

**Wansbeck Valley Food Bank in Ashington:**

**June 2023 – September 2023**

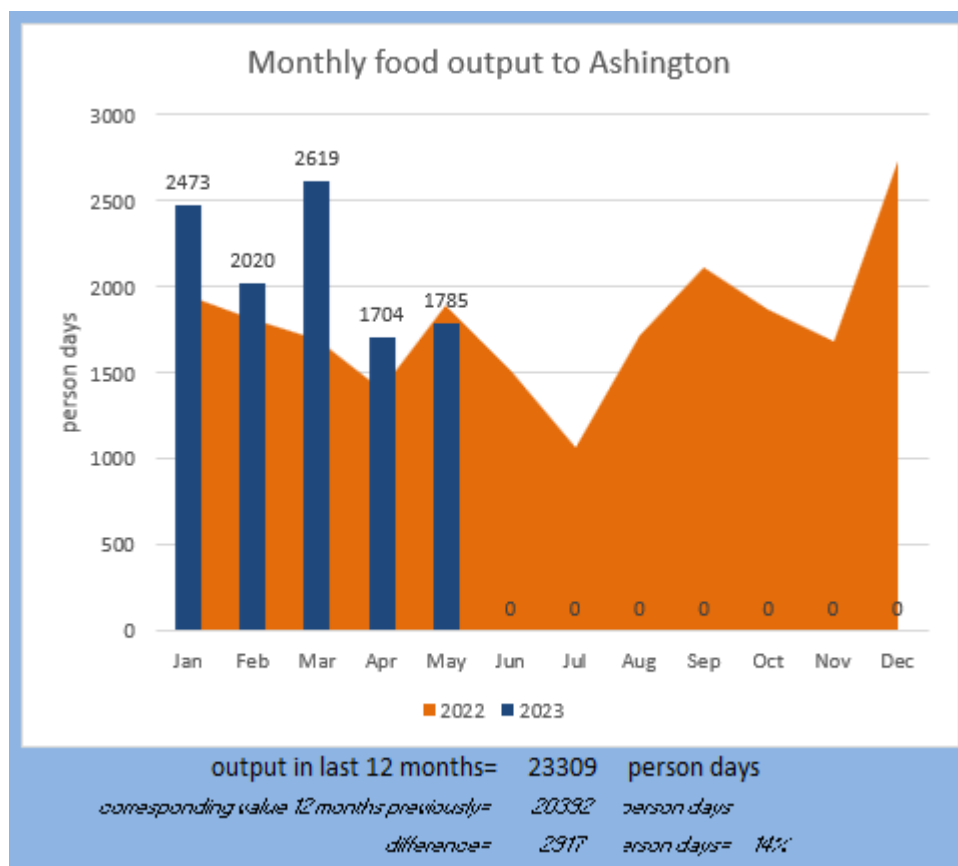
This is the first report to Ashington Town Council for the 2023 – 2024 funding year. As we had been without a paid Admin worker for three months (until August of this year) we are still behind on producing statistics; please accept our apologies for this. We will include the missing statistics in our next report.

**Full years:**

For context, the numbers of adults and children supported by our emergency food aid in Ashington since our establishment is as follows:

- 2014 = 866
- 2015 = 1141
- 2016 = 1599
- 2017 = 1984
- 2018 = 2154
- 2019 = 3762
- 2020 = 4836
- 2021 = 5335
- 2022 = 5447 (3621 adults and 1826 children).

The graph below shows our most recent available picture of food days distributed in Ashington. The graphic shows just the first 5 months of this year and the text below it gives the rolling 12 month position. This shows that we had delivered 14% more than equivalent 12 month period in 2021/2022. Need in Ashington therefore continues to grow.



## June 2023 – September 2023

Although we have not yet been able to produce up-to-date figures for days of food provided we do have statistics showing the numbers of referrals and of people fed in 2023. For the period January – July this year and can compare to the equivalent months in 2022. These show the following:

Number of Referrals relating to Ashington Residents							
2022		Number of Referrals	Number of Adults	Number of Children	Total persons		
January		250	350	146	496		
February		231	314	155	469		
March		209	293	134	427		
April		190	239	116	355		
May		246	312	167	479		
June		180	247	137	384		
July		139	184	86	270		
Jan-July		1445	1939	941	2880		
2023		Number of Referrals	Number of Adults	Number of Children	Total persons		
January		225	304	307	611		
February		256	360	139	499		
March		310	432	215	647		
April		215	291	130	421		
May		231	303	138	441		
June		242	369	149	518		
July		238	307	119	426		
Jan-July		1717	2366	1197	3563		
<b>Difference 2023 v 2022 =</b>		<b>Referrals=</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>Persons =</b>	<b>683</b>		
			<b>18.8%</b>		<b>23.7%</b>		

As can be seen the growth in referrals in the first seven months of the year is 18.8% and the growth in the number of people fed was 23.7% indicating a larger number of people fed per referral. These two percentages may not accurately reflect the growth in the number of days' worth of food provided, especially because the pattern of 3 and 7 day parcels may be different this year than last. However we do feel that the figure for numbers of days of food provided is likely to be between the two percentages given.

### General:

Whilst our presence at Ashington YMCA allows us to provide a collection hub on their premises, we are finding some reluctance from a number of people to use the hub. These individuals/families express a preference for home delivery. We do respect these views, however we are keen for as many as possible to use the hub, as this then allows us to use our home delivery resources elsewhere in our area.

Overall donations of food have still not returned to pre-pandemic levels and, as need is now so much higher, donations do not meet need and we have to purchase food in ever increasing

amounts. In addition, we calculate the food price inflation on the items of food we have to purchase to be 14% in 2023 alone. We now anticipate that we will spend more than we receive in grants and donations in 2023. This will be the first time we have a financial year deficit.

For information, whilst we remain in the same premises at Northgate Hospital we still are expecting to be asked to move in the very near future. The hospital trust does plans to find us alternative premises elsewhere on the site, but this is not guaranteed. These continued delays in resolving our premises' future is causing some uncertainty and a little anxiety amongst our volunteers. We do wish to remain on the Northgate site as this brings many advantages, but the need for extra space is becoming acute.

Peter Robertson

on behalf of Wansbeck Valley Food Bank

September 2023