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| Lincoln Community Larder | A black and white logo  Description automatically generated |

Strategic Plan 2024-2027

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**Introduction and overview**

This is the current strategic plan for Lincoln Community Larder. It covers the period April 2024 to March 2027.

The purpose of this document is to set out clearly and simply our overarching plans for the next three years, alongside a description of our mission and values. Although it is a document setting out the plan for the next three years, it remains dynamic and is subject to change by the Board of Trustees, to ensure it is relevant, practical and pragmatic.

In terms of governance, it sits alongside the charity’s constitutional foundation documents, providing guidance, adding detail and assisting with interpretation.

This Strategic Plan should be read together with the annual Business Plan that unpacks how we will deliver in the year ahead in a more granular operational manner with detailed activity, tasking and delivery targets.

The Lincoln Community Larder was one of the first foodbanks in the country, opening its doors on 18 August 1989. If you want to donate food, donate money, help us by volunteering or simply find out more about us and what we do, visit our website at:

<https://www.lincolnlarder.co.uk/>



**Neil Rhodes**

**Chair**

**Lincoln Community Larder**

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| **1. Mission** Why do we exist? | We exist to tackle the relief of poverty in Lincoln and the surrounding area by the provision of basic nutritious food and other basic amenities.We collect food and ﬁnancial donations in order to:1. provide three day emergency food supply parcels to people at a time of crisis
2. provide basic amenities, which we deﬁne as energy vouchers to support/help meet cooking requirements where a need is identified
3. support ﬁnancially schemes and projects designed to relieve food poverty (e.g. FISH)
4. support other independent food distribution organisations
5. provide food distribution centres in Lincoln and the surrounding areas
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| **2. Values** How do we behave? | The Lincoln Community Larder is:1. an independent, secular, charitable organisation run completely by unpaid volunteers
2. a non-political organisation that will assist in any study research or information gathering designed to give better insight into the needs of the poor in Lincoln and surrounding areas
3. a low cost, high impact service
4. a welcoming, non-judgmental organisation
5. open to all in need and does not discriminate against anyone, especially on the grounds of sex, marital or parental status, race, ethnic or national origin, colour, disability, sexual orientation, religion or age
6. operating within Health & Safety and relevant food hygiene regulations
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| **3. Vision** What are our aims in the next 5 years? | Over the next three to five years we aim to:1. ensure the long-term sustainability of our service to the community
2. maintain our individual identity so as not to be seen as part of another service
3. maintain a city centre presence for our main distribution site
4. ensure adequate food storage space is always available
5. provide more distribution centres in areas of need
6. build sustainable relationships with other organisations working to challenge food poverty
7. help solve clients’ long-term issues - by referral to other organisations that can help with their problems
8. promote the idea of healthy eating (which we do by membership of the Lincolnshire Food Partnership and in our choice of the foods we supply)
9. support ﬁnancially other organisations in providing food for children
10. Maintain long term financial stability, utilising our reserves effectively to support our objectives; supplementing this with a proactive approach to achieving grant funding together with donations of food and funds.
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| **4. Strategy & Goals**What will we do? | **A - Long-term sustainability**The Larder will have an organisational structure in place to achieve its objectives. This includes: |
|  | 1. being managed by a board of trustees with a range of skills and experience (including: leadership, ﬁnance and accounting, charity work, PR & social media, and IT)
2. having a board of trustees within which there will be a number of office holders including: Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary
3. having a Larder Coordinator to organise day-to-day operations, with the

assistance of a Volunteer Coordinator (this is a charity wide role and not just Rosemary Lane)1. recruiting and retaining a body of volunteers sufficient to enable the efficient and effective operation of the charity
2. ensuring the Larder is reaching the people who need the help most by operating under a referral scheme
3. applying for grant aid for both core and one-oﬀ funds throughout the year to prevent reliance on short-term funds and donations
4. attracting regular ﬁnancial donors and enabling easier financial donation through electronic means
5. working hard to attract food donations from a range of sources
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|  | **B - Governance**Good governance is fundamental to a charity’s success. It enables and supports a charity’s compliance with the law and relevant regulations. It also promotes a culture in which everything works towards fulfilling the charity’s vision.The following statements help define the role and responsibilities of trustees : |
|  | 1. Trustees have a responsibility to understand the environment in which the charity is operating and to lead the charity in fulfilling its purposes as effectively as possible with the resources available.
2. The Trustee’s core role is a focus on strategy, performance and assurance.
3. The Trustees must have a shared understanding of and commitment to the charity's purposes and be able to articulate these clearly, as detailed in this Strategic Plan.
4. The Trustees must be able to demonstrate that the charity is effective in achieving its charitable purposes and agreed outcomes.  This should form part of the annual report of the charity which is agreed upon by the Trustees.
5. The Trustees must agree this strategy, detailing the charity’s purposes and the desired outputs, outcomes and impacts. Periodic reviews of the charity’s purposes, and the external environment in which it works, must be undertaken to make sure that the charity, and its purposes, stay relevant and valid.
6. The Trustees must regularly review the sustainability of its income sources and their impact on achieving charitable purposes in the short, medium and longer term. This should form part of the annual financial plan for the charity.
7. The Trustees take collective responsibility for the board decisions. The chair provides leadership to the board and takes responsibility for ensuring the board has agreed priorities, appropriate structures, processes and a productive culture and has trustees who are able to govern well and therefore add value to the charity.
8. The trustees must continue to ensure that there are proper arrangements for the recruitment, support and supervision of all volunteers.
9. The Trustees must ensure that all decisions are formally recorded.
10. Trustees, as part of the Strategic Plan, must agree the values, consistent with the charity’s purpose, that it wishes to promote and makes sure that these values underpin all its decisions and the charity’s activities.
11. The Trustees recognise, respect and welcome diverse, different and, at times, conflicting trustee views.
12. The Trustees support all volunteers to feel confident and able to provide the information, advice and feedback necessary to the board.
13. All trustees give sufficient time to the charity to carry out their responsibilities effectively. This includes preparing for meetings and the expected time commitment is made clear to trustees before nomination or appointment and again on acceptance of nomination or appointment.
14. Where individual Trustees are also involved in operational activities, for example as volunteers, they are clear about the capacity in which they are acting at any given time and understand what they are and are not authorised to do and to whom they report.
15. The Trustees must ensure that the charity follows the law and upholds principles of good governance.
16. Trustees must understand their safeguarding responsibilities and meet the legal minimum to promote a culture in which everyone feels safe and respected. We will develop an approach to support this and raise understanding amongst our people.
17. Trustees must identify and deal with conflicts of interest or loyalty. Trustees must remain independent and tell the board if they feel influenced by any interest or may be perceived as being influenced or to having a conflict.
18. The Trustees must regularly review which matters are reserved to the board and which can be delegated.
19. The Trustees must regularly check the charity’s key policies and procedures to ensure that they still support, and are adequate for, the delivery of the charity’s aims.
20. The Trustees must set operational plans and budgets that are in line with the charity’s purposes, strategic aims and resources as part of the Strategic Planning process.
21. The Trustees must regularly monitor performance using a consistent framework and checks performance against the charity’s strategic aims, operational plans and budgets.
22. The Trustees retain overall responsibility for risk management and, as a board, must discuss and decide the level of risk it is prepared to accept for specific and combined risks.
23. The Trustees agree and oversee an effective process for appointing and reviewing its external examiners if they are required.
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|  | **C - Individual identity**The larder will: |
|  | * develop and maintain a new website to increase the Larder’s proﬁle
* generate good media relations and use the website and other social media to promote the Larder’s work and identity
* generate social media posts on a frequent basis, at least monthly
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|  | **D - City centre presence** |
|  | Trustees will ensure the Larder maintains a city centre presence for its main distribution site. |
|  | **E - Premises for food storage and distribution** |
|  | Trustees shall ensure agreements for storage and distribution premises, where charges are paid, shall be for a minimum of one year rental with a target of five years or on an annual rolling basis. |
|  | **F - Distribution centres** |
|  | * Trustees may consider managing distribution centres under franchise arrangements
* Trustees may undertake a review of client’s postal locations to identify a need for rural or additional city distribution centres
* Trustees may provide equipment for the establishment and maintenance of new distribution centres.
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|  | **G - External relationships**Lincoln Community Larder will: |
|  | * remain a contributing member of the Greater Lincolnshire Food Partnership
* work collaboratively with the Trussell Trust and other foodbanks in Lincoln and the surrounding area
* agree with other foodbanks, the guidelines to be issued to referrers
* work closely with others to ensure the online systems remain ﬁt for purpose
* work with referring agencies to ensure clients who appear to have longer term needs do not become wholly reliant on the food bank and move on to other support.
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| **5. Metrics** What are we going to measure? | Lincoln Community Larder will develop a comprehensive set of business metrics and measure success against the goals set within the annual business plan |

The three year strategic plan is supported and enabled by an annual business plan that sets out the operational programme of work for the year in hand. It is refreshed by the Board of Trustees before 1st April each year.

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