

2 Taff-Ely Foodbank Annual Report



Photos: Trussell

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This Annual Report presents a review of the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026, reporting on achievements, performance, and impact, including financial performance and the financial position to demonstrate the Trustees' stewardship and management of charitable funds.

As a preliminary matter, the Trustees and staff of Taff-Ely Foodbank wish to express their deep appreciation for the contribution made by volunteers and donors, without whom no achievements would have been possible.

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Letter from the Chair of Trustees

What a year. When we started this period, there was real doubt about whether we could keep our doors open. A 12-month grant from Trussell for staffing costs, which included funding for our new fundraiser role, bought us the breathing space we needed to begin longer-term planning. Since then, we've moved from firefighting to planning, and that change is already making a difference.

We needed someone with hands-on warehouse experience to take day-to-day responsibility so our CEO, Andrew Butcher, could focus on strategy — and after a careful transition, we were delighted to appoint Matthew Evans as our permanent Operations Coordinator. Matt now manages warehouse distribution, centre deliveries, food drives and volunteer rotas, and his leadership has allowed us to put stronger everyday systems in place. We've rolled out the use of Assemble to simplify shift planning and communication, and given our van the Taff Ely Foodbank logo to boost visibility. These practical changes have noticeably improved efficiency and the smooth running of the foodbank.

We're also progressing towards Cynnig Cymraeg/Welsh language accreditation to better serve our community, and a monthly newsletter keeps volunteers, partners and supporters up to date — a small touch that helps everyone feel connected.

Our support services and client work are at the heart of what we do, and we're fortunate to have Charmaine Walsh continuing as our Support Worker — she provides practical help with real compassion. That was clear after the recent house fire: Charmaine's quick call prompted the community to rally, and cash, bedding, clothing and essentials arrived within hours. A triage system across all centres helps our Support Manager focus on the most urgent cases, and we've refreshed leaflets and front-of-centre resources to make every visit welcoming and dignified. This year, we also launched quarterly Advice & Information days at our centres, bringing 12–15 local agencies together so people can access several services in one visit. Together, these improvements have made our support more effective, compassionate and impactful.

Financial security is a challenge for all charities, and we are no exception. Appointing Laura Harrington-John as Fundraiser in April has been a significant step forward. Laura's focus and expertise helped us secure £191,179 in grant funding this year, including a National Lottery award of £134,745.10 to support paid roles, and a Screwfix Foundation grant to fund essential warehouse repairs. Our Aviva Crowdfunder raised £13,138 to maintain the Baby Bank, and a programme of community events — from a Baby Bank event to a Harvest fundraiser — has strengthened local support.

We introduced “Adopt a Shelf,” a straightforward sponsorship scheme where businesses fund a product line for a year; seven organisations have already taken part. Five runners in the Cardiff Half Marathon raised £2,000, and passive income from Easyfundraising is steadily increasing. To ensure good practice, we are registered with the Fundraising Regulator and have launched the South Wales Fundraisers Network to share expertise across the region. While fundraising remains demanding and competitive, these developments have significantly improved our financial position and given us greater confidence in planning for a sustainable future.

Our campaigning capacity has been boosted by keeping Matthew Stevens on, in a new role as Partnership Coordinator. His previous work on the Guarantee Our Essentials campaign helped secure RCT County Borough Council’s backing, and his efforts have contributed to a greater media profile for the foodbank. One memorable moment was BBC Radio Wales recording their Political Breakfast show from our warehouse on Budget day — a busy, nerve-wracking but valuable opportunity to highlight how the economy affects need and the role foodbanks play in our community. We believe collaboration is key to success. This year, we set up two important groups: a Lived Experience Forum, which gives people who use our services a real voice and has reshaped how we operate, and the RCT Poverty Network to coordinate agencies and charities across RCT so we can identify common issues, share resources, and deliver a more joined-up response to hardship.

Our Board of Trustees has seen two changes. We welcomed Bethan Cook in November — her commercial experience and local knowledge are already invaluable — and we will say a grateful farewell to Hannah Furnish at the end of March for her safeguarding expertise and steady counsel. Trustees and staff continue to work closely with Andrew to professionalise the organisation and move us towards long-term sustainability.

We’ve made real strides this year, but challenges remain: securing stable income, meeting high demand, and investing in logistics. I’m optimistic because of the team, our volunteers, our partners, and the generosity of this community. Thank you for standing with us — together we’ll keep providing vital support while working for a future where fewer people need emergency food.

Michelle Thomas,
Chair of the Trustees



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Reference and Administrative Details

The name of the charity (as it appears in the Register of Charities) is 'Taff-Ely Foodbank'. Its charity registration number (England and Wales) is 1195468.

The address of the charity's registered office is:

Unit 3, Ely Valley Business Park, Tylagarw, Pontyclun, CF72 9DZ

Those who were Trustees on the date that this report was approved, or who served as Trustee during the reporting period, include:

Elizabeth Price, Trustee,
appointed on 15 March 2021.

Hannah Furnish, Trustee,
appointed on 14 March 2024.

Michelle Thomas, Trustee and Chair,
appointed on 10 July 2023,
appointed Chair 11 June 2024.

Rachael Strange, Trustee,
appointed on 1 April 2025.

Stephen Tompkins, Trustee,
appointed on 4 September 2023.

Bethan Cook, Trustee,
appointed on 1 November 2025.

Those to whom the Trustees delegated day-to-day management of the charity in a senior management role during the reporting period include:

Andrew Butcher, Chief Executive Officer, appointed 4 June 2020.

The Trustees also took advice from:

Insurance Broker

Thomas Carroll,
Pendragon House,
Crescent Road,
Caerphilly CF83 1XX.

Auditor

Ben Evans,
3 Heol Elai,
Tonyrefail CF39 8QE.

Principal Bankers

Lloyds Bank,
39 Cowbridge Road,
Pontyclun CF72 9EB.

HR Support Services

HR Connect,
1 Abbey Wood Road,
Kings Hill,
West Malling,
Kent ME19 4YT.

Structure, Governance and Management

Taff-Ely Foodbank is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) that was incorporated on 10th August 2021. The charity is governed by its Constitution (as amended on 2nd March 2021 and 11th June 2024).

Membership of Taff-Ely Foodbank is open only to community organisations and institutions (and not to individuals). In the current period, members comprised Ebenezer Church, Talbot Green; Trealaw Christian Centre, Trealaw; St David's Church, Tonyrefail; Bethel Baptist Church, Pontyclun; 3D Church, Williamstown; Carmel Baptist Church, Llanharan; and The Rock Church, Gilfach Goch.

Taff-Ely Foodbank is governed by a Board of Trustees, which is responsible for the strategic direction, governance, and policy of Taff-Ely Foodbank. Day-to-day management of the charity's activities is delegated to the CEO, who leads the staff team.

Any person who is willing to act as a Trustee must be appointed for a term of three years by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the charity Trustees. In selecting individuals for appointment, the charity trustees must have regard to the skills, knowledge, and experience needed for the effective administration of the CIO. Opportunities to become a Trustee of Taff-Ely Foodbank are advertised on volunteer websites and through other media, including via a recruitment agency if required. During 2025-26, one new trustee was appointed.

Trustees can apply by submitting a CV and cover letter to **info@taffely.foodbank.org.uk**.

Taff-Ely Foodbank is part of the Trussell Foodbank network, which was founded in 2004. Since then, Trussell has helped communities work together to launch food banks nationwide in a wide range of towns and cities. While Taff-Ely Foodbank is not required by its governance documents to adopt Trussell's policies and procedures, we are encouraged to do so and, in practice, we have found it helpful, especially to ensure that Taff-Ely Foodbank's activities are conducted for the public benefit. Trussell also provides training and technical support, and collates data from Taff-Ely Foodbank and other food banks in the network, using this information to produce reports to further the aim of ending the need for food banks.

1.

**OBJECTIVES
AND
ACTIVITIES**

Taff-Ely Foodbank's charitable objects are specifically restricted to the following:

"The prevention and relief of poverty amongst people in Rhondda Cynon Taff and surrounding areas by providing food, clothing, essential items, information, practical assistance, assistance programmes and other appropriate support"

Taff-Ely Foodbank is an independent charity. It operates as part of the Trussell Foodbank network and follows the policies and advice of Trussell, thereby benefitting from their experience in supporting more than 1,400 food banks across the UK. Our shared aim is to end the need for food banks in furtherance of our charitable objects, to relieve food insecurity and financial hardship in our community. We do this by providing food parcels as part of a package of support aimed at helping people out of crisis.

Taff-Ely Foodbank's Services:

The food bank is run by rules that:

- Provide three days' worth of emergency provisions;
- Require that vouchers, which are distributed by our trusted referral partners, are exchanged in a timely manner after issue (in recognition of the fact that they are intended for emergencies and crises)

These rules form part of the framework for ensuring the charity's activities further our purposes for the public benefit. The Trustees are confident that, by their stewardship and management of charitable funds, Taff-Ely Foodbank continues to meet the requirements around public benefit as defined by the Charity Commission.



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**ACHIEVEMENTS
AND
PERFORMANCE**

Taff-Ely Foodbank's vision is for a hunger-free RCT, where everyone can afford the essentials.

We are seeking an end to the need for food banks, **one person at a time**, and in this period have implemented projects to move towards this aim. We have also seen consistently high need for the foodbank, so have spent much of the period dealing with this.

From 1 April 2025 to 4 March 2026, we processed 1,315 food vouchers, providing emergency food for 3,346 people, including 1,310 children. This represents a monthly average of 279 people supported, down 10% on the previous period.

During this period, we were supported by supermarket donations totaling 17,890kg. Locally, food donations from individuals, charities, and those organised from corporations to Taff-Ely Foodbank were slightly higher than the previous period, equating to 16,191kg in 2025/26, 15,574kg in 2024/25, and 14,498kg in 2023/24.

With public food donations remaining at a similar level and the need for food support consistently high, it has been a challenging period, but a series of initiatives are underway to increase food and monetary donations, including the hiring of a dedicated fundraiser, more food donation locations in the local area, and our use of the BankTheFood app.

Many of the projects implemented in the previous period became business as usual during 2025/26.

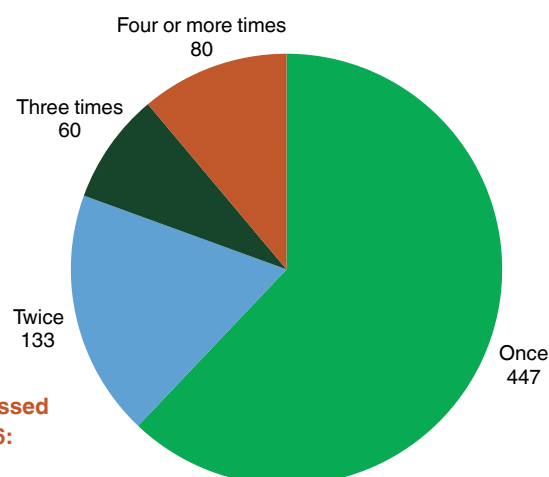
1. We ran seven food distribution centres, located in various venues around the area, on different days and at different times.

We operated in Talbot Green, Trealaw, Tonyrefail, Pontyclun, Williamstown, Llanharan, and Gilfach Goch, with our busiest centres being St Davids Church, Trealaw Christian Centre, and 3D Church. From April 2025 to March 2026, we distributed 33,682kg of food (compared to 37,830kg of food in 2024/25).

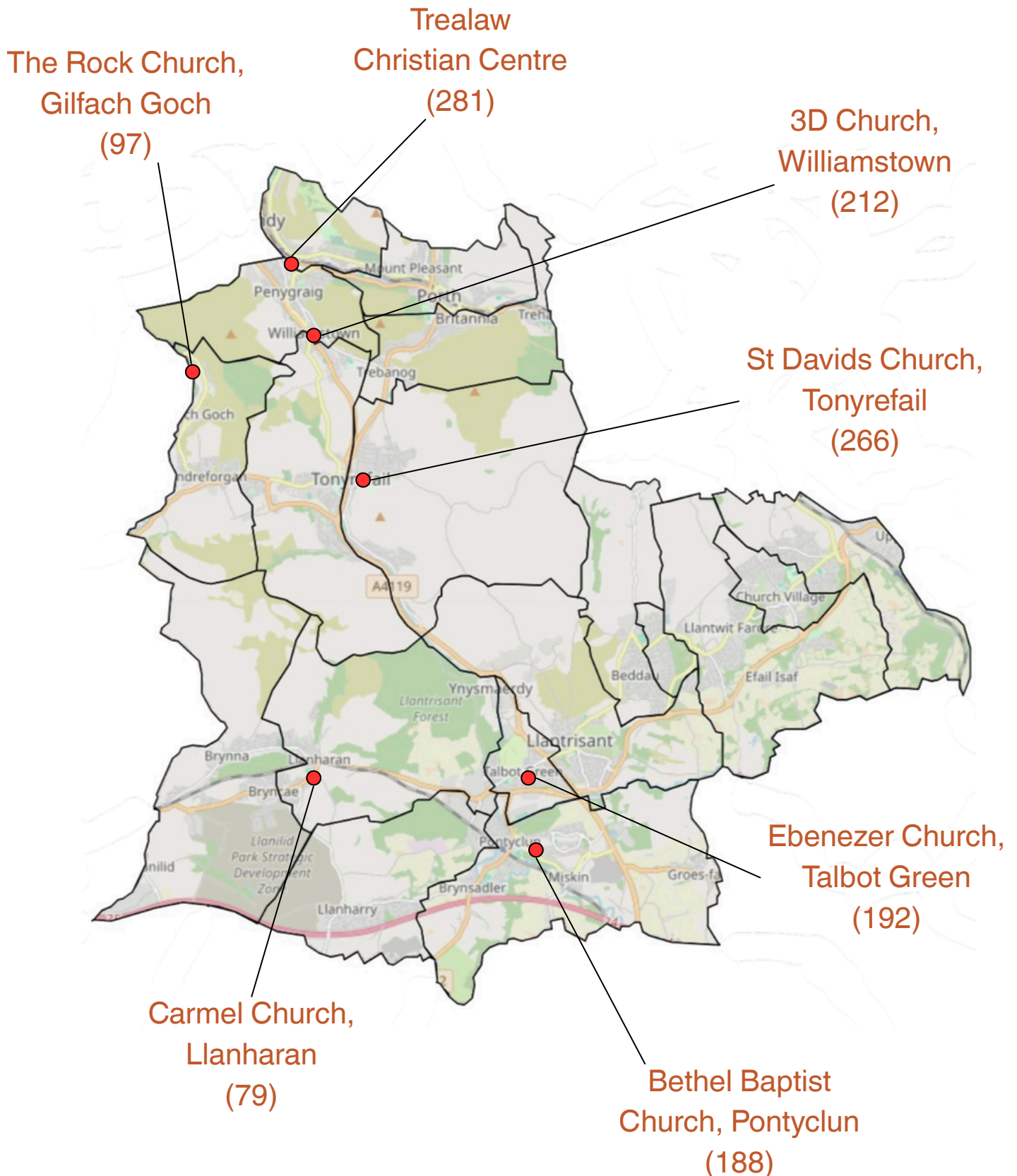
This consistently high level of need represents the impact of the ongoing cost-of-living crisis and the failure of Universal Credit to keep pace with the cost of essentials.

The vast majority of people who visited our food bank came between one and three times.

Number of times Taff-Ely Foodbank's services were accessed by unique visitors in 2025/26:



Taff-Ely Foodbank Distribution Centres:



Number of vouchers fulfilled per Distribution Centre (April '25 - Mar '26)

2. We supported the staff and volunteers

Staff and volunteers are of vital importance to the running of the food bank. We've welcomed some wonderful new staff members and thanked past members for their work in building the food bank. Safeguarding and mental health training has been offered to staff, and we have begun using the Assemble system to ensure our volunteers are confident in their work. Our monthly newsletter has been relaunched to ensure our volunteers are kept up to date with our work. We've also successfully recruited and trained new volunteers in our warehouse and distribution centres.

From April 2025 to March 2026, volunteer hours equated to more than 1000 hours, equivalent to 0.5 full-time staff members.

3. We strengthened our relationships with our referral partners.

We have relaunched our Referrers' Breakfast on a quarterly basis, bringing together our referral partners to ensure they are kept up to date with our work, our referral process, and who else in the community is supporting people in crisis.

4. We held three successful Advice and Information Days

We organised a series of Advice and Information Days across our Talbot Green, Trealaw, and Tonyrefail locations, bringing together our referral partners and organisations from across RCT that support people facing hardship. The days were a great success with positive feedback, and we will be organising more for 2026/27.



5. We expanded our Financial Inclusion service

As the presence of Citizens Advice RCT in our centres ended this year, we expanded the support we offer clients internally. We have increased the number of resources, such as leaflets available in our centres, and our support manager has undertaken additional training to provide support on a wider range of issues, with consistently positive feedback.

6. We became a more data-driven charity

We improved how we collect and collate data to inform decision-making, contributing to decisions around what resources we provide in centres, where and when our distribution centres are open, and how we raise awareness of the need for food banks in our area.

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7. We re-launched our monthly newsletter

In June 2025, we relaunched our monthly newsletter, which includes updates from our staff on the various projects the foodbank is pursuing, highlighting upcoming events and fundraising opportunities, and sharing data and trends from the previous month.

The food bank is keen to ensure volunteers, referral partners, and elected officials are kept up to date with the food banks' work

8. We achieved a Cinning Cymraeg accreditation

In an effort to ensure we are providing the appropriate support to whoever needs it, the foodbank has begun implementing a Welsh Language Development Plan in conjunction with the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office. This means the food bank has Welsh resources available and Welsh speakers for clients who wish to use Welsh. This made us the third food bank in Wales to achieve this.



9. We supported families through school half-terms and holidays

School half-terms and holidays are a time of particular hardship for local families, and Taff-Ely Foodbank was able to ensure that local families feeling this hardship were able to access the support they needed. We advertised local sources of free and cheap food, restaurants offering cheaper meals, and council initiatives to reduce costs, and provided over 400 food parcels during the summer holidays.

10. We became a Living Wage Accredited employer and registered with the Fundraising Regulator

Our commitment to ending hunger and hardship means we are also committed to paying our staff a living wage - in June, we became officially accredited with the Living Wage Foundation. At the same time, we registered with the Fundraising Regulator, demonstrating our commitment to fair and honest fundraising to support our work.



OUR 2025-26 PERFORMANCE AND ACHIEVEMENTS



£5,400

worth of donations collected
via LocalGiving and
Crowdfunder

We distributed 33,682kg
of food from seven centres
around Taff-Ely

33,682 KG OF FOOD



Seven
distribution
centres



481 supported by our
Support Manager

Our support manager, who is present in
6 of 7 centres, supported almost 500
people with vital advice and referrals



Over 1,000
hours

of volunteer time, which is
the equivalent of one part-
time staff member

OVER
£1,000



of toys donated and
distributed over Christmas

1,315
VOUCHERS



3,346
MOUTHS

From April 2025 to March 2026,
we processed 1,315 vouchers;
providing food for 3,346 people.

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New Projects

Taff-Ely Foodbank continues to develop new services to support those facing crisis in the area, and help end the need for food banks.

Taff-Ely Baby Bank

In May 2025, we launched a Baby Bank, a dedicated project providing essential baby food, formula, nappies, toiletries, and other critical items to families with infants and young children who are experiencing hardship in our communities. This project is rooted in the belief that no child should go without the necessities of life. It is a free and confidential referral-based service designed to support parents and carers in crisis. Operating from our foodbank hubs, the project provides tailored “baby bundles” that include a combination of age-appropriate items.



From April 2025 to March 2026, we supported over 60 families with these baby bundles.

RCT Anti-Poverty Network

In July 2025, we launched the RCT Anti-Poverty Network, a space for first- and third-sector organisations in RCT who support people facing hardship to discuss the challenges facing the sector, share projects, data and trends, and identify gaps in service and areas for closer collaboration. The food bank chairs this network, which meets quarterly, in an effort to improve the collective response to poverty in our communities.

Taff-Ely Lived Experience Partnership

In January 2026, we held our first Lived Experience Partnership meeting, a space for local people who have experienced hardship and used the food bank to share their experiences and contribute to decision-making in the food bank. We are particularly keen to work with people with lived experience of hardship in an effort to fight misinformation and stigma that surrounds foodbanks, and will be holding further meetings to engage the community and work with them to end the need for food banks.

Campaigning

April 2025 to July 2025 saw the final quarter of our Campaign Coordinator's work on the Guarantee our Essentials campaign locally. The campaign calls on the UK Government to set the rate of Universal Credit at a level that ensures all can afford the essentials, in an effort to end the need for food banks.

Our work in the community led to RCT and Bridgend County Borough Council's passing motions supporting the campaign, members of the Senedd and UK Parliament supporting the campaign, and local organisations signing our open letter. This culminated in the Trussell Lobby Day in June 2025, where we went to Westminster to encourage our MPs to support the campaign.



Alongside this, we contributed to Trussell's successful campaigns against proposed cuts to disability benefits, and for the abolition of the Two-Child Limit.

Media Engagement

In an effort to raise awareness of hunger and hardship in RCT and the profile of the foodbank, we have increased our presence in local and national media this year. We appeared regularly in news articles on WalesOnline and Nation.Cymru, regarding our campaigning work and End of Year Stats, spoke regularly on Greatest Hits Radio and Global Radio, and hosted BBC Radio Wales Breakfast from our warehouse. BBC News Wales spoke to us about the rising cost of essentials and about Council Tax, and our being awarded National Lottery grant funding saw AJ Odudu visit our Tonyrefail centre and champion our work on Loose Women.

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Fundraising Projects

This year, Taff-Ely Foodbank recruited a part-time Fundraiser, who has led several fundraising initiatives to ensure the food bank is sustainable.

Adopt-a-Shelf

In October 2025, we launched the adopt-a-shelf scheme, where local businesses can adopt a specific staple item in our food parcels and ensure that item is stocked for the year. This has received much positive feedback, and six items have already been adopted by local champions, ensuring we always have what we need to support people in crisis. This represents almost £9,000 in food covered .



Community Events and Donations

We have held several fundraising events, community days, and markets in Talbot Green and Pontyclun to raise donations and awareness in our community. It was great to see so many local businesses and community groups coming together to support our work, and so many in the community who donated.

Meanwhile, the wider community supported us via tools such as LocalGiving, Crowdfunder, and direct donations of food and money.

Grant Applications

Our main source of income has been grant applications, totalling over £190,000. Most notable of this was a £134,000 grant from the National Lottery, which was announced by AJ Odudu at our Advice and Information Day, and will ensure we can maintain the best possible service for our community for years to come.

Cardiff Half Marathon and ZipWorld UK

More recently, we have secured ten spaces in the October 2026 Cardiff Half Marathon, in which all ten individuals running for us have a minimum fundraising target of £250. Similarly, we are holding an April 2026 fundraising event with ZipWorld UK at the Cardiff Principality Stadium, in which attendees will walk, zipline, and abseil, again raising £250 in donations.

Christmas - 12 Days of Giving and Toy Drive

During the 2025 festive period, we ran a 12 Days of Giving campaign, encouraging people to donate to support families facing hardship during Christmas.

During this period, we also received a substantial donation of toys from LJP Digital, which were distributed to local families, totalling over £1000.



3.

**PARTNERSHIP
WORKING AND
SIGNPOSTING**

Partnership Working

We believe that in one of the wealthiest countries in the world, food banks should not need to exist. We are helping food bank visitors move out of poverty through our partnership work with organisations that offer advice on specific areas (such as debt management), through our Support Manager project, and through engagement with wider partnerships in Taff-Ely and across Rhondda Cynon Taf.

We are a Trussell foodbank, and we therefore receive advice, support, and funding from the organisation. Since July 2025, we've been chairing the RCT Anti-Poverty Network (a partnership of first- and third-sector organisations providing food parcels and other advice and support for RCT residents facing hunger and hardship).

We are also a steering group member for the RCT Sustainable Food Partnership, and regular attendees at the RCT Children, Young People and Families Network.

Signposting

The visitors who access the food bank are offered holistic support: emergency food alongside signposting to local advisory partners who can help address specific issues. This relies on agencies and signposting organisations having the capacity to issue vouchers and additional services to those in need. Signposting is led by our Support Worker.

We keep up-to-date leaflets in our centres, which are available to food bank visitors. These cover housing, mental health support, places to get free or cheap food, support for people with no recourse to public funds, domestic violence, budgeting, and debt. The leaflets are also translated into Welsh to reach the widest possible audience.

We have continued to strengthen our relationships with our referral partners to ensure our visitors receive the best possible support to help them out of food insecurity in the future. Hosting referrers' breakfasts for our referral partners to attend helps forge closer links and broaden their knowledge of other agencies in the county.

Special Thanks

Without the support of our donors, sponsors, and corporate partners, our work would not be possible. Our thanks to all of them, with particular thanks for the following:

Shelf Adoptees

Hepworth Blinds and Shutters

Lantern Roof Blinds

Klean and Tidy 4 U

Hogfather Cafe

The Grey Hare

Sally's Angels

The staff of Prince's

Corporate Partners

Edwards Coaches

Amber Couch

JNP Legal

Thomas Carroll

Pontyclun RFC

Snap Fitness

Gallaghers

April Care Solutions

Revvity

Sainsbury's Talbot Green

Tesco Talbot Green

M Group

Commercity

SWS

Dauson Environmental

2Plus1

Brothers

Charity Partners

Down 2 Zero

Hope Rescue

2Wish

Ty Hafan

The Hackney Foodbank



CONTACT US

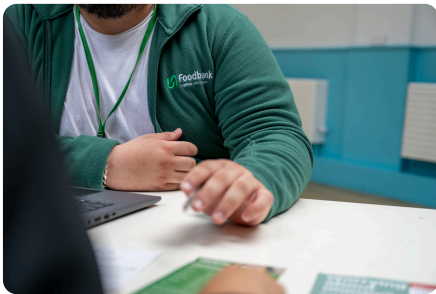
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Photos: Trussell