

East Lothian Foodbank

SC043523

Annual Report April 2023 - March 2024

5,722

food & essentials
packages distributed
in 2023/4

13,877

people helped
including

5,079

children

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Ending hunger together



Welcome to our annual report for April 2023 to March 2024.

Having only joined the Foodbank as a volunteer last October, and as Chair this May, I think I may be excused a slight feeling of impostor syndrome as I introduce the extraordinary work done by the East Lothian Foodbank team in the last financial year, but I will do my best to reflect their excellence with some thoughtful words !

“... daring to imagine a world where... everyone in our community has the one thing they need the most - hope for a better future”

One of the first things I did in preparing to take on the role of Chair was to review my predecessors' updates in prior reports. Their message was consistent; “bittersweet” is the word that most sticks in the mind, describing as it does the pain of seeing increased numbers of people in our community needing help, while recognising the titanic efforts realised by our invaluable staff and volunteers to ensure that we continue to deliver outstanding quality of service to those who need it most. **We owe them our heartfelt thanks and appreciation for everything they do.**

I would love to be able to say that the tide was turning; that after the combined shocks of austerity, COVID, the Ukraine war and the recent peculiarities of the British politicoeconomic system that things were easier last year. In reality, we delivered support to more people than ever before (allowing for the fact that our annual reporting for 2022/23 spanned 17 months) – nearly 5,800 parcels were delivered, helping almost 14,000 people. It seemed that almost every month we “celebrated” a record number of deliveries. None of this would have been possible without the generosity of our donors, both individual and corporate, who between them provided over £400,000 in food and cash; and the support of the Trussell Trust and other funding partners who together provided us with another £260,000 of restricted funding, much of which will be essential to our financial sustainability in 2024/25.

We are, however daring to imagine a world where this situation can be changed; our updated strategic plan for 2024-27 sees us focusing additional effort on expanding our advice and support services, building more, and stronger, cross-community partnerships, and influencing policymakers and decision makers in all three levels of government; and on creating an environment where everyone in our community has the one thing they need the most – hope for a better future.

This won't be an overnight change; all of my predecessors since 2015 have talked about the need to find better premises, and this will be a critical part of delivering the future we want to create. We are also closely watching the increase in food and other costs, and considering how this may impact our plans; and we need to recognise that Elaine and her team are already overstretched, so we will have to look closely at how much change we can drive at what pace, and support them appropriately to ensure the demands on their time are manageable.

We owe a debt of gratitude to everyone who supports the Foodbank - our individual donors; the array of companies and organisations who donate, collect or provide grants & other funding; our partners; and to you, our members.

Thank you all for your ongoing support for the Foodbank – **we could not do it without you.**

Thank you

5,722 requests for support

816 first time users

5,079 children supported

8,798 adults supported



We provided **124,893** meals in 2023/4. That's an average of over **2,400** every week.

In total we gave out **126,251** kg of food and essentials - almost half a tonne every day !



We also continued to provide targeted help throughout school holidays and the winter months

250

summer essentials packs provided

252

winter blankets provided

271

referrals to Fuelbank Foundation

5

crisis fuel payments made

132

people used our money advice service

76

had direct financial gains

2

Clients rehoused successfully



Our money advice service in partnership with Musselburgh CAB helped people to claim a total of **£139,024**



And we maintained focus on the “Guarantee our Essentials” campaign in support of our community’s needs

92%

of service users were in receipt of benefits or pension

58%

of service users needed help with the rising cost of essentials

9%

of households included someone of state pension age

April

Our very first Foundation Apprenticeship Placement successfully completed.

May/June

As a result of our campaign work across the county, **East Lothian Council** voted to support the Trussell and Joseph Rowntree Foundation "Guarantee our Essentials" campaign, calling on UK Government to embed a guarantee within Universal Credit that recipients will always be able to afford the essentials.

Three volunteers shortlisted as finalists for Inspiring Volunteer Awards.

Afternoon outing to **Glenkinchie Distillery** for our volunteer team.

In recognition of the hard work and commitment to support the East Lothian community, the distillery treated our team to a complimentary tour and a dram.

July

Summer essentials packs provided to families with children to help tackle holiday hunger.

This initiative was possible through the generous funding of **St Andrews Blackadder Church** in North Berwick.

August

Clearing and upgrading works begins on our allotment to help us get ready for growing fresh produce to add to our parcels. This was made possible thanks to the time and support generously given by the **Natural Connections** outreach team, based in Tranent.

With support from our committed volunteers, we raise awareness and collect over 200 signatures in support of the Guarantee our Essentials campaign.

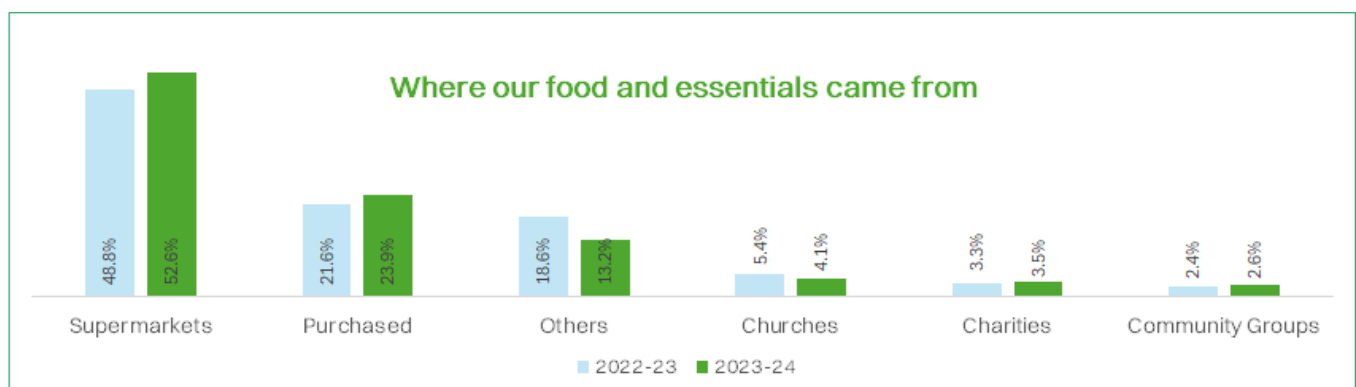
September

£1,411 raised through auction of donated book 'One City', written and signed by the authors **Alexander McCall Smith, Ian Rankin and Irvine Welsh**.

October

The first year anniversary of our money advice service delivered in partnership with **Musselburgh Citizens Advice Bureau**. Our first year achieved financial gains of £149k and supported 134 people.

In partnership with the **Working for Change Collective**, Conversation Cafés launch. These cafés bring people together to ensure voices are heard, actions taken and those in power are held accountable.



November

We open our foodbank doors to a fully reorganised warehouse. By maximising space and streamlining processes we are set up to continue to meet sustained demand.

Denise Slater joins our team as Admin Support Assistant .

December

168 emergency parcels distributed in the week before Christmas, supporting 455 people in a single week.

252 blankets given out.

Launch of our Emergency Fuel fund supported by **Musselburgh Area Partnership** funding, to support local families in extreme fuel poverty.

Seonaid Stewart, Financial Inclusion Officer leaves the Foodbank after successfully setting up our money advice service.

January

A record **1,389** people are fed in January 2024 (including **474** children)

We joined representatives from the **Trussell** network and lived experience partners at Westminster for a parliamentary event sharing our perspective on rising food need in our community.

Commenced weekly donations to the Musselburgh community pantry based at Musselburgh East Community centre to help tackle rising demand for access to emergency food outwith Foodbank operating hours.

February

East Linton Community Wellbeing & Advice Café opens. This weekly café is run in partnership with **Prestonkirk, The Ridge** and **East Lothian Debt Advisory Service** and gives local easy access to a variety of support and advice.

March

March ends the busiest year in the foodbank's history, with demand for our service up **12%**

Building on the success of our money advice service to date, expansion funding is awarded by **Trussell** to extend the project until May 2026 and recruit a further advice worker to join the team.

We are so proud & appreciative of the partnerships and support we have across the community - we literally could not survive without you.

Thank you from the
whole team !

Our audited financial statements for the 12 months to end March 2024, and 17 months to end March 2023, are available on our website. In order to provide a comparison of the foodbank's financial operations on a like for like basis, the analysis below details the charity's unaudited receipts and payments management accounts over the two twelve month periods to end March 2023 and to end March 2024.

Receipts

Total receipts during the year to end March 2024 amounted to £495,646, an increase of 32.9% from the previous year. Unrestricted receipts fell 10.4% to £228,367, whilst restricted receipts rose 126.3% to £267,279.

During the year, personal donations amounted to £94,506, a reduction of 17.6% from the previous year.

Unrestricted donations from organisations fell by 7.5% to £83,089.

£228,367

Unrestricted receipts

£267,279

Restricted receipts

£495,646

Total receipts

Donations from the public, groups and businesses in East Lothian have remained exceptionally generous throughout the year, and we would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who has donated to us this year. The decline in unrestricted receipts should be seen in the context of heightened awareness of the cost of living crisis during our financial year 22/23 when food price inflation accelerated viciously.

Restricted receipts were boosted significantly in the final month of the financial year by several sustainability grant awards from the Trussell Trust which totalled £138,400.

Payments

Total payments rose 57.9% to £358,587. Of this sum, unrestricted payments rose 52.8% to £241,723 and restricted payments rose 69.6% to £116,864.

The major unrestricted cost items included salaries and pensions which totalled £95,351, an increase of 101.6%, as a role which had been financed from restricted funding moved to being financed via unrestricted funding; the real living wage rose appreciably and additional funding was made available to fund a part-time consultant finance manager's role, and an admin support assistant. Unrestricted funding of food and toiletries amounted to £61,289, an increase of 16.9%.

Unrestricted warehouse costs rose from £3,434 to £15,927 (+363.8%) as additional storage was needed to store stock and transport costs of £8,220 were incurred (22/23: £nil).

Jingle bags - which cost £16,835 in the previous year - were not repeated over the 2023 Christmas period due to capacity constraints and warehouse space limitations.

Unrestricted professional fees rose sharply from £5,580 to £19,942 (+257.4%) for a number of reasons, the most significant being the first time payment for accounting and auditor services.

During the period the foodbank made £7,000 of grants to other organisations, up from £2,000 the previous year. Notable restricted payments included significant increases in payments for Financial Inclusion, Organising and Local Mobilisation and Volunteer Development programmes. Restricted funding of £36,570 was also expended on the purchase of stock and toiletries.

£241,723

Unrestricted payments

£116,864

Restricted payments

£358,587

Total payments

Extract of Management Accounts: Receipts

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The 23/24 audited statutory accounts for the 12 month period to the end of March 2024 are compiled on an accruals basis. The previous audited accounts, also compiled on an accruals basis, covered a 17 month period to the end of March 2023. This makes comparisons between the two sets of audited accounts impracticable. The analysis below details the charity's unaudited receipts and payments management accounts over the two twelve month periods to end March 2023 and to end March 2024.

| | | 12 months to 31/03/2024 | 12 months to 31/03/2023 |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| RECEIPTS | | | |
| Unrestricted | Personal | £ 54,593 | £ 65,698 |
| Donations - | Personal via Giving Sites | £ 39,913 | £ 48,965 |
| Donations - | Organisations | £ 83,089 | £ 89,840 |
| Gift Aid | | £ 8,325 | £ 6,384 |
| Bank Interest | | £ 3,194 | £ 1,198 |
| Bequest | | - | £ 5,000 |
| East Lothian Grant | | £ 15,000 | £ 15,000 |
| Trussel Trust Tesco Top-up | | £ 12,316 | £ 12,800 |
| General Grants | | £ 11,937 | £ 10,019 |
| Unrestricted Receipts | | £ 228,367 | £ 254,904 |
| Restricted | | | |
| TT - Strategic Facilities | | £ 15,000 | - |
| ELC Sanitary | | £ 8,000 | - |
| ELC - Energy Fund | | £ 5,000 | - |
| Community Fund | | - | £ 1,750 |
| TT - Financial Inclusion | | £ 41,857 | £ 42,066 |
| TT - Organising & Local Mobilisation | | £ 22,407 | £ 21,385 |
| TT - Volunteer Development | | £ 16,958 | £ 16,151 |
| TT- Winter Support | | - | £ 5,000 |
| ELC - Cost of Living | | - | £ 30,000 |
| TT - Sustainability Extra Food Costs | | £ 100,000 | - |
| TT - Sustainability Fundraising Manager | | £ 21,700 | - |
| TT - Sustainability Warehouse Assistant | | £ 16,700 | - |
| ELC - Admin Support | | £ 5,000 | £ 1,000 |
| ELFFN - Food Vouchers | | - | £ 750 |
| Summer Child Parcels / Winter kits | | £ 6,937 | - |
| VCEL - Comm Mental Health & Wellebing | | £ 7,720 | - |
| ASDA Large Grant via Trussell Trust | | - | - |
| Restricted Receipts | | £ 267,279 | £ 118,102 |
| TOTAL RECEIPTS | | £ 495,646 | £ 373,006 |

| | 12 months to 31/03/2024 | | 12 months to 31/03/2023 | |
|---|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| PAYMENTS | | | | |
| Salaries & Pension | £ | 56,260 | £ | 47,291 |
| Salaries - Overtime | £ | 4,985 | | - |
| Outsourced Salary Costs | £ | 34,106 | | - |
| Fresh Food | £ | 15,277 | £ | 10,847 |
| Essential Food | £ | 35,636 | £ | 20,641 |
| Toiletries | £ | 10,345 | £ | 20,898 |
| Mobile | £ | 1,034 | £ | 509 |
| Broadband / IT Support | £ | 1,417 | £ | 1,033 |
| Rent | £ | 7,166 | £ | 6,000 |
| Utilities | £ | 2,172 | £ | 1,195 |
| E L Council Waste Services | £ | 537 | £ | 472 |
| Equipment | £ | 2,735 | £ | 4,475 |
| Subscriptions / Certificates | £ | 873 | | - |
| Stationery/Printing | £ | 2,771 | £ | 2,661 |
| Marketing / Advertising | £ | 1,568 | £ | 230 |
| Cleaning | £ | 6,628 | £ | 3,600 |
| Warehouse - Storage | £ | 4,073 | £ | 3,434 |
| Warehouse - Other | £ | 3,634 | | - |
| Warehouse - Transport | £ | 8,220 | | - |
| Jingle Bags | | - | £ | 16,835 |
| Mileage / Transport | £ | 5,507 | | - |
| Other Volunteer / Staff expenses | £ | 5,469 | £ | 8,092 |
| Insurance | £ | 779 | £ | 582 |
| Professional Fees | £ | 19,942 | £ | 5,580 |
| Repairs / Maintenance | £ | 1,751 | £ | 152 |
| Bank Charge | £ | 1,309 | £ | 1,051 |
| ELFB - Grants to Others | £ | 7,000 | £ | 2,400 |
| Miscellaneous | £ | 529 | £ | 244 |
| Unrestricted Payments | £ | 241,723 | £ | 158,222 |
| Restricted | | | | |
| Area Partnership | | - | £ | 2,685 |
| ELC Sanitary | £ | 8,000 | | - |
| ELC - Energy Fund | £ | 450 | | - |
| Community Fund | £ | 906 | £ | 808 |
| TT - Financial Inclusion | £ | 35,827 | £ | 19,484 |
| TT - Organising & Local Mobilisation | £ | 21,087 | £ | 8,041 |
| TT - Volunteer Development | £ | 14,533 | £ | 5,858 |
| TT - Winter Support | - | | £ | 5,000 |
| ELC - Cost of Living | £ | 21,647 | £ | 8,353 |
| TT - Sustainability Extra Food Costs | | - | | - |
| TT - Sustainability Fundraising Manager | | - | | - |
| TT - Sustainability Warehouse Assistant | | - | | - |
| ELC - Admin Support | £ | 3,894 | £ | 1,700 |
| ELFFN - Food Vouchers | £ | 750 | | - |
| Summer Child parcels / Winter Kits | £ | 6,923 | | - |
| VCEL - Comm Mental Health & Wellbeing | | - | | - |
| ASDA Large Grant via Trussell Trust | £ | 2,847 | £ | 16,998 |
| Restricted Payments | £ | 116,864 | £ | 68,927 |
| TOTAL PAYMENTS | £ | 358,587 | £ | 227,149 |
| Total Surplus | | £137,059 | | £145,857 |

East Lothian Foodbank's reserves requirement is defined as the charity's last 6 months' cumulative unrestricted operating costs (excluding ad hoc grants provided to third party charities during the period).

Our reserves requirement at the end of March 2024 was £138,980. This has increased substantially from the end of March 2023 when the figure was £77,911.

During the year, we have seen restricted funding for some of our roles deplete, with these roles now needing to be self-funded from our unrestricted funds. As the charity has grown, the burden to keep management accounts up to date has grown materially. As a result, the board felt it was important to allocate resource to fund an additional, part-time role (rather than rely on a volunteer's goodwill) to undertake these necessary and onerous tasks. Additionally, given the extraordinary inflationary environment, the real living wage rose sharply during the period and this impacted our wage bill. These factors combined have meant that our total salary bill (funded from unrestricted funding) has increased markedly.

Furthermore, the charity depleted its restricted 'cost of living' and 'sanitary products' grant funding during the 23/24 year and this meant that by the end of the financial year monthly expenditure (from unrestricted funding) on essential food, fresh food and toiletries had also increased materially.

Our unrestricted general funds balance at financial year end was **£233,909**, equivalent to **168%** of our reserve target, down from 253% last year

At financial year end, the charity's bank balances totalled £485,573, a rise of 39% from the previous period. £221,664 of this is restricted funding, whilst the remainder (£263,909) is unrestricted. From this unrestricted sum, £30,000 has been set aside/designated for a potential property move leaving a sum of £233,909 as the charity's unrestricted and undesignated cash balance. This provided the charity with a reserves requirement cover ratio of 168% (down from 253% last year).

The level of restricted funding was materially boosted towards the end of the period as the charity applied successfully for sustainability funding from the Trussell Trust. This funding includes money to be used during the 2024/25 financial year to purchase essential food, fresh food and toiletries, as well as resource to increase the fundraising capacity of the foodbank.

Our Volunteers

We could not support our community without the extraordinary efforts of our team of volunteers, which continues to go from strength to strength...

114 volunteers (up 40% vs 2022-3)

7,100 warehouse hours

99,400 miles driven

126 tonnes of goods lifted and shifted around the warehouse and across the county !

Our Staff

Compassionate yet practical, and truly dedicated to serving those in our community who most need our help, Elaine and her team are a true inspiration to all of us.

Elaine Morrison - Foodbank Manager

Lucy Daniels - Community Participation and Campaign Lead

Lisa McCart - Volunteer and Warehouse Coordinator

Seonaid Stewart - Financial Inclusion Officer until Dec '23

Lavehanna Smith-Lundy - Referrals Coordinator from Feb '23

Jennifer Knowles - Temporary Administrative Assistant until Aug '23

Denise Slater - Admin Support Assistant from Nov '23

Sheila McEwan - Foodbank Support Adviser

Mark Singleton - Consultant Finance Manager (from Oct '23)

Our Trustees

The Board meets regularly, aligning on priorities and providing oversight and governance to support our team in fulfilling the aims of the Foodbank.

Trustees 2023/4

Rev Liz O'Ryan - Chair (until June '23)

Nathan Goode - Interim Chair (from June '23)

Rae Goode - Secretary

Mark Singleton - Treasurer (until Oct '23)

Hector Kilpatrick - Treasurer (from Nov '23)

Ann Allison

Lesley McVinish

Peter Meiklejohn

Dan Paris

Douglas Hamilton (Oct to Dec '23)

Joanna Burns (until Oct '23)

Current Trustees as of 4th October 2024

Simon Ray - Chair (joined May '24)

Jackie Burman - Secretary (joined Apr '24)

Hector Kilpatrick - Treasurer

Ann Allison

Lesley MacVinish (retiring Oct' 24)

Dan Paris

Nigel Schofield (joined July '24)

Our deepest thanks to all volunteers, staff, and past & present trustees.

Thank you

East Lothian Foodbank is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, governed by our Constitution. This guides us in the decisions we make, and also in how we establish key roles within the organisation.

Membership

Members are an important part of our Constitution. Members have the right to attend members' meetings (including any annual general meeting) and have important powers under our Constitution; in particular, the members appoint people to serve on the board and take decisions on changes to the Constitution itself.

All volunteers (defined as anyone who has completed the application process to be a volunteer) are automatically members unless they specifically withdraw from membership. At each AGM anyone attending who signs the attendance register before the start of the AGM will become a member from then until the day before the next AGM.

If you would like to become a member of the foodbank, as an individual or as a representative of your organisation, then please email our secretary: secretary@eastlothian.foodbank.org.uk.

If your application is accepted, we will confirm your membership after the subsequent board meeting. No membership fee is payable and members have no liability to pay any sums to help meet the debts (or other liabilities) of East Lothian Foodbank if it is wound up. If the charity is unable to meet its debts the members will not be held responsible.

Election, retirement and re-election of trustees

At each AGM, the members may elect any member to be a charity trustee.

The board may at any time appoint any member to be a charity trustee.

At each AGM, all of the charity trustees must retire from office but may then be re-elected by the members present.

East Lothian Foodbank is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), registered on 30 October 2012 (registered number SC043523). We are affiliated to UK poverty and hunger charity Trussell (formerly known as the Trussell Trust). The foodbank was set up in 2012 as a response to local need and we have been the last resort for thousands of local people since opening.

OUR PURPOSE

Our purpose is the prevention or relief of poverty in East Lothian.

WHAT WE DO

We provide emergency food supplies to individuals in need and / or charities or other organisations working to prevent or relieve poverty; we provide financial advice and signposting to other organisations able to help; and we campaign for the elimination of hunger, now and forever.

We support people and families
across East Lothian
who are referred to us in **severe hardship**

In 2013/14 we supported 2,628 with 1,339 parcels; this number rose dramatically during the COVID pandemic, and has continued to grow since then, peaking at nearly 14,000 people this year.

We are entirely reliant on donations and grants to serve our community - we could not do this without you: every person and organisation that donates food or money; the businesses, churches and other organisations that host collection boxes and welcome us to your events; our community partners; our staff and volunteers; and our friends at Trussell.

Thank you all