

Loose Ends Newbury

Annual Report

2023 – 2024



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

14th October 2024

Thank You

Loose Ends Newbury could not operate without the generosity and support of many individuals, organisations and businesses.

The organisations we worked closely with in 2023/24 and thank for their co-operation include:

Newbury Cricket Club
Newbury Town Council
Volunteer Centre West Berkshire
West Berkshire Homeless
West Berkshire Action for Refugees
Homestart
Family Support Workers
The Family Hub

Those helping with our food supplies include:

Sewa Day
SOFEA
West Berkshire Foodbank
Nandos
Sainsbury's
Tesco
Waitrose

In 2023/24 we received major financial donations from:

Cavendish Nuclear Ltd
David Wilson Homes
Jones Robinson
Newbury Rotary Club
Plymouth Brethren Christian Church
Sewa Day
Victory Lodge
West Berkshire Lottery Community Fund

To all the schools, churches, local clubs, businesses and individuals who donated financially or in a practical way to us - we can't mention everyone but we are very grateful to you all.

CHAIR REPORT

We were very sad to hear of the death of our founder Richard Westall, who had the vision and worked so hard to set up Loose Ends Newbury. Richard raised the initial start-up funding and opened a drop-in centre at Morton Hall providing a sandwich lunch on a Sunday for a one-year trial period, which has expanded beyond anything imagined at the time. He has left a very special legacy to our community with Loose Ends Newbury still going strong after 34 years.

We were sad too to hear of the sudden death of Peter Ramsay. Peter had joined us only recently as a volunteer. He had a mischievous sense of humour and many stories to tell and was very popular with volunteers and clients alike.

In the past year we have continued to operate as a drop-in centre five days a week, providing hot nutritious meals, food packages and wider support to homeless, lonely, vulnerable or financially struggling adults in our community. We have also continued to assist local families through the Northcroft Kitchen after school on a Monday, which we launched in February 2023.

Our Loose Ends sessions typically see between 20 and 30 people sit down to enjoy a hot meal and in the past year alone we supported some 350-400 individual adults, serving over 5,500 meals and providing over 2,300 parcels with toiletries and food essentials. We had over 50 volunteers cooking, serving, clearing and generally supporting the sessions. The winter 'cost of living crisis' also saw us return to opening a weekly 'warm hub' before our Tuesday lunch session, providing clients with somewhere warm to sit and relax. Northcroft Kitchen provided 'tea after school' for up to 15 children and their parents and carers.

We were delighted earlier this year to hear that Loose Ends Newbury has been nominated to receive the Kings Award for Voluntary Service (KAVS), the charitable organisation equivalent of the MBE. In early January trustees and some volunteers met with the deputy Lieutenant for Royal Berkshire and his colleague for the thorough assessment process that determines whether the charity receives the award. We will have to wait until November to hear the outcome when the awards are announced on the birthday of King Charles. This nomination is a huge testament to all the work undertaken by our volunteers who should be justifiably proud of the service Loose Ends Newbury provides.

We are grateful to Newbury Cricket Club for the use of the clubhouse and the constructive manner in which our two organisations work together.

For a significant proportion of the year, we worked with West Berkshire Action for Refugees providing a hub for lunch gatherings in the Global Kitchen. This stopped at the end of 2023 when the Refugees were re-located but we are very pleased to have offered the service and would want to do so if asked again.

We are continuing to see an increase in the cost of food. This does challenge us directly in terms of our running costs but we are immensely grateful for all the donations we have received and the continued support from key benefactors.

We have continued to work with other local organisations to help rough sleepers, the homeless and the vulnerable. Trustees and volunteers from Loose Ends Newbury make every effort to attend meetings and liaise with the different organisations concerned with food poverty and homelessness in Newbury.

We are very sad to see the departure of Pat Burke as a Trustee from the date of the Annual General Meeting. Pat has been a volunteer at Loose Ends Newbury for over 15 years and will continue as a member of the food team, session volunteer and Supervisor. She has always been a true stalwart of the charity.

We will also be seeing Ian Nichol leave as Treasurer/Trustee once we have been able to recruit a replacement. Ian took on the Treasurer role some 4 years ago and has been a very valued trustee.

We are always pleased to hear from anyone who might be interested in joining us as a Trustee.

A big thank you to all those local companies, local groups, local schools and local churches who organised events raising money and items for Loose Ends Newbury, and to those undertaken challenges with sponsorship going to Loose Ends Newbury.

Finally, many thanks to all our wonderful volunteers who give their time, talents and energy to make sure Loose Ends Newbury continues to provide a much needed service.

Diana Lacey
Chair



VOLUNTEERS

Loose Ends Newbury continues to be run entirely by dedicated and hard working, unpaid, volunteers who give up their time to make sure our sessions are run efficiently throughout the year. We are proud of the service we run and grateful to everyone who contributes to the smooth running of our operation.

There are currently 56 members of Loose Ends Newbury who volunteer in various capacities and in the past year we have welcomed 15 new volunteers. However, we do inevitably lose volunteers every year, so we are always keen to recruit new people to join us.

Across Loose Ends and Northcroft Kitchen sessions we need to fill 25 volunteer slots a week with other volunteers required to do off-site cooking, menu planning, stock taking, organising food supplies and collections. The rota for volunteers is run by Noni Knight who does a fantastic job making sure all slots are filled every week. Our volunteers also provide facility management, IT/social media services and administration support behind the scenes, and act as trustees.



Volunteering at Loose Ends Newbury offers a fulfilling and flexible way to contribute to our local community and to meet lots of different people. Sessions can be hard work but can also be fun! We could not operate without our volunteers so thank you to everyone who works so hard both at the sessions and behind the scenes and particular thanks to our Supervisors who take on the responsibility for leading every session.

We look for volunteers in several ways. Word of mouth is a great way to attract volunteers especially via existing volunteers as they are perfectly placed to tell friends and relatives about volunteering with us.

The Volunteer Centre West Berkshire does a wonderful job supporting local charities and help us enormously with recruitment. We thank them and congratulate them on celebrating their 50th birthday in 2024. Coverage in the local press and radio is also useful in attracting new volunteers and making the public aware of the work we do.

Our training programme was looked after by Cathy Jenkins and Paul Spour. We require all session volunteers to have an up-to-date Level 2 Hygiene qualification and much of the focus is on making sure this happens so we can maintain the highest hygiene standards. This year many volunteers have also undertaken an optional allergens course. A session on Drug Awareness took place in June which several of the supervisors attended.

OPERATIONS

Loose Ends, which is open to all adults, serves a hot, nutritious meal at five sessions each week. A cooked lunch and pudding are served on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday and a full English breakfast on Wednesday and Friday. Tea, coffee, juice and fresh fruit are always available. Food parcels, toiletries, practical clothing and camping equipment are also made available to clients on a 'no questions asked' basis.

We have a very wonderful setting and facility to provide our services.



We continue to focus on maintaining the nutritional quality of our offering to clients. Our meals are as varied, appetising and nutritious as our talented cooks can make them.

We are fortunate to have well established and stable supply chains. These include a subscription to South Oxfordshire Food and Education Alliance (SOFEA) who supply us with a variety of ambient, chilled and frozen food. West Berkshire Foodbank (WBFB) also supply us with ambient items for use in sessions. Fareshare Go arrange regular collections, by Sewa Day, as a Community Food Redistribution Organisation, of donated surplus products from local supermarkets including fresh fruit, vegetables and baked goods.

Nandos donations of chicken provide quality protein which we use to cook a variety of different lunch dishes. We would also like to thank Sainsbury's, Tesco and Waitrose for their generous donations.

Any gaps on the shelves are filled with regular shopping trips and all deliveries are received and stored by our amazing Monday food team.

We are also lucky enough to receive donations of food and toiletries from local businesses, the general public, schools and churches throughout the year and especially at Harvest Festival, Christmas and Easter. The Christmas Gift Voucher scheme from The Community Furniture Project is a nice extra for our clients at Christmas and is very much appreciated.

Loose Ends Newbury are grateful to all organisations and individuals who support us to provide a good quality and consistent service to those who need us.



Northcroft Kitchen serves local families a freshly cooked and nutritious meal for both adults and children. We have now been running continuously since February 2023 on a Monday afternoon from 3.30 to 4.45, with homemade cakes and puddings too. There is always a children's meal, and macaroni cheese is particularly popular!

Any parent or carer who needs a hot meal is welcome with their children in our safe and child friendly space. We have toys, books and colouring materials for the children and during the good weather it's great to see the children letting off steam out on the playing field! The parents/carers have got to know each other, they sit and chat, which is lovely to see.

Whilst numbers fluctuate, we usually have eight or more families including some 15 children who attend regularly and we have served over 1100 meals in 2023-24. Most children are primary age or pre-school. Our clients include lone parents, some in work, some not, and we also have low-income families that include at least one working parent. We have families living in temporary accommodation and some still living with host families.

We would like to say a big thank you to all our volunteers and for the support that Homestart, the Family Hub and school Family Support Workers provided. It has developed into a social place for the families to interact and have some fun as well as enjoy a meal.

Northcroft Global Kitchen

Northcroft Global Kitchen operated from April 2023 until December 2023 providing an opportunity for Asylum Seekers living at the Regency Hotel or other local accommodation to come together at the Pavilion each Friday to cook and prepare a communal meal. This service was a partnership with West Berkshire Action for Refugees (WBAR) who provided advice, counselling and support to Asylum Seekers in West Berkshire.

The service was valuable because whilst Asylum Seekers are provided with government funded board and lodging, there were few opportunities for them to interact socially and meals were not culturally sensitive, were reheated in a microwave and were largely eaten in isolation.

We were able to support WBAR in providing a facility where the refugees could cook together dishes of their choice 'from home', then sit and eat together around a shared table. WBAR also used the opportunity to guide the clients through their Level 2 Food Hygiene qualification – equipping them for potential temporary work when their paperwork is sorted – and integrated the meal planning, shopping and budgeting as part of their weekly English classes and readying them for a life in the UK.

The service came to an end in December 2023 when the Government terminated the use of the Regency Hotel and dispersed the residents to other accommodation throughout the country.

Over the 32 weeks of operation 604 meals were served - on average 19 meals a week. We were pleased to see that 38 Asylum Seekers gained the Level 2 Food Hygiene qualification. The Asylum Seekers reported that they benefited from the sense of community, fun and well being showing the value of the project.

REPORT ON ACCOUNTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024

The Financial Year for Loose Ends Newbury (LEN) runs from the 1st of June to the 31st of May each year. A Statement of Accounts for this period is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. The prior year figures are also shown. The Accounts have been prepared on a cash basis. Although we are not required by the Charity Commission to have our accounts reviewed, we have done so as it is good practice, and no concerns were raised by the reviewer.

The Accounts show that the LEN had income £34,046.18 and expenditure of £18,964.08 in the year. There was therefore an in-year operating surplus of £15,082.10. LEN commenced the year with funds of £71,723.26 and ended the year holding funds of £86,805.36.

During the year LEN reviewed where it held its funds to ensure a reasonable return on them. Following this review, it was decided to continue to hold £5000 in a savings account with the Newbury Building Society but to transfer £30,000 into a one year Fixed Term Savings Account at Metro Bank ending on the 3rd of March 2025 at an interest rate of 4.41% gross. In addition, as at 31 May 2024 LEN held £10,120.36 in a Metro Instant Savings Account. The balance is held in a Metro Current Account ensuring accessibility of funds for operational requirements. There were no restricted funds held by LEN in this financial year.

COMMENTARY: The 2024/2024 financial year ended very positively for LEN due to the generosity of its supporters and donors.

We are very grateful to the organisations, businesses and grant making bodies who have supported us in the year. We also benefit from financial donations from individuals, often on a regular basis, and from organisations fund raising on our behalf. In addition, participants in the West Berkshire Lottery name us as an organisation they support and thus provide regular income to us. We would like to express our thanks to all of those individuals.

It should also be noted that the income shown in the accounts as coming from the Local Giving fund raising platform represents income from individuals who chose to give us money through that platform which also claims Gift Aid, when applicable, on our behalf.

What the financial accounts cannot show is the value of the very significant gifts in kind we receive, mainly food supplies, from a range of sources. These are referred to elsewhere in this report.

We have remained in good control of our expenditure during the financial year and arguably show very good value for money as a result of all of our services being delivered by unpaid volunteers rather than employing staff.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are asked to note the Annual Report and approve the submission of the Accounts to the Charity Commission

Ian Nichol, Treasurer

Appendix 1

Loose Ends Newbury Annual Accounts		Year	Year
		2023-24	2022-23
Opening Balance	at 01/06/2023		
Newbury Building Society		£42,042.95	£21,922.45
Metro Bank		£29,680.31	£27,000.57
Total Opening Balance		£71,723.26	£48,923.02
Income			
Bank/BS Interest		£991.55	£120.50
Gift Aid		£288.75	£0.00
Fundraising		£1,231.33	£1,376.04
Good Exchange		£0.00	£10,097.97
Churches		£1,200.00	£0.00
Business		£15,865.29	£11,124.80
Grants		£1,000.00	£10,455.00
Local Giving		£3,172.30	£3,924.67
Groups and Organisations		£5,115.61	£2,683.01
West Berks Lottery		£914.50	£1,237.00
Individuals		£4,266.85	£4,919.62
Crowdfunder		£0.00	£55.00
Total Income		£34,046.18	£45,993.61
Expenditure			
Shopping and General Expenses		£6,749.82	£4,860.54
IT and Admin Expenses		£1,171.40	£1,343.61
Rent		£300.00	£386.30
Utilities		£576.40	£2,525.31
Insurance		£1,191.24	£1,259.43
Cleaning & Hygiene		£3,552.62	£3,843.42
Training		£48.00	£367.01
DBS checks		£120.00	£0.00
Maintenance		£235.99	£393.55
Furniture, Fittings and new equipment		£3,630.58	£2,049.75
Other Operating costs		£1,388.03	£1,621.85
New Premises		£0.00	£4,542.60
Total Expenditure		£18,964.08	£23,193.37
Closing Balance	at 31/05/2024	£86,805.36	£71,723.26
Represented by:			
Newbury Building Society 7 Day notice account		£5,000.00	£42,042.95
Metro Bank Current Account		£41,685.00	£29,680.31
Metro Bank Instant Savings		£10,120.36	£0
Metro Fixed Term Savings		£30,000.00	£0

LOOSE ENDS VOLUNTEERS OCTOBER 2024

We could not operate without our volunteers so thank you to everyone who works so hard both on sessions and behind the scenes.

Trustees

Diana Lacey, Chair

Caroline Billington, Pat Burke, Gill Downs, Paul Jenkinson, Ian Nichol, Treasurer

Operations Support

Nicola Buckland, Cathy Jenkins, Kathy Le Brun, Alison Martin, Paul Spour

Food Group

Geoff Anderson, Sue Burbridge, Pat Burke, Gemma Fuller, Rob Harris, Gill Leech, Sheridan Leevy, Noni Knight, Paul Walter

Supervisors

Emma Aird, Trish Arrowsmith, Pat Burke, Gill Downs, Clare Edwards, Alice Fogg, Paul Spour, Helen Webb, Amy Zydzienowski

Session Volunteers

Maureen Avery, Helen Balster, Barney Bardsley, Caroline Billington, Kaye Broom, Nicola Buckland, Sue Burbridge, Judy Cooper, Graeme Coulam, Helen Cundy, Helen Dixon, Andy Donovan, Prue Fenn, Linda Ferguson, Sally Fletcher-Bott, Gemma Fuller, Carol Guthrie, Rob Harris, Rachel Henley, Jane Hopkins, Sharni Hulait, Cathy Jenkins, Nicola Johnson, David Keep, Noni Knight, Diana Lacey, Suzanne Lees, Kathy Le Brun, Ben Major, Alison Martin, Jon Nelsey, Maja Ochocinska, Robert Parsons, Ian Purvis, Eleanor Rance, Diana Sanderson, Nicky Sanderson, Olivia Scull, Marguerite Shave, Issy Stevens, Paul Walter, Ying Walter, Barbara West, Guy West, Wendy Westall, Dave Young



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