

Charity registration number 1153297

**STRATFORD-UPON-AVON FOODBANK
ANNUAL REPORT**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER
2023**

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON FOODBANK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2023

The Trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 30 November 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's constitution, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives and activities

Public benefit

The Trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

The objects of the CIO are the prevention or relief of poverty in Stratford-upon-Avon and surrounding areas in particular but not exclusively by providing emergency food supplies to individuals in need and/or charities, or other organisations working to prevent or relieve poverty.

Activities

In the Spring of 2023, we confirmed our Strategic Plan which is aligned with the above charitable objects and agreed as follows.

Vision: To provide emergency food and support in Stratford-upon-Avon and surrounding areas for people in need, and to work with partners to prevent and relieve poverty.

Our Two Core Strategies:

- Effective provision of emergency food parcels and support for people in crisis/need
- Work with partners to understand and help alleviate the root causes of poverty

We are now implementing our key plans against these strategies.

Achievements and performance

Significant activities and achievements against objectives

2022/2023 has been a very busy year, and our key metrics are as follows: ·

- A 41% increase in people fed, with increasingly more families (children fed +61%)
- 5,244 parcels were distributed in the year compared to 3,713 in the prior year
- Donations through the year of 54.8 tonnes of stock, of which Food Drives contributed 6.2t
- We purchased 8.2t of stock for the first time - including 2.6t for our fresh food project
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Our Activities can be grouped into 3 key areas:

1 Food distribution and home deliveries

The majority of our food has been distributed from our base at the Fred Winter Centre. In October we started to operate a weekly pop-up distribution in Bishopton, an outer district of the Town, utilizing the van we purchased in July. In November 2023, we also started distributing from Meon Vale, a rural area some 10 miles outside of town, and in time we hope to be able to create a 'sub-hub' in the community centre there. We have continued to offer a home delivery service for those clients unable to get to our base, or carry food parcels back home. In 2022/2023 we made 487 home deliveries, feeding 1,229 people, compared to 234 deliveries and 543 people in the year before. We also started a Support Agency Spotlight, to help provide further support to clients who come to us, where support agencies attend some of our distribution sessions. This is all part of our objective to help alleviate some of the root causes of food poverty.

2 Food Supply and Storage

The main warehouse has been very busy through the year, and with the higher demands (which have outstripped donations), we have increasingly needed to purchase food. We also continue to hold excess stock on some limited lines in our cabins at Tesco. At the end of the financial year we were holding 9.2t of stock compared to 10.9t at the end of the previous financial year. During the year we have had challenges reconciling our stock levels, and have undertaken a number of stock checks and subsequent changes in processes and equipment, in order to improve the accuracy of our stock level reporting.

3) Key Projects

a. Money Advice Programme (MAP) / Financial Inclusion

In a partnership run with Citizens Advice South Warwickshire (CASW), and through the generous funding of the Trussell Trust, our Financial Inclusion support has continued to be in great demand. Although we have faced some operational challenges, we have delivered the following results:

- 278 clients have been referred into the project
- Total financial gains for those clients is just over £638k
- We have helped manage £154k of debt
- 135 clients no longer need to use the Foodbank

b. Fresh Food

After a challenging start in July with no refrigeration facilities, our 28 week fresh fruit and vegetables pilot became an established part of our parcel offering. Over that period 2,835 parcels (91% of all parcels) included some fruit and vegetables with over 2.6t distributed. With minimal wastage and much positive feedback from clients, we have since agreed to continue with fresh food as part of our regular distributions.

c. Christmas Hampers

Together with corporate volunteer support from Pure Ideas Ltd and Coventry Building Society, we created 407 hampers (2.8t stock), fulfilling every nomination received. Municipal Charities and Heart of England Community Energy both gave us funding for the rural and town elements of the project .

d. School Holiday Lunchboxes

With the support of a Warwickshire County Council grant, we distributed 132 lunchbox hampers over the six week summer holiday period, benefiting 313 children. Their generous support also enabled us to run the project again in the October half-term.

Financial review

Reserves policy

We continue to maintain a robust financial position despite the challenges of inflation, increased Foodbank usage and the economic pressures which many of our donors and funders are facing. This year our accounts show a significant difference in our income and expenditure compared to previous reports, as we now include a figure for all food donations received and distributed - this is based on a value per kilogram (£2.37) suggested by the Trussell Trust.

Overall, this year our income exceeded our expenditure by £62k increasing our reserves to £325k compared to £263k in December 2022. There are four areas of note:

a. Food supply

Our food donations have fallen by around 20% resulting in a significant reduction in the food we could share with other Foodbanks. This, coupled with a continuing increase in the parcels we have distributed, meant we had to purchase food on a regular basis for the first time.

b. Unrestricted donations

We are incredibly grateful for the support of local churches, schools, businesses, charitable organizations and local people, both in time and financial donations. In 2022/2023 these increased to £124k compared to £115k in the prior year helping us to fund our operating costs.

c. Restricted Grants

We have also been fortunate in the year to have received £105k in restricted grants that are detailed in note 15 (£55k in 2022). Particular thanks go to The Trussell Trust who continued to fund our MAP/ Financial Inclusion project with CASW as well as our Pathfinder project which enabled us to recruit a part-time Development Worker and partly fund our Foodbank Manager/Pathfinder Leader. Our expenditure against grant funding has therefore also increased significantly as we progress these projects to help alleviate the root causes of food poverty.

d. Costs

We have continued to manage costs tightly with the most marked increases in staff costs linked to our Project work and food purchases. Necessary repair costs to our storage cabin were met by a generous donation from The Trussell Trust. During the year we also invested funds in a van which has helped with our satellite distribution, home deliveries and transporting food donations

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a charitable incorporated organisation established under a constitution signed on 24th July 2013

The Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

P Dickinson

D Logan

N Barter (resigned May 2023)

C Collins (appointed October 2023)

L Davies (appointed October 2023)

J Dodge (resigned May 2023)

H M Hedger

N Hounsell (appointed October 2023)

M G Langley

P Page (resigned April 2023)

A Turner (appointed October 2023)

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Four new Trustees were appointed during the year following a recruitment process supported by the Trussell Trust, including national and local advertising, initial screening and interviews. Selection was then determined by unanimous approval of the existing Trustees.

During the year we saw a number of other changes to our Trustees. In April 2023 Nick Barter, Chair of Trustees advised of his intention to stand down and Philip Dickinson was elected as Chair, taking over on 1st June 2023. Davina Logan was elected as Vice-Chair and also continues as Secretary. We have made good progress in our Governance, reviewing, updating and approving a number of new policies in 2023:

- Stratford Upon Avon Foodbank (SUAF) Conflicts of Interest Policy
- SUAF Safeguarding Policy
- SUAF Serious Incident Reporting Policy
- SUAF Expenses Policy (Volunteers/Staff)
- SUAF Data Protection Policy
- SUAF Health & Safety Policy
- SUAF Complaints Policy
- SUAF HR Policy
- SUAF Anti Bribery, Fraud and Theft Policy

None of the Trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the Trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up

Organisational structure

In December 2022 we appointed Kate Morris as our Foodbank Manager and Pathfinder Lead. Kate's dedication to our cause has been fantastic, and in particular she has helped strengthen our operation, progress our Pathfinder project, manage multiple challenges and be a fantastic ambassador for the Foodbank.

In March 2023 we appointed an Assistant Manager and Operations Lead on a part time basis, and then in October 2023 we appointed a part-time Development Officer enabled by funding from The Trussell Trust on our Pathfinder Project.

Over the last year we have seen 146 volunteers, contributing over 5,000 hours of unpaid time (1,900 in our Warehouse, 1,800 front line Distribution, and the remaining 1,300+ across food drives, home deliveries and other initiatives). We remain indebted to the terrific work that our volunteers continue to do for us.

The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

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P Dickinson

Trustee

Date: