We are now back to primarily operating from Distribution Centres (The Salvation Army, Lurgan; Emmanuel Church, Portadown; Hope Church, Craigavon) where clients can come and collect their food parcels, with deliveries limited to those with limited mobility or access to transport.

During the last several years, CAF has worked closely with Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council to meet the needs of the wider community. Along with the three other food banks in our area (Via Wings, Storehouse Banbridge and Armagh Foodbank), we have worked to adapt to the changing needs of the community during Covid. This has involved elements of co-design with the council to ensure that the right support is given to the people who are most in need in a timely fashion.

Additionally, where specific emergency situations arose, mitigating measures were put in place in co-ordination with various statutory agencies and community organisations.

Summary of Activity

This section provides an overview of activities, including referrals, donations, volunteers, publicity, management and the proposed way forward.

- Referrals

For this 12-month period, 1,826 referrals were made into CAF. This resulted in 5,525 people being supported with three-day emergency supplies, that is, the equivalent of over 16,575 days of food and other essential items.

For our normal operations, the main reasons for the need included low income & debt. Benefit changes and delays, sickness, domestic violence and unemployment were some of the other reasons for referral. People come from across the whole Craigavon area, including rural and more urban locations to access support from CAF. By ward, some of the areas included Ballybay, Brownlow, Mourneview, Lough Road, Shankill, Killicomain and extended to more rural areas such as Loughgall, Gilford and Magheralin. Many come from areas of deprivation.

CAF supported people of all ages, from those over 65 to those under 5 and from all backgrounds and ethnicities. 2,438 three-day supplies were given to children. Of these 690 were aged 0-4. Single people accounted for 28% of all referrals, which reflects the vulnerability of this group when it comes to support from the benefit system and the lack of suitable housing for this societal group.

- Partnership with agencies

CAF provides a wide range of agencies with Foodbank vouchers which enables them to determine if local people could benefit from an emergency supply. CAF received referrals from around 50

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agencies. An example of some of the agencies worked with and from whom referrals were received included The Salvation Army (Lurgan and Portadown), Emmanuel Church, Shalom Prayer Group, Community Advice Craigavon, Portadown Cares, Splash Surestart, Craigavon Intercultural Programme, St Vincent de Paul etc. This list extends to other organisations including Health Visitor and Social Work teams, local Constituency Offices, NIACRO, Women's Aid among many others. Over this year we have worked hard to keep our agencies engaged, re-engage with some and establish new referral agencies.

It is the CAF's relationship with agencies which continues to ensure people are identified and referred for emergency food support at a time of crisis.

- ABC Community Food Hub Project

This financial year included the second full year of operation of our Food Hub project. With support from Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon Council, this project is designed to distribute surplus food from various sources to key trusted partners in the Borough, who are providing food-based support services. Partners of this project include Storehouse Banbridge, Via Wings, Dromore and Armagh Food Bank. Other beneficiaries included social supermarkets such as Freedom Foods Lurgan and Portadown, community groups, youth clubs and similar charities.

Surplus food is supplied from FareShare, engagement with local food producers and some targeted purchases enabled from specific funding streams. On average the project reallocated around 4 tonnes of food each month, much of which was destined for waste.

The Food Hub will continue to develop its strategic partnerships with local food producers in the coming year to tackle food waste and help businesses achieve their corporate social responsibility goals.

- Donations

We received donations, mainly in the form of food, from many individuals, voluntary groups, churches and some businesses. In relation to non-perishable food and non-food essentials, CAF received over 55,922.26kg of donations from over 60 organisations. Most of our donations come through individuals donating through the Lurgan and Craigavon Tesco Permanent Collection Points in store. Local schools, churches and businesses also gave very generously.

- Volunteers

We are so thankful for all the support from our volunteers, without them, the food bank could not function. Throughout the last 4 years we have worked hard to adapt to the changing circumstances created by the Covid pandemic. This involved significantly changing our mode of operation to a home delivery style solution, and now moving back to a Distribution Centre model with limited deliveries.

- Future

In going forward the Trustees have a number of areas they would like to focus on. We have been working to increase our financial donor base and want to focus on that next year and secure funding on a longer-term basis. In addition, whilst we have a great network of referral agencies, the Trustees want to continue to ensure that this network enables us to identify and support those most in need and ensure we have, through donations, the correct stock to meet need. Our volunteers are such a valuable resource and the Trustees will seek to ensure they are supported and that we broaden the variety of roles available to them. This in turn, we hope will help raise our profile and awareness of poverty and food poverty and enhance our ability to signpost and refer.

This will be enhanced through the continued development of systems, processes and plans that will ensure we, with the support of the Trussell Trust, meet quality assurance guidelines. Craigavon Area Food Bank is working with the Trussell Trust on a pilot innovation project to develop the effectiveness of our services.

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In our wider remit as Craigavon Area Compassion Project, we are working on the creation of a Community Food Hub, to help support the community sector by providing a centralised location for food donations across the Borough. We have been liaising closely with ABC Council and the three other food banks in our Borough on this project. We have also attained funding from The Trussell Trust for some strategic staff roles which will focus on anti-poverty strategy.

We have also been working closely with the Asylum Seekers and Refugees in the Craigavon Area. This has included working with the ABC Council Good Relations Team and Emmanuel Church, Portadown to facilitate training courses and link up clients with support. Our new Welcome and Wellness staff roles have been essential, providing the capacity to support individuals and families more than just signposting. The new Referral Officers have made it possible to triage self-referrals better, and to build a better connection with our referral partners.

Financial Overview

Total Incoming Resources £201,944 (2023: £125,851)

Total Resources Expended £150,140 (2023: £113,204)

Surplus for year **£51,804** (2023: £12,647)

No funds held by the charity were in deficit either during the year or at the year end.

Supported by:

Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon District Council, Halifax Foundation for Northern Ireland & Seeded by the Trussell Trust

Registration Details:

Registered Northern Ireland Charity No: NIC103987

Registered Limited Company No: NI615573

Company Law requires the Trustees/ Directors to prepare the financial statements for each financial year. The Trustees/ Directors have taken the decision to prepare the financial statements in accordance with UK GAAP (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). According to Company Law, these accounts must not be approved by the Trustees/ Directors unless they are satisfied that these accounts give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and its income and expenditure.

In preparing these financial statements the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enabled them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the preventions and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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Small Company Provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

This report was approved by the Board of Trustees, and signed on its behalf by:

DocuSigned by:

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Mr Christopher Leech
Director
Date: 23 May 2024

DocuSigned by:

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Mr Martin Stevenson
Director
Date: 22 May 2024