



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Foyle Network Foundation is a member of the Trussell Trust.

Together, we're creating a future without the need for Food Banks

We should all be free from hunger.

We should all have enough money for the essentials.

It's not right that anyone needs a food bank.

Everyone should have enough income to cover the essentials we all need to live.

Together, we can build a future where none of us need a food bank, because none of us will allow it.

#GuaranteeTheEssentials

[Foyle.foodbank.org.uk](https://foyle.foodbank.org.uk)

[Trusselltrust.org](https://trusselltrust.org)

When



People are  
going without

It's time to

**GUARANTEE  
OUR ESSENTIALS**



JRF JOSEPH  
ROUNTREE  
FOUNDATION



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## WELCOME

### Karen Mullan - Strategic Development Manager

2023 was a year of many changes, we increased our staff team which enabled us to provide more support services. Trussell Trust provided us with funding for a Financial Inclusion Project to help maximise people's income, deal with debt and include money management advice and guidance.



This year we joined Feeding Britain, a network of affordable food projects supporting people in their communities and working for change to eliminate hunger. We worked closely with Derry City and Strabane District Council and other organisations in the City for a number of months on designing and delivering winter support interventions.

We continued to listen to those using and referring to our service and a continuous thread, was that our name Foyle Foodbank was seen as a barrier for some people reaching out or accepting help. We also heard that we are more than a Foodbank and our name should reflect that. So, with the support of Trussell Trust we engaged Gray's Communications to explore if this was so and to work with our stakeholders and partners. We are delighted with our new branding and name, Foyle Network Foundation.

We seen more people using our foodbank for the first time. Winter was really difficult for many people and this resulted in our busiest Christmas to date. Even in difficult times we were totally overwhelmed with the donations and support we received from the public and businesses. People knew how tough it was for others and wanted to support them where they could, and we are extremely grateful to those who donated. I want to thank our team at Foyle Foodbank, the staff, volunteers and board of directors for your commitment and hard work. I have no doubt by working together we will be able to face the challenges and developments of the coming year.

I want to thank the team at the Trussell Trust, in particular Jonny and Julianne, for their strategic direction and ongoing support.

On behalf of us all, I want to thank those who donate, give their time to help at our events or organising your own, the businesses who have donation points, APEX who support us with our premises, our funders, our community partners, referral agents and everyone who has helped us, we look forward to working with you all again in the coming years.



## MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON

Denis McGowan

Foyle Foodbank is a place where people can come, when suddenly confronted, for whatever reason, with the fact that they have no money for food or struggling financially. The foodbank is the visible conduit between the generosity of local people and those who for whatever reason cannot at times afford the essentials of life.



Foodbanks can only ever be a temporary sticking plaster solution. In the past year and with financial and strategic help from the Trussell Trust Pathfinder Project under the guidance of a Strategic Development Manager, the Foyle Foodbank is slowly developing a model hub of “wrap around services” and a pathway for tackling and dealing with poverty.

Along with several other foodbanks , we are moving from a reactive response to a more proactive and integrated model that will help move people away from foodbank dependency to a place where, at least they have some measure of resilience. We are excited to announce that over the last few months we undertook with financial help from The Trussell Trust to engage Gray’s Communication to carry out consultation work around our current brand and name. Those who use our service, volunteers, staff and board members were involved and we are delighted with our new name Foyle Network Foundation and our fresh new look, that will encompass all of our services and partnerships.

We have much more work to do, and many plans for the coming year. We could not do this without the generosity and support of local people and businesses, our staff, our dedicated volunteers, funders, partners and our Board.

I want to thank you all and I look forward to working with you.

## JONNY CURRIE

### Trussell Trust N.Ireland Network Lead

The Trussell Trust network in Northern Ireland consists of 23 food banks that operate in 50 locations, serving people in all 18 Assembly constituencies. The last year has been our busiest ever, with 39,334 emergency food parcels provided to people across NI between April and September. Low incomes, especially from social security, debt, health conditions and issues with social security payments such as delays or sanctions were the main reasons people were left with no option but to turn to a food bank for help.



Our food bank network is still highly engaged locally in supporting our strategy to end the need for food banks. They change communities through building stronger referral relationships with community, voluntary and statutory support organisations to ensure people only need to access emergency food as a last resort and receive the most appropriate follow-on assistance to maximise their income. Our food bank network changes minds through supporting participation work that amplifies the voices of lived experience to inform food bank operations and build understanding of what drives people to food banks. This ranges from setting-up lived experience panels to the production of awareness-raising videos on what support to expect when you visit a food bank. Food banks in NI are playing an increasing role in changing policy at local council level as well as at Stormont and Westminster. Anti-poverty conversations at a local level are being led by many of our food banks through the chairing of anti poverty forums and convening local response plans to influence council community plans and priorities.

This year we released “Hunger in Northern Ireland” - the first of its kind in-depth study on hunger, its causes, impacts and who is affected, in NI. The return of the NI Executive now offers the potential for deeper work to change communities, minds and policy with the aim of ending the need for emergency food. Foyle Food Bank continues to play a leading role within our network as a Pathfinder food bank, and in the year ahead I know we will continue to work together to achieve our shared goal of ending the need for food banks in our communities.

## OUR REBRAND

As part of our Pathfinder work we had identified the need to reimagine our Foodbank, as we are more than a Foodbank and provide a range of services and recognising there can be barriers to reaching out or contacting a Foodbank. Trussell Trust provided funding to contract Gray's Communications. Gray's provided their expertise and worked alongside our clients, staff, volunteers, board and Trussell Trust, they listened and tested the market to help us come up with our new name, brand design, vision and mission. We are delighted to enter 2024 with our new name and logo.



### SWALLOW Symbology

The swallow represents hope, strength and resilience. The birds taking flight are a representation of the journey of coming to seek help and flying upward. The swallow is a symbol of good hope for sailors at sea, as this represents them being close to land and firm ground.

### Vision

Our vision is for a vibrant and thriving community, putting an end to hunger and poverty while fostering an environment of resilience and prosperity. We are guided by deep compassion and unyielding commitment, and we aspire to create a community where every individual receives crucial support with dignity and compassion.

### Mission

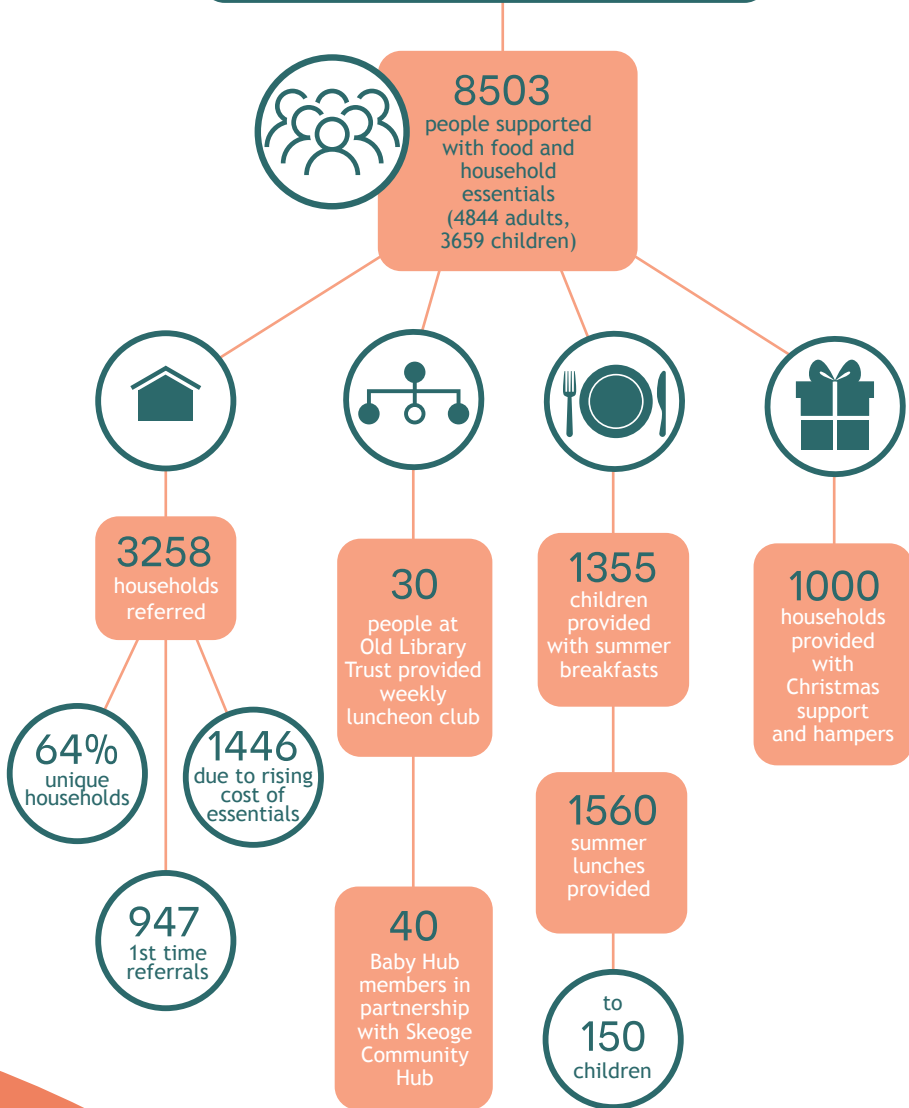
At Foyle Network Foundation, we are dedicated to eradicating hunger and poverty within the Foyle area. We are committed to providing essential support while fostering dignity, respect, and empowerment within our community.



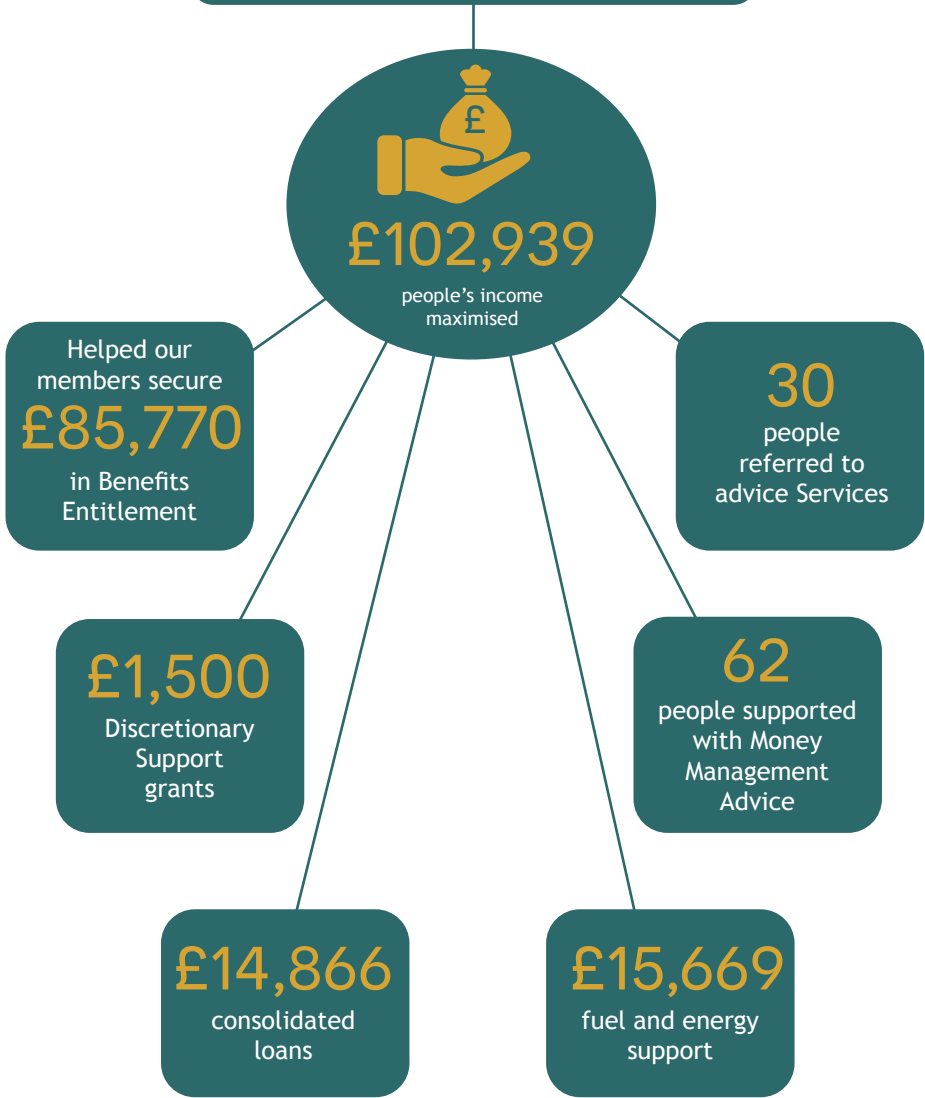
# THANK YOU



## SUPPORT PROVIDED



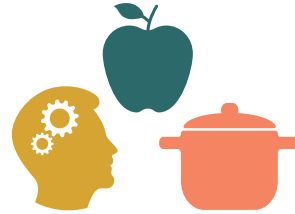
# FINANCIAL INCLUSION



## WHAT WE PROVIDED

### Other programmes and activities included:

- Counselling
- Nutrition and wellbeing programmes
- Cooking demonstrations for Halloween and Christmas



### In partnership with others:

- Baby Hub and Family Fun Day with Skeoge Community Hub
- Weekly lunch club with Old Library Trust to 30 people
- Information events in partnership with Waterside Neighbourhood Partnership and Derry City and Strabane District Council
- Summer Breakfast Clubs and Summer Lunches for children and young people
- Savings Scheme with Derry and Pennyburn Credit Union
- Food Drives in Sainsburys and Tesco Lisnagelvin and Quayside Shopping Centres



## 2023 HIGHLIGHTS



APR  
23

**Financial Inclusion** - Trussell Trust provided funding for a Financial Inclusion Officer to develop and deliver a project, to work in partnership with advice services and credit unions to provide benefits advice, specialist debt, savings, money management and advice on every day household bills.

**Social Supermarket** - By adding this service, it allowed us to provide longer term support to more people.



MAY  
23

**Baby Hub Skeoge** - We opened the first of our Baby Hub projects in partnership with the team at Skeoge Community Hub. Local parents of children aged 0-3 yrs sign up as members and fortnightly avail of family toiletries for £5. As part of our work with Pennyburn Credit Union, we have signed many of the children up to the credit union and from the £5 fee we save £2 per fortnight alongside their parents saving.



JUNE  
23

Earlier in the year we formed a partnership with Feeding Britain and in June we visited several of their projects in Liverpool to view different affordable food models.



JULY  
23

Supported 15 organisations with breakfast items for their summer scheme projects. Provided hot lunches to St Marys Youth Club and Skeoge Community Hub.



AUG  
23

Established Participation Forum 'The Swallows' with 8 members who had accessed or were involved in our service. The group meets regularly and helps inform our work, improve our service and works with The Trussell Trust on policy and research work.



SEP  
23

Derry City and Strabane District Council provided funding to offer extra support and information events over the winter, to help inform and support people with winter pressures.



OCT  
23

Engaged Gray's Communication to rebrand and re-imagine our Foodbank.



DEC  
23

With the support of a team of volunteers and donations from the public and businesses we provided 1,000+ households with Christmas Hampers.

## HOW WE HELPED

**Margaret** self-referred, working single mum with a 6-year-old child struggling with multiple credit and store card debts. We supported through Community Supermarket and Financial Inclusion. Referral was made to local credit union to consolidate debts, Margaret was already a member but wasn't aware they could provide this help.

When bank statements were reviewed, they saw finance loans with other stores that were accumulating interest. A £6,000 loan was offered, so that Margaret would be making one-off payments to the credit union each month to make finances more affordable.

Margaret said "I am grateful for the support from Elaine, I would not have been able to contact the credit union without her advice due to uncertainty and nerves around my financial situation."

Margaret has found herself in a better financial position which has allowed her to no longer need the services from the food bank and has eliminated a lot of stress from her life.

*"Overall the Foodbank has been my lifeline. It's not just going and getting a few groceries to keep you and your family going, it's the whole support network, meeting new people and being able to talk to others and knowing we're all in it together and we're all on the same boat!"*

*"I've been a food bank client since December 2022 and it has literally transformed my life through practical and emotional support. I actually dread to think where me and my children would be today without their intervention. I've also attended cooking courses that have not only educated me on healthier eating habits but has reduced long-term isolation I've felt as a single parent, carer and home educator of my daughter with disabilities."*

**Michael** referred from Advice Northwest, married with four children, off work due to illness. Was supported through the Community Supermarket and attended cooking classes. Met with Elaine who referred to ASK advice who helped apply for PIP which was successful. Received support with fuel and electricity and was referred to the Resource Centre who provided hot meals as part of their winter support. Michael said “The Foodbank staff are absolutely amazing and really helpful. I was very scared at first going in but they make you feel at ease. They helped me so much, without their support I would have not be eating.”

*“Thank you so much for getting me set up in the credit union. I always wanted to get into it but found it hard and now you guys have sorted it out, Thank you so much”*

Through working with our partners, we were able to support Michael and his family, this support enabled Michael to return to work, receive benefits that he was entitled to which helped increase his household income so that he no longer needs our help.

**Niamh**, “As a single mother the baby hub has helped me in numerous ways by providing additional support and guidance. Paying £5 a fortnight and receiving all of the essential toiletries for my daughter and I has been a weight lifted from my shoulders, this has let me put my money into electric, gas and food.

*“Hi just to let you know the credit union has approved me for a loan to clear them big debt books, thankfully. I’m delighted and it’s thanks to you”*

My daughter and I love meeting the girls, they’re super helpful and make you feel very welcome. The baby Hub has introduced me to the credit union. I wanted to sign my daughter up to the credit union since she was born but I hadn’t got around to it. When the baby hub collaborated with the credit union this gave me a great opportunity to start a saving scheme for her which won’t be touched until she is 18. When I save for my daughter the baby hub saves £2 also which will make such a positive impact to her future.”

## STAFF



Karen Mullan  
Strategic  
Development  
Manager



Louise Kane  
Project Support  
Worker



Elaine Porteous  
Financial  
Inclusion Officer



Seanan Walker  
Project  
Administrator



Lynn Connolly  
Project Support  
Worker



Frances Murray  
Community  
Supermarket  
Coordinator



James McGrady  
Warehouse and  
Building  
Supervisor



Bethany Moore  
Community  
Campaign's  
Coordinator

## VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers help out daily and weekly to help us provide all our services. They provide roles such as support in our office, warehouse, welcome area, shop, packing areas, collections from our donation points, help with deliveries, provide financial inclusion advice and counselling. Thanks to volunteers from Seagate, Lycra, Foods Connected, Learning Pool and All State who help out at various times of the year.





## TONY MURRAY

Volunteer in Office

“Sometimes people and families need a bit of support to get them through challenging times and its nice to be there for them. Foyle Foodbank plays an essential role in sustaining the clients who avail of our services.



I get to bring some of my own life and work experiences to what we do here. I’ve had the opportunity to meet a lot of new friends and volunteering also gives me a sense of purpose.”

## VOLUNTARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Denis McGowan  
Chairperson



Alison Wallace  
Vice Chairperson



Des Reid  
Treasurer



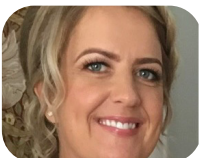
Karen Mullan  
Secretary



Teresa McCloskey  
Board Member



Gerry Kelly  
Board Member



Deirdre McDaid  
Board Member



Alan Rodden  
Board Member



Damien McAdams  
Board Member

## PHOTOS



# PHOTOS



Thanks to all our funders and partners



## CONTACT DETAILS



Unit 15, Springtown Industrial Estate, Derry, BT48 0LY



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## OPENING HOURS

Foodbank services - Monday/Tuesday/Thursday/Friday 11am - 2pm

Office hours - Monday to Thursday 9am - 5pm / Friday 9am - 3pm

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## TO DONATE

Paypal : [info@foyle.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@foyle.foodbank.org.uk)

Bank Details: Foyle Foodbank Ltd

Sort Code: 950679    Account no: 90109568



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