



Executive Summary

Reporting Period – 1st January – 31st March 2026

This report reflects the above reporting period for the contract between OWBC and Helping Hands Community Trust.

Key Information

Overview (from the CEO)

The organisation continues to deliver stable core services. We are actively pursuing new funding opportunities and strengthening partnerships to support future growth and long-term sustainability.

This quarter, our operational focus has been on maintaining high service quality, including preparation for Advice Quality Standard (AQS) accreditation, alongside workforce development and improvements to internal systems such as policies and IT. Fundraising, grant applications and partnership development remain key strategic priorities.

As we enter the new financial year, we are progressing several key developments. In particular, we are seeking funding to expand our outreach, prevention work and foodbank-related work, as current funding for these areas are due to end in October 2026. We are also looking to invest in staffing capacity across the organisation to ensure we can continue to meet increasing demand effectively.

Our schools-based work is developing positively, with delivery already underway and strong engagement from young people. This programme supports early intervention by building awareness of financial wellbeing and resilience. We are actively seeking additional funding to sustain and grow this work over the longer term.

We have also begun planning for our 30th anniversary in March 2027, launching a year-long campaign to celebrate the organisation's impact and the communities we support. This will be an important opportunity to raise awareness of our services, engage new supporters, and strengthen relationships with partners and funders.

We welcome opportunities for community involvement and would greatly value support from local stakeholders.

While we anticipate the end of some key funding streams later this year, we have made the decision to implement a modest pay increase for staff in response to the rising cost of living, increases in the national minimum wage, and the fact that salaries have remained unchanged for several years. We are committed to progressing towards becoming a Living Wage employer, recognising the challenges this presents within a short-term funding environment.

Looking ahead

We are mindful of upcoming changes within the local authority landscape from 2028 and are taking proactive steps to strengthen relationships and diversify our funding streams. We have seen a noticeable increase in our visibility across Leicester and Leicestershire, which is supporting new opportunities for community engagement and small-scale fundraising. Participation in events such as the CEO Sleepout will further support this.

Finally, strengthening our organisational structure remains a key priority. We have recently recruited our first Finance Officer and aim to further develop our management capacity to better support staff wellbeing and service delivery. Subject to funding, we plan to continue building a structure that ensures resilience for our organisation.

In Summary

The organisation continues to deliver strong impact, earn external recognition, and build momentum. Our priority now is to secure funding beyond October 2026, as ongoing funding challenges remain; achieving this will enable us to expand our capacity to meet growing demand.

Partnerships and Representation

We continue to collaborate with key partners and remain active on several boards and steering groups, including:

- LLR Financial Inclusion Group
- Oadby and Wigston Integrated Neighbourhood Team (INT)
- Fundraising Exchange
- Better Mental Health Partnership
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Reaching People membership network

Demographics

Please see separate report #1

Quantitative data

Council Area - Number of NEW Clients

Client Address Council Area	Client Details Count Number of Clients
Blaby District Council	37
Charnwood Borough Council	11
Harborough District Council	19
Hinckley & Bosworth	4
Leicester City Council	72
Melton	1
North West Leicestershire District Council	2
Oadby & Wigston Borough Council	87
Out of Leicestershire	1
Report Total	234

Report Filters (All Conditions must be met):

Client Details > Date First Seen From 01/01/2026
Client Details > Date First Seen To 31/03/2026

Council Area - Number of Clients (New & Existing)

Client Address Council Area	Client Details Count Number of Clients
Blaby District Council	79
Charnwood Borough Council	18
Harborough District Council	45
Hinckley & Bosworth	15
Leicester City Council	164
Melton	2
North West Leicestershire District Council	4
Oadby & Wigston Borough Council	281
Out of Leicestershire	4
Report Total	612

Report Filters (All Conditions must be met):

Client Details > Date Last Updated From 01/01/2026
Client Details > Date Last Updated To 31/03/2026

The first table above shows new clients only, within each council area. The second table above shows both new and existing clients within each council area. The number of clients shown in both the above tables have been seen during this reporting period.

Oadby and Wigston continue to be areas that have the highest number of clients seen; this is a result of our focus on the local community and our commitment to supporting people within the Oadby and Wigston Borough. However, we continue to ensure that we support whoever needs our help, with residents from the city increasingly seeking our support.

OWBC Electoral Ward - Number of NEW Clients

Client Address Electoral Ward	Client Details Count Number of Clients
	5
Eyres Monsell	1
Glen Parva	1
Knighton	1
Oadby Brocks Hill	4
Oadby Grange	3
Oadby St Peter's	6
Oadby Uplands	1
Oadby Woodlands	2
South Wigston	15
Stoneygate	1
Western	1
Wigston All Saints	11
Wigston Fields	11
Wigston Meadowcourt	13
Wigston St Wolstan's	11
Report Total	87

Report Filters (All Conditions must be met):

Client Details > Date First Seen From 01/01/2026
 Client Details > Date First Seen To 31/03/2026
 Client Address > Council Area In List Oadby & Wigston Borough Council

OWBC Electoral Ward - Number of Clients (New & Existing)

Client Address Electoral Ward	Client Details Count Number of Clients
Oadby Brocks Hill	16
Oadby Grange	7
Oadby St Peter's	20
Oadby Uplands	13
Oadby Woodlands	12
South Wigston	66
Wigston All Saints	36
Wigston Fields	34
Wigston Meadowcourt	38
Wigston St Wolstan's	26
Report Total	268

This report shows 87 clients from the above electoral wards were new clients, with a total of 268, where 181 were existing or repeat clients

Please Note: *January is a quieter period for Helping Hands, and starting to pick up during February, especially for Debt and Money Management Advice as that is when clients credit card bills start to roll in. We also closed our South Wigston office for 2 days during January for staff training as part of our re-set preparation for the new year.

As you can see, Helping Hands Community Trust continue to support many people beyond Oadby and Wigston, with 331 people seeking our support from beyond the borough. We try to provide our unique service to all those that need our support by using funding from other sources, and we rely on additional volunteer support to help deliver our full service to all residents of Leicester and Leicestershire. We want to ensure that we do not turn anyone away who is in need and/or in crisis.

Council Area - Clients & Matter Categories (issues)

Client Address Council Area	Case Details Matter Category	Client Details Count Number of Clients
Oadby & Wigston Borough Council	Community Care	5
	Consumer/General Contract	62
	Debt	52
	Education	1
	Employment	15
	Family	17
	FOODBANK	39
	General	1
	Housing	36
	Land and Environment	1
	Legal Advice - Solicitor	91
	Mental Health	11
	Miscellaneous	48
	Personal (Self)	1
	Welfare Benefits	3
Welfare Rights	298	
Report Total		681

Report Filters (All Conditions must be met):

Case Details > Date of Last Update From 01/01/2026
 Case Details > Date of Last Update To 31/03/2026
 Client Address > Council Area Is Oadby & Wigston Borough Council

For Work Completed items and time spent, see separate report #2

You will see from the above reports it shows all matter categories (issues) that those 268 clients across all electoral wards within Oadby & Wigston have presented to us. It clearly states that we have dealt with 681 separate issues from 268 clients within this quarterly reporting period. This shows that clients are approaching us with multiple issues, and all are being addressed and dealt with.

I have also provided you with a second additional report attached, showing the time each issue takes per visit. You will see that 1671 work completed items have taken 32596 minutes (approx. 543 hours).

As before I will give you a quick summary of the reports.

Total number of client (New & Existing = 268

Total number of Issues/categories/matters = 681

Total number of work completed items (everything done for each case) = 1671

Total time spent = 32596 minutes

We are spending approx. 2 hours with each client.

The financial Outcomes report is attached #3

Gaining good financial outcomes and helpful advice on welfare and debt are core services in our delivery. Along with financial outcomes we are also logging non-financial outcomes being the 'soft' outcomes where we monitor our impact, such as, clients now feel able to cope, clients stress and mental health has significantly reduced, client is no longer feeling suicidal, client is now feeling more confident and empowered, client left more knowledgeable, client now able to manage their finances better etc.

The support we offer is focused around a holistic and person-centred approach. The quality of advice and support goes beyond the financial gains for the people we support within communities. We support clients with many different issues; welfare benefits, debt advice and money management, claims and applications, general advice, form filling, domestic abuse concerns, housing issues, employment and education issues, food and fuel poverty, legal advice, mental health support and appeals and tribunal representation.

The non-financial Outcomes report is attached #4

The above report is a new addition for this month. This is to give you a quick insight as to the impact our services are having on our clients, and how their mental health and wellbeing is positively being affected by the work we do.



Case Study 1

Client Seen By: Rick Bray

Date: Jan 2026

Location: OWBC Area

Client Profile & Case Background:

A Single man living on his own, his only source of income since redundancy is Universal Credit. The client has accumulated significant debts as he cannot seem to cover his necessary expenditures let alone debt repayments.

Summary of Issues & Needs Assessment:

Client wishes to rid himself of debt, he is struggling to afford his Debts on top of his necessary monthly expenditure.

After providing me with evidence of his monthly incomings and outgoings, we went through a budget plan for the month as well as maximising his income through schemes and benefit eligibility.

He feels he is now on top of his monthly bills, it is the debt payments that he is struggling with.

He is a regular user of the foodbank and would like to be less dependent on foodbanks as they are only designed to support people in crisis on an ad hoc basis, they are not to be relied upon.

Resources:

Internal-

Debt Advisor

External-

Conc 8 guidance and FCA DRO intermediary regulations

Options Discussed, Advice Given & Actions Taken:

I went through an updated Income and Expenditure with the client, and he has a negative disposable income if you include debt repayments, thankfully his rent and council tax were up to date.

I spoke with him regarding his debts and I fully assessed the clients' circumstances regarding the debt level, assets and perceived change of future circumstances of which there were none.

I then explained the pro's and con's of various debt solutions available, for him to decide what would be best for him.

Outcome:

The client chose to proceed with a DRO Debt Relief order. I reminded the client again of the negative effect this will have on his credit file.

The client was successful in his Debt Relief Order application and all submitted debts have been written off and now he feels he can afford his bills and on-going usage going forward.

He understands that if he doesn't pay his existing bills going forward and accrues arrears that we will not be able to write them off again without an extenuating reason (and waiting for 6 years). The client fully understands this.

The client has gained confidence, his mental health has improved, he no longer requires emergency food, and he can now concentrate on other aspects of her life, he is actually seeking work, he feels able to rejoin the workforce with nothing holding him back.

Any Unusual Factors or Difficulties For Client:

It took numerous appointments with the client, and this was a long process to gather the necessary evidence, as the client had a lot on his mind and could not concentrate on just his debt situation.

What Was Learned:

Patience and constant communication are key, this outcome could not even have been attempted without repeat appointments.

Case Study 2

Client Seen By: Rick Bray

Date: Feb 2026

Location: South Wigston office

Client Profile & Case Background:

A Single lady with 2 children her only source of income is Universal Credit. The client has tried to switch energy supplier, decided she didn't want to go ahead with it, cancelled the switch within her 14 day cooling off period but has still been charged and now has a debt to an energy company that are not even her supplier.

Summary of Issues & Needs Assessment:

Client wishes to rid herself of this debt as she was in her cooling off period. After providing me with evidence of her monthly income and expenditure, we went through a budget plan for the month as well as looking at her entitlement of income maximisation via various grant schemes and a benefit eligibility check, as is standard with any client seeking assistance. We pride ourselves on offering an holistic approach.

Resources:

Internal & External

In-house Debt Advisor

FCA Conc 8 guidance

Energy ombudsman regulations

Scottish Power's own terms and conditions

Options Discussed, Advice Given & Actions Taken:

I went through an updated Income and Expenditure with the client, and she has been able to continue to meet all her priority bills and current usage when they fall due, she just needed someone to fight her corner as she knew she had been wronged.

We decided an email from me explain the situation would possibly help, and asking the supplier to refer to their own terms and conditions would highlight the issue sufficiently and hopefully get the debt quashed as it seemed legally unenforceable.

Outcome:

The bill/debt was waived/wiped/disappeared.

Any Unusual Factors or Difficulties For Client:

One appointment was all it took with this client to put together a timeline, gathering the evidence of payments made, providing bank statements, and supplier T&C's.

We are thankful that Scottish Power did not contest this as it would have meant numerous appointments with the client, and this could've been a much longer process.

What Was Learned:

The clients input is paramount, if she didn't have the required documents this would have taken a lot longer, and extremely difficult to prove where the fault lay.

Contacts

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We also have accounts on the following social media platforms:

Facebook

X (formerly Twitter)

Instagram

LinkedIn