



## **Oxford Poverty Action Trust Annual Report 2024**

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## **1 Chair's Report 2024**

### **The Problem**

Recent reports from authorities and voluntary organisations indicate that poverty is a growing issue. Levels of homelessness are not reducing. There is a surge in demand for food parcels and other homelessness support. All of this along with reduction to the homelessness prevention grant is increasing pressures for statutory and voluntary agencies. The risk of becoming homeless for whatever reason continues to increase. The number of households requiring homelessness support has also risen by 128% in three years, according to the District Councils' Network. The level of homelessness in Oxford is significantly higher than in neighbouring local authority areas. The problem of homelessness in the city continues. Many of the reasons are as before, well known – the cost of housing in Oxford, the rise in the cost of living, rental issues, the austerity imposed by central government on local government for many years, and the associated cuts to expenditure on housing, mental health and drug services.

### **The OxPAT Response**

Despite the problems, the charities engaged in supporting single homeless people in Oxford continue to do excellent work, and the Oxford Poverty Action Trust (OxPAT) continues to provide a mechanism for concerned citizens to donate to these local charities. Active since 1996 the Oxford Poverty Action Trust (OxPAT) has distributed around £900,000 to support homeless people in Oxford, including £76,237.58 in 2024. We have done that by soliciting donations which we then pass to other local charities who we perceive to be doing good work to help the homeless. OxPAT has no staff or premises and very few costs. In 2024 we had no costs. It is very difficult when you see a homeless person on the street to know how best to help. Surveys show that over 70% of money donated directly to the homeless will be spent on drink or drugs. Giving money to OxPAT means that your donation will be channelled through professional charities with the resources to understand the problems a homeless person is suffering with, and to help develop a plan to help the person address those problems. The OxPAT money will be spent by the charity involved on items or activities which will directly benefit an individual or individuals. It will typically be spent on shelter, food, clothing, advice, medical care, and training to help people get a job, or manage their finances better. We are very grateful to all of our supporters and donors.

### **Activities in 2024**

#### **Fund raising 2024**

In total £53,899.85 was donated by the public, resulting in a total raised of £78,664.51

#### **Lucy Group**

We were pleased to support training by Aspire, Homeless Oxfordshire, and Connection Support in 2024. This was made possible by a generous grant from the Lucy Fund.

#### **Christmas cards**

Our 2024 Christmas Card sales comprised various designs of lovely Oxford street scenes by local artist John Somerscales. We sold the cards directly to members of the public and through the Hayfield Deli in Hayfield Rd.

#### **Events**

Christmas Carol singing at the Oxford Railway Station by Appleton Singers was a successful evening.

Carol singing by children of St Barnabas School at the Westgate Centre before Christmas was very well received. Many thanks to the children, teachers and Cllr Susanna Pressel.

Oxford Unison Fun Run again adopted OxPAT as their charity for fund raising from their annual Christmas Fun Run around Christchurch Meadow. Thank you to Julian Richardson and colleagues.

Julian Richardson and his band also raised funds for OxPAT at local gigs in late 2024

We also had a successful bucket(and card reader) collection at Asda store in Wheatley.

## **Distribution**

In 2024 OxPAT partnered with the charities listed in section **5 Partners** below. We consider that these agencies are amongst the most effective in Oxford and we thank them for continuing to partner with us. Between them these charities provide a full range of support services for homeless people from helping those sleeping on the streets, to providing shelter in day centres and hostels, mental care, rehabilitation, and training and skills development to help them find employment.

## **2 Legal Details**

### **Trust**

The object of the Trust is “for the relief of the effects of poverty, sickness, disablement and old age” in accordance with a Trust Deed made on 28th June 1998. The Trust has been granted registration as a charity by the Charity Commissioners. The Charity Number is 1070645. The Inland Revenue has accepted the Trust as a charity within the definition of section 506 (1) Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1998, as a result of which the Trust’s income and gains are not taxable to the extent that they are applicable and applied to charitable purposes.

The registered address is 25 Woodstock Road, Oxford OX2 6HA.

During the calendar and accounting year 2024 the following persons acted as Trustees of the Oxford Poverty Action Trust (known as OxPAT) for some or all of the time:

Paul Armstrong

Deborah Ceadel

Ralph Hall

Meg Movshon

Patrick Mulvihill

Ben Chataway

Officers during the year 2024 were:

Chair: Patrick Mulvihill

Secretary: Deborah Ceadel

Treasurer: Paul Armstrong

The Patrons of the Trust are: Rt Revd. William Kenney CP Mrs. Felicity Dick, Deputy Lieutenant of Oxfordshire

The Charity’s Bankers are: The Co-operative Bank, King’s Valley, Yew Street, Stockport, Cheshire, SK4 2JU

The charity owns no functional property and there are no connected companies.

Special thanks to Jonathan Clark for website support.

**Pat Mulvihill, Chair, March 2025**

### 3 Finance

**Table 1 - OxPAT Financial Report for 2024**

OxPAT Accounts (figures in £)	2023	2024
<i>Expenditure:</i>		
Maintenance <sup>1</sup>	-	1,258.75
Grants to Core Agency Charities	64,700.00	73,300.00
One-off grants	637.18	2,937.58
Christmas cards	-	-
Bank error	-	-
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>65,337.18</b>	<b>77,496.33</b>
<i>Income:</i>		
Boxes	754.55	1,356.66
Fund Raising <sup>2</sup>	256.09	1,205.74
Organisations	2,369.73	10,846.70
Places of Worship	1,699.71	1,460.00
Private Donations (Gift Aid)	30,137.50	24,231.30
2022 Christmas cards	75.00	-
2023 Christmas cards	990.29	255.00
2024 Christmas cards	-	567.79
Donations via platforms (online & offline) <sup>3</sup>	17,408.95	11,158.56
Other Private Donations (Non-Gift Aid)	6,889.44	3,037.50
Gift Aid payments from HMRC	-	23,941.87
Card machine <sup>4</sup>	-	186.02
Other	965.17	417.37
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>61,546.43</b>	<b>78,664.51</b>

<sup>1</sup> In the 2023 annual report, an expenditure line of 'Admin and Special Purposes Sub-accounts' was reported, however, as expenditures on maintaining the charity and our income flows have exceeded the special purposes sub-account, this line is renamed for clarity.

<sup>2</sup> Includes donations made via our card machine during fundraising events.

<sup>3</sup> Includes online donations made via CAF, CAF cheques, JustGiving, Stewardship, The Big Give or Charitable Giving; donations plus any gift aid collected on behalf of OxPAT are included in this row.

<sup>4</sup> Donations received via our card machine excluding during fundraising events: when not used at fundraising events, our card machine is typically stationed in the Hayfield Deli.

**Table 2 – Reconciliation with bank**

	2023	2024
Opening balance	5,656.26	1,865.51
Income	61,546.43	78,664.51
Expenditure	65,337.18	77,496.33
Closing balance	1,865.51	3,033.69

### Income

2024 has been a strong year for OxPAT compared to historical levels, with total income increasing around 28% from 2023. Total income in 2024 increased from £61,546.43 in 2023 to £78,664.51.

In the 20+ years OxPAT has been operating, we have collected nearly £900,000 from our donors.

Our income is spread across various categories of donors and donation channels.

Box income nearly doubled in 2024 compared to 2023.

Fundraising income increased by nearly £1,000 compared to 2023 levels, largely due to several successful collections held in the run-up to Christmas.

Income from organisations includes a restricted grant of £7,000 from the Lucy Group to fund training opportunities (discussed further below); excluding this donation, income from organisations increased around three-and-a-half times by around 62% compared to 2023 levels.

Income from places of worship decreased slightly from 2023 to £1,460.

Gift Aid eligible donations direct to our account have decreased by around 20% to £24,231.30 in 2024, mostly due to several occasional / one-off donations in 2023 not being repeated in 2024.

The 2024 Christmas card saw revenues of £567.79 in 2024. In line with previous years, a proportion of revenue from the Christmas card sales come in during the first few months of the next calendar year. Hence, further revenue from the 2024 Christmas card is expected to be collected in 2025. Overall, 2023 Christmas card sales brought in income of £1,245.29 across 2023 and 2024: no printing costs were incurred as 2023 and 2024 card sales were from existing stock.

Donations made via fundraising platforms such as Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) or Stewardship, have decreased by around one third between 2023 and 2024 to £11,158.56. Platform revenue reflects a number of regular donations made via CAF, as well as additional one-off donations. Revenue via fundraising platforms includes any Gift Aid collected by a given platform on our behalf.

Non-Gift Aid donations also decreased by around 56% from 2023 to 2024, generally reflecting fewer one-off donations which were not expected to be repeated.

In 2024 we made a sizeable Gift Aid claim covering several previous years, totalling additional revenue of £23,941.87.

Gift Aid for direct donations to OxPAT in 2024 will be claimed in 2025, though as this claim will only cover one year, it is expected to be substantially lower than in 2024.

In the second half of 2024 we purchased a card reader to allow us to receive card-based donations in person. This card reader has been used at several fundraising events (where we received donations totalling £291.49 via the card reader, this comprises part of the "Fund Raising" amount in Table 1), and otherwise it is typically stationed at the Hayfield Deli, where it has earned £186.02 through a stream of fairly regular donations.

Other income reflects donations made directly to our bank account which are not attributable to a specific individual/organisation as well as a fundraising not linked to a specific organisation or event. Other income decreased to £417.37 in 2024, noting that this income stream generally fluctuates year to year.

## **Expenditure**

The total grants made by OxPAT in 2024 amounted to £77,496.33, the vast majority of which was donated as regular distributions to our core agencies, totalling £73,300. Of this, £66,300 were regular grants, and a further £7,000 were grants for training projects generously funded by the Lucy Group (see above). Grants to individuals (paid via various charities) made in 2024 stood at £2,937.58.

In 2024 we incurred maintenance costs (see below) of £1,258.75 which included £918.75 for legal advice on updating our Trust governing document and £340 was incurred when purchasing the card reader.

## **Special purposes account**

Within the totals reported in Tables 1 and 2 above we keep track of a special purposes sub-account, which contained funds from a donation from the Oxford Round Table. This was originally given for box replacement and refurbishment but the Round Table has now agreed that it may be spent on anything we consider appropriate. As per Table 3 below, the funds have now been fully used (put towards the maintenance costs, above), and given that we do not expect to receive similar donations in future, the account has been closed.

**Table 3 – Special purposes account**

	2023	2024
Opening balance	621.96	621.96
Income	-	-
Expenditure	-	621.96
Closing balance	621.96	-

We would like to thank all our donors, large and small, for their generosity towards us. In particular, we would like to thank our regular donors, both organisations and individuals, who have supported us over the years including St Leonard's Church Eynsham, the Oxford Oratory of St Aloysius Gonzaga, and the Lucy Group. We are also very grateful to Howard Cox for carrying out our independent examination.

We would also like to thank the charities to whom we give the money. We have no doubt that the money we pass to them is used efficiently and effectively in support of people in Oxford who are homeless, or in danger of homelessness.

**Paul Armstrong, OxPAT Treasurer, January 2025**

## 4 Grants Policy Core Principles

1. OxPAT funds are to be used to provide direct help to homeless or vulnerably housed adults.
2. OxPAT funds can be used to fulfil basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter. They can also be used to help people address the issues that have led to them becoming homeless, by building confidence and self-esteem, improving skills, and addressing dependency issues.
3. OxPAT funds are not to be used to fund administration nor on-going costs, or to discharge statutory duties.
4. OxPAT funds will only be distributed to or through recognised charitable agencies; and must be spent by or under the supervision of such an agency. Distribution The monies received by OxPAT are distributed through agency welfare funds to be spent on welfare services, rehabilitation, accommodation and training and education to help people to get off the streets and move forward.

### Core Agencies

OxPAT will aim to distribute most of its funds to a core group of agencies via regular monthly donations to their welfare funds. It is each agency's responsibility to ensure this money is spent in accordance with OxPAT's core principles and to report back at the end of the calendar year or more frequently as appropriate as to how it has been spent.

### Specific applications

Some of OxPAT's funds will be used to fund specific applications which are not from the core agencies. Examples of successful applications include requests for clothing, bedding, work tools, and transport costs to enable a person in need to travel to a job. To apply for a grant for a homeless, or vulnerable, person, please download the OxPAT Grant Application Form from the OxPAT website ([www.oxpat.org/](http://www.oxpat.org/)), and follow the instructions on it.

## **5 Partners**

### **Core agencies during 2024 were:**

Aspire  
Crisis  
Connection Support  
Elmore  
St Mungo's  
Edge Housing  
Homeless Oxfordshire Community Fund  
Homeless Oxfordshire O'Hanlon House

## **6 Box Officer's Report**

### **Box Locations**

#### **Collection boxes at:**

St. Michael at the North Gate Shop  
Oxford Town Hall  
Wellcome Trust Centre (Old Road Campus)  
Hayfield Deli  
Blackwells (Broad Street and Westgate SC)  
Magdalen College Bar  
Oxford Railway Station  
LMC International  
Iffley Dental Practice  
Daunts Books (Summertown)

**Catherine King, Box Officer, March 2025**

