



Cirencester Foodbank

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31 December 2023

Cirencester Foodbank
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for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

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Cirencester Foodbank
Charity Information

Registered charitable incorporated organisation number 1159810

Registered office and Principal address

Cirencester Baptist Church
Chesterton Lane
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 1YE

Trustees

Kieran Archer	
Paul Cooper	
Anne Currie	Chair
Annelie Green	Appointed 7 September 2023
Clare Hannis	Resigned 11 January 2024
Alex Hudd	Resigned 23 March 2023
Stephen Lynas	Appointed 13 July 2023, resigned 1 November 2023
David Taylor	Treasurer
Elisabeth Thomas	
Cliff Thrussell	Resigned 12 September 2023
Jamie Sanders	Appointed 23 July 2024

Head of Foodbank

Anton Wynn

Professional Advisors

Philip Stansfield	Independent examiner
Mike Verdi-Cotts	Design and Publications

Bankers

Lloyds Bank
Business Banking
BX1 1LT

Website

www.cirencester.foodbank.org.uk

Cirencester Foodbank CIO
Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

The Trustees are pleased to present their report together with the independently examined financial statements of Cirencester Foodbank for the year ended 31 December 2023. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, Cirencester Foodbank's constitution and the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) as amended by Update Bulletin 1.

Constitution

Cirencester Foodbank was registered as a charitable incorporated organisation by the Charity Commission on 6 January 2015. The constitution was amended on 7 December 2023 to clarify how trustees may make decisions electronically and to correct a number of typographical errors.

Organisational structure and decision making

Overall responsibility for Cirencester Foodbank sits with the trustees who meet quarterly to receive reports on Cirencester Foodbank's activities, to determine the strategy and objectives of Cirencester Foodbank and to ensure all relevant governance requirements and standards are upheld. In 2023, the Trustee Board was supported by 5 sub-committees, each comprised of trustees and some including the Head of Foodbank. The sub-committees were Governance; Finance; Personnel, Communications and Strategy. Each sub-committee operates within terms of reference approved by the board and meets at least 4 times per year.

Progressing on the strategic priorities of the foodbank and management of the foodbank's day to day operations are the responsibility of the Head of Foodbank. In this he is assisted by a team of 7 staff (see staffing below). A scheme of delegation sets out the powers which have been delegated to the Head of Foodbank, trustee subcommittees or other staff members. The scheme of delegation is reviewed and updated regularly by the board of trustees.

The foodbank receives support for its services from Trussell under the terms of a franchise agreement. Under the terms of this agreement the foodbank has agreed to orient its strategic goals towards ending the need for its service, to involve people with lived experience of foodbank use in all aspects of the foodbank's activities and to uphold Trussell's organizational values of compassion, justice, dignity and community. The foodbank is grateful for all the support which it has received from Trussell, including financial support for key staff roles, its operation of the foodbank's referral system and materials, training and other support.

Policies and objectives

The charitable objectives of Cirencester Foodbank are to:

- Relieve persons in Cirencester and throughout the district who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress (beneficiaries) in such ways as from time to time the trustees see fit;
- In furtherance of the first objective to supply goods to beneficiaries, either directly or through agency partners approved by the Trustees. Goods include but are not limited to food, including tinned and dried food to ensure a healthy, balanced and nutritional diet sufficient for three days at a time, clothes, furniture and heating;
- Undertake any other activity consistent with the primary purpose of Cirencester Foodbank, including but not limited to counselling and other advisory services.

The vision of Cirencester Foodbank is that no one should need to use a foodbank and our missions are:

- To ensure that nobody in our community should go hungry.
- To give food, support and advice to those in need.
- To work with local partners to understand better the causes of food poverty in our community, and how collectively we can address those causes.

- To create more public awareness about the causes of, and solutions, to this issue.

These will be achieved through:

- the continued effective provision of food parcels to those in crisis
- working closely with the foodbank’s referral agencies to ensure a focus on preventing food poverty
- maximizing the financial resources of our clients and assisting to deal with the issues leading to food poverty
- communicating the reasons for food poverty and deepening decision maker relationships to help shape local services
- inviting those with lived experience of poverty to help shape our services and ensuring support services are available to all

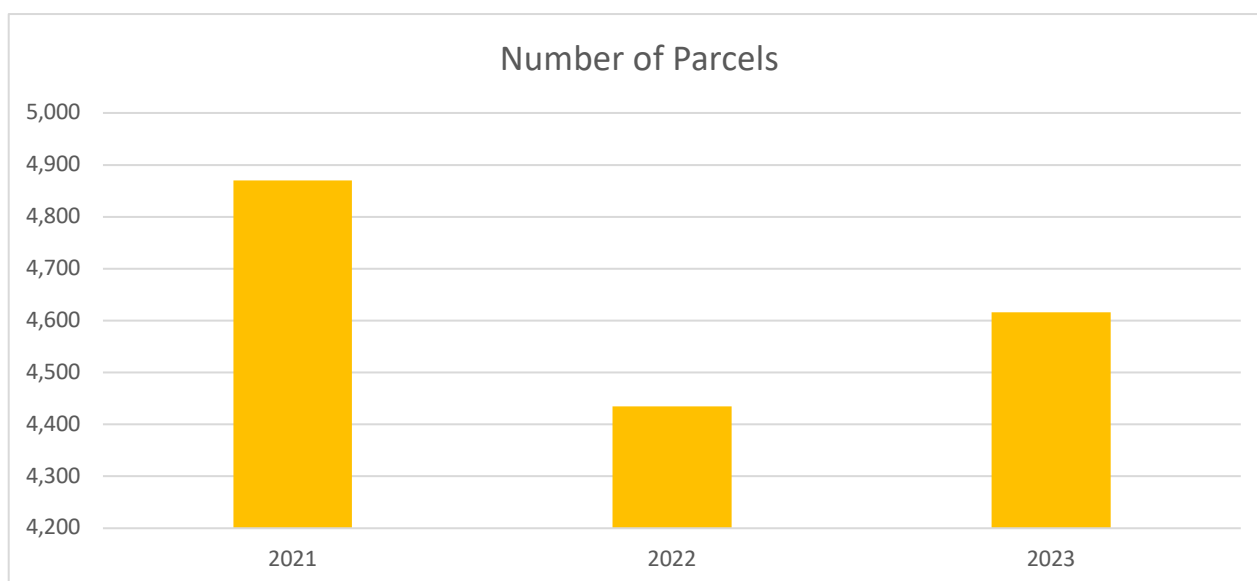
The values of Cirencester Foodbank are:

- Treat everyone with honesty, respect and compassion
- Ensure we are caring, inclusive and just
- Act with integrity in all that we do
- Honour the right to privacy and dignity of those in need

Main activities undertaken to further Cirencester Foodbank’s objectives

Provision of Emergency Food Parcels

In 2023 Cirencester Foodbank provided 4,616 three-day emergency food parcels, compared to 4,435 in 2022 and 4,870 in 2021.



The foodbank distributed its parcels through its centres in Cirencester and Tetbury, and through its delivery service. The centres act as hubs, designed with conversation and connection in mind. In addition, they are places where clients can access additional support and advice services including through support agencies being present in those spaces.

51378.94kg of stock was received in 2023; the majority (45669.18kg) was donated and a smaller quantity (805.93kg) purchased. 44,381.55kg of products were distributed directly to clients, 1855.60kg to partners to support their initiatives in reducing hardship (for instance breakfast clubs) and a further 1141.62kg was damaged or out-of-date.

The foodbank closely monitors its stock levels and the makeup of its stock levels to ensure efficient use of its warehouse space. For example, the foodbank decreased its high stock levels of cereals during the year by donating cereal to school breakfast clubs which schools reported led to a decrease in levels of non-attendance and lateness at school.

The foodbank continues to promote to its donors the donation app, BanktheFood, as an additional stock management tool.

Fresh fruit and vegetables continued to be regularly provided as part of the emergency 3-day parcels.

At Christmas, additional hampers were provided containing long life Christmas food items to each household.

In 2023, the foodbank provided a grant to the Churn Project for the provision of food (including fresh food and snacks) at the Churn's family group activities.

Non-Food Support

Cirencester Foodbank continued to provide a range of non-food support to clients in 2023. Food parcels contain toiletries, cleaning products and pet food (if required). During the year energy vouchers, mobile phone SIM cards, Tesco food vouchers, stationery sets, toiletry bags, reading books for children over the summer holidays, dental hygiene packs, Easter eggs, winter care packs and Christmas hampers were distributed.

Signposting and Citizens Advice Support

The foodbank's signposting team continued to support foodbank clients both in the foodbank hubs and by telephone in 2023. This included referring clients to relevant outside agencies for support (such as Citizens Advice, P3, the Churn Project) and through providing relevant financial support for clients (eg fuel vouchers, SIM cards). With the increasing prevalence of mental health issues resulting in referral to the foodbank, the team undertook training on mental health issues and support and materials to support clients with mental health issues were included with food parcels.

The foodbank has recognized for some time the need for greater support for its clients to manage debt. In 2023 the foodbank increased its funding of support for clients from Citizens Advice from 2 to 6 days through the funding of a specialist debt adviser and additional general adviser support. The debt adviser spent much of 2023 in training but by the end of the year was beginning to advise clients independently. This advice and the advice of the 2 general advisers is provided both in the foodbank centres and after referral from the foodbank's signposting team.

The Citizens Advice foodbank advisers are able to provide advice to the foodbank's clients with the most complex and wide-ranging issues which often require multiple advice meetings over many months.

Community Engagement

The foodbank continued to work closely with its referral partners in 2023 to develop its understanding of drivers of food poverty in the local community and possible solutions. The foodbank worked with key local organisations (including Feeding Gloucestershire and Cotswold District Council) in the planning of a new Cotswold Food Strategy and spoke at the Feeding Gloucestershire launch event in Northleach in June 2023.

The foodbank was involved in a number of community events attended by other support agencies designed to provide information for residents about locally available services, including wellbeing roadshows in Lechalde, South Cerney and Tetbury. In Fairford the foodbank worked with the Working 4 Wellbeing Group to understand the scale of need in that community.

The foodbank initiated many activities during the year aimed at increasing the involvement of people with lived experience in the organisation. The foodbank recognizes this as a long-term ambition, the first step in which is developing close, trusting relationships with our users. Activities included "Rise and Shine" breakfast packs and Coronation recipe packs.

The foodbank spoke with many community organisations throughout the year to inform the local community about the foodbank's vision and its activities and to educate about the causes of food poverty in the area.

Staffing

As of 31 December 2023, the foodbank had 7 members of staff (equivalent to 7 full-time staff):

- Head of Foodbank
- Operations and Logistics Manager
- Warehouse Manager/ Data and Insight Lead (two roles combined in one person)

- Participation Lead
- Family Engagement worker
- Delivery Driver
- Administrator

As a result of the foodbank seeing increasing demand for its services and support required by families in the area, a family engagement worker was recruited in September 2023 for a three year project aiming to develop school/family/foodbank partnerships in order to provide advice and support to families in need and build resilience to overcome food poverty. This project is co-funded by the foodbank and through the generous support of the Symondson Foundation.

Premises

Due to the increasing breadth of the foodbank's operations and the related increase in staff numbers, the foodbank moved to new office space in Cirencester in May 2023. This space provides desk space for all staff and a meeting space and so will assist in the collaborative working which the activities of the foodbank require. The foodbank has entered into a six year lease for these premises, with the ability to terminate the lease by giving three months' notice after the first year. These premises replace the one room office which the foodbank previously occupied on Dyer Street in Cirencester.

The foodbank's warehouse space remains at Cirencester Baptist Church (with additional offsite storage rented as required by the level of donations received).

Volunteers

The foodbank relies on its wonderful team of volunteers across all its activities. Volunteers roles include acting as trustees, packing parcels and sorting donations in the warehouse, assisting clients at the distribution centres in Cirencester and Tetbury, in the administration of the foodbank and assisting with the foodbank's communications. The signposting team of volunteers continue to help foodbank clients to access relevant support services both via phone support and at the foodbank hubs.

A volunteer joined the foodbank full-time in 2023, on sabbatical from their job. This volunteer has assisted the foodbank to develop its relationships with its referral agencies and ensure the foodbank's internal systems are appropriate and effective to manage those relationships.

The foodbank had approximately 100 volunteers in 2023 (excluding trustees). The foodbank is immensely grateful to all its volunteers, without which it could not operate. There are currently 8 separate teams and at 2 annual events these teams are invited to come together as one large family, to learn a little more about other volunteer roles, as well as the staff activities. In 2023, 13 volunteers reached an amazing 5 years or more of volunteering with the foodbank which was recognised at the September volunteer event.

Finances

Cirencester Foodbank's accounting process is based on cash/money transactions as and when they are recorded through the bank account.

In 2023, Cirencester Foodbank received generous support from individuals, other charities and many businesses with food donations and significant financial donations. On 31 December 2023, the food bank had funds of £355,000 (end 2022, £315,000), of which £65,000 was restricted funds for specific projects. Income exceeded expenditure by £39,000, with £17,000 of this excess being restricted funds carried forward to 2024.

Cirencester Foodbank's income for 2023 was £260,000 (2022 £220,000) of which £87,000 (2022 £76,000) is restricted. Unrestricted income was £173,000, higher than 2022 by £30,000. During the year 15 donors (individuals, trusts, clubs and businesses) made donations of more than £1,000, totaling £41,000 with a further £87,000 from three sources providing the restricted funds. £63,000 of the restricted funds relate to grants made by Trussell Trust to the foodbank as part of its Pathfinder Programme. Other regular donations (83 individuals) totaled £30,000.

The food bank uses Just Giving as a fund-raising platform with £15,000 being raised in 2023.

Expenditure for the year totaled £ 221,000 (2022, £146,000). The increase of £75,000 includes projects using restricted funds of £70,000. Normal operational expenses total £151,000, of which £88,000 was for office and administration, £45,000 for warehousing, packing and distribution, and £12,000 for client support services.

Cirencester Foodbank's financial reserves policy is to hold accessible funds to meet the expenses of the food bank for a period of at least twelve months if financial donations cease. The food bank's unrestricted funds at the beginning of 2024 totaled £289,000, which is sufficient to cover forecasted outlays in 2024, and into 2025.

Achievements

Progress on the foodbank's objectives was as follows:

Continued effective provision of food parcels to those in crisis

In 2023, the foodbank provided food parcels with a value of £109,582¹ to the community through its foodbank hubs in Cirencester and Tetbury and through its delivery service. Due to the high rate of both physical and mental ill health and disability amongst its clients and the lack of rural transport options, the foodbank believes a delivery service is essential to reach those clients who are unable to get to Cirencester or Tetbury.

Working closely with our referral agencies to ensure a focus on preventing food poverty

Changes to the data collection system used by the foodbank in 2023 are enabling greater understanding of the circumstances which have led clients to use a foodbank. These changes were introduced to the foodbank's key referral partners in 2023, and the large majority of the foodbank's referral partners entered into new data sharing agreements with the foodbank.

The foodbank published a newsletter for its referral partners in 2023 to raise awareness of food poverty issues in the area.

The foodbank works particularly closely with Citizens Advice with regular meetings to share local data and food poverty and discuss any additional support which may be needed in the community. For example, digital exclusion was highlighted as an issue in the area. As a result the foodbank acquired refurbished laptops through GRCC DAISI (Gloucestershire Rural Community Council's Digital Accessibility, Inclusion, Support and Innovation project) for use by clients at the foodbank's hubs, with the support of the foodbank's staff and volunteers. Fuel poverty has also been seen as an issue by support services in the area; the foodbank is able to distribute fuel vouchers to assist with energy costs and also distributed winter warmer goodie bags to clients containing items such as gloves, socks and a flask.

The family engagement project which started in October 2023 and the dedicated member of staff for this programme has deepened the foodbank's relationship with local schools, enabling earlier intervention for families suffering hardship with the aim of preventing the need for use of the foodbank.

Maximising the financial resources of our clients and assisting to deal with the issues leading to food poverty

The foodbank referred 69 people to its funded Citizens Advice team in 2023. Of these 22 were passed on to the foodbank's Citizens Advice debt advisor for regulated debt advice and support, whilst a further 10 were given support around debt from the general advisors.

All clients who received support from the debt advisor were deemed to no longer be in need of support from the foodbank at the end of the process as their income had been maximized and debt managed to a level where they could afford their core essentials and food. 52 clients supported by the general advice support team were felt to no

¹ Based on £2.37/kg

longer be reliant on the foodbank. This means that 75% of referred clients were deemed to be free from food poverty as a result of the referral to Citizens Advice.

A total of £426,557 of debt was managed between the general advisors and debt advisor, with a further £49,942 of financial gains achieved.

98 households were supported by the foodbank signposting and family engagement work. These households often had complex needs, with multiple issues that led them into food poverty. As a result, 129 referrals were made to partners, including Citizens Advice, the Fuel Bank Foundation, Step Change, Furniture bank, Community Wellbeing Services and Warm and Well. 240 signposts (provision of information about other groups and services) were also made for this group. £5,908.00 of funding was provided to households through energy vouchers provided via the Fuel Bank Foundation.

Communicating the reasons for food poverty and deepening decision-maker relationships to help shape local services

The foodbank's 2022/23 food poverty report was published in June 2023. This report summarised for local decision makers key statistics around food poverty in the Cotswolds and barriers to residents to access support and services. The foodbank has continued to work throughout the year with its key partners, such as Cotswold District Council, Gloucestershire County Council (particularly in relation to the Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF)), Fairford Town Council, Tetbury Town Council and Feeding Gloucestershire to share its knowledge of local food poverty.

The foodbank continued to communicate the challenges for families around accessing support from the HAF. Issues around transport to activities, booking events through the digital portal and the lack of food provision and support for families around budgeting and cooking (which were key deliverables in the Government's aims for the HAF) were shared with Cotswold District Council and Gloucestershire County Council, with feedback from foodbank clients also shared. This has generated conversations in both county and district councils about how provision should be delivered in the remaining HAF periods and after HAF funding runs out in March 2025.

Inviting those with lived experience of poverty to help shape our services and ensuring support services are available to all

As a result of the work of the foodbank's participation lead Sue Price-Rabantheng to understand directly from clients their situations and the reasons why they need to use a foodbank, the foodbank now has a greater understanding of the complex needs of its clients and, in particular, has highlighted the barriers which the lack of rural transport links creates for clients accessing services and support. The foodbank has raised this issue with local decision makers and continues to study the effects of this in the community.

A panel of foodbank clients supported the foodbank in developing a three month engagement project directed towards other foodbank clients, where their initial journey to the foodbank was mapped. This provided a greater understanding of the challenges around getting referred to the foodbank and information on where ongoing support to address their issues was not available. This enabled the foodbank to develop its own signposting, and to provide feedback to partners about gaps in support provision.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE TRUSTEES:

ANNE CURRIE

Anne Currie (Chair)

23 October 202

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Lloyds Bank	- 3,668	65,377	-
	United Trust Bank	86,298		
	Cambridge Bank	40,000		
	Charity Bank	81,670	-	-
	Hampshire Trust Bank	85,000	-	-
	Total cash funds		289,300	65,377
(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))		OK	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
	<i>Paul Cooper</i>	PAUL COOPER	07/03/2024	
	<i>AP Currie</i>	AP CURRIE	07/03/2024	



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Cirencester Foodbank

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 December 2023

**Charity no
(if any)**

1159810

Set out on pages

1

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31.12.2023

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with 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 (~~other than that disclosed below~~ *) 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 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.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Date:

18/02/2024

Name:

Philip Stansfield

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

FCA in England and Wales (Retired)

Address:

The Downings

Church Lane, South Cerney

Glos GL7 5TT