



GENERAL MEETING - 2024-2025

Chair's Report

Gateshead Foodbank Annual Update: Serving the Local Community in 2024/25

Gateshead Foodbank would like to extend its sincere gratitude to all volunteers, staff, donors, corporate partners, and community organisations whose support continues to be crucial in meeting local needs. In 2024/25, we assisted 7,891 individuals—down 563 from the previous year—reflecting the ongoing impact of our combined efforts to combat food insecurity, make foodbank the last port of call and provide comprehensive support.

Our mission goes beyond emergency food aid. We remain committed to helping people improve their long-term financial stability. Key highlights from our financial inclusion work in 24/25 include:

- £304,304 in total financial gains, averaging £4,988 per person.
- £459,810 in debt managed or written off, with an average reduction of £3,738 per person.

This year we were granted funding from Trussell and have been able to employ a Local Organiser. Diane's role has two main branches: first, supporting and organising groups of local residents to address community issues, empowering them to take action on issues that affect them daily and encouraging these groups to voice their concerns in conversations with the local authority. Diane also promotes Trussell's campaigns on national issues such as the 'Laying it on the Table' further strengthening our advocacy work and sharing these insights at a national level to ensure the community's concerns are heard on a larger scale.

We continue to be very grateful for the support of our dedicated team of volunteers, our generous donors both giving food and money and to our many partners who have supported us throughout the year. Our bi-monthly newsletter has full details of the amazing ways we are supported by the community please contact info@gateshead.foodbank.org.uk or follow us on social media to for more information and to keep updated.

Gateshead Foodbank General Report - Distribution April 2024- March 2025

Key Pointers:

- **Individuals Supported:** 7,891 people received emergency food support, a decrease from 8,454 in the previous year.
- **Volunteer Engagement:** The Foodbank operates with 82 volunteers across three distribution centres and a total of 122 volunteers contributing to various roles.
- **Referral Partnerships:** 3,354 referrals were made by 59 agencies, with 60% of clients accessing the service only once during the year.
- **Financial Inclusion Impact:** 257 individuals received financial advice, resulting in £764,114 in combined income gains and debt management outcomes.
- **Christmas Support:** 354 Christmas hampers and £3,830 in supermarket vouchers were distributed, enabling families to purchase essentials during the festive period.

Our three Distribution Centres over the last year have supported **7,891** people with emergency food and offered support to ultimately move them on from accessing the food bank. Our Distribution Centres consist of **82** volunteers and **122** volunteers in total throughout the food bank. Gateshead Foodbank has a commissioned Financial Inclusion Worker. As well as three full time staff, we all come together to ensure people accessing our food banks, who are struggling to afford the basic essentials, receive the right food, a listening ear and ways to improve their financial situation. Creating an environment that is safe and welcoming, in line with Gateshead Foodbank ethos to treat people with respect and dignity in a non-judgemental way. None of this would be possible without a collective effort to feed people who are in an emergency situation, who are offered support and help to ultimately move on from needing to access the food bank, back into using the community food provisions of their own choice.

Thank you.

We would like to thank all involved in our continued partnership with Blaydon and Birtley Methodist Churches and the reception staff at Gateshead Citizens Advice (who greet and manage those attending Gateshead Distribution).

Throughout our Distribution Centres we have seen a further decrease in those accessing emergency food parcels, we fed a total of 7,891 people compared to 8,454 the previous year, showing a decrease of **563**. The decrease in the number of individuals accessing emergency food is attributed to effective partnerships, comprehensive support services, and proactive financial inclusion advice from staff, volunteers and referral partners. The food bank's approach, focusing on dignity, choice, and holistic support, has contributed to positive outcomes for people. Continued collaboration with referral partners and community engagement remains essential to sustaining and building upon these achievements.

Our food parcels are made up from kind food and monetary donations, parcels offer people short term emergency food for up to 7 days. We give people the choice of what they would like to take from a standard tray, in addition to this a range of extras such as fresh fruit and

vegetables, bread and frozen items. We accommodate as best we can individuals who have dietary and cultural requests from kind donations. We are able to offer toiletries, nappies, sanitary products and pet food, which are donation dependent. We want to thank 'everyone' within our community from individuals to businesses, who enable us to offer a range and choice of items in a dignified manner, to those people who visit Gateshead Foodbank.

Total People Fed - by Distribution Centre

Food Bank Centre	Vouchers fulfilled	Adults	Children	Total
Birtley	248	337	143	480
Blaydon	341	487	270	757
Gateshead	3509	4662	1992	6654
				7891

Referral Partners:

3,354 referrals were made from 59 referral partners, with 48 of those referral partners being statutory services. All referral agents now use an online E referral process and no longer issue red paper vouchers. This makes managing data and frequency of users much easier. Of the 7,891 people fed, 60% of those referred by our partners only visited the food bank once in this period. This is a testament to the great partnership working and communication we have, to ensure people are offered individual packages of support as well as food. We have continued to deliver our monthly "New Referrers" Meeting, for agencies who would like to become a referral partner or to build up more knowledge about the Foodbank, increasing our network and community working together. We held two events in this period for referral agents and we facilitated a strategic referral pathways workshop with referral agencies, focusing on Gateshead Foodbank strategy and vision, to ensure everyone has a greater understanding of the role we all play in ending the need for food banks.

Financial Inclusion Partner:

All distribution centres have access and resources from the Financial Inclusion Team. They have been able to offer much needed advice and support, with evidence clearly showing substantial financial gains for individuals who have been referred (see table below). A total of 257 people engage in advice and support, with 854 advice issues dealt with. People received an individual's support package, having access to SIM cards from Vodafone, top up energy fuel voucher worth £54.

The top three advice services requested were debt, benefits and financial services/capabilities. A staggering £764,114.00 combined gains and debt managed. We want to thank the Financial Inclusion Team for their ongoing positive outcomes achieved for people.

Income Maximisation Advice - Income Gain Outcomes				
Cumulative	April to June 2024	April to September 2024	April to December 2024	April 2024 to March 2025
Income gains for people using the service (total cumulative):	£74,041	£134,759	£199,149	£304,304
Of which Achieved:	£9,815	£10,500	£16,313	£43,019
Of which Expected:	£64,226	£124,259	£182,836	£261,286
Number of people who achieved or are expected to achieve an income gain (cumulative)	21	40	56	61

Debt Managed				
Cumulative	April to June 2024	April to September 2024	April to December 2024	April 2024 to March 2025
1a. Debts written off: total value of debt written off for people using the service (cumulative, $\mathfrak L)$	£40,902	£53,890	£93,045	£134,400
1b. Debts written off: number of people using the service whose debt was written off (cumulative)	3	7	13	15
2a. Other financial outcomes: total value of 'other' financial outcomes resulting from debt advice for people using the service (cumulative, £)	£85,585	£166,634	£183,865	£281,226
2b. Other financial outcomes: number of people using the service who received an 'other' financial outcome resulting from debt advice (cumulative)	33	50	66	85
3a. Repayments rescheduled: total value of repayments rescheduled for people using the service (cumulative, $\mathfrak L$)	£0	£1,440	£42,744	£44,184
3b. Repayments rescheduled: number of people using the service whose repayments were rescheduled (cumulative)	0	2	21	23
Total value of debts managed (£)	£126,487	£221,964	£319,654	£459,810
Total number of people whose debt was managed	36	59	100	123

Christmas Hampers:

Over December 2024, we gave out 354 Christmas hampers across all three distribution centres and a total of £3,830 supermarket vouchers. Individuals and families were able to purchase whatever they needed with the vouchers, giving them a choice, as well as their Christmas hamper and standard emergency food. This was all possible through kind food and monetary donations and a combined effort from our corporate partners, who volunteered to make up the parcels and our regular volunteers, enabling us to come together and coordinate this huge operation over the busy period. Many smiles were observed and happy tears were shared from those individuals receiving their Christmas hampers and vouchers.

I want to thank everyone for a collective effort in addressing food insecurity and highlight the positive impact Gateshead Foodbank has in reducing the need for emergency food.

Lesleyann Watson – Project Manager

GATESHEAD FOODBANK WAREHOUSE REPORT 2024-25

Stock In	116,403 kgs
Stock Out	121,234 kgs
Total Handled	237,637 kgs
Closing Stock	6,635 kgs

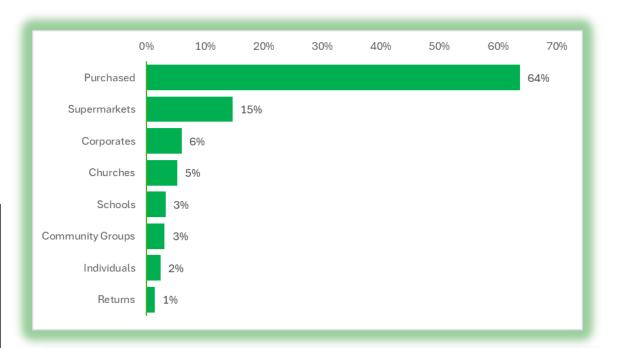
The warehouse team managed over 200 tonnes of food and toiletries in the year ending 31 March 2025.

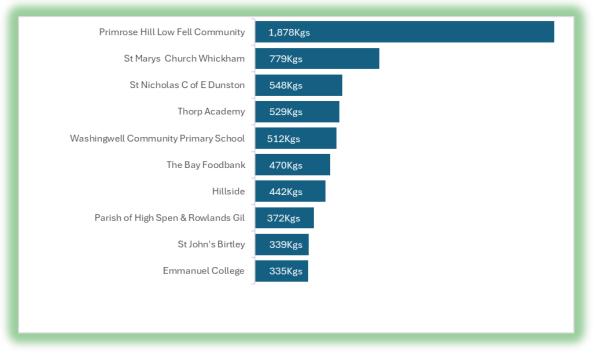
Bulk purchasing, mainly from Morrisons Wholesale and supplemented by Brakes Food Services, was crucial in meeting demand for emergency food aid.

Although Bulk Purchases and Supermarkets account for nearly 80% of all food donations we actively encourage and promote donations from the public and corporations alike. Our top ten donors, led once again by the Primrose Hill Low Fell Community, are listed here.

Now of course none of this is possible without our small but dedicated volunteer teams.

They know who they are. Thank You!!





Gateshead Foodbank CIO

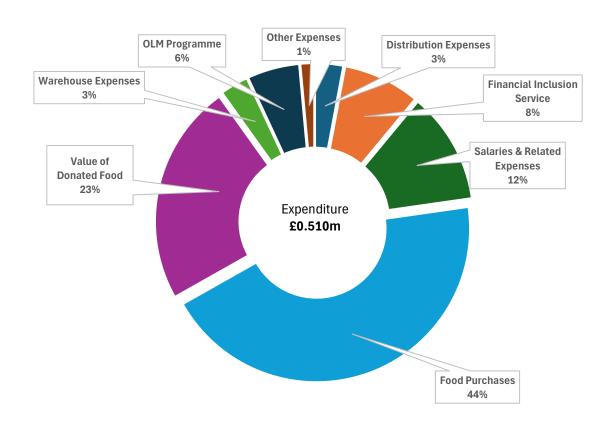
Balance Sheet

As of March 31, 2025

	TOTAL
Fixed Asset	TOTAL
Tangible assets	£10,520.62
Total Fixed Asset	£10,520.62
Cash at bank and in hand	£456,314.26
Current Assets	- 100 ,
Prepayments	499.66
Stock	19,640.49
Uncategorised Asset	0.00
Total Current Assets	£20,140.15
NET CURRENT ASSETS	£476,454.41
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	
Current Liabilities	
Accruals	0.00
Deferred Income	0.00
Other Creditors	0.00
PAYE/NI	5,186.27
Total Current Liabilities	£5,186.27
Total Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	£5,186.27
NET CURRENT ASSETS (LIABILITIES)	£471,268.14
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	£481,788.76
TOTAL NET ASSETS (LIABILITIES)	£481,788.76
Charity funds	
Opening Balance Equity	0.00
Retained Earnings	521,022.29
Surplus/(Deficit)	-39,233.53
Total Charity funds	£481,788.76

WHERE OUR MONEY GOES:

Distribution Expenses Financial Inclusion Service	£15,002.76 £41,116.00
Salaries & Related Expenses	£59,743.10
Food Purchases	£224,644.47
Value of Donated Food	£118,664.74
Warehouse Expenses	£15,046.49
OLM Programme	£27,958.15
Other Expenses	£7,351.11



Notes:

Financial Inclusion Service: Bought in Service from Gateshead Citizens Advice Bureau.

509,526.82

OLM Programme: This is the cost of running the "Organising Local Mobilisation" Proramme and is essentially salary & related expenses.

Food Purchases: The cost of buying in 74,135kg of Food and Other Items

Gateshead Foodbank CIO

Financial Activities

April 2024 - March 2025

	TOTAL
Income	
Donations	242,931.32
Grants	213,472.31
Top-Up	4,566.08
Total Income	£460,969.71
Cost of Sales	£343,309.21
TOTAL	£117,660.50
Expenditures	
Accountancy	722.60
Bank charges	60.00
Blaydon Distribution	450.00
CAB Distribution	14,522.76
Computer Software	126.13
DBS	150.00
Depreciation	3,507.23
Financial Inclusion Service	41,116.00
ICO Data Protection Service	35.00
Insurances	1,505.09
Motor Expenses	4,916.96
Office/General Administrative Expenditures	1,275.06
OLM Expenditure	27,958.15
Salaries & Related Expenses	59,743.10
Warehouse	10,129.53
Total Expenditures	£166,217.61
NET OPERATING INCOME	£ -48,557.11
Other Income	
Bank Interest	9,323.58
Total Other Income	£9,323.58
NET OTHER INCOME	£9,323.58
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	£ -39,233.53

WHERE OUR MONEY COMES FROM:

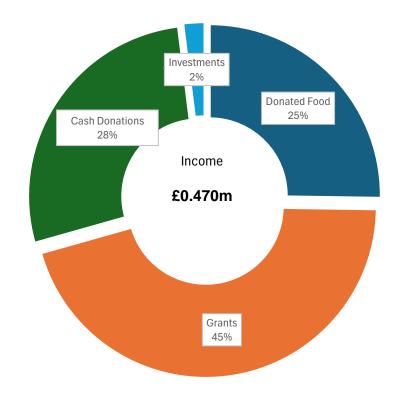
 Donated Food
 £118,664.74

 Grants
 £213,472.31

 Cash Donations
 £128,832.66

 Investments
 £9,323.58

Total £470,293.29



Notes:

Donated Food: We received 40,089kg of food and this has been valued at £2.96 per kg.

We Received the following grants:

Gateshead Council £113,000 Post Code Lottery £30,000 Trussel £70,472

Investments: This is interest received on our deposit accounts

Local Organiser Progress Summary

Overview of Role

As a Local Organiser, my core role is to engage with the community, listen to people's lived experiences, and identify widely and deeply felt issues that can be tackled through local campaigns. My ultimate aim is to develop community-led teams that work together to bring about systemic change.

Training and Support

- Completed in-depth Zoom training with Trussell Trust, including a residential in June.
- Receive regular supervision from an OLM Manager through Teams and face-to-face meetings.
- Attend regional North East cluster meetings with other Local Organisers for mutual support.
- Meet monthly with two buddies from my cohort for peer learning and encouragement.

Community Engagement

- Visited local Distribution Centres (Birtley, Blaydon, Central) and volunteered, connecting with volunteers.
- Attended pop-up food pantries, Family Hub open days, drop-ins, and community groups.
- Participated in Gateshead's first Food Summit and various networking events.
- Built relationships with local organisations such as Oasis Co-Production, Your Voice Counts Equal People, and Gateshead Youth Council.

Listening Campaigns

- Ran "Glad, Sad, Mad" listening exercises in multiple community spaces to gather issues and stories.
- Hosted workshops asking residents to reflect on Trussell's 8 Building Blocks for a future without food banks.
- Gathered stories on hardship and hope through the "Laying It All on the Table" activity using tablecloths.







Local Campaign Development

Deckham/Shipcote:

- Supported local residents affected by fly-tipping and rats.
- Organised a community litter pick (20 bags collected).
- Helped launch the Deckham Residents Association—first meeting had strong attendance including local councillors and officers.







Lobley Hill:

- Formed the Lobley Hill Community Group with 3 residents.
- Identified issues: fly-tipping, dog fouling, dangerous parking near Emmanuel College.
- Emailed local councillors and invited them to the next meeting.

Highfield:

- Met residents concerned about park safety and cleanliness.
- Council committed to monthly meetings, summer cleanup, and skip day in October.

Parents of Children with SEN:

- Built a WhatsApp support group with parents navigating complex challenges.
- Future campaign planning ongoing—allowing space for trust and clarity to develop.

Policy & Political Engagement

- Built strong relationships with Gateshead Council.
- Facilitated visits to the food bank by the Mayor and several Cabinet Members.
- Advocated for Free School Meals auto-enrolment—confirmed Gateshead has practiced this for 10 years and has committed to promoting it more publicly.
- Co-developed Gateshead Council's Co-Production Framework for Adult Social Care.
- Collaborated with Gateshead Citizens Advice and Age UK to promote Pension Credit uptake following changes to Winter Fuel Payment eligibility.

National Campaign Involvement

- Active participant in Trussell's national campaign on Universal Credit reform.
- Held multiple "Laying It All on the Table" events at community fairs, Tesco collections, and distribution sessions.
- Shared tablecloth stories via social media and contributed to Trussell's national campaign newspaper.
- Registered residents to vote and helped them apply for photo ID.
- Invited all local election candidates to the food bank; six accepted, including now-MP Mark Ferguson who mentioned the food bank in his maiden speech.
- Met with MPs prior to the budget and spring announcements, advocating for:
 - A minimum floor for Universal Credit
 - Reduction in DWP deductions from 25% to 15% (partially achieved)
 - Extension of the Household Support Fund to March 2026

Reflection

I've focused on listening well, testing ideas (such as drop-ins), and shifting strategies when things didn't work—always with the goal of empowering communities to campaign for real change. While building trust and teams takes time, significant progress has been made, and several campaign groups are now active. Our groundwork is strong, and momentum is growing.