



ANNUAL REPORT

2024

Registered Charity Number 1177303

Company Registration Number CEO13360

Principal Office Northgate Park
Morpeth
NE61 3BP



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

TRUSTEES: Richard Charles Anderson
John Rowley
Mark Facey
David Lea
David Binns (resigned 14 Feb 2024)
Peter Robertson (resigned 17 Feb 2024)
Richard Scholfield (resigned 24 Sept 2024)

ASSOCIATES: Karen Bower
Dawn Hallett
Sheila Rowley

FOOD BANK
CO-ORDINATOR (Salaried): Claire Slater
Helen Griffiths (resigned June 2024)
ADMIN SUPPORT Karina Henery (appointed Sept 2024)

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



Chairman's Remarks

This has been a year of change for Wansbeck Valley Food Bank (WVFB).

As stated last year our lease for the Food Bank warehouse was due to expire and over the past 12 months we have been operating from split locations on the Northgate Park site, a Portacabin, Grit Store and an Office. However, construction of our new permanent premises by Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Trust (CNTW) is nearing completion and we expect to relocate early 2025.

In addition to our distribution point at Ashington YMCA we have added Hirst Welfare Hub as an additional distribution point operating on different days from the YMCA.

It was mentioned at our last AGM that we have now partnered with the Full Circle Food Project who support and instruct those, living in South East Northumberland, with the rudiments of growing food and healthy cooking on a budget. As a result of this we now receive 30 to 40 microwaveable meals a week from Full Circle. The feedback from clients has been very positive.

With the help of a grant from the National Lottery we were able to purchase a new van that can accommodate pallet size purchases of goods thus enabling us to obtain bulk purchase discounts with no delivery costs.

During 2024 one of our salaried staff left and has now been replaced by a part time employee. We have also appointed two new Associate Trustees to help us expand our skill set. Welcome to all those involved.

To all the many volunteers, in whatever role you have at the Food Bank, I would like to thank you all for your commitment throughout 2024. Also, I would like to thank Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust for allowing us use of several buildings until the new warehouse is available.

During 2025 the Food Bank will continue to offer help to everyone who needs it in the hope that one day soon its services will no longer be required.

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

Good news and a sense of normality have been in short supply since the beginning of this decade.

Thankfully 2024 introduced the possibility that the lingering repercussions of COVID were on the wane and the soaring food costs combined with food supply chain restrictions were at long last returning to some semblance of ordinariness. That's not to say WVFB would be going to go out of business soon but surely all we had been waiting and wanting for almost three whole years was within our grasp.

And for WVFB this was our opportunity to step back a little and take stock of our activities and perhaps explore some fresh opportunities and new direction for our operation.

There was though one minor detail in need of our immediate attention and that involved what was to happen now our six-year residence at Northgate had run its course. In the final weeks of 2023, we were technically homeless.

It must be said that ever since Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Hospital NHS Foundation Trust [CNTW] first welcomed us to Northgate they have given unstinting support to our endeavours.



And rather than see us abandoned on the streets they have tried their utmost to somehow find us alternative accommodation as part of their Northgate Park redevelopment.

It has taken a long time to get to this stage but eventually formal proposals for a new building were submitted by CNTW mid 2024, and these ultimately received the blessing of those that matter in the NHS and the local planning authority. We can report with a degree of relief that construction of the new build was well under way towards the end of 2024. Discussions regarding tenancy agreements have yet to be concluded and we take nothing for granted. However, if all goes according to plan we should be relocated circa March 2025.

Meanwhile, as a stopgap, the Trust have made available office space for our administration - a small but secure warehouse in which to accommodate goods-in / bulk storage – and use of car parking space in which we use portable accommodation to pack and dispatch food parcels.

Working in this new split-site environment has not been without its challenges. However, our service to clients has continued without disruption. None of this would have been possible without the dedication and hard work of our volunteers and again the continuing support of CNTW for which the trustees are immensely thankful.

By chance this disruption to our established regular operational and administration routines has presented us with the ideal opportunity to reassess our longer-term operation.

One area of notable change is in the way in which we intend to source food stocks following the move. The main reasoning behind this is to achieve a minimum of 15% savings on the purchase of food, ensure we carry sufficient stock to alleviate the somewhat panic approach to stock replenishment, and to make most efficient use of warehouse space.

We successfully implemented this in part during 2024 in readiness for our relocation in 2025.

Improved methods for lifting and handling are also one of our aims.



We also intend to explore alternate ways of doing food bank. There is much to learn and gain from establishing partnerships with other organisations. Our work with the Full Circle Community Food Project initiative based in Ashington is an excellent example of this approach which is of mutual benefit to both organisations and not least, our clients. We are open to discussions with community agencies to explore ways in which we might diversify client support. These initiatives are ongoing.

The Trustees have become increasingly concerned about the number of clients who are using the Food Bank on a regular basis. The Food Bank exists to provide emergency food parcels and while it is appreciated that some emergencies will require more than one parcel, these parcels should not be seen as a solution to the issues the clients are facing.

We have therefore decided that a client can receive a maximum of one parcel per month, with a maximum of six parcels within a twelve-month period. This should not be seen as an entitlement, expectation, or guarantee.

We continue to monitor and liaise with our partner agencies on how best to assist our clients' needs in such circumstances.

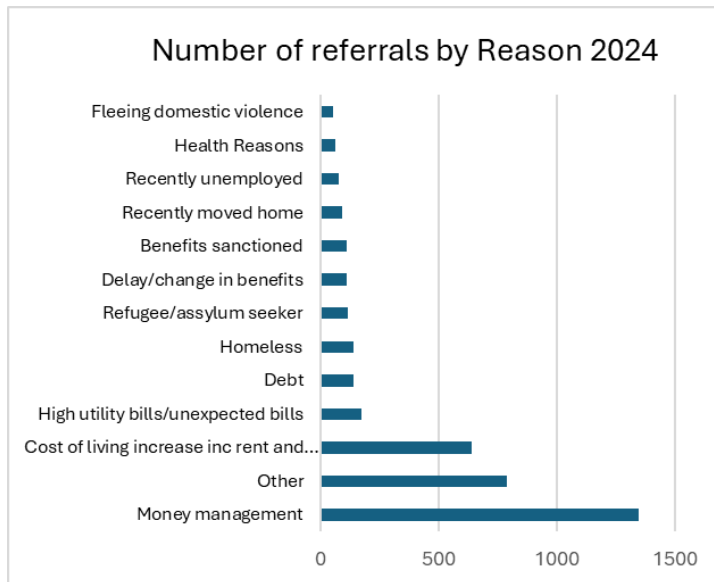
We also offer a local client distribution point in partnership with the Ashington branch of the YMCA. In 2024 an additional distribution point was established in conjunction with our Hirst Welfare partners.

Our client delivery service and food collections from suppliers and local collection points is with the use of three dedicated vehicles. A National Lottery Grant has enabled us to purchase an additional vehicle in 2024 and this is used mainly to collect food from suppliers.

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 collecting 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.



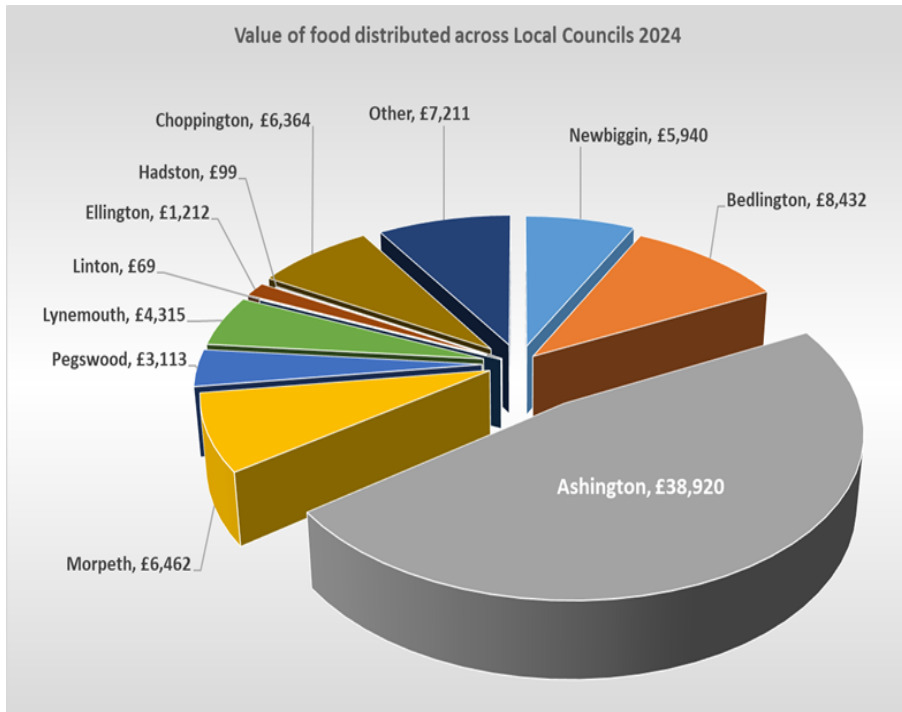
Other*- includes; Working but on sick leave, Starting New Job, Hospital to Home, Low Income / delay in Wages, Financial Exploitation, Recently Left Prison, School Holidays, Lost/Stolen Money, Alcohol & Drug Addiction, Temporary Accommodation- No Funds, Evicted, Not Eligible for Benefits, Universal Credit, Bereavement Costs, Christmas or multiple reasons

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 2024

In the year 2024 we received 3837 Referrals and supplied 49,329 meals to 5947 Adults and 2391 children. Of those clients needing support, 74% are returning clients.

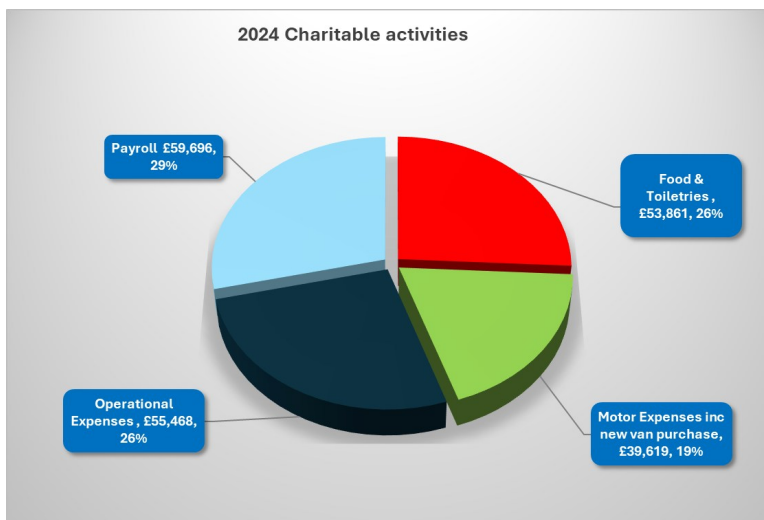
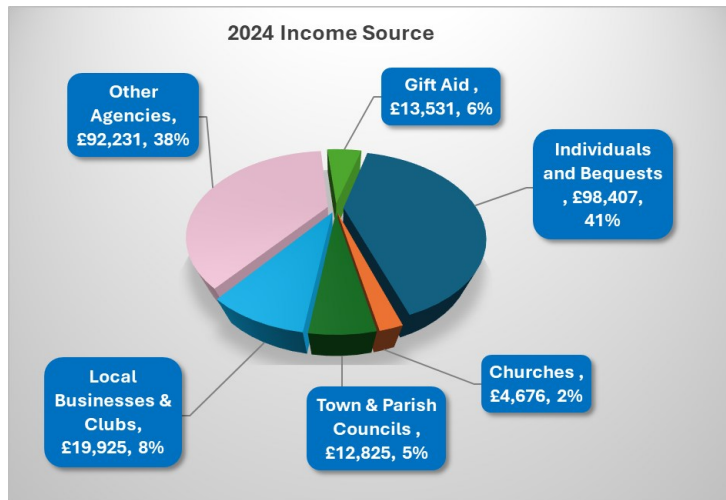


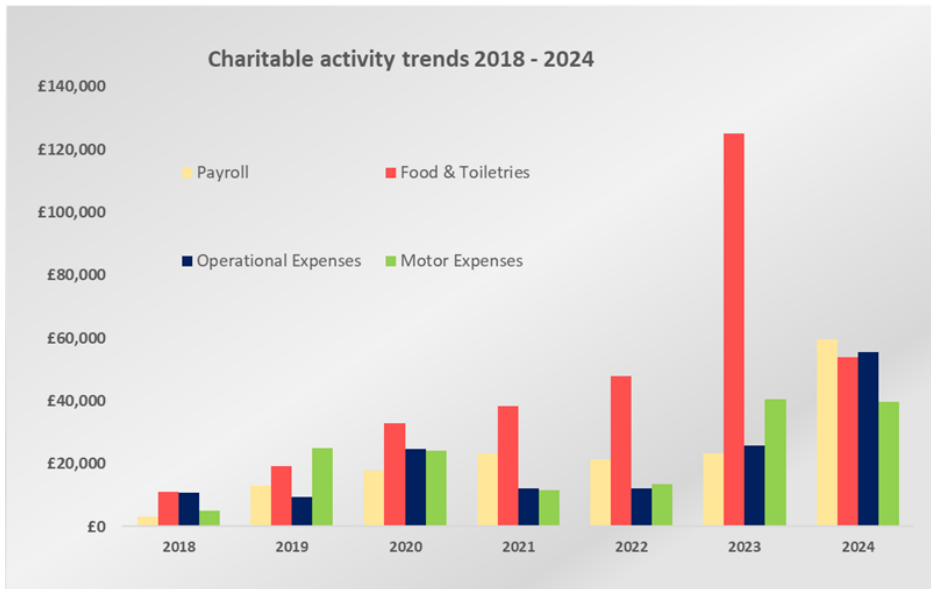
Expenditure on Food	£53,861
Value of Donated Food	£28,274
Value of Issued Food	£82,136



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 four vehicles one of which is 9 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 2024]*



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.

The 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

Work continues to further define the specific roles and responsibilities of the Board, Salaried staff and Volunteers in order to make best use of their skills and aspirations and to the benefit of the food bank and our clients

The Annual Report was approved by the Trustees of the charity on 9th January 2025 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 2024 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 5 March 2025



Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2024

Current Assets	Year ended 31 December 2024	Year ended 31 December 2023
Cash at bank and in hand	313590	275543
Creditors: Amount falling due within one year*	<u>(5726)</u>	<u>(3104)</u>
Net Assets	<u>310696</u>	<u>272439</u>
 Funds of the Charity		
Restricted Funds	-	-
 Unrestricted Income Funds		
Unrestricted Funds	<u>310696</u>	<u>272439</u>
Total Funds	<u>310696</u>	<u>272439</u>
 *Creditors falling within one year		
Other Taxation and Social Security	718	514
Other Creditors	223	252
Accruals	<u>4785</u>	<u>2338</u>
	<u>5726</u>	<u>3104</u>



Wansbeck Valley Food Bank
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the Period
for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Total Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total Unrestrict- ed funds 2023 £
Income and Endowments from:		
Donations and legacies	241958	183626
Investment income	7778	5282
 Total income	 249736	 188908
Expenditure on:		
Raising funds	(1175)	(1260)
Charitable activities	(210304)	(214629)
 Total expenditure	 (211479)	 (215889)
 Net income	 <u>(238257)</u>	 <u>(26981)</u>
Net movement in funds	(38257)	(26981)
 Reconciliation of funds		
 Total funds brought forward	 272439	 299420
Total funds carried forward	310696	272439



**Wansbeck Valley Food Bank
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the Period
for the year ended 31 December 2024**

	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£
<i>Donations and legacies</i>		
Legacies and bequests	1202	573
Donations - Individuals	97205	112746
Donations – Churches	4677	4387
Donations Town and Parish Councils	12825	21500
Donations – Collection Boxes	362	100
Donations – Local Business and Clubs	19925	11893
Gift Aid Tax Reclaimed	13531	10265
Grants – other agencies	92231	22162
Grants—other agencies	-	-
	241958	183626
 <i>Investment income</i>		
Interest on cash deposits	7778	5282
	<u>7778</u>	<u>5282</u>



Wansbeck Valley Food Bank
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the Period
for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Total	Total
	2024	2023
	£	£
<i>Raising funds</i>		
Fundraising costs	(1175)	(1260)
	-	-
<i>Charitable activities</i>		
Food and Toiletries	(53808)	(123160)
Packaging	(1348)	(1176)
Wages and Salaries	(58053)	(25436)
Staff pensions (Defined contribution)	(1373)	(515)
Recruitment Cost	(105)	(426)
Rent	(19468)	(3166)
Insurance	(817)	(680)
Telephone and Stationery	(4446)	(4483)
Equipment and IT	(8965)	(5585)
Printing	(1781)	(1600)
Sundry Expenses	(536)	(305)
Northgate Premises Expenses	(17441)	(5187)
Motor Expenses	(39618)	(40480)
Accountancy fees	(2448)	(2338)
Bank charges	(97)	(92)
Other interest payable	-	-
	(210304)	(214629)



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 four vans and a pallet stacking truck..

Trustees remuneration and expenses

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



Maybe we were once a little naive in thinking the food bank movement would be a quick fix after which all would be well with the world and food banks would be no more.

Well, we all know over a decade later how much we were mistaken.

Sadly, the affordability of food and its accessibility in our immediate community continues to be a recurrent issue with no signs of it being sorted any time soon.

The people who know about such things tell us that an estimated 7.2 million adults and 2.7 million children experienced food insecurity in 2024.



They also inform us that households with children in the poorest fifth of the population would have to spend 70% of their disposable income on food simply to afford the government-recommended healthy diet.

We can only but hope that one day soon the fundamental causes of all this will be resolved. But for now, the food bank movement continues to support those who might be desperately looking for their next meal.



Meanwhile we at Wansbeck Valley Food Bank along with the support of all our friends are dedicated to supplying a nutritional food parcel to where and who is in need.



And here at a glance is what it takes and what we do to make that happen

The Organisation:

92 Volunteers [including Trustees]

2: - Salaried staff members

4 Vans [1 up on previous year]

25724 Annual milage

3472 Telephone calls

Busiest Hour 12:00 to 12.59

Busiest Day Wednesday

Busiest Month January

Public Benefit

15 Average referrals process daily

3837 Total Referrals

5947 Adults fed

2,391 Children fed

49,329 meals issued

£53,861 value of food purchased

£28,274 value of food donated

£82,136 total value of food issued

1,550 Households

118 Homeless referrals

£53 average value of food received by each household

74% Clients returning on a regular basis

3351 Referrals Delivered

486 Referrals collected from distribution point



THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING

Academy Northumberland CofE
AECOM LIMITED
AKZO Nobel
Ashington Camera Club
Ashington Hurst Rugby Club
Ashington Town Council
Ashington United
Bedlington FC
Bernicia Foundation
British Rail
CAF Bank
Carr & Co Solicitors
Charities Trust
Choppington Parish Council
County Durham Community Foundation
Dukes Secondary
Elsie Davis Trust
Food Standard Agency
Handels Banken
Henriksen Trust
Jewsons
Karbon Homes
ICS
Lions Club of Morpeth
Local Churches
Local Schools
Local Scout, Brownies & Rainbow Groups
Masonic Northumberland Mark Benevolent Fund
Menzies Distribution Ltd
Morpeth All Saints [Friends of]
Morpeth and District Gardening Club
National Lottery
Newbiggin Maritime Centre
Newcastle Building Society
Nissan Sunderland
North East Organic
Rotary Cramlington
Rotary Morpeth
Roundabout Club
Thirston Parish Council
Timley
Tranemo Workwear Ltd
WI Lancaster Park
WI Morpeth Town
Woodhorn Museum