



# Baby Banks in 2024: Rising Need, Relentless Support

Insights from the Baby Bank Alliance Annual Impact and Membership Survey

# Your Data. Your Impact. Our Shared Story.

The story of rising need,  
sector strength,  
and collective action

**Thank you to the 180 baby banks who took the time to share their data for our Annual Impact Survey 2024.**

**Your input gives us the clearest picture yet, of the scale, workload and impact of baby banks across the UK.**

Together, you supported over 118,000 families and distributed more than 3.2 million essential items - that's a 151% increase on last year. Yet while the numbers are rising, so too are the challenges. Many baby banks are stretched, with 65% unable to meet every referral, and facing rising costs, funding uncertainty, and growing demand.

This report reflects the collective strength, generosity, and resilience of baby banks.

It's also a call to action: to recognise your impact, respond to the need and stand with you as you support families through crisis.

# How We Estimated Impact By Extrapolating Data

The methodology used to create the picture of baby bank impact in the UK

## Why do we need to extrapolate?

We received impact survey responses from **~45% of the UK's 400 baby banks** this year.

We want to build a **complete picture of baby bank impact in the UK** to generate further support and awareness of baby banks.

To build this complete picture, we need to estimate the impact of the **~220 unknown baby banks** (who did not participate in the survey), by extrapolating from the results from **known baby banks** (who did participate in the survey).

## How did we extrapolate?

We considered three methods for extrapolating to unknown baby banks:

1. **Using median** reach of known baby banks
2. **Using mean** reach of known baby banks
3. **Excluding large** known baby banks (e.g. Little Village) and using mean reach of remaining

We selected **option 1 – median**, which works as follows:



## How robust is the extrapolation?

We selected **option 1 – median** as it is simple to understand, easily replicable, and would give a good representation of the smaller baby banks who did not participate in the survey.

However, **our answer may still overestimate the impact of baby banks**. Although we know unknown baby banks are smaller, we do not fully understand their characteristics (e.g., size, location, referral type).

**In future years**, we could consider option 3, or a more sophisticated extrapolation with a better understanding of the characteristics of unknown baby banks.

# The Big Picture: Insights from Our 2024 Survey

What 180 baby banks told us about need, impact and workload across the UK

In 2023,  
around 40%  
of UK baby banks  
took part in our first  
annual survey,  
creating a  
powerful snapshot  
of the sector.

Since then, the  
landscape has continued  
to shift...

- **Child poverty is deepening.**  
In 2024, 4.5 million children in the UK are living in relative poverty after housing costs, that's 31% of all children, and rising from 4.3 million in 2023.
- **And it's not just poverty — it's deprivation.**  
2.3 million babies and children are now growing up in households facing both low income and material deprivation —that's 1 in 6 children without the basics they need to thrive.\*
- **The Baby Bank Alliance is growing in response.**  
With 225 members and counting, baby banks are standing together, sharing knowledge, offering peer support, and helping families across the UK meet rising levels of need. *Note: 208 members at time of survey.*

# Five Big Takeaways from the BBA Survey\*

## 1. Support is growing - and so is the need.

Baby banks supported 118,000 families in 2024, up from 94,000 families in 2023. A rise of 25%.

## 2. Demand is outpacing capacity.

65% of baby banks say they receive referrals they can't fulfil, due to lack of resources or stock.

## 3. A climate win for baby banks - and the planet.

Last year alone, baby banks prevented 38ktCO<sub>2</sub>e from going to waste, that's enough to power 6,000 homes for an entire year!

## 4. The Baby Bank Alliance helps relieve pressure.

The Baby Bank Alliance supports members through funding, donations, guidance, and peer connection, strengthening the sector from within.

## 5. Members want more of what works.

Baby banks told us they want the BBA to keep focusing on funding, item support, and growing connections across the network.

Your data.  
Your voices.

The five things  
we need to pay  
attention to...

# The Scale of Support: Growing Year on Year

Survey respondents 2024 vs. 2023

Baby banks responding to our survey supported...	UK-wide Estimates* supported...
<b>216,000 children and babies</b> (+9% vs 2023) <sup>1</sup>	<b>~400,000 children and babies</b> supported (+2%)
<b>118,000 families</b> (+25%)	<b>~220,000 families</b> (+35%)
<b>3.2 million essential items</b> (+151%, worth approx. <b>£70 million</b> ) <sup>2</sup>	<b>~3.5 million items</b> distributed (+143%)
<b>155,000 referrals</b> (+35% vs 2023, and growing 35% per year since 2021)	<b>~257,000 referrals</b> (+30%)

Item growth may reflect increased public awareness and donations, driven in part by the collective voice and visibility of the Baby Bank Alliance.

## What baby banks gave to families in 2024:

- 144,000 clothing bundles to keep children warm (+45%)
- 196,000 books to support early literacy (+80%)
- 35,000 sleeping bags to support safe sleep for infants (+62%)  
...plus a wide range of other essentials

# Challenges Baby Banks Are Facing

The gap is widening. Baby banks are being asked to do more, with less...

## Demand is Surging, But Stock is Tight

- **65% of baby banks** received referrals they couldn't fulfil—mostly due to item shortages, not staffing
- **69% have waiting lists** for items, especially larger essentials like cots and buggies
- Only **9% have waiting lists** for referrals themselves

## Funding Remains Unstable

- **69%** saw no improvement in funding success over the last year
- Average **referral cost has risen to £86** (up 7%)
- Income is down (**£88k**, -13%) while spending is up (**£76k**, +22%)

## Volunteer Reliance is Growing

- Volunteer hours grew **82%**, while paid staff increased just **31%**
- Staff costs still make up **40% of operating costs**

## Families Face Systemic Barriers

- Key challenges include **low pay**, **insufficient social security** (e.g. two-child cap), and **immigration concerns**
- Fewer families reported issues with childcare, time together, or children's social opportunities

# Supporting the State & Powering the Circular Economy

## Easing Pressure on Public Services

- Baby banks work closely with statutory services, most referrals come from **social care, health visitors, and midwives**

## Reducing Waste, Extending Use

- In 2024, baby banks prevented **~38kt CO<sub>2</sub>e** through item reuse, enough to **power 6,000 homes for a year**
- UK-wide, the savings rise to **~42kt CO<sub>2</sub>e**

## Leading on Reuse and Repair

- **60%** of baby banks repair or salvage parts
- **58%** ask families to return items for reuse
- **97%** say sustainability is a key part of what they do

**Baby banks don't just support families, they play a vital role in easing pressure on public services and driving sustainability through reuse.**

# The Story In Numbers: What 180 Baby Banks Told Us

Real data. Real challenges.  
Real impact.

The following pages show the most complete picture yet of the baby bank sector - built from your experiences, your effort, and your voices.

This data tells the story of how baby banks are showing up for families, even as the pressure grows...

# From buggies to books, baby banks gave it all...

No. Items gifted to families by baby banks in 2024 by category



**144k** bundles of clothing (+45% vs 2023)



**11k** cots, cot beds, travel cots (+17% vs 2023)



**17k** Moses baskets or cribs (+45% vs 2023)



**143k** blankets or sheets



**35k** sleeping bags (+62% vs 2023)



**15k** prams, buggies, strollers (+47% vs 2023)



**6k** slings or baby carriers (+48% vs 2023)



**6k** highchairs (+61% vs 2023)



**7k** Sterilisers (+55% vs 2023)



**16k** baby baths or bath supports (+89% vs 2023)



**318k** toiletries (+507% vs 2023)



**1k** cloth nappy kits (+163% vs 2023)



**6k** safety gates



**196k** books (+80% vs 2023)



**242k** toys

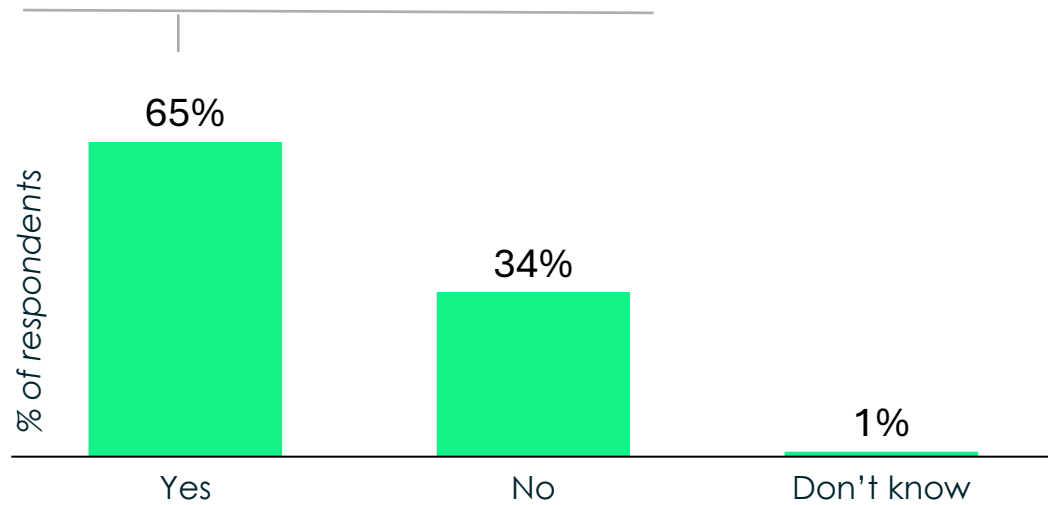


**64k** shoes

# Most baby banks receive referrals they cannot help...

Q: Do you receive referrals you are unable to help?

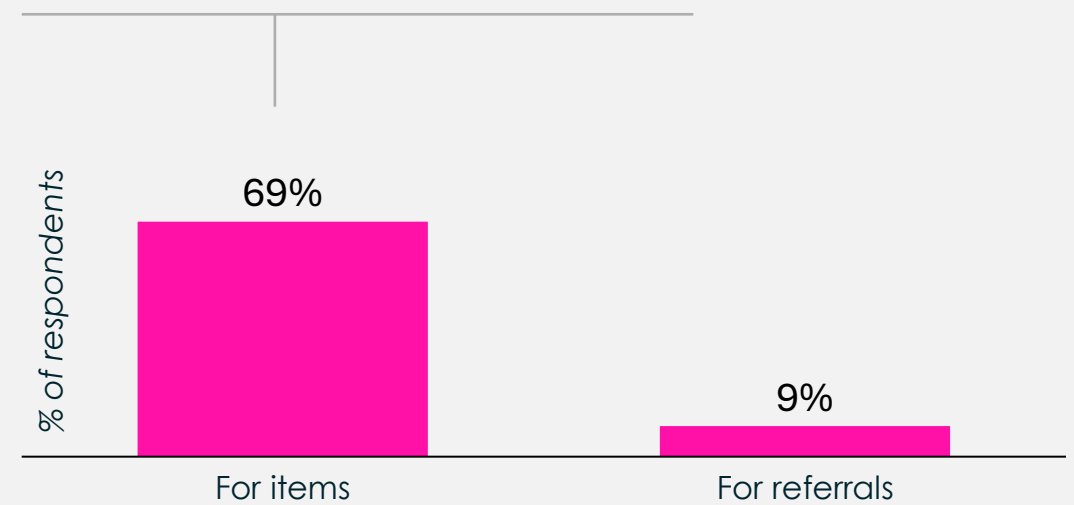
Most baby banks (54%) are **constrained by products available** rather than staff (10%).



# ...while most keep a waiting list for items, not referrals

% Share of baby banks with a waiting list

**Larger items** are generally on waiting lists, such as cots, prams, safety gates.



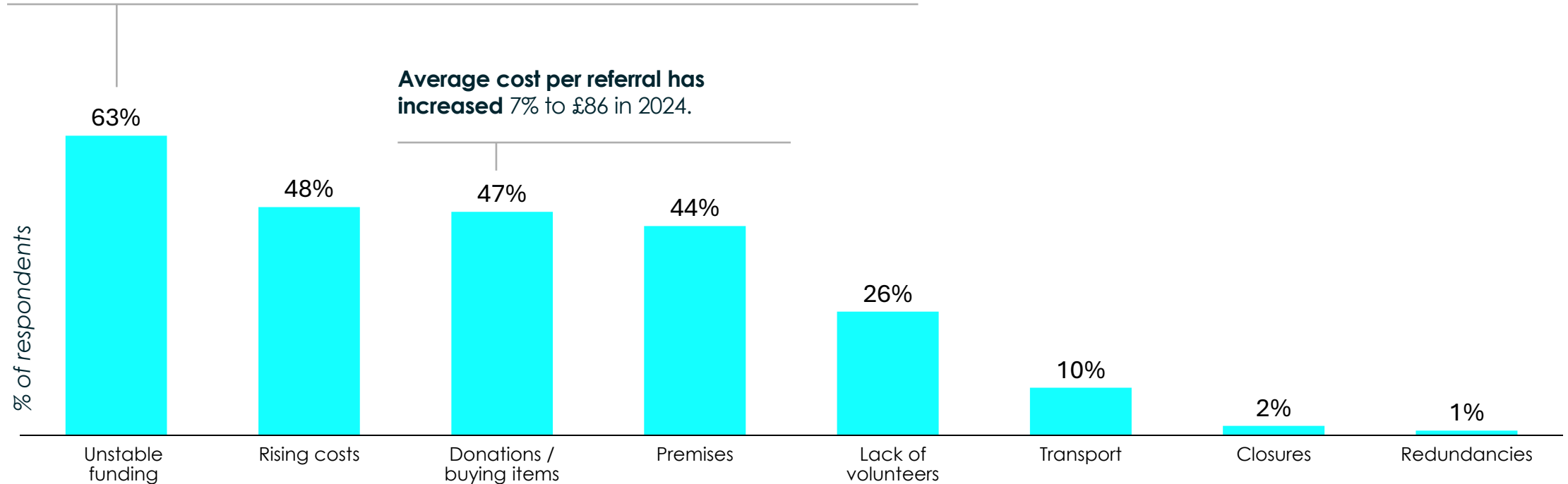
**Some baby banks are forced to cap their waiting lists.**

You told us, 61% of item waiting lists and 33% of referral waiting lists have limits in place due to demand.

# Baby banks are stretched with unstable funding, fewer donations and rising bills

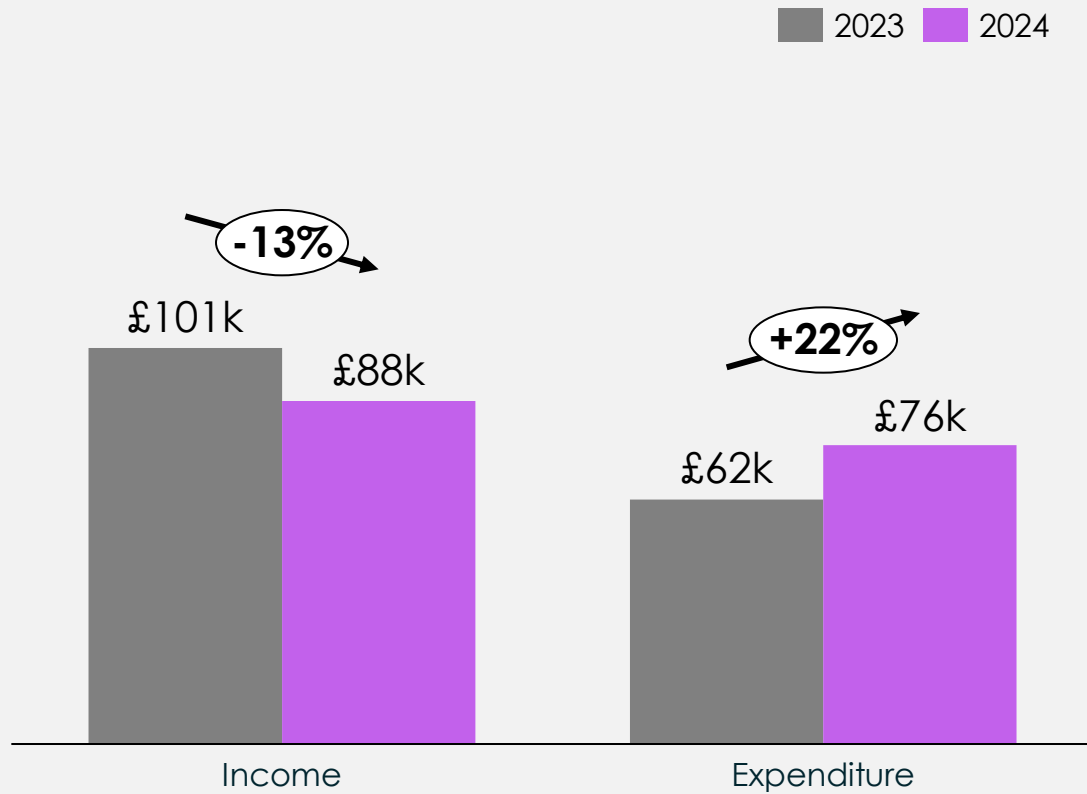
Q: What are the biggest challenges you face in running a baby bank?

Most baby banks (69%) **have not seen funding success rates improve** in the last year, while average income has dropped by 13%



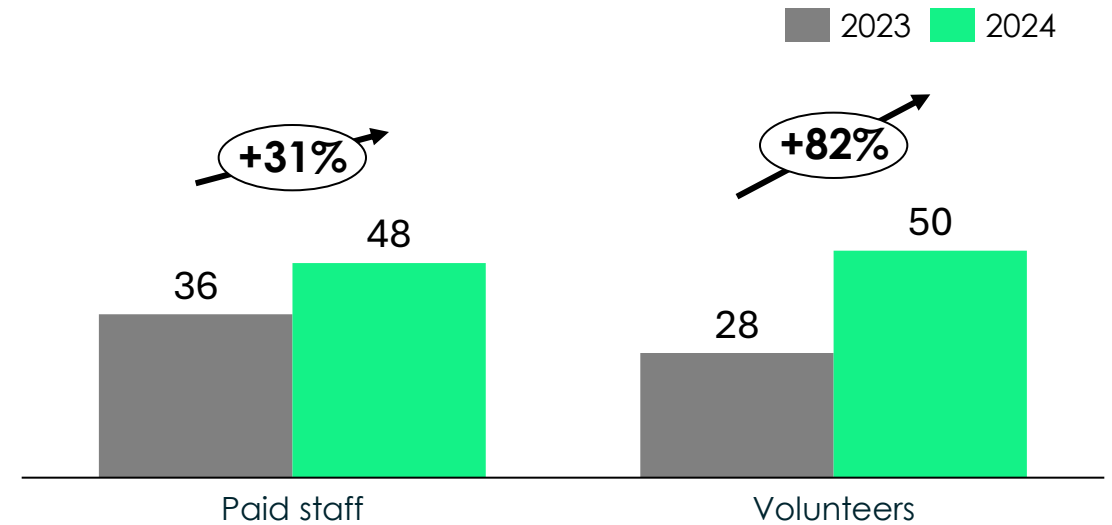
# Baby banks faced increasing financial pressures...

Average<sup>1</sup> annual income and expenditure of baby banks (excluding gift-in-kind)



# ...and were disproportionately more reliant on volunteers

Average number of hours per week, #



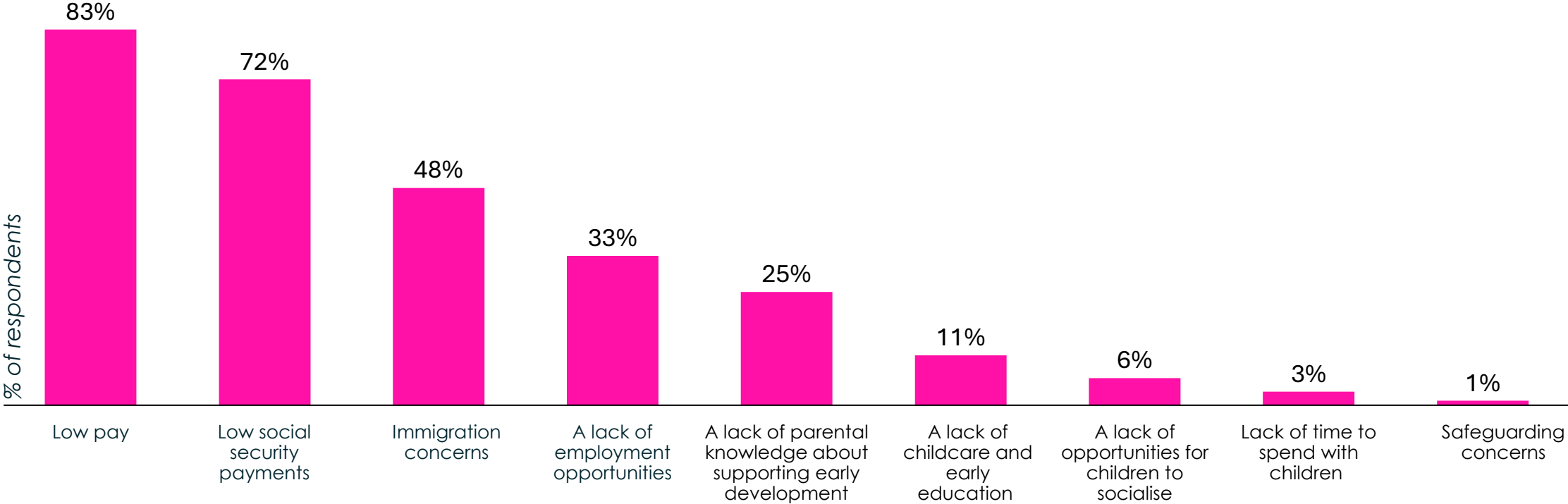
## Rising costs are hitting hard.

The increase in average spending is partly driven by more paid staff, but it's also fuelled by inflation and growing demand.

As pressure mounts, many baby banks may need to rely even more on volunteers to keep up.

# Families of baby banks face challenges with low pay, low social security payments, and immigration concerns

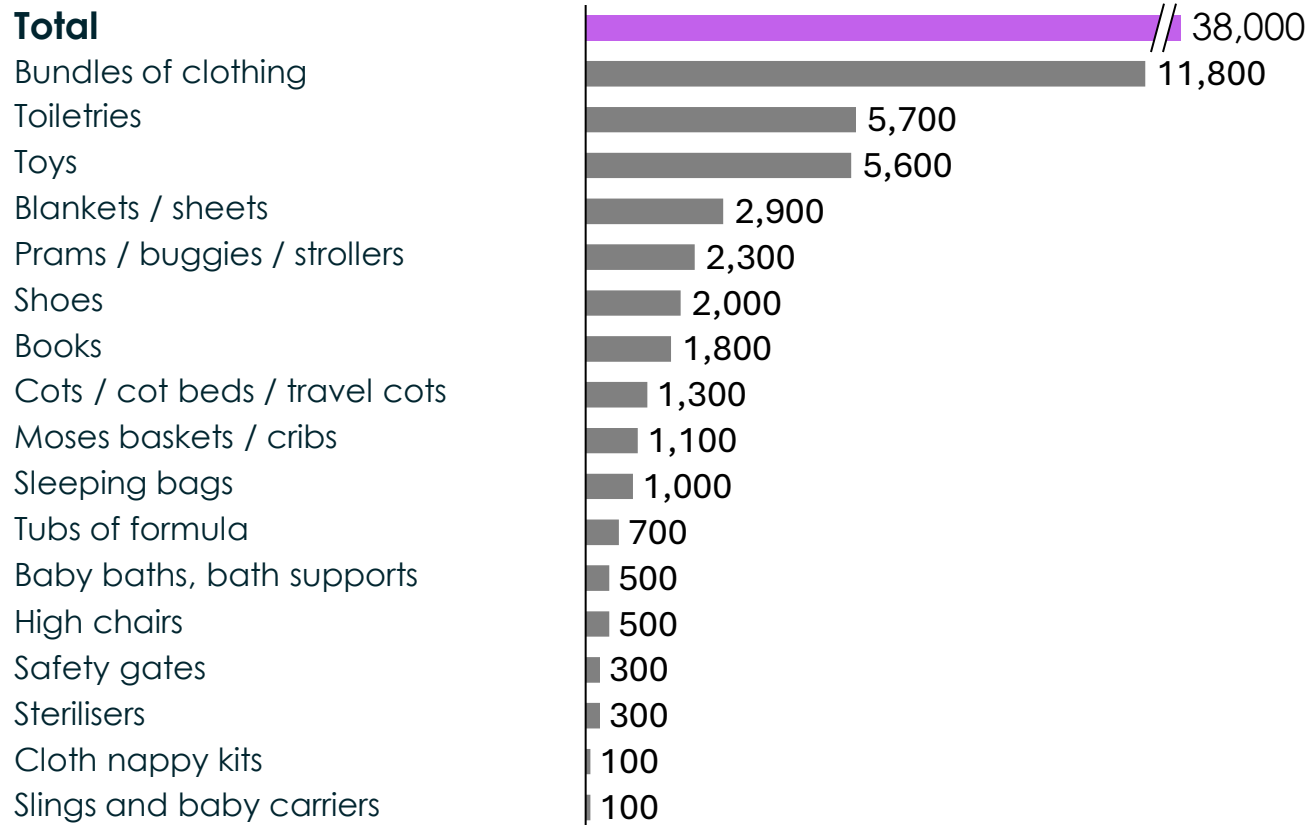
Q: What are the most pressing issues facing families accessing your baby bank?



Source: Annual Survey 2024

# Baby banks helped cut 38,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions in 2024

CO<sub>2</sub> saved by baby banks through giving items a second life



## A Win for Families and the Planet

By reusing donated items, baby banks saved around 38,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2024. That's the carbon equivalent of powering 6,000 homes for a year<sup>1</sup>. Scaled across the UK, the total saving could reach 42,000 tonnes!

This doesn't even include clothing or nappies, where data was less consistent, so the real impact is likely even higher.





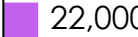
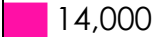
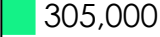
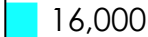
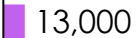
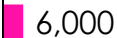
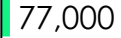

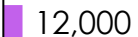
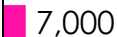
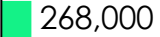
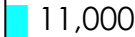
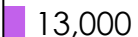
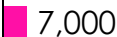
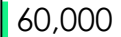
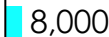
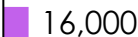

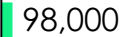
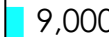


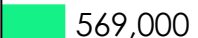


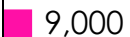


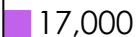
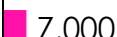
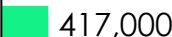

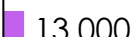

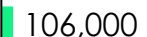
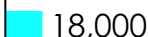
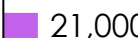
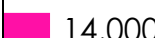

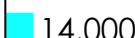

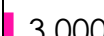
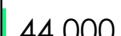

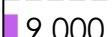
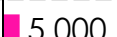
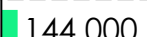
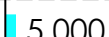



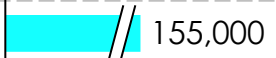
These savings reflect the entire lifecycle of the items - from production to disposal - and are based on modelling from AI tools, ChatGPT and DeepSeek.

**Less waste.**  
**Lower emissions.**  
**More support for families.**



Note: Data on individual items of clothing and nappies was excluded, as data was inconsistent across baby banks.  
<sup>1</sup>: Assuming 6tCO<sub>2</sub>e per household annually. Note: Kt<sup>1</sup> represents kilo tonnes, which is equal to 1,000 metric tons. "CO<sub>2</sub>e" signifies carbon dioxide equivalent, meaning that all greenhouse gases are converted to the equivalent amount of CO<sub>2</sub> that would have the same warming effect. Source: Annual Survey 2024, ChatGPT, DeepSeek

# 2024 Impact by Region – Total Reach

Region	Survey responses	 Children & babies supported	 Families supported	 Items gifted	 Referrals received
North West	23	 22,000	 14,000	 305,000	 16,000
West Midlands	15	 13,000	 6,000	 77,000	 6,000
East England	14	 12,000	 7,000	 268,000	 11,000
South West	15	 13,000	 7,000	 60,000	 8,000
East Midlands	12	 16,000	 5,000	 98,000	 9,000
South East	31	 60,000	 30,000	 569,000	 47,000
Yorkshire and the Humber	13	 14,000	 9,000	 387,000	 10,000
Scotland	13	 17,000	 7,000	 417,000	 7,000
North East	10	 13,000	 10,000	 106,000	 18,000
Greater London	12	 21,000	 14,000	 724,000	 14,000
Northern Ireland	9	 5,000	 3,000	 44,000	 4,000
Wales	13	 9,000	 5,000	 144,000	 5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	 // 216,000	 // 118,000	 // 3,199,000	 // 155,000

Results are from responses received from 180 baby banks and have not been extrapolated to represent the whole of the UK. Source: Annual Survey 2024

# 2024 Impact by Region – Average Reach per Baby Bank

					
Region	Survey responses	Children & babies supported	Families supported	Items gifted	Referrals received
North West	23	938	593	16032	709
West Midlands	15	887	411	5949	385
East England	14	910	537	20646	788
South West	15	964	488	4601	586
East Midlands	12	1431	431	8189	750
South East	31	1947	992	18958	1532
Yorkshire and the Humber	13	1297	687	38723	795
Scotland	13	1565	650	34767	613
North East	10	1601	1092	11825	2262
Greater London	12	1947	1199	72361	1150
Northern Ireland	9	654	362	4863	392
Wales	13	687	423	13091	437
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>1279</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>19872</b>	<b>893</b>

Results are from responses received from 180 baby banks and have not been extrapolated to represent the whole of the UK. Source: Annual Survey 2024

# 2023 Impact by Region – Total Reach

Region	Survey responses	Children & babies supported	Families supported	Items gifted	Referrals received
North West	17	16,000	7,000	207	10,000
West Midlands	13	14,000	5,000	54,000	6,000
East England	16	13,000	6,000	47,000	9,000
South West	13	15,000	7,000	38,000	8,000
East Midlands	8	12,000	5,000	48,000	5,000
South East	25	50,000	24,000	116,000	30,000
Yorkshire and the Humber	9	14,000	4,000	65,000	7,000
Scotland	8	16,000	8,000	84,000	9,000
North East	6	9,000	4,000	33,000	9,000
Greater London	11	20,000	11,000	550,000	12,000
Northern Ireland	8	9,000	3,000	13,000	4,000
Wales	11	12,000	7,000	19,000	6,000
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>148</b>	<b>199,000</b>	<b>94,000</b>	<b>1,275,000</b>	<b>115,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes 3 responses from Baby Banks without a region (e.g., Baby Basics). Results have not been extrapolated to represent the whole of the UK. Source: Annual Survey 2023

# 2023 Impact by Region – Average Reach per Baby Bank

Region	Survey responses	 Children & babies supported	 Families supported	 Items gifted	 Referrals received
North West	17	955	422	12176	572
West Midlands	13	1046	410	4120	496
East England	16	832	397	2907	558
South West	13	1119	554	2948	642
East Midlands	8	1473	626	5975	661
South East	25	2010	975	4643	1186
Yorkshire and the Humber	9	1549	498	7265	783
Scotland	8	1943	1040	10496	1082
North East	6	1515	709	5557	1547
Greater London	11	1804	1029	50022	1083
Northern Ireland	8	1122	399	1677	481
Wales	11	1081	613	1705	519
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>148</b>	<b>1364</b>	<b>643</b>	<b>8734</b>	<b>788</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes 3 responses from Baby Banks without a region (e.g., Baby Basics). Results have not been extrapolated to represent the whole of the UK. Source: Annual Survey 2023

**Thank you  
for standing  
stronger together**

**The data in this report reflects the strength, resilience and generosity of the baby bank community.**

**Together, you supported over 118,000 families, distributed 3.2 million essential items, all while navigating growing demand, limited funding, and rising costs.**

You've told us what's working, what's not, and where support is most needed. This insight powers everything we do at the Baby Bank Alliance, from funding and training to advocacy and national storytelling.

Thank you for sharing your data, your time, and your trust.

Together, we are stronger, and together, we'll keep pushing for the support families deserve.

**Support. Share. Stay connected.**

 [babybankalliance.org](https://babybankalliance.org)

 [@babybankalliance](https://www.instagram.com/babybankalliance)



The Baby Bank Alliance is founded by Save the Children, Purposeful Ventures, Little Village and Bristol Baby Bank Network. Purposeful Ventures is a registered charity (1204622) in England and Wales. Save the Children is a registered company limited by guarantee (Company No. 178159), registered Charity in England and Wales (No. 213890), Scotland (SC039570) and Isle of Man (No. 199).