

Although I only took over as Chair in October 2021, this report will cover the period from the beginning of the financial year in April.

Following the massive increase in demand in 2020 due to the pandemic we had expected 2021 to be a quieter year, but unfortunately it didn't turn out to be any better. It seems that the knock on effects of 2020 together with ongoing uncertainty about availability of work, etc resulted in demand which was, in real terms, greater than 2020. On a positive note, we finished 2021 with a refined strategy for dealing with the distribution of Christmas parcels which made the whole process run very smoothly. We've already started planning for this year!

Unfortunately, 2022 is looking like being another very busy year, with none of the usual decrease in demand that we'd expect to see in March/April. The economic crisis is taking its toll, and that means that more people are struggling to make ends meet. At the moment, our finances are healthy and we're still getting a good amount of food and cash donations, but these are things that we need to keep a close eye on to ensure that we maintain enough resources to continue to provide a reasonable level of support to the community.

Of course, our most valuable resource is our Volunteers and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the hard work that has gone into keeping things running so smoothly over a prolonged challenging period.

Looking ahead, we're recruiting new volunteers for the South of our area, and assessing our team in the North to ensure that we have adequate cover. I've also been building relationships with other food aid providers across our region, to ensure that everyone has the most up-to-date information about what's going on, and to allow us to share resources if necessary.

Unfortunately, the prolonged very busy period has resulted in some things being allowed to slip and there are some areas that will need to be addressed

-

Compliance - we need to ensure that all our practices and record-keeping comply with the law and the rules of OSCR

Communication - we need clarity on what should be communicated, by whom, to whom, and within what timescales

Cooperation - we need to keep strong team working practices within the organisation, as well as ensuring that we work well with other organisations within our community

Although most of these are the responsibility of the Trustees, it is hoped that volunteers will do their best to support us with these aims.

I'm anticipating a challenging year ahead, but am confident that we have the experience and enthusiasm to get through it.