



West Northumberland Food Bank  
Units 1&2 Hexham Enterprise Hub Burn Lane  
Hexham NE46 3HN Tel: 01434 700068

7<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Corbridge Church of England First School  
St Helen's Lane  
Corbridge

Dear Mrs Suzanne Hart

I wanted to thank you and all the school community for your recent donations from the Harvest Festival, to let you know that your support really does help to make a difference for local people experiencing poverty. Very often people who turn to us for help are overwhelmed with the generosity of local people who donate food and money, on behalf of all the team at West Northumberland Food Bank and everyone we help **Thank You!**

***"Personally WNFB has been a life saver to me. Can't appreciate enough all the help & support from staff."***

The last 12 months have been our busiest ever, we supported 1005 adults and almost 700 children experiencing poverty which is more than we have ever had to help in 11 years and 100 more children than the previous year.

Our team of 22 warehouse volunteers processed over 200 food parcels a week and made 5050 doorstep deliveries of around 7330 tinned and dried food parcels worth around £15 each and over 3,100 fresh food parcels along with over 3700 packs of household essentials such as toilet roll, nappies, toiletries, washing powder and pet food.

Our team of 26 volunteer drivers have covered over 25,000 miles in our 3 vans taking vital supplies to 740 households across 50 Towns and Villages. Approximately £87,500 worth stock was donated by local people, but funds from donors like yourself helped us buy in additional supplies over £53,000.

***"I suffer from depression and anxiety; to get doorstep delivery is a godsend"***

***"Thank you so much for your help and support, you don't understand how much my food parcels and this help has made over the past few months!"***

In the last 12 months our Helpline team of 28 volunteers took around 120 calls a week from people struggling to stay afloat with the soaring cost of living, energy price hikes, low wages, and insufficient benefits. 274 households that's over 37% of callers have never used a Food Bank before or for a very long time.

Our Helpline team provide much needed information to help people through these very difficult times 65% of the agencies we signpost people to are for energy and debt advice, mental health services and local community-based projects.

Registered Charity Number 1158289

Registered Office Unit 2 Hexham Enterprise Hub Burn Lane Hexham NE46 3HN

*"Without this I don't know what I would do. Always friendly service & nice to talk to someone"*

14% of calls to our Helpline were from people in low paid work, 10% from Pensioners, 45% from people in treatment for their mental and 53% for their physical health.

*"Thank you for your advice earlier today. I cannot tell you how grateful I was, and I'm sorry for the tears, they were happy/relieved ones I promise!"*

Some people find it very difficult to access services on their own, so we also have an Outreach Programme where to help to reduce isolation and improve the well-being and finances of some of the most vulnerable people accessing the Food Bank we meet with them in the community and accompany them to appointments or help them make difficult phone calls.

*"I really appreciate your help and support you have been our saviour and we can't thank you enough!"*

Along with taking requests for Food Parcels our Helpline Team helped us distribute over £56,000 of Hardship Funds in the last year to provide around 70 shopping vouchers a month, emergency energy vouchers for Prepayment Meters and hardship awards for essential household items such as carpets, kitchen equipment and for solid fuel.

*"They're a god send – in more ways than just supplying food, I wouldn't have had heating or hot water, we're having to prioritise which is more important, food, or electric and gas."*

Hardship funds have also been used to run our own Cost of Living initiatives including a Winter Fuel Scheme that provided 120 homes with solid fuel and energy vouchers helping 337 adults and children with the extra costs of keeping their homes warm, being able to cook and have enough hot water in February and a 'Back to School' providing £18,000 to 120 families with 244 children to help with the costs of the new school year.

*"That's brilliant, I've been crying for two days about money and this will really help"*

*"I can't afford to put the heating on so use the electric fire, I'm very grateful it's such a cold house"*

However as we head into another Winter the number of people turning to us for help is already rising—and it's only going to increase. Some pensioners are missing out on their Winter Fuel Allowance, and families are struggling more than ever to afford the basics. We continue to meet this growing demand, year on year and want to let you know this would not be possible without donations from kind and generous local people like you.

*"I can't thank you guys enough for all you do for me personally over the years. It's very comforting knowing that people like all of you exist in this world."*

Our Charitable Objectives are the prevention or relief of poverty in West Northumberland, and we are fully committed to continuing to support people experiencing poverty for as long as we are needed, and sincerely appreciate your support to help us do that. **Thank you,**

*"It's an invaluable service. There would be so many people who would collapse without the food bank"*

Yours sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sam Gilchrist".

Sam Gilchrist, Chief Executive

For the latest updates and insights into how your support is making a real difference follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#)