



ANNUAL REPORT

2023

Registered Charity Number 1177303

Company Registration Number CIO13360

Principal Office Northgate Hospital
Morpeth
NE61 3BP



CHAIR: Richard Charles Anderson
TREASURER: John Rowley
SECRETARY: Mark Facey

TRUSTEES: Richard Charles Anderson
Peter Robertson
John Rowley
Mark Facey
David Binns
Richard Scholfield
Linda Fugill (resigned 8 Sept 2023)

ASSOCIATES: David Lea
Sheila Rowley

FOOD BANK
CO-ORDINATOR (Salaried): Claire Slater
Helen Griffiths

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER: Wellway Accountants Limited
Borough Hall
Wellway
Morpeth
NE61 1BN



Chairman's Remarks

Again, this past year has been a great challenge and has resulted in the highest ever need for food from Wansbeck Valley Foodbank (WVFB) in our 11-year history.

During 2023 we have employed two full time staff to help with the administration of the Foodbank. Also new Trustees joined us in order to expand our skill set. Our collection point at Ashington YMCA, now in its second year, is proving to be a success as many Ashington clients are collecting food parcels from this central point.

As our lease has expired on the Foodbank Warehouse, we have re-located to a temporary location still within the grounds of Northgate Hospital. These facilities will be used until the new permanent Foodbank Warehouse becomes available in Spring 2024.

A new larger delivery van was also purchased in 2023 to replace our ageing original delivery van.

I would like to thank all volunteers of the Foodbank. Those who have been with us many years and those who are new to us. Your commitment and efforts are greatly appreciated by the Trustees and the communities you serve. Also, I would like to thank Cumbria, Northumberland Tyne and Wear (CNTW) NHS Foundation Trust for allowing us use of their building as a warehouse and providing temporary accommodation until the new Warehouse is available.

A long serving Trustee, Linda Fugill, has recently stood down. Linda was part of the original group who first established the Foodbank and has worked in several roles during her 11years and the Trustees would like to thank her for her loyal and considerable time she has spent working for the Foodbank. We wish her all the best for the future.

During 2024 I look forward and hope that change for the better will come and ease the need for a Foodbank but until that happens the Foodbank will continue to offer help to everyone who needs it, with compassion.

Richard Anderson

Chair of Trustees



Trustees' Report

OBJECTS AND AIMS

Wansbeck Valley Food Bank is a registered charity, set up to prevent or relieve poverty or financial hardship in Northumberland. The charity achieves its aims and objectives, in particular but not exclusively by:

- The provision of emergency food parcels, items, services and facilities to individuals in financial need
- Contributing to and co-operating with charities and other organisations working to prevent or relieve poverty within Northumberland

OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

Should anyone doubt the need for food banks in our community then perhaps it's worth noting that our local grocery wholesaler considers that of all their major customers WVFB ranks among their biggest spenders. To meet client demand, in 2023 we purchased food to the value of £125,000. Add to this all the food donated in kind then the value of food channeled into our community by the food bank was £348,000, a 51% increase on the previous year.

Alternatively, consider this as being over 131,000 meals supplied to clients, which is 14% higher than 2022.

According to figures released by ONS, the price of food rose by 9.2% in the year to November 2023. As expected, those already reliant on benefits or experiencing problems with health, accommodation, family circumstances or a combination of these factors are the most likely to find their incomes stretched beyond their means.

In 2023 we reverted to pre COVID practice where food parcels are only issued on receipt of a referral made through one of our partner agencies. Self referrals are no longer accepted. This way the client is more likely to receive guidance and help to resolve the underlying reasons for their dilemma.



In line with many other food banks, it has always been our policy to provide 3 meals for 3 days for each eligible individual in the household. The number of return occasions is ostensibly limited to 3 times per year. In special circumstances we extend help beyond 3 days and 3 occasions within a 12-month period.

It is noticeable that 80% of our clients are being referred to us on a regular basis indicating no immediate resolution to their situation. One of the main aims of the food bank *"is for the provision of emergency food parcels, items, services and facilities to individuals in financial need."*

It remains a major concern to us that that some clients are using the Food Bank to supplement their income rather than for an emergency. We continue to monitor and liaise with our partner agencies on how best to assist our clients needs in such circumstances.

Mid way through 2023 we noted the reduction in volume of food donated combined with the escalating expenditure on food purchases suggested that left unchecked we would incur a significant overspend in 2023. Although reserves are in place for such eventualities, we began a program aimed at assessing the composition of 3-day and 7-day food parcels in terms of nutritional value, quantity, client ethnicity, and purchase cost. In addition, a review of our stock replenishment procedures was initiated.

We also initiated discussions with community agencies to explore ways in which we might diversify client support. These initiatives are ongoing.

For five years we have been operating out of the former mortuary at Northgate Hospital [renamed Northgate Park.] Now our tenancy has finally come to an end. Being aware this was to happen; we have been actively looking for alternative accommodation throughout 2023. If little else this exercise has emphasized the generosity and hospitality provided by Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Hospital NHS Foundation Trust [CNTW]

In parallel with our search for alternative accommodation, CNTW has again come to our rescue by offering to find us room in its flagship re-development of Northgate Park. We are deeply indebted to CNTW and look forward to this next stage in our joint collaboration.

Meanwhile we have moved into temporary on-site accommodation which has given us an ideal opportunity to review many aspects of our operation prior to the next move



2023 is the second year in partnership with the Ashington branch of the YMCA whose premises located in central Ashington offer clients a local collection point. Currently 40% of clients living in the immediate area choose to collect from here. It is our intention that others will be encouraged to do likewise allowing us the benefit of reduced vehicle costs and better utilisation of volunteers.

Our client delivery service and food collections from suppliers and local collection points is with the use of three dedicated vehicles one of which was newly purchased in 2023. With this arrangement we are looking for greater transport flexibility and reduced dependence on hire vehicles.

Several years ago, we appointed a full-time salaried food bank coordinator. This arrangement has served us well but as the organisation continued to expand and develop it became apparent that we should be looking to build more resilience and sustainability within our salaried administration structure. Recent experience confirms we can no longer rely on a single person, [be they volunteer or salaried,] to provide the resilience we are looking for. As a consequence of this in 2023 we appointed two full time salaried food bank coordinators.

Our operation is entirely dependent on the continuing and incredible generosity of the community in terms of food and financial donations. We are totally indebted to our faithful team of volunteers whose efforts in sorting, stacking and delivering food are essential to our operation.

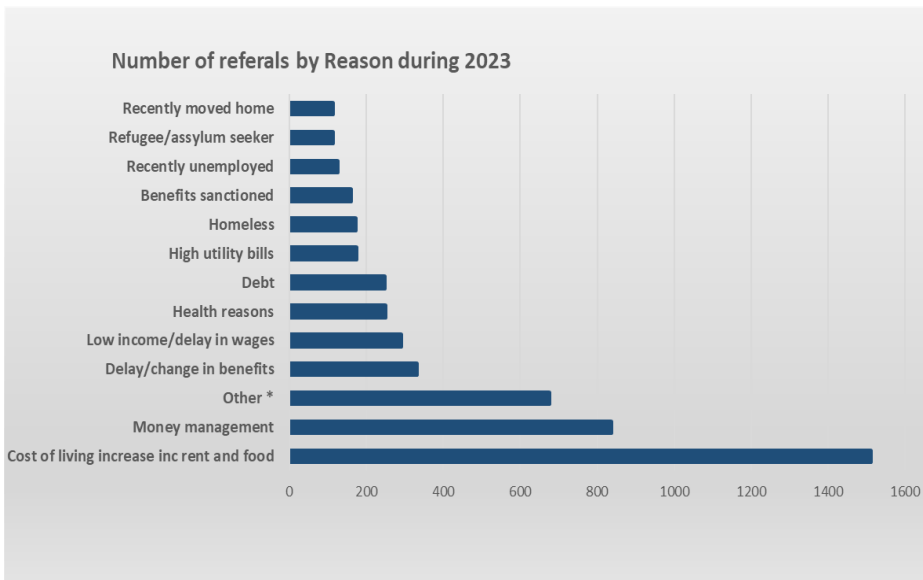
Notwithstanding all the increasing challenges, we continued to provide emergency food parcels to those identified as being in need. All appropriate requests were fulfilled.



PUBLIC BENEFIT

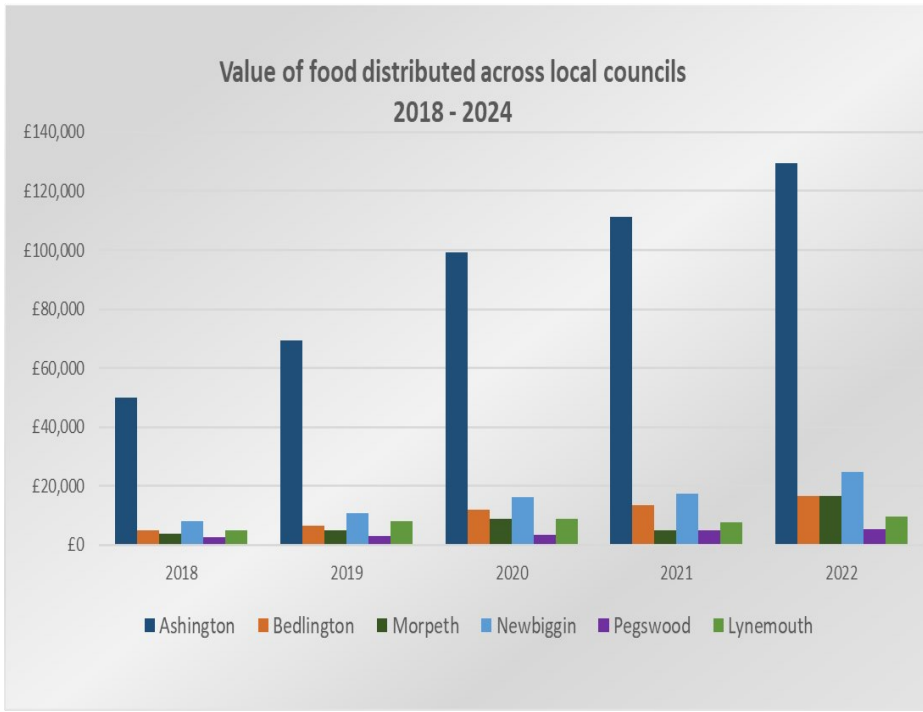
The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charities Commission for England and Wales.

Achievements and performance 2023



Other- includes; Financial Exploitation, Universal Credit Uplift, Bereavement/funeral costs, Not eligible for benefits, School holidays, Refugee/asylum seeker, Fleeing domestic violence, Recently left prison, Lost/Stolen Money, Universal Credit, Christmas or multiple reasons*

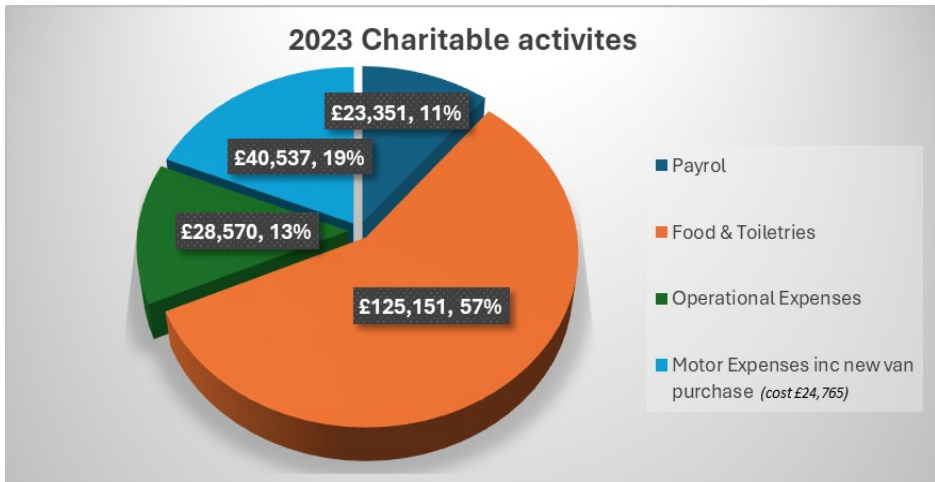
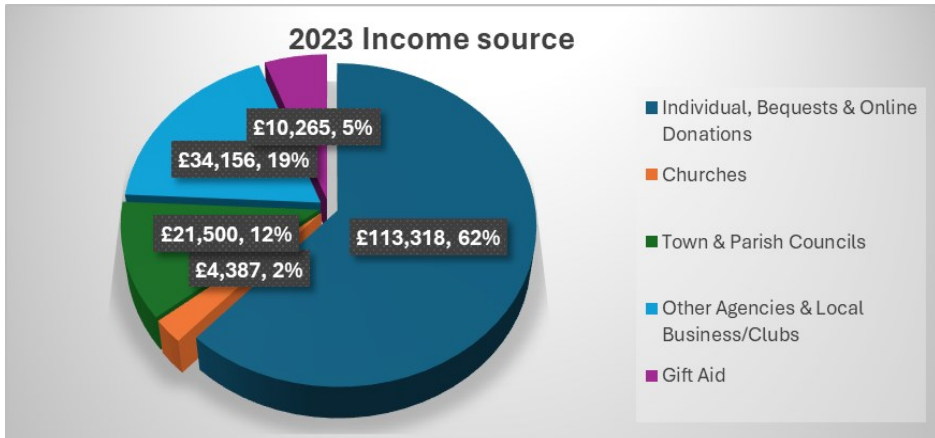
In the year 2023 we supplied 130,881 meals, this being a 14% increase on the previous year. As a consequence of food inflation, the total value of meals distributed increased by 51% on the previous year. Of those clients needing support, 20% are clients new to us.

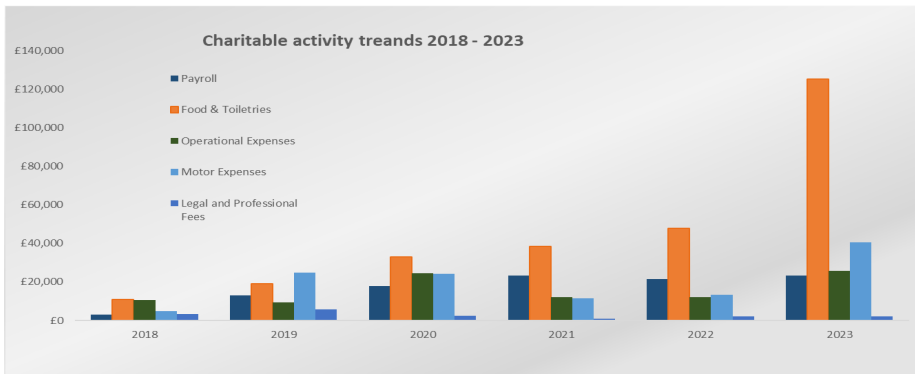


Total value of food distributed by WVFB 2018 - 2023					
2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
£89,262	£133,000	£170,292	£192,246	£230,226	£348,143

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The charity's current account will be maintained at approx. £10,000. This can be increased with trustee approval for exceptional items. The deposit account will be maintained for the remaining balances.





Policy on reserves

Our aim is to hold in reserves no less than 3 months of the total operating budget for the current year *[or an amount no less than £100,000, whichever is greater]*. This will ensure that all expenditure, including core salary costs will be covered in the event of a shortfall in funding. This amount to be reviewed quarterly in the light of operational costs.

Fundamental to the food bank operation is having an adequate warehouse distribution facility and associated office accommodation. We are assured that CNTW is making provision for us to remain on site at Northgate Park. None the less the trustees have decided it prudent to retain the sum of £100,000 in reserve to cover the cost of relocation to alternative accommodation should this be necessary.

We currently have use of three vehicles one of which is 8 years old. A sum of £25,000 has also been reserved should the Trustees consider it economic to replace this vehicle.

The total value of reserved/designated funds is £225,000 *[31st December 2023]*

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Nature of governing document

Wansbeck Valley Food Bank is governed by a Constitution of Charitable Incorporated Organisation.



Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Trustees are appointed at the AGM, however the trustees may appoint a new trustee to temporarily fill a vacancy or to bring in additional skills or experience. Such a trustee will retire at the next AGM but can then be reappointed.

A new role of Trustee Associate has been created to complement and broaden the experience and skill set of the Board of Trustees. It is particularly suited to those who are unable to fully commit to the demands and responsibilities of being a Trustee. It also offers potential Trustee candidates an insight and better understanding of the Food Bank governance. Associates will contribute to the routine working and decision making alongside the Board of Trustees.

The Trustees, where practicable are involved in the work of the Food Bank.

Organisational structure

For reasons mentioned above, the expansion of the food bank operation has stretched our administration resources beyond limit. Following the resignation of our former salaried food bank coordinator in March 2023 the opportunity was taken to review the food bank administration.

The review concluded that we needed to increase the number of salaried staff. In August 2023 we appointed two full time salaried food bank coordinators. Work continues to further define their specific roles and responsibilities to make best use of their skills and aspirations to the benefit of the food bank and our clients

The Annual Report was approved by the Trustees of the charity on 1st March 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

Revd John Rowley

Independent Examiner's report to the trustees of Wansbeck Valley Food Bank

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2023 details of which are summarised here. The full report is available on request.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees of Wansbeck Valley Food Bank you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act")

I report in respect of my examination of the Wansbeck Valley Food Bank's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention with the examination giving me cause to believe that any material respect:

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of Wansbeck Valley Food Bank as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. The accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. The accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

R Thompson
ICAEW
Borough Hall
Wellway
Morpeth
Northumberland NE61 1BN
Date 1 March 2023



Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2023

Current Assets	Year ended 31 December 2023	Year ended 31 December 2022
Cash at bank and in hand	275543	301413
Creditors: Amount falling due within one year*	<u>(3104)</u>	<u>(1993)</u>
Net Assets	<u>272439</u>	<u>299420</u>

Funds of the Charity

Restricted Funds	-	-
Unrestricted Income Funds		
Unrestricted Funds	<u>272439</u>	<u>299420</u>
Total Funds	<u>272439</u>	<u>299420</u>

*Creditors falling within one year

Other Taxation and Social Security	514	(321)
Other Creditors	252	99
Accruals	<u>2338</u>	<u>2215</u>
	<u>3104</u>	<u>1993</u>



Wansbeck Valley Food Bank
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the Period
for the year ended 31 December 2023

	Total Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total Unrestrict- ed funds 2022 £
Income and Endowments from:		
Donations and legacies	183626	180071
Investment income	5282	926
 Total income	 188908	 <u>180997</u>
Expenditure on:		
Raising funds	(1260)	(902)
Charitable activities	(214629)	(95458)
 Total expenditure	 (215889)	 <u>(96360)</u>
 Net income	 <u>(26981)</u>	 <u>84637</u>
Net movement in funds	(26981)	84637
 Reconciliation of funds		
 Total funds brought forward	 299420	 214783
Total funds carried forward	272439	<u>299420</u>



Wansbeck Valley Food Bank
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the Period
for the year ended 31 December 2023

	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£
<i>Donations and legacies</i>		
Legacies and bequests	573	-
Donations - Individuals	112746	91255
Donations – Churches	4387	2207
Donations Town and Parish Councils	21500	22130
Donations – Collection Boxes	100	-
Donations – Local Business and Clubs	11893	18496
Gift Aid Tax Reclaimed	10265	8278
Grants – other agencies	22162	37705
Grants—other agencies	-	-
	183626	<u>180071</u>
 <i>Investment income</i>		
Interest on cash deposits	5282	<u>926</u>
	<u>5282</u>	<u>926</u>



Wansbeck Valley Food Bank
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the Period
for the year ended 31 December 2023

	Total	Total
	2023	2022
	£	£
<i>Raising funds</i>		
Fundraising costs	(1260)	<u>902</u>
	=	=
<i>Charitable activities</i>		
Food and Toiletries	(123160)	(47277)
Packaging	(1176)	(2939)
Wages and Salaries	(25436)	(20403)
Staff pensions (Defined contribution)	(515)	(425)
Recruitment Cost	(426)	-
Rent	(3166)	(324)
Insurance	(680)	(578)
Telephone and Stationery	(4483)	(2088)
Equipment and IT	(5585)	(633)
Printing	(1600)	(2081)
Sundry Expenses	(305)	(366)
Northgate Premises Expenses	(5187)	(2444)
Motor Expenses	(40480)	(13540)
Accountancy fees	(2338)	(2230)
Bank charges	(92)	(129)
Other interest payable	-	(2)
	(214629)	<u>(95458)</u>



Notes to the Accounts: (Full details of these can be provided on application)

The trustees have prepared the trustees' report and financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Financial guarantee contracts

The trustees confirm, in accordance with the Charitable Incorporated Organisations (General) Regulations 2012, that at the year end the CIO did not have any outstanding guarantees to third parties nor any debts secured on assets of the CIO.

Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets purchased are written off in the year of purchase.

The charity owns a van which was transferred on incorporation in 2018. In 2020, a second van and two containers were purchased.

Trustees remuneration and expenses

No trustee, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charity during the year.



CLAIM: There are more food banks across the UK than McDonald’s restaurants

There are those who point out there are more food banks across the UK than McDonald’s restaurants and there are also those convinced there is no place for food banks in 2024. Conversely the huge growth in the food bank movement is vindication that the doubters are very much outnumbered by those who are deeply concerned by the prevalence of food poverty and have decided to do something about it.



Food poverty in the UK and beyond is not exclusively a product of modern times - it spans generations and cultures. The main difference today is that hunger is not stigmatized as it used to be and that is largely because of emerging food bank movement and more so those who are generously support their endeavours. In some ways the movement has become institutionalised. Even so, if you were in the unfortunate position of having nothing to put on the table for the kids tonight, it matters not if it’s an institution or a charitable gesture!



We at Wansbeck Valley Food Bank prefer to let others talk the politics. Instead, we would aim to make sure a decent – nutritional food parcel is delivered where and when it’s needed.

And this is how we make that happen



And here at a glance is what it takes to make it happen

The organisation:

80 Volunteers [20 up on previous year]

2: - Salaried staff members [1 up on previous year]

3 Vans [1 up on previous year]

28617 Annual milage

4485 Telephone calls

Busiest Hour 12:00 to 12.59

Busiest Day Wednesday

Busiest Month December

Public Benefit *[inc % increase on 2022]*

5557 Total Referrals *[20% increase on previous year]*

22 Daily Referrals Average

1762 households

7551 Adults *[20% increase on previous year]*

4038 Children *[18% increase on previous year]*

43627 Day People fed *[14% increase on previous year]*

80% Clients returning on a regular basis

4272 Referrals Delivered

1285 Referrals collected from YMCA

131,000 Meals issued *[14% increase on previous year]*

£348,143 Value of meals issued: *[51% increase on previous year]*

£125,000 Value of food purchased: *[162% increase on previous year]*



THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING:

Aldi Bedlington & Ashington
Asda Ashington
LIDL Morpeth
Local Co-ops
Morrisons Morpeth
Poundland Ashington
Sainsburys Morpeth

Ashington Town Council
Bedlington West Parish Council
Choppington Parish Council
Morpeth Town Council
Newbiggin Town Council
Northumberland County Council

Charities Trust
Elsie Davis Trust
Henriksen Trust
Lynemouth Power
NHS Integrated Care Systems [ICS]

Ashington Camera Club
Ashington Forum
Bedlington Blyth & District Riding Club
Labour Group Morpeth
Lions Club of Morpeth
Masonic Northumberland Mark Benevolent Fund
Morpeth Town Juniors
New Voice Choir
Northumbria Health Care NHS Foundation Trust
The Maritime Centre Newbiggin
Newcastle Building Society
Newcastle FC
North East Organic
Robson Prescott
Rotary Morpeth
Sing Morpeth
Skipton Building Society
Tranemo Workwear
Unison Northern NTW Branch
WERCA'S FOLK choir
Women's Institute Morpeth Town

Local Churches
Local Schools
Local Scout, Brownies & Rainbow Groups