Baby Bank Alliance.

Baby Banks in 2025: A lifeline for families in need

Insights from the Baby Bank Alliance Annual Impact and Membership Survey

Your Data Story:

Rising demands, rising costs and **collective action**

This report demonstrates the vital role that baby banks continue to play in supporting families facing hardship across the UK.

Collectively, you have supported over 213,000 families and distributed 19 million essential items, all while continuing to meet rising demand in the face of limited funding and increasing costs.

Rooted in communities and powered by collective action, baby banks are stepping in to support families when they have nowhere else to turn.

Yet demand continues to outstrip capacity. Despite supporting record numbers of families, more than half of baby banks received referrals they could not fulfil.

We will continue to support, champion and advocate baby banks, working towards a future where no child goes without the essentials they need to thrive.

Extrapolation method uses median reach of captured baby banks to represent remaining ~175 not covered by our data

Why do we need to extrapolate?

We received survey data about **~55% 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 **~175 baby banks not covered** (who did not participate in the survey or were not included in Baby Basics UK data), by extrapolating from the results from **baby banks covered** (who did participate in the survey or were otherwise included by Baby Basics UK data).

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 the largest** reach figures (over 95th percentile) and using mean reach of remaining

We selected **Option 1 – median**, as it is intuitive and less skewed by outliers, which works as follows:

Extrapolated reach = Reach of known baby banks + Number of unknown baby banks (~175) × Median reach of known baby banks

How robust is the extrapolation?

- In prior years, we acknowledged that our calculations may overestimate impact, as unknown baby banks tend to be smaller.
- This year, the inclusion of more smaller baby banks has indeed lowered median values, making year-on-year comparison less reliable.
- Therefore, for reach and items, **year-on-year change is reported using only baby banks who provided the corresponding data in both 2024 and 2025.**

The Big Picture: Insights from Our 2025 Survey

The landscape of what **225 baby** banks told us

Around 50% of UK baby banks took part in the 2025 Annual Survey, creating the most powerful snapshot of the sector yet.

Child poverty remains a harsh reality in the UK.

In 2025, 4.5 million children were growing up in poverty. An estimated 2.3 million babies, children and young people were living in households experiencing both low income and material deprivation.

This means millions were going without everyday necessities — from adequate clothing, sleep spaces and toiletries to opportunities to learn and play.

Against this backdrop, the baby bank community has never been more vital.

With 261 Alliance members and growing, together baby banks are providing practical support, sharing expertise and strengthening local communities — helping to ensure that every baby and child has the best possible start in life.

Source: **[2026]** Households Below Average Income: An analysis of the UK income distribution: FYE 1995 to FYE **2025 [2025]** **Action for Children**

Five Big Takeaways from the BBA Survey

1. **The need for support continues to rise.**
   Baby banks across the UK supported 400,000 children in 2025 – a rise of 11% from 2024.

2. **Baby banks ease pressure on public services.**
   Baby banks distributed more than 19 million essential items and saved the state up to an estimated £18 million.

3. **Baby banks need more donations.**
   57% of baby banks say they receive referrals they can't fulfil, due to lack of resources or stock.

4. **Bank banks power local circular economies.**
   Last year alone, baby banks prevented 28ktCO_2e from going to waste, that's enough to power 4,500 homes for an entire year!

5. **The Baby Bank Alliance is impactful to our members.**
   The majority of member baby banks would strongly recommend Alliance membership to others (87 Net Promoter Score).

Source: Annual Survey of 2024 & 2025

The Scale of Support: Growing Year on Year

Survey respondents 2025 vs. 2024

Baby banks responding to our survey (225) supported...	UK-wide Estimates* supported...
211,649[1] **children and babies** (+11% vs 2024)	~**400,000* children and babies** supported
118,524[1] **families** (+8% vs 2024)	~**210,000* families**
Distribution of 12 million[1] **essential items** (+275% vs 2024)	**Distribution of ~19 million* items**
161,500 referrals[1] (+8% vs 2024)	~**264,000* referrals**

Item volumes saw the biggest jump in 2025, up 275% from the previous year.

What baby banks gave to families in 2025:

510k toys *(+30% from 2024)*

24k tubs of formula *(+26% from 2024)*

16k cots, cot beds or travel cots *(+20% from 2024)*

[1] *Figures likely underestimate total reach, as many baby banks conservatively estimate the number of children supported.*
**Figures extrapolated from BBA Survey data Source: Annual Survey 2024, Annual Survey 2025*

Challenges Baby Banks Are Facing

Demand is high, but resources are limited

- **Demand for larger equipment continues to outstrip supply,** with cots, prams and safety gates most commonly subject to waiting lists.
- **More than half of baby banks (57%) still receive referrals they cannot fulfil,** largely due to shortages of essential items.

Funding Remains Unstable

- **Restrictions and reductions on available funding make for a intense competitive market.** 78% of baby banks reporting flat or declining funding application success rates, compared with 69% in 2024.
- The average referral cost remains steady at £85.
- Demand for baby bank services continues to grow, with more children being supported each year. However, **average income growth of 9% (£98,000) has not been sufficient** to keep pace with increasing need.

Reliance on volunteers

- Volunteer hours grew **61%**, while paid staff increased just **13%**
- For a quarter of baby banks, insufficient volunteers or staff is the primary challenge they face.

Family circumstances and challenges

- Families supported by baby banks most commonly experience financial hardship driven by **low wages and inadequate social security support.**
- Beyond financial pressures, the most significant challenges reported were **poor wellbeing and unsuitable housing conditions.**

Source: Annual Survey of 2024 & 2025

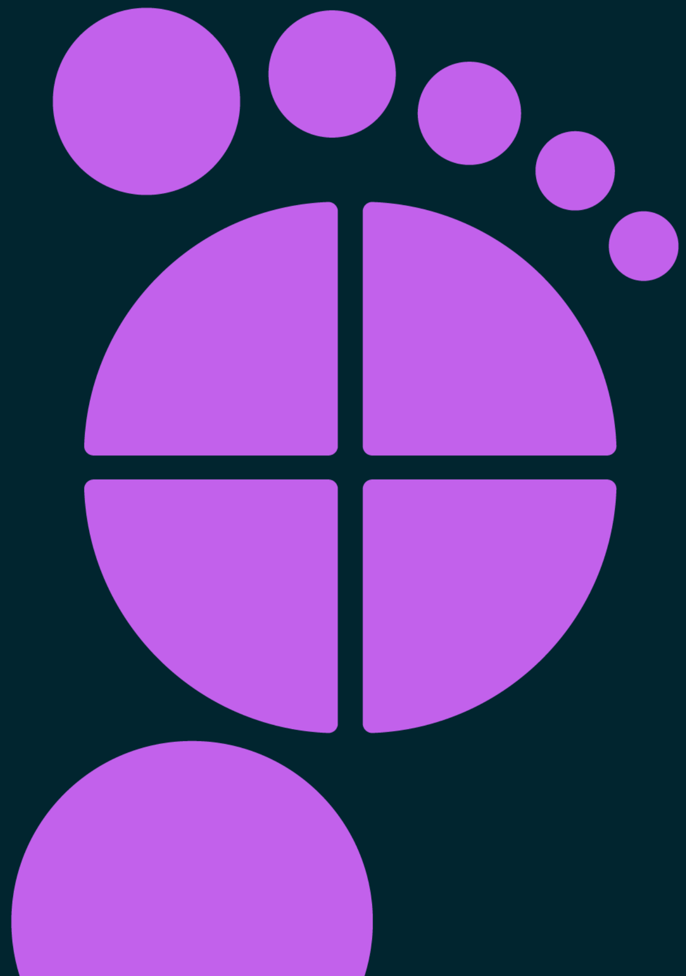
Supporting the State & Powering the Circular Economy
UK baby banks in 2025

Easing pressure on public services

- Baby banks work closely with statutory services, most referrals come from **social care, health visitors, and midwives.**
- Baby banks provide items to families that the **state could otherwise be responsible for providing, saving them an estimated £18million.**

Reducing waste and extending use

- **Baby banks in the UK avoided an estimated ~28ktCO2e** in 2025 through item reuse, equivalent to **annual emissions from 4,500 homes.**
- **80% of baby banks encourage families to return items**, suggesting the actual emissions avoided may be higher.
- **Around 40% of baby banks also repair items**.



The Story In Numbers: What 225 Baby Banks Told Us

Thank you to the 225 baby banks who took the time to share their data for our Annual Impact Survey 2025.

Your input helps build our clearest picture yet of the scale, workload and impact of baby banks across the UK.

Baby banks continued to give away a wide range of items

Items gifted to families by all UK baby banks in 2025, by category

9m individual nappies *(+8% from 2024)*

6m items of clothing

882k toiletries

510k toys *(+30% from 2024)*

340k books *(+13% from 2024)*

225k pack of wipes

164k blankets or sheets *(-9% from 2024)*

84k footwear *(+8% from 2024)*

81k bottles

62k jars, pots or pouches of baby and toddler semi-solid and solid food

57k sleeping bags *(+9% from 2024)*

43k mattresses

33k moses baskets or cribs *(+5% from 2024)*

24k tubs of formula *(+26% from 2024)*

23k baby baths or bath supports *(+16% from 2024)*

23k prams, buggies or strollers *(+3% from 2024)*

16k cots, cot beds or travel cots *(+20% from 2024)*

14k changing mats or units

13k sterilisers *(+3% from 2024)*

10k highchairs *(+11% from 2024)*

10k baby slings, wraps or carriers *(+30% from 2024)*

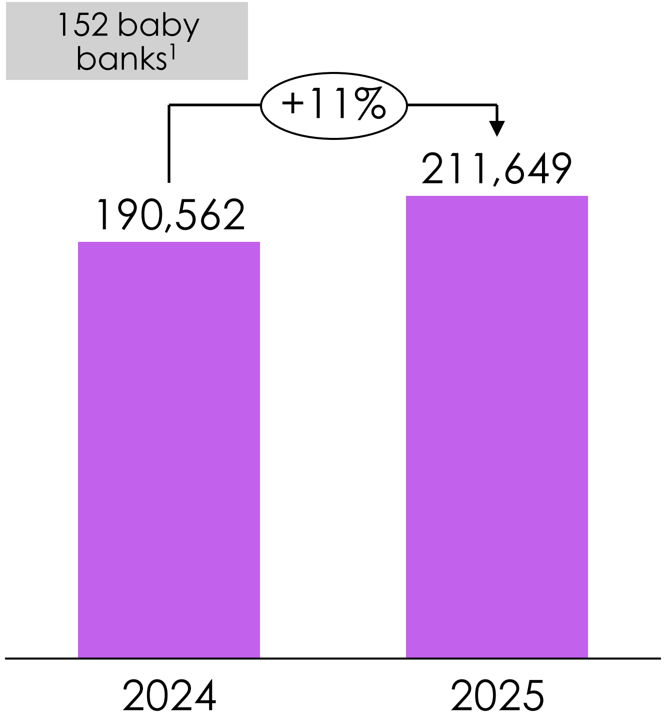
8k safety gates *(-2% from 2024)*

5k cloth nappies

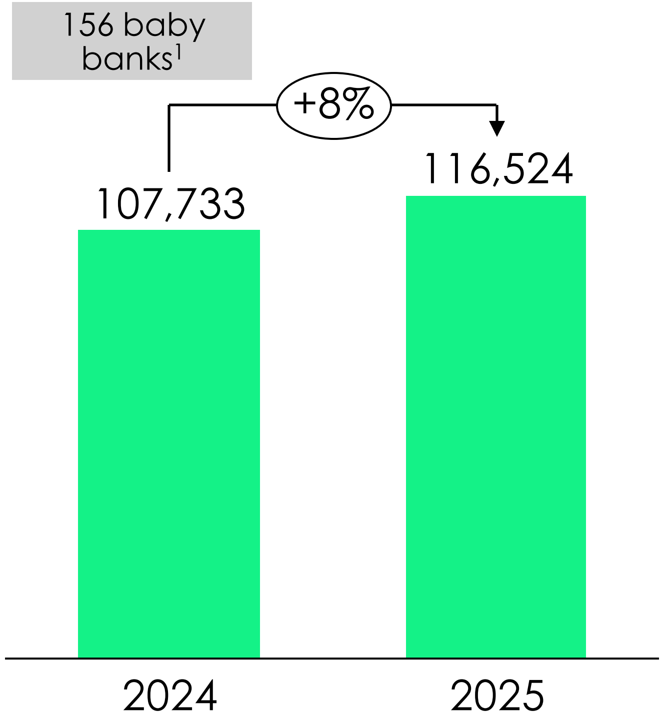
Source: Annual Survey of 2024 & 2025

Like-for-like: Baby banks supported ~11% more children in 2025 than 2024

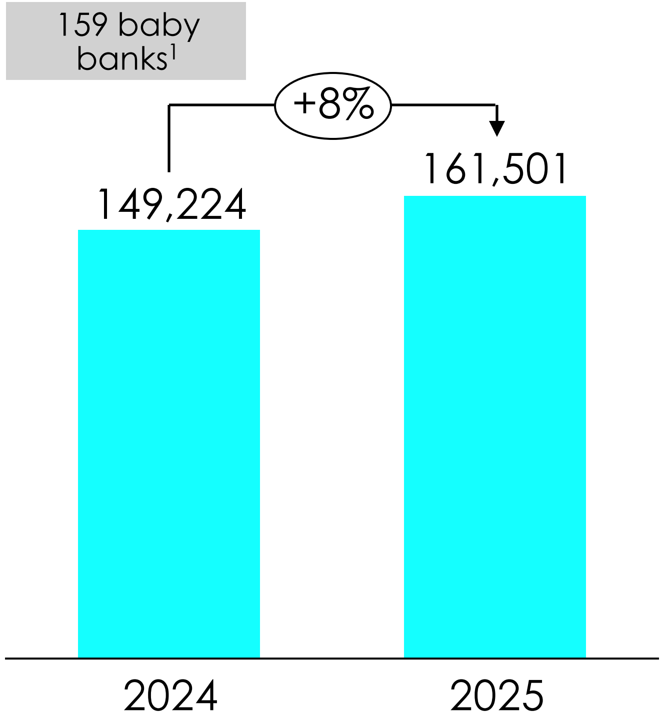
Number of children supported



Number of families supported



Number of referrals supported



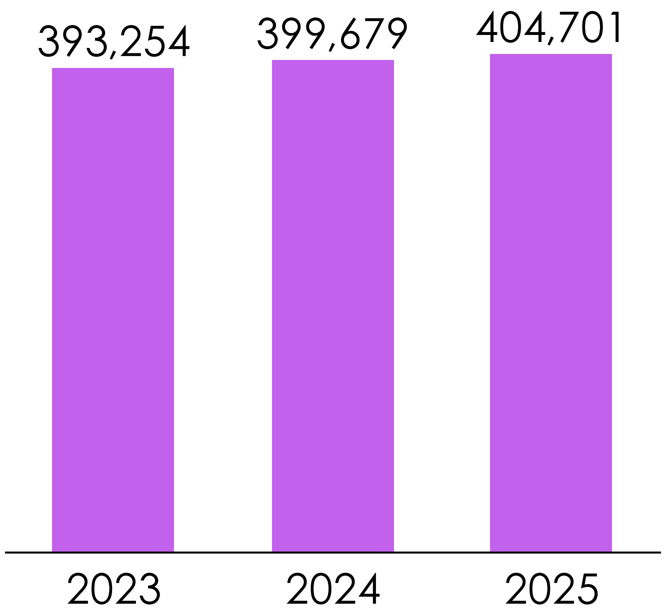
1. These are baby banks who provided the corresponding data in both 2024 and 2025.

Source: Annual Survey of 2024 & 2025

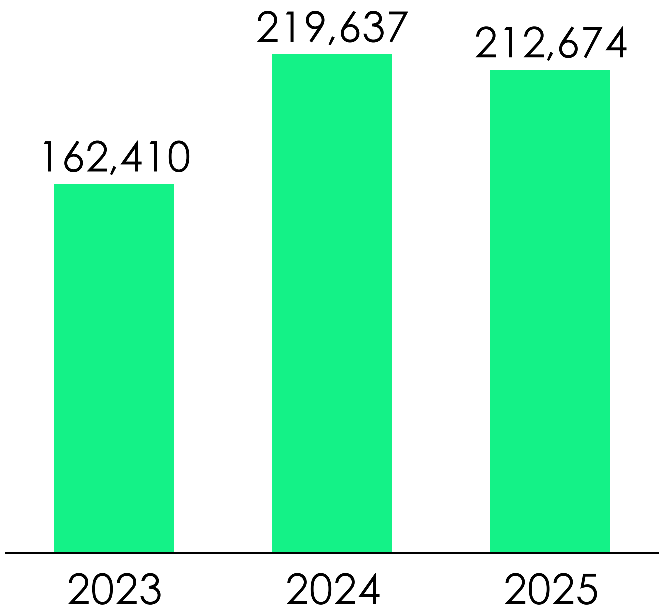
UK-wide: Baby banks supported 400,000 children in 2025

The year-on-year change shown on this page is likely to be inaccurate. However, as data coverage has improved each year, the latest absolute figures are expected to be the most accurate picture of UK baby banks to date.

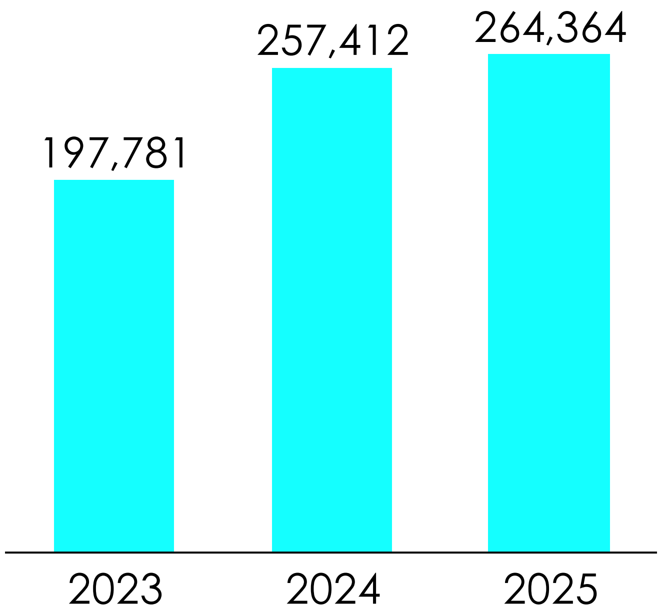
400k children supported



210k families supported



260k referrals supported[1]



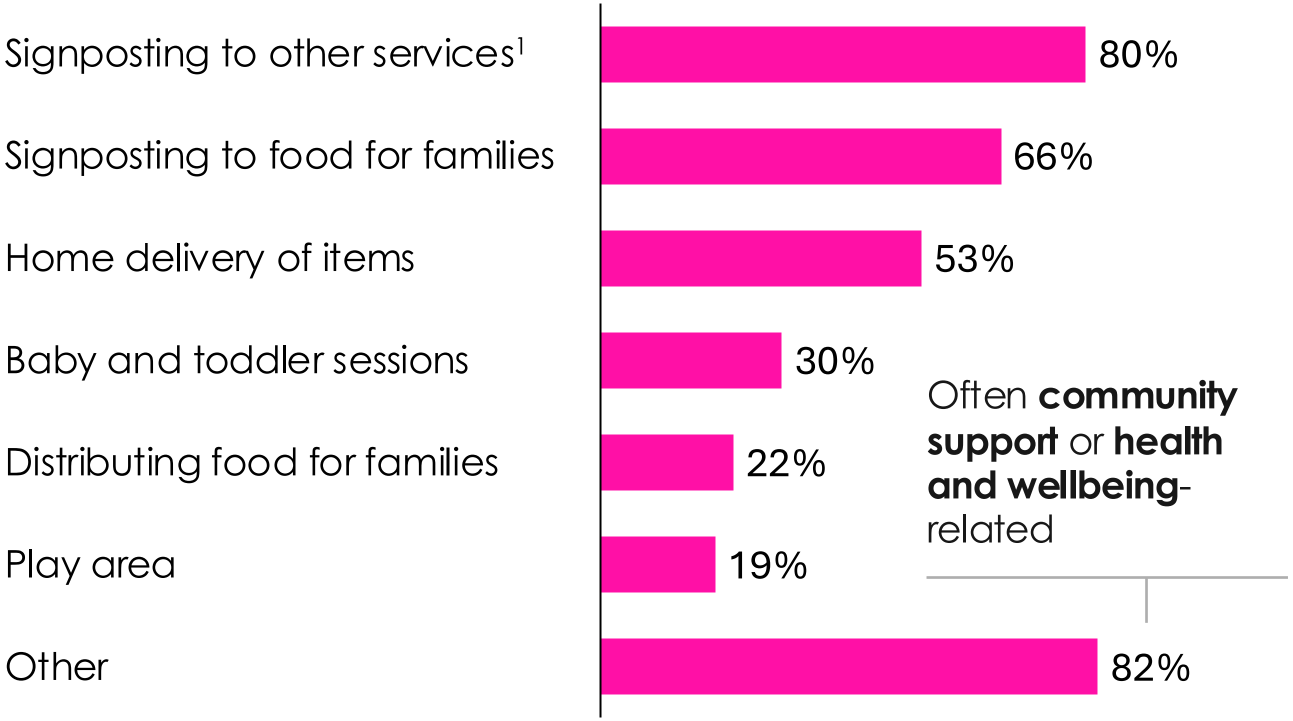
1. The change in survey wording may mean the 2024 and 2025 data on referrals are not directly comparable ("referrals received" vs "referrals supported"); however, it appears that baby banks have interpreted these similarly.

Source: Annual Survey of 2023, 2024 & 2025

Baby banks provide holistic support to families…

Q: Which of the following provisions do you offer, if any?

% of respondents



1. 'Other services' to those that distribute food for families.

Source: Annual Survey of 2025, Hartlepool Baby Bank Price List

…while saving the state an estimated £18m in 2025

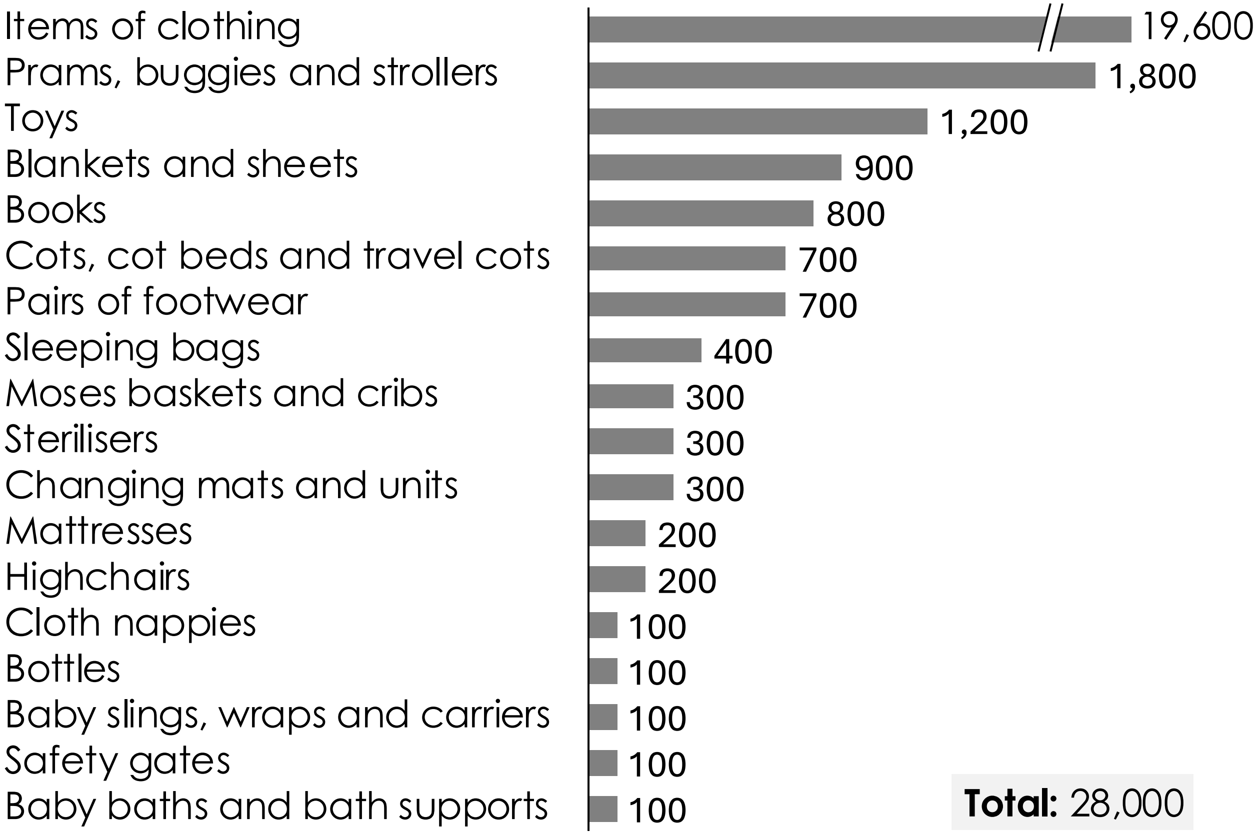
Baby banks provided items to families that the **state could otherwise be responsible for providing:**

- Cot, cot bed or travel cot – £225
- Moses basket or crib – £50
- Pram – £500
- Steriliser – £20 per item
- Baby bath or bath support – £25 per item
- Formula – £12 per item
- Bottle – £7 per item

Extrapolating UK-wide, this corresponds to £18m direct savings for the state.

Baby banks avoided ~28ktCO2e in emissions in 2025

Emissions avoided by baby banks through item reuse, tCO2e[1]



1. Assuming 6tCO2e per household annually

Source: Annual Survey of 2025, ChatGPT, Claude

Takeaways

Baby banks in the UK avoided an estimated ~28ktCO2e in 2025 through item reuse, equivalent to **annual emissions from 4,500 homes.[1]**

Emissions per item:

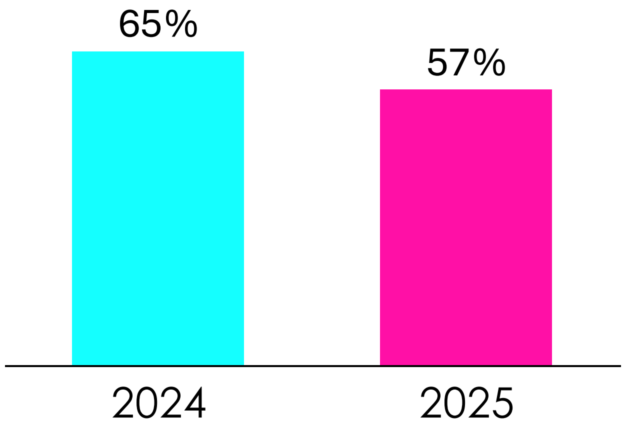
- Considers entire lifecycle (raw materials, manufacturing, transport, use, and disposal).
- Averages estimates from generative AI models ChatGPT and Claude.

These estimates are based on a single reuse per item; however**, 80% of survey respondents report encouraging families to return items**, suggesting the actual emissions avoided may be higher. **Around 40% of baby banks also repair items.**

Over half of baby banks received referrals they were unable to help

Q: Did you receive referrals you were unable to help?

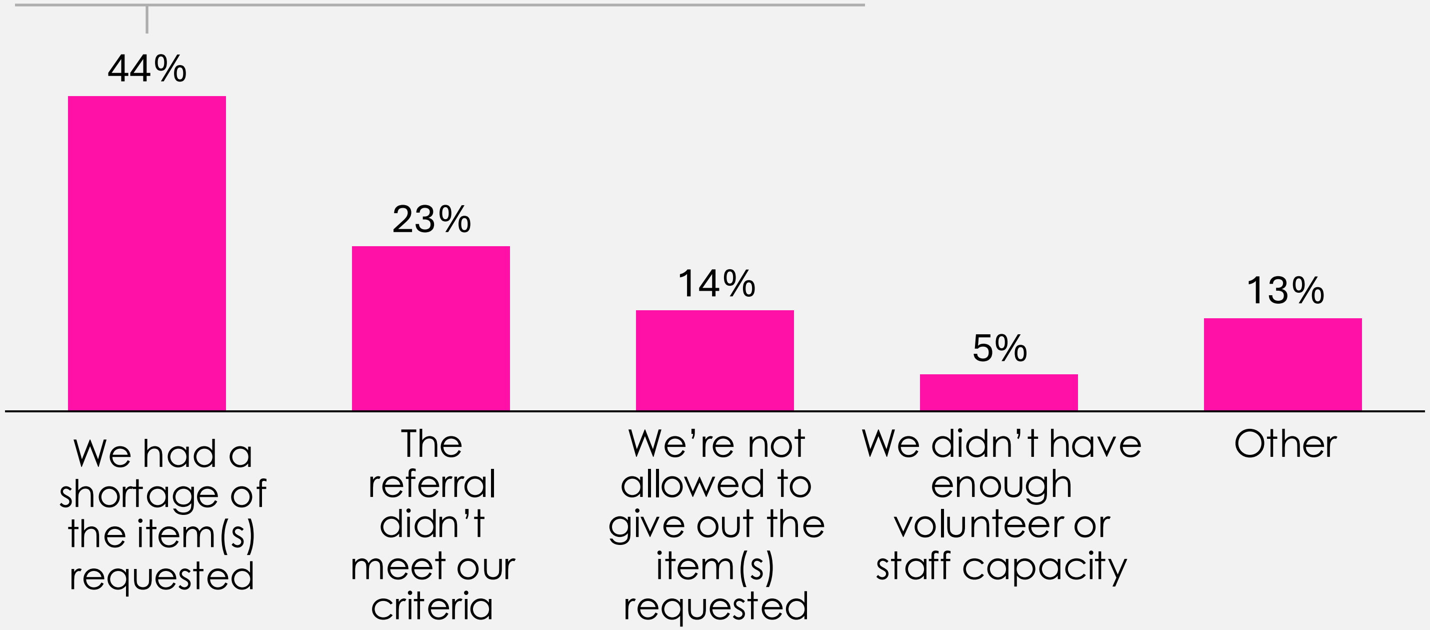
% of respondents who answered "Yes"



Q: What is the most common reason you were unable to help?

% of respondents

Larger items are generally on waiting lists, such as cots, prams (particularly double) and safety gates.



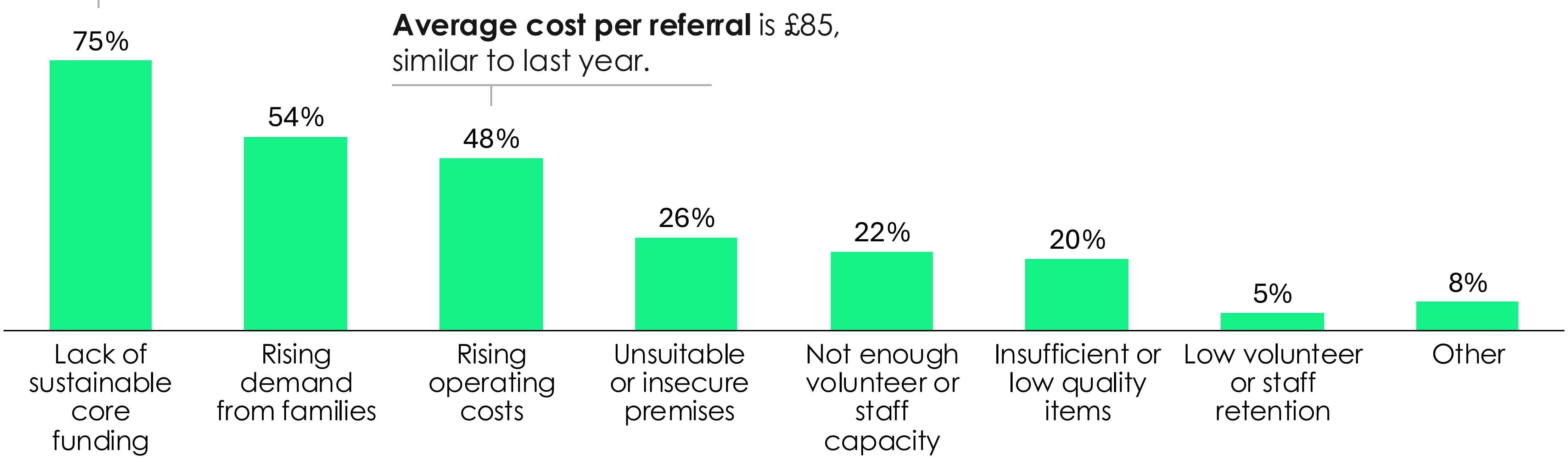
Source: Annual Survey of 2024 & 2025

The funding landscape remains challenging for baby banks

Q: What are the biggest challenges in running a baby bank? (Please select up to 3 options)

% of respondents

Most baby banks (78%) **report flat or declining funding application success rates**[1], up from 69% last year, with **high competition for funding** being the most common reason for application rejection.



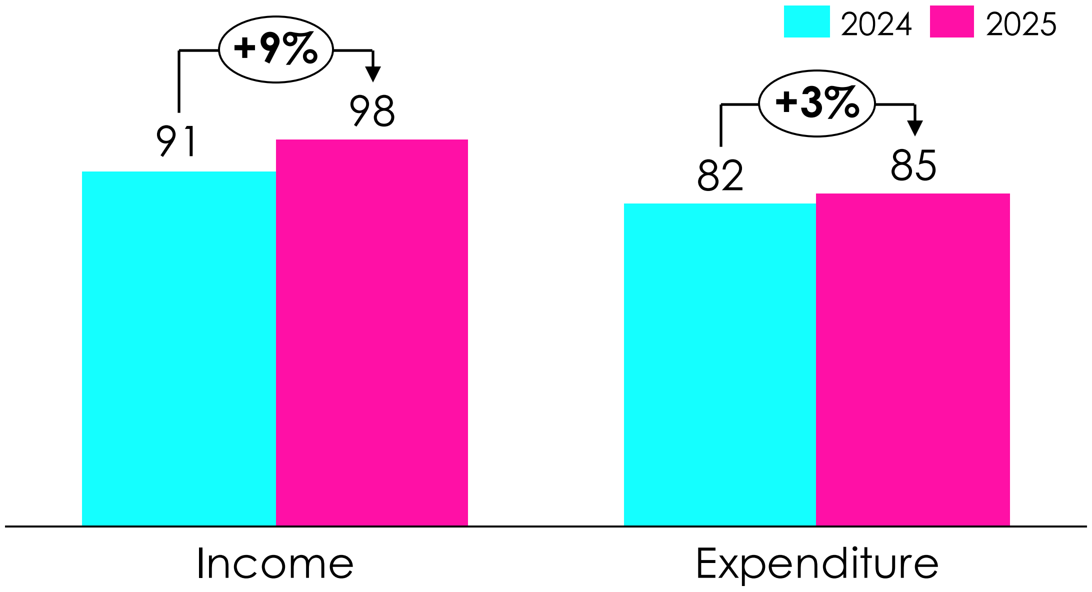
1. Whilst income increased between 2024 and 2025 for baby banks who provided income figures in both years, it can be true that funding application success rates have decreased in the same period if baby banks completed more applications in 2025. Even among only baby banks who reported their funding application success rate in both years, 77% report flat or declining rates.

Source: Annual Survey of 2024 & 2025

Income rose slightly faster than expenditure…

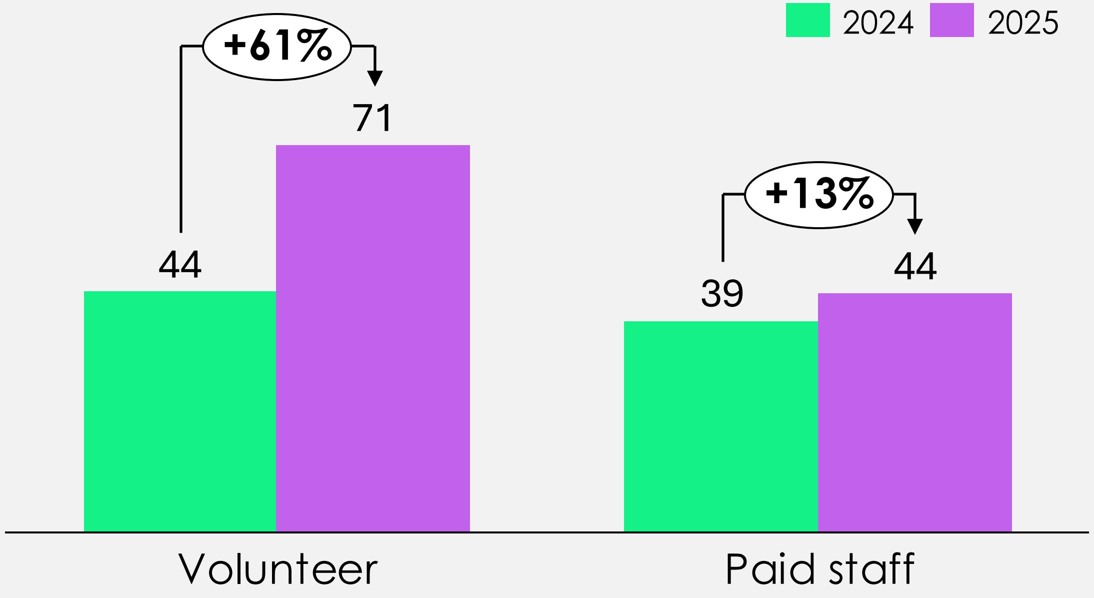
Average annual income[2] and expenditure, £k

These baby banks supported **~11% more children** over the same timeframe.



…whilst baby banks are increasingly reliant on volunteers

Average number of hours per week, #

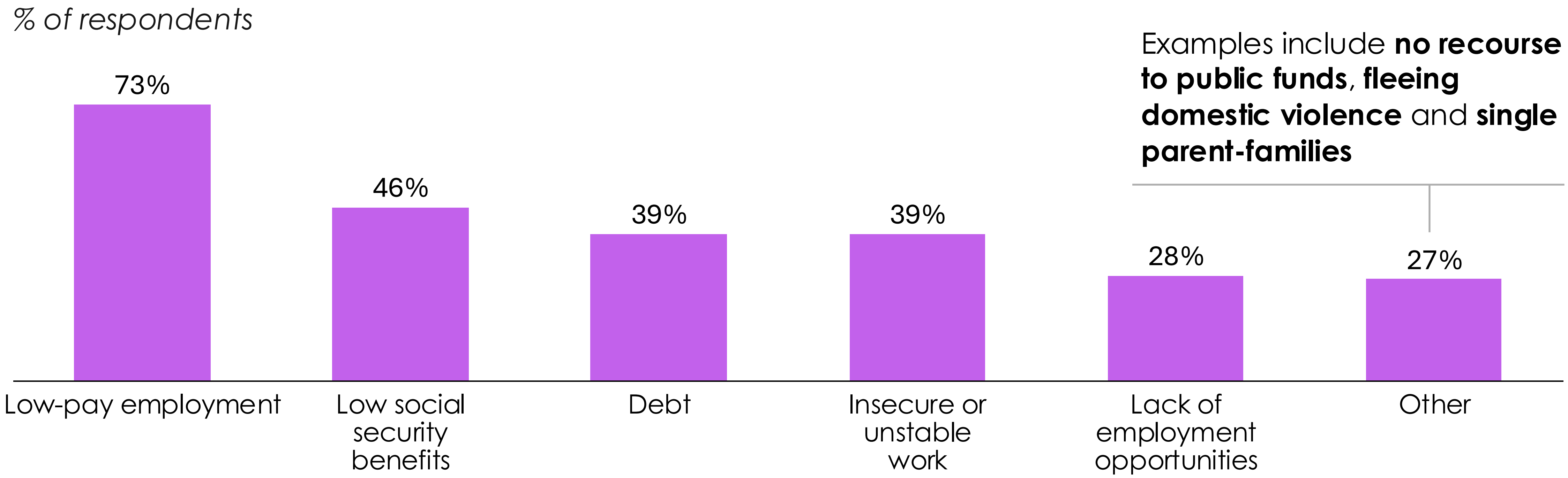


1. Only baby banks who provided the corresponding data in both 2024 and 2025 are included, to avoid results being skewed by the onboarding of increasingly smaller baby banks to the Alliance over time. 2. Excludes gift-in-kind and donations.

Source: Annual Survey of 2024 & 2025

Most baby banks say low-paid employment is a key reason the families they support experience financial difficulty

Q: If families using your baby bank are experiencing financial difficulty, what are the main reasons why? (Please select up to 3 options)

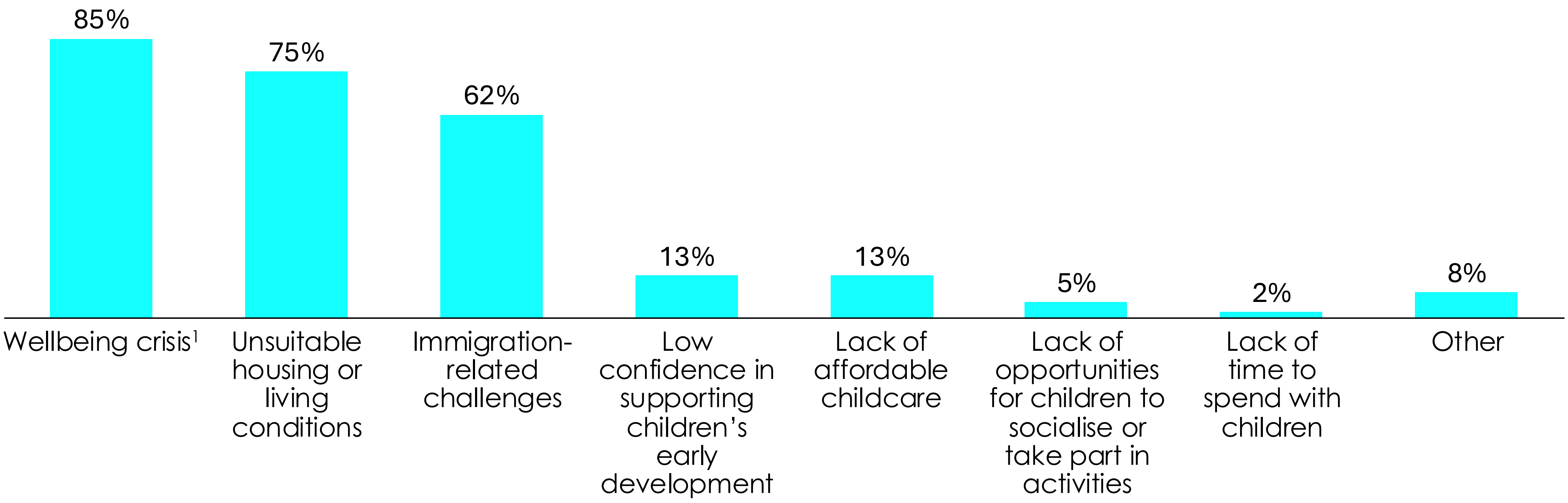


Source: Annual Survey of 2025

Baby banks say wellbeing crises, housing and immigration are the most pressing issues facing the families they support

Q: Aside from financial difficulty, what are the most pressing issues facing families accessing your baby bank? (Please select up to 3 options)

% of respondents



1. E.g. mental health difficulties, relationship breakdown, domestic abuse.

Source: Annual Survey of 2025

Baby banks would strongly recommend Alliance membership to others

Net Promoter Score was 87 in 2025[1]	1 - Strongly disagree	2 - Disagree	3 - Neither agree nor disagree	4 - Agree	5 - Strongly agree	Total 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree'
I am confident about the BBA's purpose and aims.	3%	1%	2%	31%	63%	94%
The BBA has helped to improve how my baby bank operates.[1]	3%	3%	18%	39%	38%	77%
The BBA has helped my baby bank to get more or higher quality items for families.	2%	10%	34%	32%	23%	55%
The BBA has improved my knowledge and confidence about safeguarding.	3%	10%	46%	28%	14%	42%
The BBA has improved my knowledge and confidence about fundraising.	2%	10%	39%	38%	12%	49%
The BBA has helped me feel less isolated by providing support or connections.[1]	2%	4%	14%	45%	36%	81%
The BBA has helped me feel more comfortable reaching out to other baby banks for advice or support.[1]	2%	3%	27%	42%	26%	68%

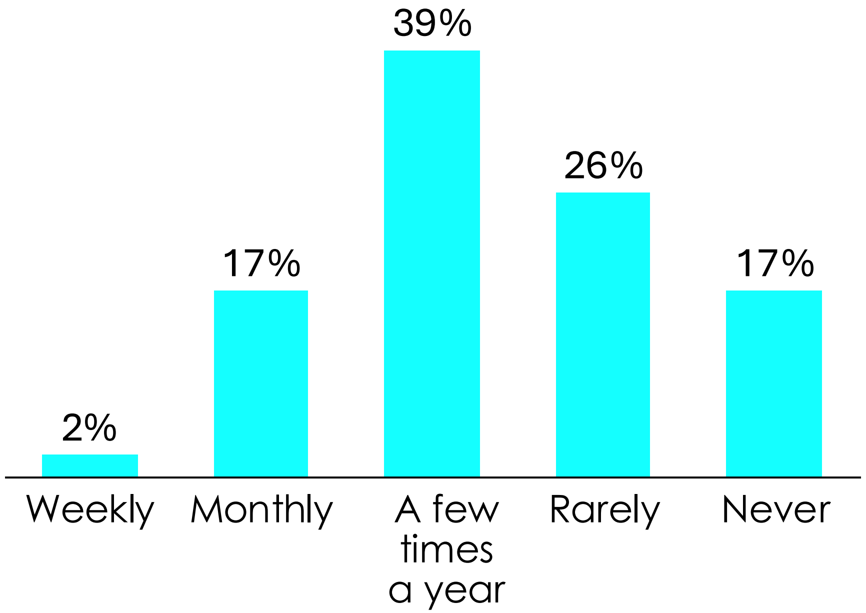
1. Net Promoter Score is calculated by subtracting the percentage of detractors (those scoring 0–6) from the percentage of promoters (those scoring 9–10) on the following question: "How likely are you to recommend BBA membership to another baby bank?" The result ranges from -100 to +100.

Source: Annual Survey of 2024 & 2025

Most baby banks have used the BBA resource library (83%), but many are time constrained (37%)

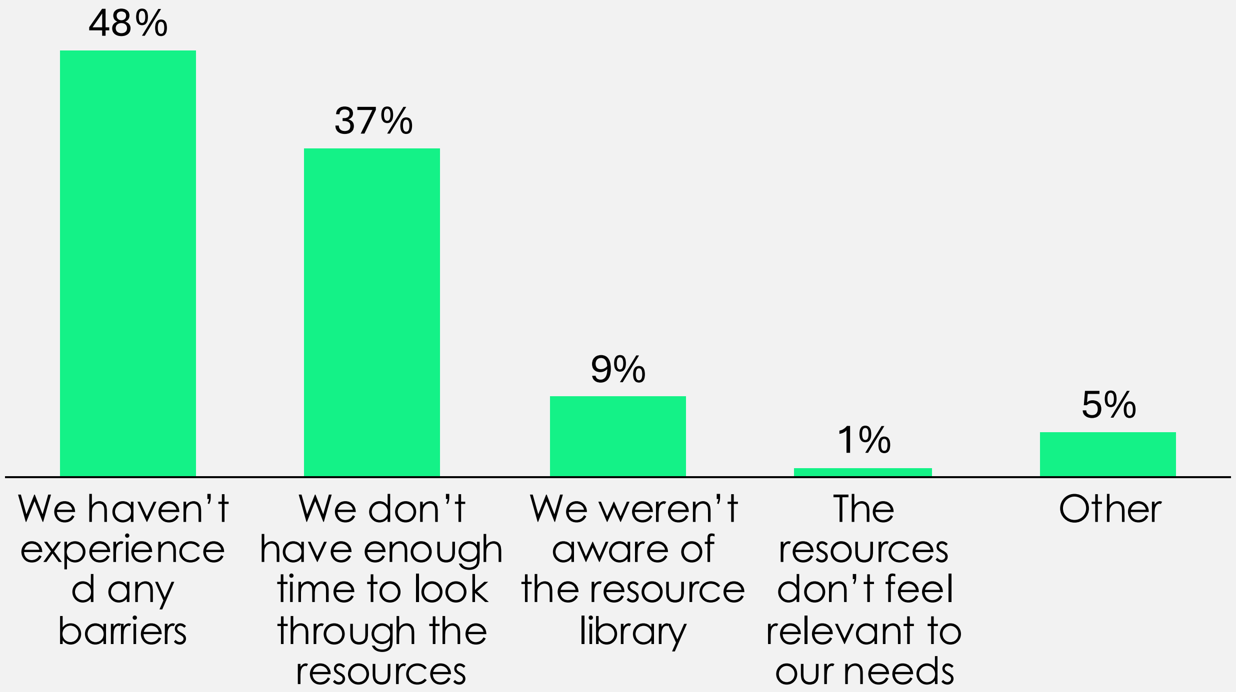
Q: How often do you use the BBA resource library?

% of respondents



Q: What is the primary barrier that affects your use of the BBA resource library, if any?

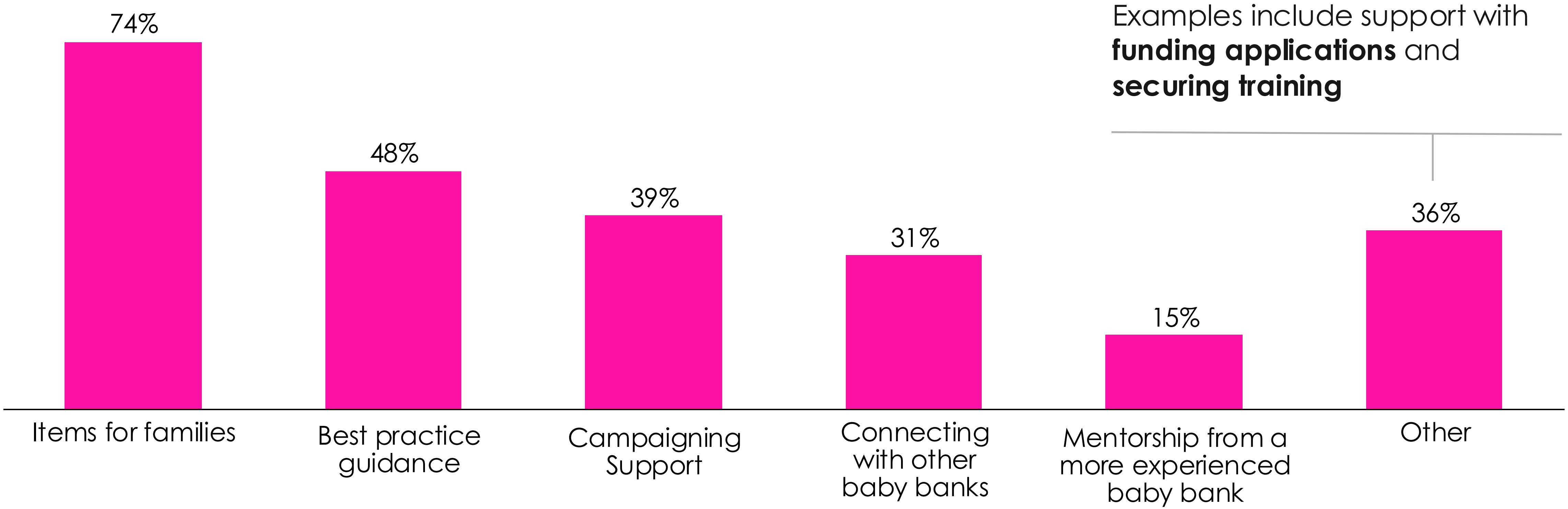
% of respondents



Baby banks continue to be most interested in items for families and best practice guidance from the Alliance

Q: What support beyond funding would you most like from the BBA? (Please select up to 3 options)

% of respondents

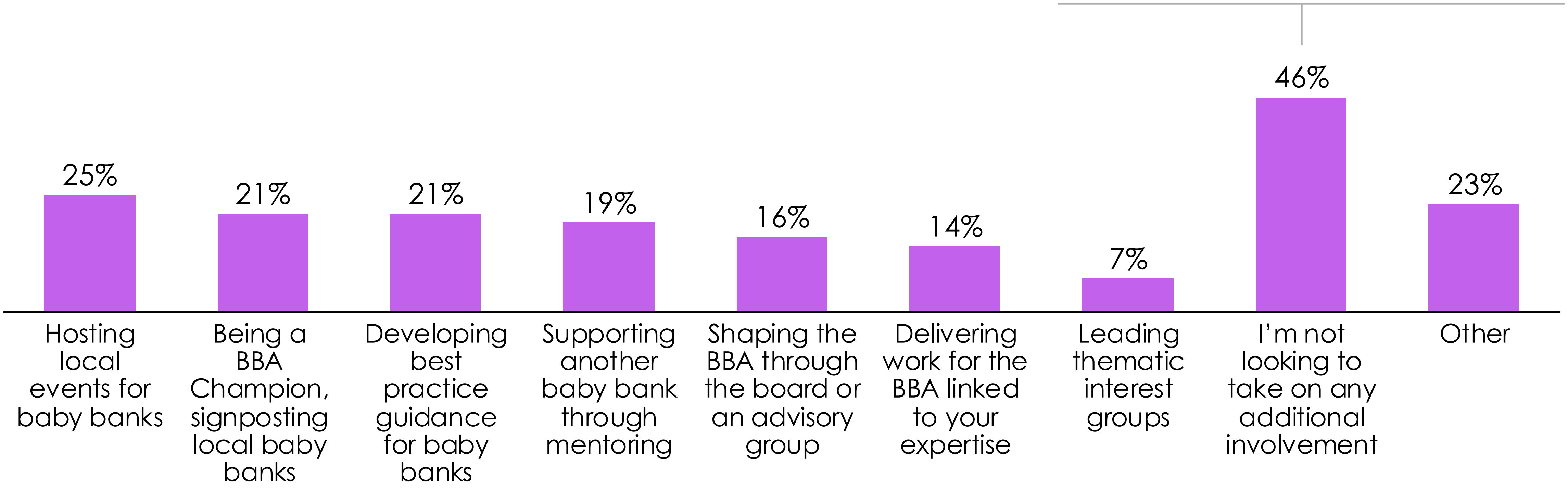


Baby banks are most keen to support other baby banks directly

Q: In which of the following ways would you like to be involved with the BBA going forward?

% of respondents

~50% of member baby banks would like to take on additional involvement with the BBA



Source: Annual Survey of 2025

Impact by region, 2025

Region	Survey respondents	Children supported		Families supported		Referrals supported		Items gifted	
North East	14	22k	*1,600*	16k	*1,121*	23k	*1,663*	910k	*65k*
Yorkshire & the Humber	13	16k	*1,235*	8k	*622*	8k	*649*	320k	*25k*
North West	25	21k	*829*	12k	*475*	16k	*621*	1.1m	*42k*
East Midlands	13	11k	*876*	6k	*455*	11k	*856*	400k	*31k*
West Midlands	20	12k	*579*	8k	*384*	12k	*586*	860k	*43k*
East of England	20	20k	*997*	10k	*485*	16k	*799*	740k	*37k*
Greater London	21	30k	*1,449*	19k	*927*	23k	*1,102*	2.6m	*122k*
South East	37	74k	*1,997*	37k	*1,010*	44k	*1,196*	2.7m	*72k*
South West	13	10k	*734*	5k	*399*	7k	*544*	500k	*39k*
Scotland	14	22k	*1,568*	11k	*780*	21k	*1,476*	890k	*64k*
Wales	19	10k	*524*	6k	*311*	8k	*401*	610k	*32k*
Northern Ireland	10	5k	*545*	3k	*280*	3k	*350*	370k	*37k*
Total	**225**	260k	*635*	140k	*1,148*	190k	*865*	12m	*54k*

Source: Annual Survey of 2025

Thank you for standing stronger together

This data reflects the strength, resilience and generosity of the baby bank community.

Your feedback has highlighted successes, challenges and areas where support is most urgently needed. These insights are central to the work of the Baby Bank Alliance, shaping our efforts across funding, training and advocacy.

Thank you for contributing your data, time and trust. Moreover, thank you for everything you do to support families in your community.

babybankalliance.org

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