



# SUPPORTING BOW FOODBANK

NEIGHBOURS SUPPORTING NEIGHBOURS



**BOW  
FOODBANK**



## ABOUT US

Founded in 2014, Bow Foodbank was created by local faith and community groups to stand alongside neighbours struggling to make ends meet. It was built to remove barriers to food support and provide a welcoming place where anyone in crisis or waiting for benefits can access help without judgment.

## ACCESS FOR ALL

We offer **non-referral, judgement-free support** to anyone who needs it. We know that walking through the door can be the hardest step. In Tower Hamlets, where child poverty is the highest in the country, many families face impossible choices between food and other essentials. Our belief is simple: **no one should face these challenges alone.**

## ONE COMMUNITY

Over time, Bow Foodbank has grown into more than a place to collect food. It's a **community hub**. Guests return as volunteers, meet friends, and find connection. Many people hear about us through word of mouth, reflecting a community built on **trust, care, and mutual support.**

## SUPPORT BEYOND FOOD

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, benefits 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.

## STRONGER TOGETHER

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

# 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 use Bow Foodbank for under six months, but a smaller group rely 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.



# Impact at a Glance

(based on our last annual report)



**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



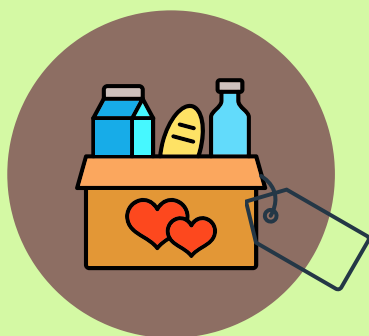
**123**

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

# CORPORATE SUPPORT & PARTNERSHIPS

At Bow Foodbank, we believe in

**NEIGHBOURS SUPPORTING NEIGHBOURS**



Our corporate teams are very much a part of **building roots** and **building stronger** communities, not only through **financial support**, but by sharing their **skills, time**, and **deepening their understanding** of the challenges people face and how poverty affects people in Tower Hamlets.

**24%** OF OUR INCOME COMES FROM CORPORATE DONORS

helping us to provide **consistent, reliable support** to those who need it most. Alongside this, many teams take part in **fundraising activities** such as sponsored challenges, food drives and bake sales, often match-funded by their organisations. These efforts have helped sustain giving, even during ongoing cost-of-living pressures.



## FUNDRAISING & FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Corporate fundraising enables us to continue delivering essential services while planning for the future. Whether through **one-off events, long-term partnerships**, or **matched giving schemes**, this support is vital in keeping our doors open and our shelves stocked.

## VOLUNTEERING & ENGAGEMENT

Our partnerships are about more than funding. **Group volunteers** play a vital role in our day-to-day operations from packing and distributing food parcels for guests to supporting the smooth running of sessions.

We also offer opportunities for teams to engage more deeply with the realities of food insecurity. Through initiatives like our **Food Parcel Challenge**, participants live off a foodbank parcel for three days. Many report that while hunger is manageable, the time, planning, and social limitations have a profound impact highlighting how difficult it can be to live without choice or flexibility.

**EXPERIENCES LIKE THIS BUILD UNDERSTANDING, ENCOURAGE COMPASSION, CHALLENGE ASSUMPTIONS, AND STRENGTHEN THE CONNECTION BETWEEN WORKPLACES AND THE COMMUNITIES AROUND THEM.**



## CHARITY OF THE YEAR PARTNERSHIPS

We welcome organisations to partner with us more closely as a chosen Charity of the Year. These partnerships create opportunities for deeper, longer-term engagement bringing together fundraising, volunteering, and skills-based support in a meaningful way.

We work collaboratively with partners to shape opportunities that align with their values and interests, whether that's through team volunteering days, fundraising campaigns, staff engagement activities, or sharing professional expertise. By building lasting relationships, we can create greater impact together.



## ADVICE, SKILLS AND PRO BONO SUPPORT

We also work with partners to bring **specialist skills** and **professional expertise** directly into our community. Through pro bono support, organisations help strengthen the advice and guidance available to staff, volunteers, and direct support to guests.

This includes areas such as legal or housing advice, financial/debt guidance, language support, digital skills or CV help, design/branding, project management or logistics support, or data/IT support etc. By sharing their knowledge, partners help us respond more effectively to complex challenges, while creating meaningful connections between professionals and the local community.

These contributions play an important role in expanding the support we offer, **helping us go beyond emergency food provision towards longer-term stability and opportunity.**

## CREATING LASTING IMPACT

Together, these partnerships go beyond immediate support. They foster understanding, build relationships, and contribute to lasting change both within our organisation and across the wider community.



# Quick Guide: Ways to Support

## As a business, there are a number of ways you can help us.

There are many ways to support Bow Foodbank whether through fundraising, volunteering, sharing skills, or building a longer-term partnership. Here are some ideas to get started:

- 1 GIVE REGULARLY**

Encourage your team to support us through payroll giving or regular donations. We are registered with Charities Trust and available on platforms including Benevity, YourCause, and CAF Donate (Charity No. 1162185).
- 2 MATCH FUNDRAISING**

Match your employees' fundraising efforts or volunteer hours to increase their impact and encourage greater participation.
- 3 SPONSOR A WEEK OF FOOD**

Help cover the cost of feeding local families for one week. Each week, we support 300–400 households with food costs of around £2,500. We'll share a report showing the difference your support has made.
- 4 TAKE ON A CHALLENGE OR FUNDRAISE**

Organise a sponsored event, workplace challenge, or team fundraiser. You can set up a page via our Local Giving platform to get started.
- 5 BECOME A CHARITY OF THE YEAR PARTNER**

Choose Bow Foodbank as your Charity of the Year and build a meaningful, longer-term partnership by building a relationship of ongoing support.
- 6 VOLUNTEER WITH US**

Bring your team for a group volunteering day and get involved in welcoming guests, packing, and distributing food. It's a hands-on way to support the community and understand our work. Please see our Corporate Volunteering page for more info.
- 7 SHARE SKILLS & EXPERTISE**

We are largely volunteer-led. Offer pro bono or discounted professional support in areas such as graphic design, transport, HR, data management and more! These skills are vital to how we operate.
- 8 RUN A FOOD DRIVE**

While we purchase most of the food we distribute to ensure consistency and meet demand, donated items help us reduce costs and free up funds for other essential areas of our work. We'll provide guidance on the items we need most to ensure your donations have maximum impact.

### LET'S WORK TOGETHER

We're always open to new ideas and partnerships. If you'd like to support Bow Foodbank, we'd love to hear from you!