

History of the Hastings Foodbank Trust, Hastings, New Zealand.

In approximately 1980 a foodbank was established at the Community Social Services (Budget Advisory Services) building beside the Hastings District Council offices in Eastbourne Street, Hastings

It was a small scale informal operation in response to an obvious need. At that time requests for help were sporadic and sufficient food could be stored in a walk-in cupboard.

In 1991 due to Social Welfare benefit cuts, requests for food parcels escalated by over 500% throughout New Zealand. At this time the Foodbank relied on donated food and donations to put food in the emergency food parcels. The food parcels consisted of what food was available at the time and the food parcels were often minimal and insufficient for people's needs.

At a public meeting hosted by the then Hastings Mayor Jeremy Dwyer, the District Council Social Services Foodbank became the primary foodbank of Hastings.

It was recognised that the Foodbank needed to purchase food suitable for the food parcels and to do this the Foodbank would need solicit donations to fund the food purchases.

In 2004 a Charitable Trust Deed (Hastings Foodbank Trust) was established. The work in preparing the trust documents was done by Mark von Dadelszen of the law firm Bannister von Dadelszen.

The settlor was G R (Greta) Wham and it had eight trustees:

Greta Wham, Graham Harvey, Harold Stewart, Earle Hughes, Keith Wray, Lyn Gage, Patrick Stewart, Sheryl Manning.

The charitable objects of the trust were:

“The trust is established to carry out every charitable purpose in New Zealand whether relating to the relief of poverty or any other purpose beneficial to the community, and particularly the provision of emergency food to people in need resident in or visiting the Hastings District who are not covered by other similar organisations in the area”

One of the drivers for the establishment of the trust was so that the charitable trust could apply for funding from community groups and organisations to purchase food.

This funding which mainly came from the Hastings District Council, community organisations and groups, churches and individuals meant that the trust could now purchase mostly non non-perishable, easy to prepare food items to make up consistent standard food parcels that could sustain those in need for 2-3 days. When other food items were donated, they could be added as an extra items to the food parcels.

At this time the trust was closely associated with the Hastings Budget Advisory Service and operated from rooms that were also used by this service.

All trustees and persons working for the Hastings Foodbank Trust have been volunteers and received no payment or reimbursement from the trust. However, the trust did contract in services when required.

In 2006 the Hastings District Council building, used by the Hastings Foodbank Trust and Hastings Budget service was no longer available. The Hastings Budget Advisory Service moved to a new building at 111 Warren Street. The Hastings Foodbank Trust also moved to the same building and shared pro-rata operating expenses with the Budget Advisory Service.

In 2012 the Hastings Foodbank Trust contracted Budget Advisory Services (now Budget First) to interview clients and issue the free emergency food parcels. This also had an advantage where foodbank clients were offered an opportunity to have free budgeting advice from the Budget Advisory Service. The Foodbank has, over this time, maintained an excellent working relationship with Budget Advisory Service.

All other Foodbank work continued to be provided by a dedicated and loyal team of volunteers.

The Hastings Foodbank Trust has consistently provided the free emergency food parcels to between 4000 and 6000 people a year.

In 2021 Budget First advised the Hastings Foodbank Trust, that due to the expansion of their service, Budget First would be needing the office space occupied by the Foodbank. It was likely that they would not be in a position to renew the lease with the Foodbank when it expired in October 2022.

The trustees of the Hastings Foodbank Trust then started reviewing options to continue the foodbank operations within Hastings. It soon became apparent that there would be considerable additional costs and time involvement in establishing a new stand-alone operation in Hastings.

In January 2022, The Hastings Foodbank Trust trustees contacted Nourished for Nil (Hastings) to explore the possibility of leasing or using the Nourished for Nil rooms. The discussions then moved to a possible merge of the two organisations.

Nourished for Nil were established in Hastings in 2017 as a food rescue organisation and by 2021 had greatly expanded to supplying free rescued food to over 145,000 people in Hastings, Napier and the wider area of Wairoa and Central Hawkes Bay.

The Napier Foodbank had already merged with Nourished for Nil earlier in January 2022.

Further meetings between the Hastings Foodbank Trust and Nourished for Nil were held in February, March and April 2022.

On 13th June 2022 the Hastings Foodbank Trust and Nourished for Nil signed a Memorandum of Understanding to combine both organisations.

There were significant advantages and cost savings for the Hastings Foodbank to incorporate with Nourished for Nil.

These advantages included:

- Nourished for Nil had just signed a five year lease on a large premises in Hastings. There was room in the new premises for the Hastings Foodbank operations. The Hastings Foodbank would continue to operate in the mornings and Nourished for Nil continue to issue rescued food primarily in the afternoons

- Much of the food for the Foodbank emergency parcels could now be sourced from the free food supplied to Nourished for Nil.
- Rent, administration and funding applications would be met by Nourished for Nil
- Gaining economies of scale by combining with the Napier foodbank
- Having combined operating procedures and database
- Nourished for Nil had recent experience in issuing emergency food parcels to people self -isolating due to Covid 19.
- It removed the costs of the Hastings Foodbank's additional storage facilities.
- Reduced volunteer's time in transferring food supplies from storage facilities to the foodbank.

The merged Hastings Foodbank was to be operated on weekday mornings by Nourished for Nil and continue to meet the aims of the original Hastings Foodbank Trust Deed by supplying emergency free food to those in need in the Hastings District. There was still be an interview process, but this was now be done by 3rd party agencies. It was intended to continue with a limit on the number of free emergency food parcels a person can collect a year.

Nourished for Nil would continue to provide their free rescued food to people in the Hastings District. This was available five evenings a week at either their Hastings central, Flaxmere or Camberley centres. Gold card citizens could also obtain free food on Thursday mornings at the Hastings central centre.

On the 22nd October 2022, Nourished for Nil commenced issuing the emergency food parcels to those in desperate need in the Hastings District.

By 28th October 2022 the Hastings Foodbank Trust had transferred all remaining food stocks, physical assets and funds to Nourished for Nil. It also relinquished the office lease to Budget First and the Storage shed lease to A Plus Storage.

On the 18th January 2023 the Hastings Foodbank Trust was formerly dissolved.

Trevor Percy

Chairperson, Hastings Foodbank Trust