



Duns Fair Share Newsletter (Foodbank, Social Café and Community Larder)

Dear friends, volunteers and supporters of Duns Fair Share

It has been a while since our last newsletter and a great deal has happened over the intervening period. This newsletter will, I hope, bring you up to date with what we have achieved over the last year and where we are now: a vibrant, 100% voluntary, organisation that makes a real difference to the lives of people in our community.

First, let me introduce myself. My name is Carol Pease and I am now the Interim Chair of Duns Fair Share. I joined as a volunteer with the Food Bank about 5 years ago and became a Trustee when Duns Fair Share achieved charitable status. Our previous Chair, David Adams, has now stepped down from the position but still remains with us as a highly valued volunteer. We owe a great deal to David. Duns Fair Share was his vision and he worked long and hard to achieve it. This has been a remarkable journey, from the food store in a cold, cramped garage to 15 Murray Street where we can house not only the Food Bank store, but also the thriving Social Café and Community Larder.

Food Bank

As most of you know, Duns Food Bank provides vital emergency food support to people facing socio-economic hardship in Berwickshire. Clients, to whom we deliver, are referred to us from over 40 agencies such as housing associations, social workers and counselling services. We are sustained by food donated by members of our community and cash donations and grants that enable us to purchase supplementary food and vouchers that can be spent in the local Coop on fresh food.

At this time of year many local organisations think of us and food donations have arrived from, or been promised by: Go Fibre, Community at Tesco Berwick; Berwickshire High School and Robertsons of Duns. It important to stress that every food or cash donation or grant that we receive for the food bank is used **only for the food bank**.

We know that the safety net we provide is of real importance to the most vulnerable in our community. We operate every day of the year and in the 12 months to October 31, 2025, we made 361 deliveries and provided enough food to support 673 people including 210 children. That's the equivalent of delivering aid to a household in food poverty **every single day of the year**.

Social Café

Our Social Café is open between 10 and 12 each Tuesday and Thursday morning. We provide a warm and welcoming space for people to meet and enjoy a hot drink and a biscuit together on a pay as you feel basis. We also host the What Matters Hub from Scottish Borders Council that offers drop in sessions or appointments where customers can meet people from community groups and voluntary organisations as well as social workers and occupational therapists. Anyone can come along – and they do! We have had 2,203 customer visits in 2025 to Dec 4. That's 4,489 visitors since we started at the end of January 2024. Our Pay As You Feel cafe and larder donations make an essential contribution towards our running costs.

Community Larder

The Community Larder is open at the same times as the café and is also very popular. The Larder is a green initiative, making good food that would otherwise go to landfill available to anyone for a small donation. If you haven't been already, please come along and see the wide range of healthy fresh and frozen food we have on display – and bring a shopping bag! As well as helping the planet, we know that having this access to good healthy food is also helping struggling households in the area. We obtain food from Fare Share, Duns Coop, Farne Salmon, Greenvale potatoes and Eildon Food Hub. In the growing season we also receive donations of surplus fresh vegetables from the Hugo Burge Foundation gardens at Marchmont and from Abundant Borders' Community Garden.

This year we have been trialing late evening open larders, with food still in date but destined for landfill from Duns Coop. These are proving popular and are diverting a lot of good food from landfill.

Volunteers

We would achieve nothing without our volunteers. We have around 40 wonderful loyal and committed people who run the café and larder, pack and deliver food bank parcels and generally keep us on our feet. However, life events have seen us sadly lose a small number of our most experienced and treasured people. We have been successful in recruiting some replacements but we need more. There are so many roles we can offer, both customer facing and behind the scenes. Volunteer recruitment is now a real priority for us and we would appeal to everyone to consider volunteering with us. If you, or someone you know, would be interested to know more, please contact us at dunsfairshare@gmail.com.

Trustees

Now that we are a fully formed Charity, we have a Board of Trustees. Each of our current Trustees is also a volunteer. They bring ideas, creativity and strategic direction to the Board. There are vacancies on the Board and I would encourage anyone who is interested in helping us as we move forward by joining the Board to get in touch. The current Board is made up as follows:

Carol Pease: Interim Chair; Fiona Gaddes: Secretary; Kate Williamson: Treasurer; Rosie Blair; Roz Hall Kelly Howitt; Ian Repsch; Donald Wilson.

The Future

We have proved that we can make a significant impact on the lives of people who experience food poverty. That need is not going away any time soon. We are also making a difference by diverting tons of good food from landfill to people who will make excellent use of it, nourishing families with good, fresh produce. But, if we are to continue, we need sustained support from everyone in our community. So please continue to advocate for us, support us and volunteer with us.

We'd like to thank you all for your care and support and wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Carol Pease