



# Gillingham Foodbank Annual Report

**1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021**



## [A] Objectives and activities

### **National and county context**

The first UK foodbank was established in 2000 by Christian charity The Trussell Trust in Salisbury. The Trust now co-ordinates a network of local independent foodbanks, to which it provides consultancy, training, systems, services and quality assurance. There are now over 300 foodbanks in the UK network, working to the same systems and standards.

### **Gillingham Foodbank purposes**

The objects of the charity are to relieve poverty, hardship or distress through the provision of food to people in need of emergency supplies in North Dorset, South Somerset and Wiltshire and by such other means as the trustees may decide.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities, Gillingham foodbank trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the Charity Commissioners' public benefit guidance, in particular, when exercising powers or duties in advancing our objectives, conforming with the Charities Act 2011.

### **Foodbank main activities**

Gillingham Foodbank provides emergency food assistance to local residents in short-term financial crisis.

Clients are normally referred to the foodbank by a front-line service or agency, such as a health worker, children's centre, council service or housing association. This referral process ensures that the client's need has been validated, and thereby ensures that assistance is targeted appropriately.

The client receives a voucher which they bring to the foodbank. There they receive half-a-week's food, suitable for the size of their family. The food is donated by the general public, and is non-perishable standard groceries. Clients are usually limited to three vouchers per crisis in order to prevent the development of a dependency relationship.

Like other foodbanks in the Trussell Trust network, Gillingham Foodbank is run by mainstream Christian churches. However, the operation and objectives of Gillingham foodbank is entirely charitable, and non-religious in nature. Clients, partners and volunteers of all backgrounds are welcomed and treated equally.

## [B] Achievements and performance

### **B1. Outcomes: food allocations to clients**

**Total "person allocations" during this report period = 2047**  
(comprising 1231 adults, 816 children)

This level of demand experienced in 2020-2021 has increased from 1744 (1065 adults and 679 children) in the previous year. This appears to be consistent with national trends.

North Dorset is a rural area, in which many areas appear affluent; however, there are pockets of poverty and low income. This is a surprisingly high level of relative demand, for an area that is easily type-cast as affluent. It strongly indicates the presence of real issues of poverty in this rural area.

Trends in demand over the year show peaks at major school holidays, when there is additional demand from families identified as genuinely reliant upon “free school meals” during term-time. That apart, the overall trend appears to be steadily upward.

In any six-month period, clients access the foodbank on average twice. This is consistent with the principal of providing specific crisis-relief, and not long-term, regular or open-ended assistance.

### Age and ethnicity of clients

<b>Age of client</b>	<b>Client 17-24</b>	<b>Client 25-64</b>	<b>Client 65+</b>	<b>Undisclosed</b>	<b>“children”</b>
Number assisted	196	983	52	0	816

Simple statistics are collected about the age of clients and the number of “adults” and “children” in their household. The small number of clients over 65 is notable. This elderly group is not in natural contact with many of the voucher-holding agencies, and also can be reluctant to seek or accept charitable help.

## B2. Voucher referral agencies

Foodbank vouchers are held by 40 agencies, mostly with a local focus, although there are 10 very active referral agencies.

The role of referral agencies remains absolutely crucial to the operation of the foodbank, and their continuing partnership is greatly appreciated.

The rate of referrals is highly variable between voucher-distributors, reflecting the varied scope of their work, the needs of their clientele and the period in which they have held vouchers.

Vouchers are issued by the Foodbank itself where there are *bone fide* contacts validated by agencies that do not themselves hold vouchers, or where an agency asks the foodbank to issue an “emergency voucher”. Vouchers are occasionally issued to “cold callers” on understanding that they must seek further help from agencies that the foodbank volunteers signpost them to.

## B3. Food collections and donations

Food donations from the general public remain consistently high. The Foodbank continues to attract very strong support from the public at large.

### Food donors

Donor type	Number	Total (kg)	Proportion
Churches	21	1,552.24	3.83%
Educations	9	259.30	0.64%
Supermarkets	8	32,947.18	81.25%
Corporate	7	401.20	0.99%
General public		2,753.70	6.79%
Charities	7	13.0	0.03%
Community Groups	7	1467.30	3.62%
Purchased		160.60	0.4%
Returned to Foodstore		965.30	2.38%
Stock adjust		29.9	0.07%
Total		40,549.72	100%

Total year

donations this amounted to

40,549.72kgs. Foodbank allocations have an average retail value of £1.75 per kg. On this basis, the value of all stock donated to the foodbank is almost £71,000. This is astonishing and shows the huge support the foodbank continues to have.

## B4. Levels of abuse

Fraud, abuse and misuse are minimised by the voucher referral system, whereby clients only access the foodbank when referred by an agency that has validated their level of need. Nevertheless, some clients will attempt to abuse the system. The systematic processing of vouchers, discussion with voucher-issuing agencies and data checks keeps this under control.

It is believed that the level of actual abuse is not above 5%, and may well be under half that figure. This low rate reflects the robust systems that are in place, although sustained vigilance will always be required to maintain this security.

## B5. Future projections

Geographically, the Gillingham foodbank has reached its natural frontiers. The establishment of a new pop up foodbanks during March 2020 may have some limiting effect on client referrals on the periphery, though likely to be more than offset by generic increases.

National forecasts are for significant increases in demand during 2021-2022. While food and energy costs continue to rise and low-income household earnings remain stagnant, there is no likelihood of a down-turn in the households in financial crisis. This is expected to be compounded by reduction in Universal Credit in October.

Increases in demand during 2021-2022 will put pressure on aspects of the Foodbank operation:

- **Administrative and managerial** functions will be under pressure, and additional volunteer support needed to share some of the central activities.
- **Outlet opening arrangements** and volunteer numbers will be periodically reviewed to ensure capacity to handle local levels of demand. In particular, the option for an outlet in Wincanton will be reviewed, if there is apparent need.
- **Food supply** is not expected to be a problem. Public donations are very strong, and is helped by food dump bins in many local supermarkets.
- **Foodstore capacity** will not be a problem as there are now two foodstores based in Paris Court, one acting as an overflow store.

There appears every prospect that the foodbank will be able to meet the challenges of 2021-22, and continue to provide vital assistance to households in crisis across its area of operation. A Strategic Plan is being developed to meet the aims of the charity.

## [C] Financial review

### C1. Key points

During the year 2020-21 Gillingham foodbank received total income of £70,385 (FY2019-20: £18,568) and dispersed £13,333 (FY2019-20: £7,930).

Net current assets of £83,826 were carried forward across the year end (FY2019-20: £32,529).

### C2. Income and expenditure

We had expenditure of £3,567 for employment costs as we very briefly employed a Project Manager. After a few months he wished to continue with the work, but as a volunteer only.

We had much higher donations than in previous years, due to the generous gifts from the public in response to the Covid 19 pandemic.

We received £5,625 in Gift Aid due to the high level of donors willing to do this.

We also received a huge amount of donations of food both from the public and directly from Companies and Supermarkets in response to the Covid 19 pandemic.

### C3. Reserves policy

#### Cash reserves

The foodbank's cash reserves held on 31st March 2021 were as follows:

	£
<b>Unrestricted Funds:</b>	
Co-op Bank - current account	68,830
Wyvern Credit Union	14,996
<b>TOTAL UNRESTRICTED</b>	<b>83,826</b>
<b>Restricted Funds:</b>	0
<b>TOTAL RESTRICTED</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL CASH FUNDS</b>	<b>83,826</b>

#### Monetary investments

The foodbank has no money directly invested in property, securities or other forms of investment.

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Gillingham foodbank's reserves policy covers all of its general and restricted funds. This policy is reviewed and approved annually by trustees. This policy is as follows:

#### Reserves policy for general funds

The foodbank aims to hold a minimum of 6 months' budgeted expenditure in its general funds at any time. This equates to £11k for 2021-22. This is to provide funds for:

- Essential cash-flow: covering short-term deficits whilst awaiting grants or other income, or in the event of needing to fund-raise for specific projects
- Unforeseen emergencies or unexpected needs, such as unanticipated repair bills or other urgent expenditure
- Unexpected shortfalls in funding.

## Reserves policy for restricted funds

*Not applicable*

## C4. Investment policy and performance

The foodbank's investment policy is to diversify its (limited) funds in bank accounts and deposit accounts only. It has no other financial investment products or any investment property. The foodbank has no endowment funds, currently.

Short-term deposits are lodged directly with Co-operative Bank plc and attract rates of interest comparable with available commercial market rates. Deposit lodged with Wyvern Credit Union attract a dividend which is currently 0%. In FY2020-21 Gillingham foodbank's deposit account funds attracted an average interest rate of 0%.

## C5. Going concern

The trustees of Gillingham foodbank have every reason to believe that the charity is a going concern, principally because it continues to be able to raise funding to support all of its activities, and further to extend those activities. The foodbank has adequate reserves to cover any shortfall in anticipated income.

## C6. Deficits

The foodbank's total income exceeds its net expenditure and the charity does not operate in deficit. The charity has no subsidiary funds or undertakings.

## **Governance and charitable status**

Gillingham foodbank was set up by Gillingham Community Church, St. Benedict's Catholic Church, Gillingham Methodist Church and St. Mary's Church.

The foodbank is a charitable trust with independent charitable status, and is constituted as a body of incorporated trustees with five trustees on the trust body.

The foodbank's governing document is a trust deed, executed on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2012.

Trustees are appointed to Gillingham foodbank by a resolution of the trustees passed at a special meeting of the trustees. In selecting individuals for appointment as trustees, the trustees have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the charity. Every trustee is appointed for a minimum of three years. The Chair of trustees is elected by the other trustees at an ordinary meeting of trustees.

No trustee is employed or receives any remuneration or financial benefit from the charity.

The foodbank is audited annually by the Trussell Trust, to verify the efficiency, effectiveness and probity of procedures. This audit generates a written report to the trustees and any actions carried out if needed. A copy of the report is available on request.

The foodbank is registered with the Information Commissioners Office. All volunteers are required to sign confidentiality agreements, protecting both client personal details and operational information.

## **Operational structure**

The foodbank operates from two locations. One, in Paris Court, Station Road Gillingham hosts the food stores, and the other, Wessex House, 8 High Street, Gillingham, deals with the administrative functions and the public-facing outlet. During the year we moved from distributing the food at The Old Library in Station Road Gillingham to our new centre at Wessex House.

## **Volunteers**

Around 30 regular volunteers contribute to the foodbank operation, in administration, stock management, deliveries and public-facing roles. All public-facing volunteers receive training to ensure consistency of procedures and standards. It has been calculated that the volunteer hours put into the foodbank equate to 2.5 full time paid staff; which if paid the minimum wage would cost over £25,000. We are therefore very grateful to all our volunteers who give up their time.

## **Covid 19**

Many volunteers were unable to help during the various lockdowns caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. This has put extra pressure on the remaining volunteers, but it also attracted some new ones who were willing to step in as they were unable to work. All the contact with clients has been on the phone as we were unable to meet them face to face due to the restrictions.

### **E1. Name of the charity**

Gillingham foodbank

### **E2. Charity registration number**

1146565 Registered in England & Wales/Scotland

### **E3. Address of principal office**

6 Station Road  
Gillingham  
SP8 4PY

### **E4. Names of trustees serving in FY2020-21**

Gordon Clowrey, Hannah Gibbons, Lewis Buckwell, Philippa Sargent and Robert Rickards, and David Webb.



## **[F] Exemptions from disclosure**

None.

## **[G] Funds held as custodian trustee**

Gillingham foodbank holds no funds as custodian trustee. Nor does it collect any sums as agent for any other bodies for passing on to them.

**GILLINGHAM FOODBANK**  
**ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**FREESTONE & CO**  
**Chartered Accountants**  
**One The Centre**  
**High St**  
**Gillingham**  
**Dorset**  
**SP8 4AB**

**GILLINGHAM FOODBANK**  
**ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES**  
**ON THE ACCOUNTS OF GILLINGHAM FOODBANK**

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# GILLINGHAM FOODBANK

## BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 £	£	2020 £	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	1		988		762
<b>Current assets</b>					
Cash at bank and in hand		83,826		32,082	
<b>Current liabilities</b>					
Accruals		<u>315</u>		<u>315</u>	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<u>83,511</u>		<u>31,767</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>84,499</u>		<u>32,529</u>
<b>Unrestricted Reserves</b>					
At 1 April 2020			32,527		26,665
Profit for the year			<u>51,972</u>		<u>5,864</u>
			<u>84,499</u>		<u>32,529</u>

In accordance with the engagement letter dated 29 August 2014, I approve the accounts set out on pages 2 to 4. I acknowledge my responsibility for the accounts, including the appropriateness of the accounting basis as set out in note 1 to the accounts, and for providing Freestone & Co with all information and explanations necessary for their compilation.



Signed for and on behalf of Gillingham Foodbank

Date : 31/1/22

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