



**Trustees' Annual  
Report  
& Financial  
Statements for the  
Year Ended  
October 31<sup>st</sup> 2022**

**8947**  
food  
parcels  
given out

**3030**  
food parcels  
given out to local  
children

**107,073**  
kilograms of  
food donated

**179**  
volunteers



[www.exeterfoodbank.org.uk](http://www.exeterfoodbank.org.uk)  
*'Restoring dignity, reviving hope'*

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Our Distribution Centre at The Mint Methodist Church, Exeter (above)

Local school collections are an important source of donations – but it also gives us an opportunity to share about what we do with young people across the city



*Throughout our report these green boxes are used to share the voices of clients of Exeter Foodbank who have shared their experience with us.*

## 1) Exeter Foodbank – letter from our Trustees

During the pandemic we would often dream of getting back to 'normal'. We would also often hear the phrase 'the new normal', as we did not know how the world would change because of Covid19.

In terms of Exeter Foodbank, *the new normal* brought higher client numbers - and clients with needs that are far more complex. The primary reasons for referral to foodbank are not only low income or the levels of Benefits available; they involve social isolation, mental health issues, insecure housing, rent increases, debt etc. And, during the last year, we have also all become accustomed to the phrase 'the cost of living' as this has really begun to impact the lives of many people globally. The *new normal* for an anti-poverty charity is multi-faceted and complicated.

As well as the return to normal and the cost of living, we were also impacted by the effects of the war in Ukraine. By the summer of 2022, we were seeing Ukrainian families coming in to almost every session at Exeter Foodbank while they arranged their Benefits, housing, school uniforms etc. It was another challenge in a list of challenges. Looking back, life at before Covid 19 seems so uncomplicated.

As we begin our report, we stand at a time where we are seeing an increase in clients of 134% compared to the same month in 2021.

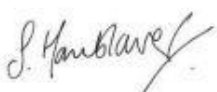
As part of a Trussell Trust project called Pathfinder, we are developing collaborative networks across the city. We are working with many agencies now to tackle the issues of poverty in Exeter, and increasingly our work has become more holistic in its nature. Working with the other agencies, we hope that we can reduce the need for people to come to the foodbank by a concerted effort to make all of the available support easily accessible to them. This will take time. But our aim is to reduce the number of food parcels and to help people to manage without donated food.

We continue to work with approximately 170 volunteers and 150 referral agencies across the city. We also continue to benefit from wonderful public support and have seen donations continue to be maintained through all of these major global events.

For us, *the new normal* is a more collaborative approach. It is more about working together with others and putting greater emphasis on poverty prevention. While doing this, we aim to ensure that we continue to meet and treat clients at foodbank in such a way that *restores dignity and revives hope*.

Our Trustees and Staff Team have worked exceptionally hard this year to manage all of these changes and face these challenges. Having been in operation since 2008, we feel that we are seeing the benefits of receiving faithful support from the people of Exeter, including many wonderful community and faith groups. We are also very fortunate to have put robust systems in place which have expanded to match the growing need.

Thank you.



Sarah Hornblower, Chair of Trustees

## 2) STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

### 2.1 Governing Document

Exeter Foodbank was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on 8 June 2008. It registered as a charity with the Charities Commission on 25th March 2009 under charity number 1128795.

### 2.2 Organisational Structure

**Trustees:** Exeter Foodbank is directed by a board of trustees drawn from local churches, who also serve as directors for the purpose of company law. Trustees are appointed at the charity's Annual General Meeting.

The board takes responsibility for all policy decisions and the charity's finances. The minutes of board meetings constitute the formal record of proceedings and decisions taken and approved by the trustees.

**Financial Oversight:** The treasurer of the charity is also a trustee and reports regularly to the trustees as to the charity's ongoing financial status. A trained volunteer carries out much of the day-to-day financial management of the food bank, under the close supervision of the treasurer and a second designated trustee.

**Employees:** The Foodbank employs four part-time staff; a Project Manager, an Administrator, an Advice Worker and a Logistics Worker undertake the day-to-day running of the charity.

**Management Team:** The trustees have delegated much of the day-to-day running of the charity and operational decisions to a Management Team. Management Team meetings take place at least bi-monthly; minutes are kept as a formal record of proceedings.

**Volunteers:** The Foodbank benefits from the service of approximately 170 volunteers, who are recruited from all sections of the local community. Voluntary team leaders oversee specific areas of operation.

**Related Organisations:** Exeter Foodbank is affiliated to the Trussell Trust, a charity based in Salisbury, which is registered in England and Wales under charity number 1110522.

### 2.3 Risk Management

**Risk Register & Policies:** The trustees give consideration to the major risks to which the charity is exposed via a risk register when updating its annual plan. These include internal and external risks that, if occurring, would be likely to affect finance and resources and other aspects of the work of the charity. The trustees are satisfied that procedures and systems are in place to monitor and control these risks and to mitigate any impact that they may have on the charity and in its future operations.

Exeter Foodbank has an appropriate manual for staff, volunteers and clients of the charity which is reviewed annually. This includes policies covering Data Protection, Equal Opportunities, Health & Safety, Safeguarding (Vulnerable Adult and Child Protection) and Complaints.

**Financial Procedures:** The trustees have ensured that comprehensive insurance cover is in place to cover risks. A Financial Procedures Policy has been implemented, and finances are kept under regular review. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out below and comply with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, and in accordance with applicable accounting standards, and with the requirements of the Revised

Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" issued in 2005, and with the Companies Act.

**GDPR:** EFB takes Data Protection very seriously. We ensure that all of our online and office practice is in line with the *General Data Protection Regulations* which were implemented in May 2018. We review all of these policies annually and update them with guidance from The Trussell Trust.

**Quality Assurance:** The Trussell Trust carries out regular quality assurance inspections of Exeter Food Bank, including in areas of statutory compliance, working practices, volunteer roles, public relations and communications, fundraising, safeguarding and sustainability.

Volunteers from The Mint Methodist Church busily packing Christmas Hampers



Tesco's Community Champion John Smith (left) at our annual Tesco Collection with volunteers Rachel (and her 12 week old baby!) and Terry.

*"My partner works 40 hours a week and we have a 3-month-old baby but we have to choose whether to pay the bills or buy food. My partner earns too much to get help from Universal Credit but not enough to survive on what he earns and because of Covid I did not earn enough to get maternity pay from the company I work for. I am a young mum and do not have the luxury of being able to put food on the table"*

### 3) OBJECTIVES, AIMS & ACTIVITIES

#### 3.1 Charitable Objectives

The objective of the charity, as set out in the charity's governing trust deed, is to relieve persons in the United Kingdom and elsewhere in the world who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress in such ways as the trustees from time-to-time think fit.

#### 3.2 Aims

**Emergency Food Provision:** Exeter Foodbank seeks to alleviate food poverty in and around Exeter by providing short term, emergency food for families or individuals in crisis via a voucher referral scheme. Beneficiaries come from a broad cross-section of the local community; they include families, young people, and both the unemployed and those in work. Anyone can be referred to Exeter Foodbank, regardless of background, belief, race or creed.

**Contextual Support:** Through Advice Work, close partnership working and effective sign-posting, the Foodbank aims to relieve the immediate physical and psychological pressures caused by food poverty, whilst ensuring that more long-term support is put in place.

**Raising Awareness of Food Poverty:** Additionally, Exeter Foodbank aims to raise awareness of the complex issues that surround food poverty and to contribute to research into its causes. In doing so, we aim to improve public understanding of the causes of food poverty, engender greater community cohesion and contribute constructively to public debate.

Collectively, these measures aim both to meet immediate local need and to address the wider causes of food poverty, in order to promote long term change.

#### 3.3 Public Benefit

Each year, our trustees review our activities and strategies to ensure that we are effective in reaching those most in need of assistance in the local area, and in meeting our longer term aims. In carrying out this review, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and in particular its supplementary public guidance on the Prevention of Relief of Poverty for the Public Benefit.

#### 3.4 How the Foodbank Works

- Non-perishable food is donated by members of the public from a prescribed list
- Food is transported to our warehouse, where it is sorted by date and by type.
- Clients in crisis are assessed by one of our authorised referral agencies and are issued with a foodbank voucher.
- Clients bring their voucher to one of our food distribution sessions where it is exchanged for nutritionally-balanced food
- Clients are encouraged to access further sign-posting and support services, as required.

#### 3.5 Objectives for the Year

Our objectives this year are based upon the objectives that we have agreed with Trussell Trust as part of the Pathfinder Project. These will be ongoing for the course of Pathfinder and will not be achieved before the next Annual Report

- a) Develop Participation
- b) Develop Referral Pathways
- c) Develop our Financial Inclusion
- d) Develop volunteer skills and experience
- e) Develop our Operations

### 3.6 Strategies for Achieving the Objectives

#### a) Participation

We plan to increase the input of clients with a lived-experience of food poverty. We aim to do this with a variety of methods including surveys, interviews and dialogue with referrers. We aim to bring together a group of people with lived experience so that they can share their stories and utilise their experience to help the foodbank adapt to the needs of its users. We hope that this will enhance both the experience of visiting a foodbank and also the support that is available.

#### b) Referral Pathways

We will work most closely with our largest referral partners across the city to not only understand who is coming to us and why, but also to see how we can create collaborative systems across the city to offer the very best support to clients who are in need – and offer this help at the earliest opportunity

#### c) Financial Inclusion

We plan to continue developing the work within our Community Hub with local support agencies. We wish to be able to offer clients far greater support in areas like Benefits advice, debt advice and employment skills. We will continue to work with agencies who can offer support with general cost of living and cost of utilities.

#### d) Volunteer skills and experience

We have recently signed up to an online system offered by the Trussell Trust which allows our volunteers to anonymously share their feelings and experience of their time at Exeter Foodbank. The results were very encouraging with our volunteers suggesting that they rated the value of their experience at 9.2 out of 10. This shows how invested and enthusiastic our volunteers are about supporting the overall aim of the foodbank and serving the community.

Throughout Pathfinder, we aim to continue to develop our volunteers by offering training (in areas like valuable conversations with clients and in areas of signposting).

In 2023 we will also launch our **Exeter Foodbank Volunteer Forum**, which will assign a volunteer Representative to each team at foodbank and enable all volunteers to be able to feed back ideas, comments etc so that their voices can be heard as we develop the charity.

#### e) Operations

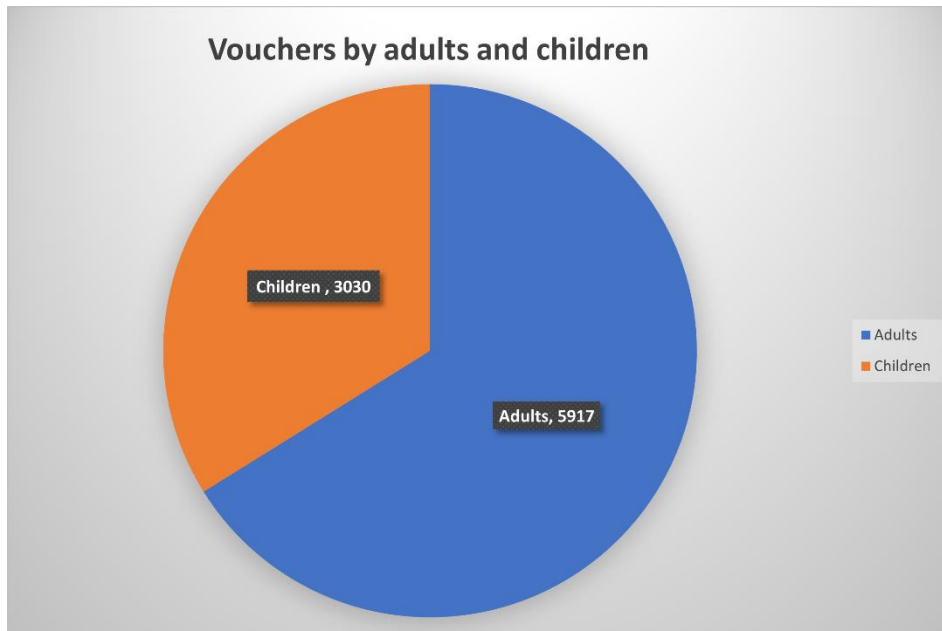
With the charity growing at such a rate, we aim to increase our staff team in 2023. We are in discussions about appointing an Operations Manager and a new Logistics Support Worker.

*"I'm struggling at the moment due to loss of employment and not getting much money due to my circumstances. So the foodbank is a huge help to people like myself. The volunteers are so kind and helpful and very understanding. So I'm grateful for that. Overall they are doing a great job and I appreciate that so much. THANKS!"*

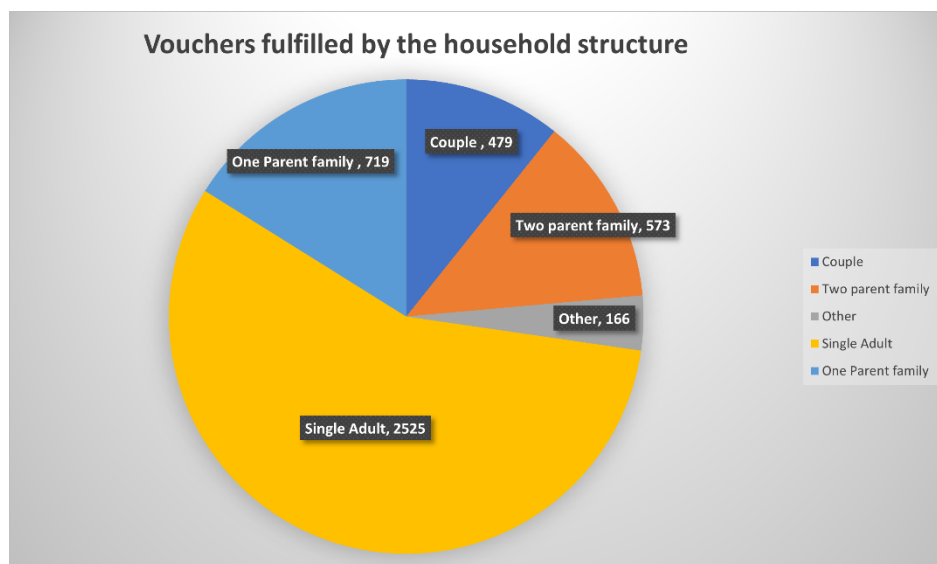
### 4) Statistics

Our records from this period shows that the number of food parcels distributed increased from **6538** to **8947**. This is an increase of approximately **37%**. Of this total number, **3030** were given to local children.

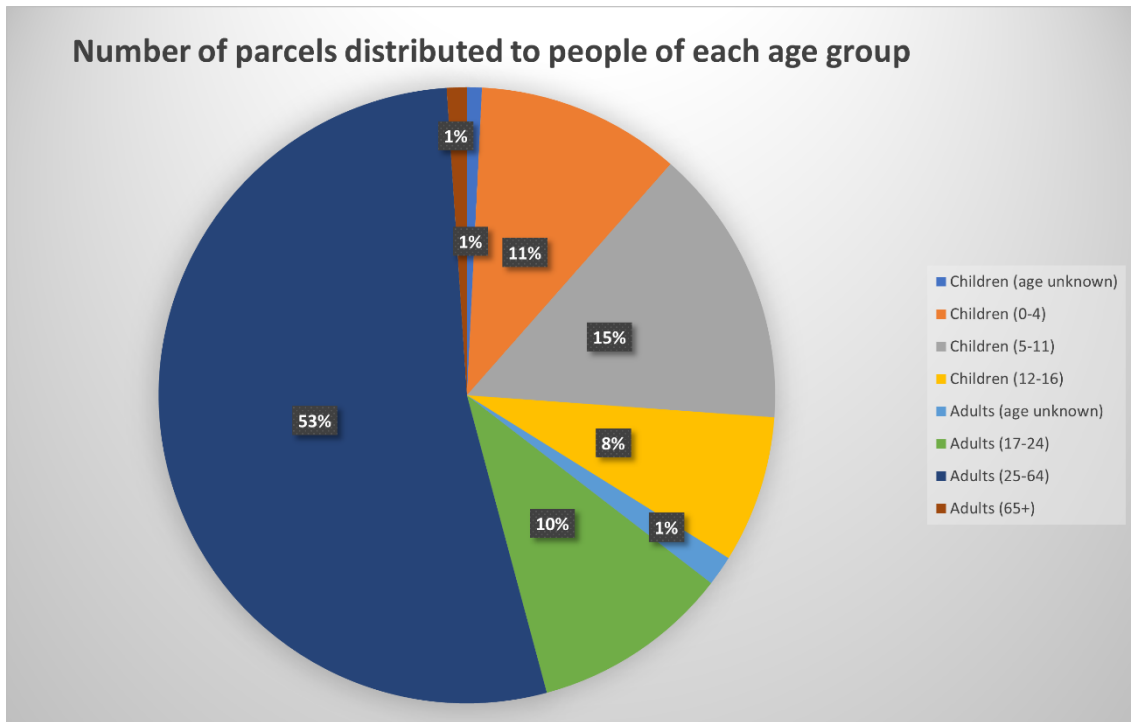
**Figure 1:** Shows the split between parcels given to adults and children.



**Figure 2:** Shows the distribution of food parcels and the size of the households. This does reveal that the largest number of referrals are for single people. The cost of living (especially the cost of housing) for single people continues to be a significant problem.

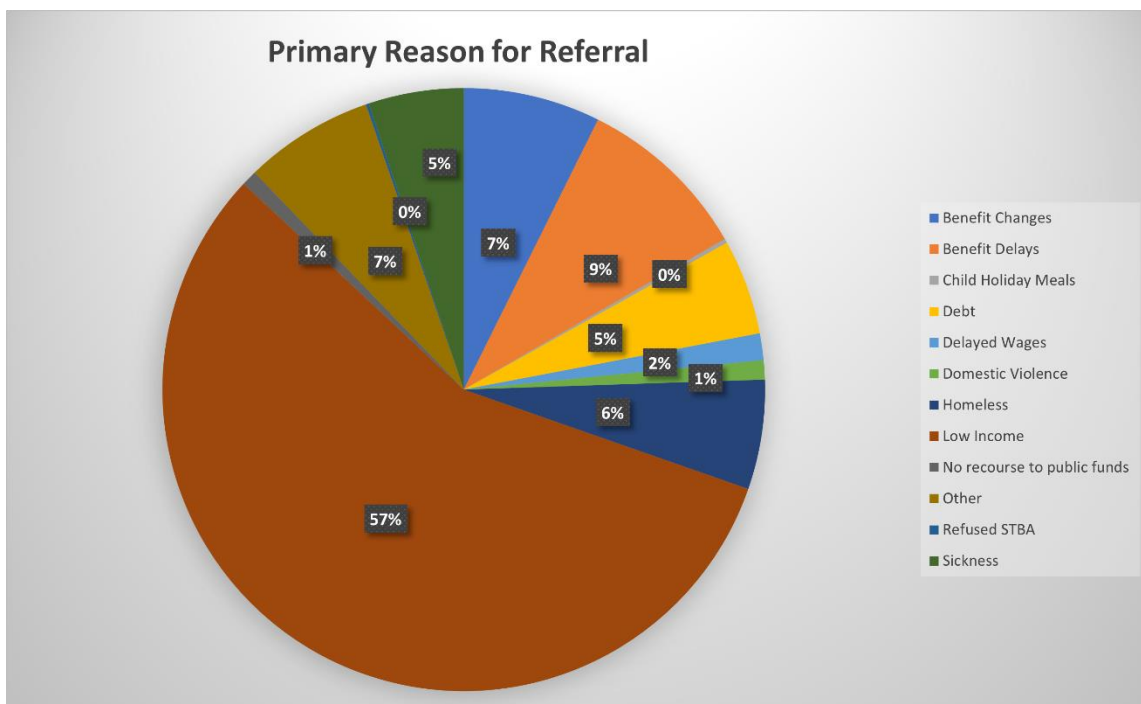


**Figure 3:** shows the ages of the clients supported in Exeter by this charity.



**Figure 4:** Shows the reasons why clients need to visit the foodbank in Exeter. The vast majority are reported as 'low income'. This figure can include both households that are on low earnings and those who are struggling to afford the basic necessities while being supported by the Benefit System.

We see a significant number of households who simply cannot manage the final week of each month before their wages are paid. This number appears to be increasing rather than decreasing.



## 5) Main Activities & Achievements in 2021/2022

At the beginning of the year we were coming out of the time of Covid Lockdowns which we had used as an opportunity to make some changes to our operation. We anticipated increased demand, and that was to be the case. During the pandemic we developed a **'shopping style'** system which allows clients to have greater choice about the food that they have. We received several visits from other foodbanks and charities who wanted to understand how our system was working successfully, and why the clients appreciated it so much.

We opened sessions on Wednesdays at both **The Mint Methodist Church** and **The Beacon Centre**. Our aim was to offer more time for clients and less queuing. We were able to stock these because of good local support. With the financial donations that we had received throughout the pandemic, we were also able to allocate a budget to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables each week. The fresh food is an important addition for clients who are having to survive on donated (tinned, dried and long-life) food for any period of time.

It was also possible for us to buy regular supplies of **ready meals** for clients who have no cooking facilities or who are in temporary accommodation. Sadly, we have seen this number increasing steadily. By March 2022, we were regularly hearing the phrase *'Cost of Living'* from our clients as a significant issue driving both food poverty and vulnerable housing situations.

By the summer of 2022, we also had the challenge of meeting many families from **Ukraine**. We worked with other groups and charities to ensure that we were giving the best possible support. This involved translating much of our material into Ukrainian, working with host families and also working with **Vodafone** to distribute SIM cards for refugee families. At this time, we were already seeing numbers of clients similar to those during the pandemic, so it did make for a busy few months.

During the year we had begun our journey on the **Trussell Trust Pathfinder Project**. The aim of Pathfinder is to reduce the need for foodbanks in a local community by ensuring that other forms of support are more accessible and collaborative. Our aspiration is that if a client engages with us and all of the available support from our partners, that together, we may end their need for support from the foodbank.

As well as employing our own **Advice Worker**, we developed closer links with various agencies during the year. During 2021-22, we hosted regular sessions with **Job Centre Plus** so that clients could access support in regard to the Benefits system.

In October 2022 we opened **'The Living Room'**, our Community Hub, at The Mint Methodist Church. The aim of this project is to help our clients to *live* and *flourish* rather than simply *existing*. Since the Living Room opened, we have held regular sessions with **Job Centre Plus**, **Citizen's Advice**, **Employment Plus**, **Exeter Community Energy**, **Age UK Exeter** and **South West Water**. We have also started working with **Christians Against Poverty** as we plan a *Money & Budgeting Course* in the autumn.

The final development before writing our Annual Report was the opening of a new, weekly Distribution Session at **Cranbrook Education Campus**. The **Cranbrook Food Hub** opens each Thursday evening to support the community in this quickly-growing town (Cranbrook is development situated approximately 9km from central Exeter).

*"I am unable to eat three meals a day.  
I am unable to pay my fuel bill.  
I am in debt.  
I am unable to go to the dentist.  
I am unable to afford even the smallest of luxuries.  
I am no longer able to afford pet insurance"*

*"I am worried about the cost of living because... keeping up with paying monthly bills and having so little left at the end of it that even buying toilet roll is difficult. The effect on mental health is huge as I have had to give up on any hobbies and activities as I can no longer afford it"*

## 6) Other News

- We continued to receive wonderful support from the local community, and a total of **107,073kg** of food was donated.
- Christmas 2021 saw us involved in various initiatives including working with local business **Dart's Farm** to enable 70 local families to have a turkey Christmas dinner with all of the trimmings.
- Our **#efbchristmasinabag2021** project saw more than **300** donations of Christmas Hampers donated. All of these were given to local families.
- We were able to offer **280 Christmas Hampers** to Care-experienced young people. We worked in tandem with **Devon County Council (DCC)** on this project and this has enabled us to have deeper working relationships with some of the staff involved and thus enabling us to offer support in other areas of need.
- Related to the Hampers project, we were able to resource and fund four **Christmas Dinners** across the county in partnership with the Participation Team at DCC. Approximately 100 young people were able to attend.
- We were able to offer **Work Experience** and **Duke of Edinburgh** placements to young people who wanted to find out about our charity and support their local community.
- We continued to be an integral part of **The Exeter Food Network (EFFN)**. There are several charities working across the city to help clients in food poverty. We were able to offer signposting resources and some stock to help them at peak and seasonal times. Our hope is to see continued and developing collaborative work in this area. In March 2022, we held the first Round Table event with EFFN as we looked to develop our shared work of supporting vulnerable people.



A visit from our local MP, Ben Bradshaw (centre).

*"I just want to say a massive thank you for your help. I got a referral and went to the foodbank. Never have I felt so relieved in my whole life. So much thanks to you and the truly wonderful team you had working today. I was embarrassed and so low and not only did they give me food but empathy and compassion.... A wonderful, wonderful bunch of people.... So much thanks"*

## 7) Financial

Review (See separate report)

Financial statements

**Principal Funding Sources**

**Reserves Policy**

**Trustees' Responsibilities in Respect of the Accounts**

The Trustees are required to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Trust and of its financial activities for that period. In preparing those accounts, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Trust will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Trust and to enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities Act 1993 and the Charities Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Trust and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.



Chair of Trustees

Date: October 31<sup>st</sup> 2022

*"I have moved to a smaller home but my energy bill has gone up x 3!!"*

*"Prices have almost doubled in my supermarket. I had to buy a kitchen appliance as mine broke and it left me short for food. These people do an amazing job!"*

*"I am worried about how I will feed my two children, age 1 + 3. I am also worried about how I will get them both Christmas presents, let alone the basic essentials like clothes and shoes"*

*Even part-time working I am struggling to afford bills and make ends meet. Even trying to limit my outgoings it's the main essentials making money not go far. I worry that I won't be able to provide for my kids without foodbanks help"*

## 8) Reference & Administrative Details

Charity Name	Exeter Food Bank
Charity Number	1128795
Company Registration Number	6718767
Trustees	Mr Stephen Davis Mr Gary Flint Mr Richard Judd Mr Gerald Hunt Mrs Sarah Hornblower (Chair)
Company Secretary	Mr Gary Flint
Registered Office	Exeter Foodbank 26 Clyst Heath Exeter Devon EX2 7TA
Bankers	Co-operative Bank PO Box 250 Delf House Skelmersdale WN8 6WT