



# **BOW FOODBANK**

**NEIGHBOURS SUPPORTING NEIGHBOURS**

**ANNUAL REVIEW  
2024-25**



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BOW  
FOODBANK

# CHAIR'S FOREWORD

**Bow Foodbank has seen another year of major change as we continue to support our neighbours in Tower Hamlets facing food poverty.**

In August 2024, after more than a year of preparation with Tower Hamlets Council, we finally moved into our new home at **Bow Community Hall on William Place**, near Roman Road Market. This long-awaited move means we can open more days, run more sessions, and offer wider support to help people find a way out of poverty. Longer opening hours have reduced waiting times and, we hope, made the overall experience more positive for our guests.

We extend heartfelt thanks to **Bethnal Green Methodist Church** and **Raine's Foundation School** for hosting us during 2023–24. Their generosity kept us going through a challenging transition period.

We continue to look for ways to make using the Foodbank more dignified. This year, we introduced a '**click and collect**' option, giving guests more choice and flexibility when booking food online.

Since the move, around **400 households**—some 1,200 people—now receive our support each week. Our **open-access model**, with no referral required, remains central to our mission. We know that people who access our support already face considerable barriers before they come to us, often during a crisis.

Our partnerships with organisations such as **Spotlight, The Felix Project, The First Love Foundation, and Lawstop** have grown stronger, enabling us to provide more holistic support. Together with other food aid groups, we helped establish the **Tower Hamlets Food Poverty Network**, sharing good practice and advocating for our sector. Joining the national **Feeding Britain** network in 2024 has also connected us to new ideas and policy insight. We were delighted to see the restoration of funding for the **Tower Hamlets Food Hub** for 2025–26 and look forward to continued collaboration with the Council's Anti-Poverty and Public Health teams.

We thank **Rev. Tim May of St Mary's Church** for his dedicated service as a Trustee since 2020, guiding us through the Covid-19 years. We wish him every success in his new parish.

Finally, an enormous **thank you to our donors, volunteers, and staff**. Your generosity—of time, food, and money—keeps our doors open every week of the year. Whilst it is disheartening that foodbanks are still needed in 2025, I am immensely proud of the compassion, skill and dedication shown by our team of staff and volunteers. We are incredibly lucky to have an amazing team!

As long as there are people in Tower Hamlets living with food insecurity, **Bow Foodbank will be here for them.**

**Steve Gilvin**  
Chair of the Board of Trustees



# ABOUT BOW FOODBANK



Founded in 2014, Bow Foodbank was born out of a coming together of local faith and community groups who wanted to stand alongside neighbours struggling to make ends meet. Our founders recognised the many barriers people face in accessing food support and created a place where anyone in crisis, or waiting for benefits, could find help without judgment.

We provide **non-referral, judgement-free assistance** to anyone who asks, because we know that the hardest step is often walking through the door. In Tower Hamlets, where child poverty is the highest in the country, too many families face impossible choices between food, household essentials, and other basic needs. Parents often go hungry to ensure their children are fed, and many go without items like toothpaste or toiletries just to put food on the table. Our work is driven by the belief that no one should face these challenges alone.

Over the years, Bow Foodbank has become more than a place to collect groceries — it has grown into a hub of community. Guests often return as volunteers, to connect with friends, or simply to feel less alone. In a borough where access to technology can be limited, most people find us through word of mouth. We are neighbours, friends, and families looking out for one another.

Alongside food and household essentials, we also provide advice and signposting to specialist services. From help with navigating the benefits system, to connecting people with housing or debt support and much more, we work closely with local partners to ensure that our guests can access the right help at the right time. For many, the foodbank is a first step towards wider support and greater stability.

With an open-access policy, Bow Foodbank is proud to be a place of **dignity, stability, and community** in Tower Hamlets, and we will continue to be here for as long as we are needed.

# REVIEW OF THE YEAR

We knew this year would bring significant challenges, and the first thing to say is a **huge thank you to our volunteers and partners**. Without you, we could not have met the needs of our community.

Surprisingly, moving into our new space was not the most significant challenge we faced this year. Instead, the move gave us the chance to re-evaluate our work and ask: what do we want to offer our guests? Our priority became staying true to the foodbank's founding vision of **"neighbours supporting neighbours,"** while also imagining what more we could be. We envisioned a foodbank where guests wouldn't need to queue, but instead could arrive in a welcoming space to openly share their challenges, receive non-judgmental advice, and strengthen both their financial and social resilience. Most of all, we wanted to create a community where volunteers and guests alike felt **connected, valued, and respected**.

Our move to Roman Road also gave us the chance to adapt our offer. One key step was launching **Click and Collect**, an online ordering service that lessened queues and allowed guests to collect food at times that suited them. This innovation placed **dignity** and **choice** at the heart of our service.

In recent years, household numbers had spiralled, threatening sustainability as food bills rose to unsustainable levels. To stabilise, we chose to focus on households in Tower Hamlets, protecting resources for our closest neighbours. This shift allowed us to develop new models of support, creating safe spaces for conversations and offering advice to help families build resilience.

To achieve this, we restructured our staff team, adding roles that strengthened our capacity:

- A **Volunteer Coordinator** to grow community involvement
- A **Corporate and Community Manager** to deepen local partnerships
- A **Guest Experience and Partnership Manager** to connect guests with support networks
- A **Procurement and Impact Manager** to maximise value and measure outcomes

With this new team, Bow Foodbank aimed to offer more than food—deliberately building resilience and stronger community connections.

2024-25 was a year of **change**.  
2025-26 will be a year of **further impact**.

With a stronger foundation in place, we are ready to deliver not just food, but **dignity, resilience, and hope**.



# Impact at a Glance



**20,941**

Parcels Distributed +  
**12,306** Children's  
Parcels



**440,000**

Meals Provided



**185**

Tonnes of food distributed,  
the weight of  
**one blue whale!**



**9,630**

People  
Supported



**123**

Youth Bags  
Delivered



**1,981**

New Guests  
Registered



**£620,000**

Value of Food  
Distributed



**£224,156**

Cost of food &  
toiletries purchased



**£159,507**

Value of Food  
Donated

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We drew on feedback from trustees, guests, and volunteers to document Bow Foodbank's **vision** and **values**, and to create **guiding principles** to navigate change. We value both practical support and the way it's offered, aiming to ensure every visitor feels **warmly welcomed** and part of a **supportive community**.

## OUR PURPOSE

All households should have access to food and basic essential items. We believe that poverty damages communities, affecting every area of an individual's life.

## OUR MISSION

We are a community solution committed to building resilient and connected communities whilst eradicating food insecurity in Tower Hamlets.

## OUR ETHOS & CULTURE

How we deliver practical support matters! By offering support as part of a collaborative community, we increase people's connections, empower them to raise their voices within the community, and recognise what individuals contribute—*not just what they need.*

## HOW WE BUILD RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

### ROOTS

Resilient communities thrive on a sense of belonging and shared identity—a place where people can belong, contribute, and grow together.

### SHOOTS

Resilient communities cultivate skills and talents, creating spaces where resources are mobilised for the collective good.

### CONNECTIONS

Resilient communities foster connections to our neighbours and the social support structures that promote their social, mental, physical and spiritual well-being.



# OUR VALUES

## COLLABORATION

It's all about **teamwork**! Whether through creative and **positive partnerships** with other organisations providing additional guest support, or by **collaborating** with volunteers to harness and utilise their unique skills with excellence, we strive to make a **meaningful impact** on the community.

## DIGNITY

We aim to offer our guests **dignified support** and **respectful communication** that uphold **integrity** and convey their **inherent value**.

## EMPOWERMENT

We seek to **empower** individuals to build independence and confidence, recognising our responsibility to create opportunities for them to contribute to their communities.

## BELONGING

**Belonging** is integral to all these values, enhancing their impact. It's both active, shaping and collaborating within a community, and passive, being in a safe, valued space that empowers dignity. For belonging to thrive, we must be **inclusive**, acknowledging **diverse communities** and **holding ourselves accountable** for creating **resilient, unified spaces across different backgrounds and experiences**.



# PARTNERSHIPS

## BUILDING A STRONGER FOOD NETWORK IN TOWER HAMLETS



Bow Foodbank knows that it cannot meet all the needs of our guests, and this means we aim to work in positive partnerships to help them access other organisations that can support guests to thrive.

**Collaboration** is one of Bow Foodbank's core values. We believe Tower Hamlets is best supported when local charities, advice agencies, and food providers work together.

Bow Foodbank is a founding member of the **Tower Hamlets Food Poverty Network**, and this year, we helped to take it to the next stage by fundraising for its first paid coordinator. This has strengthened collaboration between members and improved the quality and accessibility of food and support services across the borough.

Through the network, partners have shared learning on **sustainable procurement, volunteer support, and advice delivery**. The group also joined **Feeding Britain**, ensuring Tower Hamlets has a stronger voice in national policy discussions on food insecurity.

When funding cuts threatened to disrupt food provision, Bow Foodbank provided **1.5 tonnes of food** to sustain key partners. Working together, the network successfully advocated with the council to secure funding and align activities with local anti-poverty and public health strategies.

With new support from the **Wakefield Trust**, Bow Foodbank is helping to extend this cross-borough work further. We remain committed to **shared procurement and distribution solutions**, while tackling ongoing **storage and transport challenges**.

Collaboration remains central to our work, ensuring that, together, we can provide the strongest possible support for people across Tower Hamlets.



### PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

We're so grateful to **The Felix Project** for their generous donations of food, especially fresh fruit and vegetables, valued at **£102,000**. Their support helped us provide nutritious meals to our community throughout the year.



Felix

# CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

At Bow Foodbank, we believe in:

## NEIGHBOURS SUPPORTING NEIGHBOURS



Our corporate teams are very much a part of this culture — **building roots** in the communities where they **work, sharing their skills**, and **deepening their understanding** of how poverty affects people in Tower Hamlets.

This year, Bow Foodbank made corporate partnerships a core focus by dedicating a staff role solely to this area. This enabled a

## 45% INCREASE IN CORPORATE FUNDRAISING

with donations rising from around **£120,000 to £175,000**. The post was funded by the **Tides Foundation via BlackRock**, allowing this work to develop with no financial risk to the organisation.

Through this role, we continued to develop and build on Charity of the Year partnerships with **OSiT St Paul's, RGA, USS** and **Collyer Bristow**, while also engaging new teams in fundraising events like sponsored challenges and bake sales often match-funded by their companies. These efforts helped maintain steady individual giving, despite cost-of-living pressures.

**But our partnerships are about more than money.** Corporate support also plays a vital operational role. Teams contributed

**814** VOLUNTEERS

GIVING **3841** VOLUNTEER HOURS

VALUED AT **£51,904** AT LONDON LIVING WAGE

Their time has been vital in keeping services running as we expand our opening hours.

To highlight the realities of food insecurity, we invited one of our charity partners to take part in our **food parcel challenge** where volunteers live off a foodbank package for three days. Participants reported not hunger, but the time, effort, and restrictions of living on basics, as well as the social impact of not being able to “just pop out” for a meal or host friends.

**EXPERIENCES LIKE THIS ENCOURAGE  
COMPASSION, CHALLENGE ASSUMPTIONS, AND  
HELP CREATE LASTING CHANGE.**

# DEVELOPING SERVICES

There have been two significant changes to our food distribution model in 2025. The **Youth Bags Pathway** and our **Click & Collect Service**.

## **YOUTH BAGS REACHING YOUNG PEOPLE IN AREAS OF HIGHEST NEED**

Young people are often overlooked in food support, yet face some of the highest levels of need. In partnership with **Spotlight**, Bow Foodbank launched weekly food bags for vulnerable young people – distributed by trusted youth workers and health professionals.

Unlike our standard service, these bags aren't capped at 12 visits. They offer steady help so young people can stay engaged in education and connected to vital services.

Young people from Spotlight also volunteered at the Foodbank — reinforcing our ethos of neighbours supporting neighbours.

**In the first few weeks of the program this year, 123 food bags were delivered.**

This pilot shows how targeted partnerships can make a lasting difference for those most at risk.



**“THANK YOU VERY MUCH.  
THESE RATION PROVISIONS ARE  
VERY HELPFUL, ESPECIALLY AT  
THE END OF THE MONTH.”**

We thank **Buzzacott** and the **Buzzacott Stuart Defries Memorial Fund** for the seed funding that made this work possible.

## **CLICK & COLLECT: BRINGING CHOICE AND DIGNITY TO FOOD SUPPORT**

Bow Foodbank's new Click & Collect service has transformed how guests access food support. Instead of waiting in long queues, guests can now choose their food items online and collect their parcel at a convenient time. It's simple, quick, and built around **dignity** and **choice**.

For many families, this has been a game-changer:

**“WE ALL LIKE TAKING OUR  
TIME SHOPPING, BUT  
WITH CHILDREN YOU  
CAN'T REALLY.”**

Initially, we worried this might reduce personal connections with guests, but it has done the opposite. Volunteers can now focus on guests' wellbeing, asking about their week, and understanding their broader needs – transforming a food pickup into a moment of genuine human connection with meaningful conversations and personalised support.

Click & Collect now serves families, working parents, and guests with mobility challenges — offering flexibility without stigma.



# REFERRALS AND



***At Bow Foodbank, we believe support should go beyond food. It's about dignity, connection, and lasting change.***

We want our guests to feel welcome, valued, and connected to the help that enables them to move beyond the causes of poverty. To embed this across the foodbank, we created a new role dedicated to:

- Offering advice and guidance
- Building partnerships with specialist organisations
- Capturing guest voices
- Supporting volunteers to signpost quality support

**New Guest Experience & Partnership Manager**  
**Role Created in**  
**Sept 2024**



## **THE MARKETPLACE** *Bringing Support to Guests*

As part of our Marketplace model, we host partners offering vital wrap-around services from health screening and dental care to home insulation.

Guests can access these services without sharing personal details, helping to build trust, choice, and dignity

**DIGNITY TRUST CHOICE**

## **SPECIALIST ADVICE** *Specialist Advice & Immediate Support*

With thanks to the **Bromley by Bow Centre**, guests have accessed targeted help with energy debt, vouchers, and pension credit.



**£2,500+ in Energy Vouchers Distributed in just three months**

We're planning to expand this area to include **ESOL sign-ups, financial awareness, and training opportunities.**

## **COMPLEX CASES** *Complex Case Support for Guests*

Our **Guest Experience & Partnership Manager** works closely with partners to support guests with multiple challenges.

- **First Love Foundation** – complex benefit cases
- **Lawstop** – housing and homelessness legal aid

**£119,000 additional benefits secured**



**10 complex housing cases (first few weeks)**



## **WIDER SUPPORT** *Connecting Guests to Wider Support*

Over the past year, guests have been supported to access:

- Domestic abuse and housing services
- Micro-grants and discretionary housing payments
- Baby banks and medical treatment
- Immigration and safeguarding support

***At Bow Foodbank, it's not just about food. It's about helping people rebuild their lives.***



**LOOKING AHEAD**

*We're building volunteer capacity to better signpost guests and expanding partnerships in mental health, immigration and debt advice ensuring every guest can access the support they need.*

# OUR GUESTS

## Poverty in Tower Hamlets

Tower Hamlets remains one of the most deprived areas in the UK, with the highest levels of pensioner and child poverty.

- **46.5% of children live in poverty** – the highest rate in the UK (End Child Poverty, 2025).
- **44% of older people live in low-income households** – the highest proportion in England (Tower Hamlets Poverty Review, 2021).
- Tower Hamlets is among the 20 local areas with the **highest rates of destitution** (Tower Hamlets Poverty Review, 2021).



**56%**

of guests are women



**1 in 3**

weekly visits are from Bengali families with children



**1,169**

parcels distributed to people experiencing homelessness



**3,313**

parcels distributed to Asylum Seekers



**224**

parcels distributed to survivors of domestic violence

## Demographics & Vulnerability

- Most guests used Bow Foodbank for under six months, but a smaller group relied on support for one–four years, showing the scale of long-term hardship.
- Bangladeshi residents made up 30% of our guests and 43% of visits, compared to 34% of the borough population.
- White British residents made up 11% of our guests and 12% of visits, compared to 22% of the borough population.
- Families with children dominate use: Bengali families with children account for about one-third of weekly visits. White women with children are twice as likely to use the Foodbank as those without.
- Disability and age compound disadvantage increasing the need for support.



# WHAT OUR GUESTS SAY

"I had £10 left on the meter and was going to be in the dark. You all helped me get vouchers for gas and electric."

"I don't visit often, but it makes such a difference when I do, whether it's getting pasta or lentils, toothpaste or deodorant, and the fresh foods add more...I'd like to thank all staff and volunteers for your respectful, empathic support, given with a smile and a chat."

"You all helped me with my PIP application. Without that, I would have been cut off, just for forgetting a secret word."

## FRANK'S STORY

When **Frank** reached the end of his 12 annual visits, he asked volunteers if he could have an extension. After speaking with staff, it became clear he was facing several serious challenges: **rent arrears, unclaimed benefits, and a recent family bereavement**, all of which were taking a toll on his well-being.

Bow Foodbank staff arranged an appointment with **First Love Foundation**, who discovered that Frank was **not receiving the benefits he was entitled to**. Through weekly advice sessions at the foodbank, the team helped him apply for **Personal Independence Payment (PIP)** and secure a **Discretionary Housing Payment** to clear his rent arrears.

As a result, Frank received **£2,944 in housing support and over £3,000 in backdated and ongoing PIP payments**, a life-changing boost to his income that allowed him to **clear his debts and regain stability**.

Frank has since built a strong relationship of trust with both the Bow Foodbank and First Love Foundation, giving him the confidence and time needed to work through his complex situation.

*For confidentiality, the name has been changed, but the experiences shared are real.*

# VOLUNTEERS

## THE HEART OF BOW FOODBANK

We remain deeply grateful to our volunteers, **without whom Bow Foodbank could not operate**. This year brought major change, and there was understandable concern about what this would mean for our established group of 350 community volunteers, some of whom have been with us for over **10 years!**

### Our Volunteering Community

Our volunteers reflect the **diversity and energy** of Tower Hamlets:

- 8% are asylum seekers
- 33% are also Bow Foodbank guests
- 13% are students
- 22% are retirees



### Creating Connection & Cohesion

Our volunteers are a living example of **neighbours supporting neighbours** — people from different backgrounds and life stages building stronger connections and friendships across Tower Hamlets.

**100% of volunteers say that volunteering helps them feel connected to their community.**



**8,939  
hours  
=  
£119,800  
value**

### Volunteering

Despite the changes, our volunteers showed remarkable commitment and adaptability. Together, they contributed **8,939 hours of support** — the equivalent of **£119,800 in value** (based on the London Living Wage).

**100% of  
volunteers  
agree that  
they build skills  
through  
volunteering.**

### Growing Skills & Confidence

We invested in developing our volunteer team's knowledge, training **eight volunteers** to triage guests into wider support services. This deepened our advice and guidance capacity and strengthened volunteers' awareness of local support options available to residents.

### Why Volunteers Give Their Time

When asked why they volunteer, **53% said they do so to help their community**. Other motivations include building connections, seeing friends, and giving back to a cause that has a positive impact.



# VOLUNTEER STORIES



**“It’s not just about giving food - it’s about making people feel seen.”**

A recently retired local resident, Sasha wanted to give back to her community. Volunteering at Bow Foodbank has allowed her to meet people from all walks of life and “see things from a different perspective.” As part of the welcome team, she finds purpose in greeting guests and offering support.

**“The Foodbank helped my mental health and gave me confidence - now I want to give that back.”**

## **Before Joining Bow Foodbank**

When Melanie first came to Bow Foodbank, she was struggling with severe mental health challenges and insecure housing.

“There was a lot going on without me having residence. It was not easy for me, even though I was taking my medication.”

## **Finding Confidence Through Volunteering**

Initially supported as a guest, Melanie was later invited to join as a volunteer.

“It helps you a lot. When you are moving from one place to another, you need to learn how to speak with people, how to interact.”

Becoming a regular volunteer gave Melanie structure, social connection, and confidence. She began to see change not only in her housing and wellbeing, but in her outlook.

## **Giving Back**

“Once you feel like you’ve built up some confidence in yourself, you can then put it back in for others.”

Through volunteering, Melanie found more than food or support - she found a sense of purpose and a renewed belief that she could help others in turn.



**“When I fell ill, everyone came to see me. It was overwhelming - I realised this wasn’t just volunteering, it was family.”**

Thomas, a long-time volunteer, joined Bow Foodbank after retiring to stay active and connected. Over time, the Foodbank became a place of deep friendships and care. He now calls Bow Foodbank “a pillar of my social life” and loves seeing how the organisation gives “so much more than a bag of food.”



**“It’s been one of the most rewarding decisions I’ve made - kindness, connection, and purpose come together here.”**

During lockdown, Eva realised she didn’t know many people locally. Volunteering with Bow Foodbank changed that. Eva now leads the Period Products Champion Project, using her professional skills in research, fundraising, and storytelling to raise awareness of period poverty in Tower Hamlets.

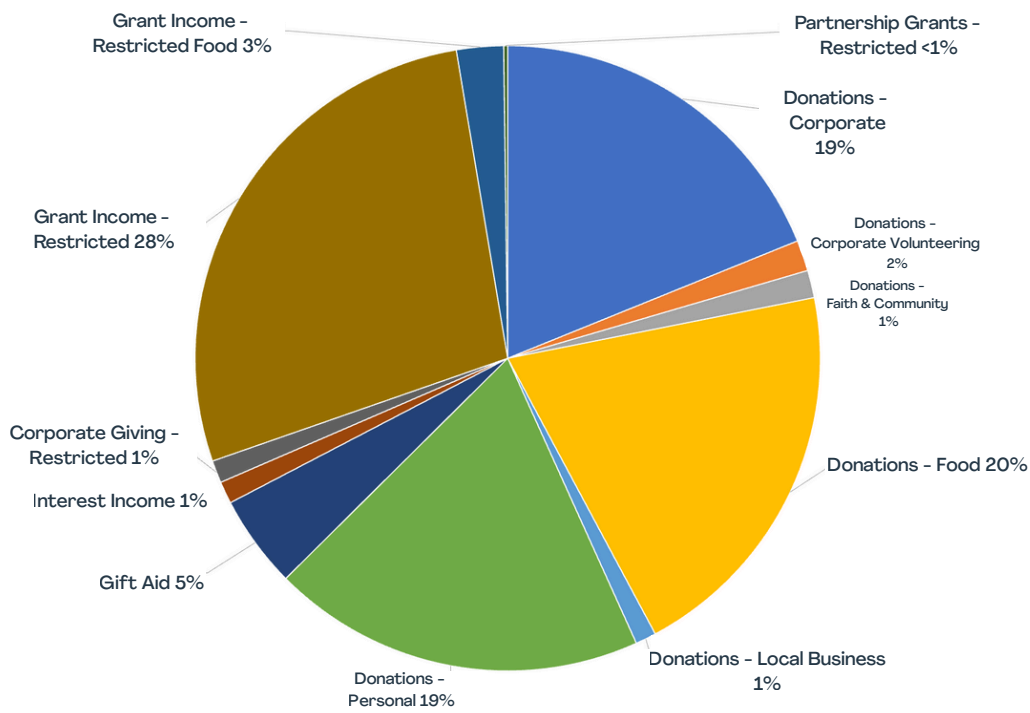
*For confidentiality, the names in these stories have been changed, but the experiences shared are real.*

# OUR FINANCES

During the year 2024-25, the charity's income, including gifts in kind and donated food, amounted to a little over **£781,754**, with expenditure being **£830,628** (representing a **7.1%** decrease from the previous year).

The tremendous support from charitable trusts, corporate supporters and individual donors allowed us to continue our work, expanding our services to meet the needs of guests. We had additional costs this year due to the move to William Place. Despite this, we are still in a healthy position to continue serving the Tower Hamlets community.

## INCOME & EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

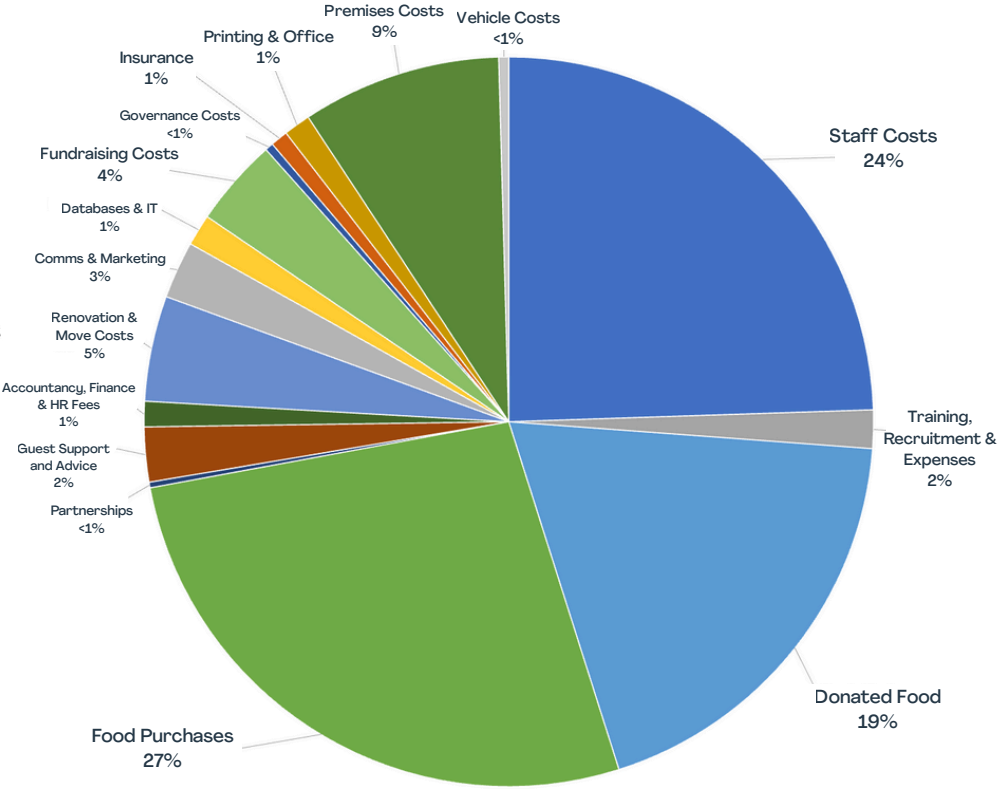


### INCOME

The chart below shows how we allocate our resources. Just under half of our expenditure goes directly towards providing food. This is a proportional reduction from previous years, reflecting Bow Foodbank’s strategy to invest more in initiatives that help guests move out of long-term poverty.

Staff costs have increased as new roles were created to lead two strategic areas: improving guest access to quality advice and support, and strengthening poverty partnerships within Tower Hamlets.

This year, Bow Foodbank also incurred significant one-off costs in preparing our new premises for operations. These costs will not recur in future years.



EXPENDITURE

# BALANCE SHEET

CURRENT ASSETS		31 MARCH 2025
Fixed Assets		£6,444
Stocks		£12,389
Debtors		£17,519
Cash at bank and in hand		£483,445
Liabilities Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		£21,945
<b>Total Net Assets</b>		<b>£491,408</b>
FUNDS		31 MARCH 2025
Unrestricted funds		£416,809
Restricted funds		£81,042
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>		<b>£497,852</b>

Full accounts are available on our website and on the Charity Commission website.

# THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

We remain deeply thankful to everyone who has supported Bow Foodbank this year. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to the volunteers who continue to give their time and energy—often in challenging weather—and to the many individuals who have contributed through donations and regular giving. While too many to name, please know that your generosity is recognised and appreciated by us all.

We are also indebted to the charitable trusts and foundations, local businesses, faith groups, schools, and community partners whose generosity has been vital to our work. The achievements of this past year would not have been possible without your support and encouragement. On behalf of our team, and the guests and families we serve: **THANK YOU!**



## OUR GENEROUS GRANT SUPPORTERS

- Arnold Clark Community Fund
- B&Q Foundation
- Beatrice Laing Trust
- Belron Ronnie Lubner
- Celtic Football Club
- Charles S French Charitable Trust
- Drax Community Fund
- East End Community Fund
- Garfield Weston
- Grace Trust
- Heinz, Anna and Carol Kroch Foundation
- iHennig
- Kenvue
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- London Community Response
- Marsh Charitable Trust
- National Lottery
- PAAWS
- Places for People
- RBC
- Simon Harris
- SNG
- St James's Place
- St James-the-Less, Bethnal Green
- The Buzzacott: Stuart Defries Memorial Fund
- The Childhood Trust
- The Drapers' Charitable Fund
- The Fishmongers' Company's Charitable Trust
- The Headley Trust
- The Royal Foundation of St. Katharine
- The Tides Foundation
- The Nice Co.
- The Truemark Trust

## OUR VALUED CORPORATE PARTNERS

- Alexandra Trust
- Allianz Global Investors
- Arbuthnot Latham
- Aviva
- Barbican Giving
- Bates Wells Foundation
- BGC Group
- BlackRock
- BT Group
- Buzzacott
- Cincinnati Global Underwriting Ltd.
- **Collyer Bristow\***
- CSC
- Drax Community Fund
- Everfair Tax Consulting Ltd
- Hannaford Turner LLP
- Jaguar Building Services
- JP Morgan
- KPMG
- LexisNexis
- NHS Property Services
- NISA – 'Making a Difference' Scheme
- O'Melveny & Myers LLP
- Octopus Foundation
- Omers
- **Office Space in Town, St Paul's\***
- Overbury
- RBC BlueBay Asset Management
- RBC Global Asset Management
- **RGA UK Ltd\***
- RJP Interiors
- Shepherd and Wedderburn LLP
- Smithfield Partners
- Taylor Wessing Community Foundation
- **USS\***
- Waterstons

\*24–25 Charity of the Year Partners

AND TO THE MANY  
WONDERFUL TEAMS WHO  
VOLUNTEER WITH US – YOUR  
TIME AND DEDICATION MAKE  
ALL THE DIFFERENCE!

# FUTURE PLANS

## LOOKING AHEAD

**At Bow Foodbank, we are committed to growing our reach and deepening our impact across the borough.** We plan to expand our outreach so that everyone who might need our support knows where to find us. We will also continue to work closely with other local providers, sharing best practice and logistical solutions to strengthen understanding of food need across our community.

**Partnerships remain central to our approach.** Initiatives such as our youth bags have shown how collaboration helps us reach specific groups and manage demand effectively. Our trustees will review how we set up partnerships to ensure future collaborations deliver the strongest local impact.

**As always, we will respond to changing local needs.** Through our referral and casework, we will seek new partners with specialist expertise in the areas our guests highlight, ensuring our services remain relevant as the population and its needs evolve.

We also want to use the skills of our volunteers to help **build more resilient communities**. For example, one of our volunteers is a baby-feeding expert, and with local concerns about the high cost of baby formula milk, we have begun work with the Public Health and Health Visiting partners to agree a pathway for those families who need formula milk for their baby to be able to collect it from the Foodbank.

We are also exploring ways to reduce digital exclusion, which limits choice for some of our guests. This might include testing a shop-style model for food distribution or supporting digital skills training.

Finally, **we will continue investing in our volunteer team**, offering training to broaden their ability to triage and signpost guests to other services that improve outcomes.

**Of course, our ultimate wish is that food banks are no longer needed. Until that day, our primary ambition is to remain a reliable emergency resource for people for as long as we are required.**



Although settling into our new site has taken longer than expected, we remain determined to offer the **best possible service to our guests** and to provide meaningful ways for our **volunteers to contribute** to a **stronger, more connected community**.

# OUR TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees met six times throughout the year with additional meetings scheduled to oversee the transition to the new premises and to respond promptly to emerging challenges. Trustees established a Service Model working group and Trustees have taken on lead responsibilities for different areas of governance to support staff in delivering services effectively.

## TRUSTEES WHO SERVED DURING THE YEAR WERE:

- **Steve Gilvin**, Chair
- **Dr. Irum Ali**, Vice Chair
- **Meena Chavda**, Treasurer (appointed April 2024)
- **Matthew Gill**, Company Secretary (appointed April 2024)
- **Lynn Stone**
- **Jagmohan Bhakar**
- **Emma Singh**
- **Vincent Allilaire**
- **Kristin Konschnik**
- **Rev. Tim May** (resigned July 2024)
- **Latika Shah**

As of 31 March 2025, there were ten trustees. Under the terms of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, Trustees are elected and co-opted, and are collectively responsible for the governance, strategy, and management of the charity.

## ORGANISATION & DECISION-MAKING

Trustees set the strategic objectives of the charity, ensure sound financial controls, and oversee policies and procedures to safeguard effective management and delivery of services.

## INDUCTION & TRAINING

New Trustees are provided with relevant Charity Commission materials, the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, and key policies covering management, finance, safeguarding, decision-making, risk, and strategy. They are further supported during and after induction by the Chair and other Trustees.





# THE BOW FOODBANK LTD.

**Registered Address:**

Bow Community Hall  
1 William Place  
London  
E3 5ED

**Charity no.** 1162185

**Company no.** 8852728

**Website:** [bowfoodbank.org](http://bowfoodbank.org)

**Email:** [info@bowfoodbank.org](mailto:info@bowfoodbank.org)

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