

Executive Summary

Reporting Period – 1st October – 31st December 2025

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

SUMMARY OF THE REPORTING PERIOD

From the 1st October to 31st December 2025, the highest electoral ward area was again South Wigston, with the Trust seeing approximately 94 new unique clients from Oadby & Wigston Borough during this reporting period. This quarter, welfare rights was again the highest matter category for clients seeking support.

Key Information

Overview

This reporting period reflects some of our progress in improve our t strategic plan and KPIs. We held our AGM in November, which marked a key milestone, with strong engagement and positive feedback from staff, partners, and stakeholders, reaffirming confidence in our refreshed brand and strategic direction. Together, these developments clearly signal an organisation that is purpose driven.

Our success at Stage 1 of an NHS Tender is a significant achievement, evidencing the quality, credibility, and relevance of our services within statutory systems. This progress positions the organisation for future commissioning opportunities and possible deeper partnership working with health and public sector partners. We look forward to seeing if anyone wishes to fund our projects via the framework.

At the same time, we are investing in visibility, influence, and sustainability. We have been confirmed as a partner for the 2026 CEO Sleepout, providing a high-profile platform to raise awareness, some income, and engage new supporters. Early planning is also underway for our 30th Anniversary campaign, launching in Spring 2026, which will celebrate our impact over the last 30 years in the local community.

As demand for our services continues to increase, capacity remains a key challenge. While all current contracts are stable, a number are due to conclude in 2026/27, making forward financial planning essential. Our priority is to secure sustainable funding that allows us not only to maintain services, but to strengthen our organisational infrastructure. This includes increasing staff salaries, enhancing management capacity, and investing in systems that support quality, resilience, and staff wellbeing. Funding decisions currently pending will be critical in shaping this next phase.

Organisational Development

Operationally, our focus is on delivering our strategy with impact. Key priorities include a detailed budget review for 2026/27, targeted funding applications, and operational improvements to ensure we can meet growing needs without compromising quality.

We are also expanding our fundraising and community engagement capacity. We are actively seeking corporate sponsorships and have created our Fundraising Group (a mix of trustees, staff and CEO trying to do fundraising in their spare time!), which meets quarterly. Our ambassador programme is strengthening our reach, with a Corporate Ambassador supporting promotion and events, and a Community Ambassador commencing outreach from January 2026, attending key business and community networks to increase awareness and partnerships.

Finally, we are piloting work within schools in 2026, reflecting our strategic commitment to prevention and early intervention. This initiative aims to reduce future need by supporting young people earlier, strengthening community resilience, and extending our impact beyond crisis response.

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

In addition:

- De Montfort University (DMU) is completing an impact report for us, which will help evidence our outcomes, impacts and inform future development.
- Voluntary Action Leicester (VAL): Our CEO has joined the VAL CEO Peer Group, strengthening sector leadership connections.
- University of Leicester: Will be providing support with tribunal cases, further enhancing our advocacy capacity.

Summary

In summary, the organisation is delivering strong impact, gaining external recognition, and building momentum. Our focus now is on securing the funding, capacity, and infrastructure needed to sustain and scale this impact into 2026 and beyond, as funding continues to be a challenge.

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	25
Charnwood Borough Council	8
Harborough District Council	19
Hinckley & Bosworth	1
Leicester City Council	81
Melton	3
North West Leicestershire District Council	2
Oadby & Wigston Borough Council	94
Out of Leicestershire	3
Report Total	236

Report Filters (All Conditions must be met):

Client Details > Date First Seen From 01/10/2025
Client Details > Date First Seen To 31/12/2025

Council Area - Number of Clients (New & Existing)

Client Address Council Area	Client Details Count Number of Clients
Blaby District Council	62
Charnwood Borough Council	19
Harborough District Council	44
Hinckley & Bosworth	8
Leicester City Council	179
Melton	3
North West Leicestershire District Council	5
Oadby & Wigston Borough Council	323
Out of Leicestershire	6
West Oxfordshire District Council	1
Report Total	650

Report Filters (All Conditions must be met):

Client Details > Date Last Updated From 01/10/2025

Client Details > Date Last Updated To 31/12/2025

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
	2
Knighton	2
Oadby Brocks Hill	9
Oadby Grange	5
Oadby St Peter's	8
Oadby Uplands	3
Oadby Woodlands	5
Saffron	1
South Wigston	19
Wigston All Saints	11
Wigston Fields	19
Wigston Meadowcourt	9
Wigston St Wolstan's	1
Report Total	94

Report Filters (All Conditions must be met):

Client Details > Date First Seen From 01/10/2025

Client Details > Date First Seen To 31/12/2025

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	20
Oadby Grange	10
Oadby St Peter's	21
Oadby Uplands	13
Oadby Woodlands	11
South Wigston	96
Wigston All Saints	27
Wigston Fields	45
Wigston Meadowcourt	42
Wigston St Wolstan's	33
Report Total	318

This report shows 94 clients from the above electoral wards were new clients, with a total of 318, where 224 were existing or repeat clients

Please Note: Helping Hands closed for a 2-week period over the Christmas and New Year period, which would explain a slightly lower figure than of previous quarters.

As you can see, Helping Hands Community Trust continue to support many people beyond Oadby and Wigston, with 327 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	50
	Debt	50
	Education	1
	Employment	13
	Family	9
	FOODBANK	24
	General	1
	Housing	35
	Legal Advice - Solicitor	13
	Mental Health	3
	Miscellaneous	36
	Personal (Self)	1
	Taxation	2
Welfare Rights	310	
Report Total		553

Report Filters (All Conditions must be met):

Case Details > Date of Last Update From 01/10/2025
Case Details > Date of Last Update To 31/12/2025
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 attached report it shows all matter categories (issues) that those 318 clients across all electoral wards within Oadby & Wigston have presented to us. It clearly states that we have dealt with 553 separate issues from 318 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 1764 work completed items have taken 41928 minutes (approx. 699 hours).

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

Total number of client (New & Existing = 318

Total number of Issues/categories/matters = 553

Total number of work completed items (everything done for each case) = 1764

Total time spent = 41928 minutes

We are spending approx. 2 hours 20 minutes 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.

Developments and moving forward

We continue to work with many partners operating in the Borough. In addition to those who provide funding for us, we have a great working relationship with the Local Area Co-Ordinators, the Social Prescribers (from O&W PCN), and other charities such as Trussell Trust, Menphys, Real Purpose, and The Bridge (a Leicester-based charity that uses our premises weekly). We also have drop-in sessions where clients can access legal advice through local solicitors. We continue to work to build relationships and networks across LLR.

Please see the 3 case studies below to reflect on the extra mile and person-centred approach that the team take in helping individuals and families across LLR.



Case Study 1

Client Seen By: Ketna

Date: 31/10/25

Location: South Wigston

Client Profile & Case Background:

Client retired and started getting her State Pension. She came in to see us in April and we applied for CTS and HB.

The council kept asking for further information as she got a small lump sum of Private Pension they wanted to see letters and then we had to re submit all of her bank statements.

Months had gone by and due to LCC back log we were still waiting for decision.

Finally in Oct client heard back after us chasing again and client was awarded £430 per month on HB and a backdated amount of HB £2500 and CTS received a backdated amount of £700.

Summary of Issues & Needs Assessment:

Benefit check was done and applied for CTS and HB.

Client is now receiving HB and CTS.

By doing a benefit check we have maximised his income.

Resources:
Internal-
External-
Gov.uk

Options Discussed, Advice Given & Actions Taken:
Helped client to apply for HB and CTS to maximise his income.

Outcome:
Client is now on SRP, HB and CTS.

Any Unusual Factors or Difficulties For Client:

Only difficulty client had was trying to get the benefits sorted and the Council constantly asking for proofs and supporting evidence.
The frustration was trying to get answers from the Council. Client happy with the outcome and thanked us for our help.

What Was Learned:

A lot of people do not know what they are eligible for and if people don't go to organisations like ourselves they would miss out on what they should be getting. We learned that we have to keep chasing LCC to get the outcomes.



Case Study 2

Client Seen By: Halimah

Date: November 2025

Location: South Wigston

Client Profile & Case Background:

The client lives with his wife and 17yr old son.
The client is too sick to work and his wife is his carer. The client stopped working in July/Aug '25.
Their income is Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Carers Allowance (CA), Universal Credit (UC) and Child Benefit (CB). His wife also gets a foreign pension.
He is still waiting for his Limited Capability for Work (LCW) assessment.

Summary of Issues & Needs Assessment:

The client wanted to know why his Council Tax changed twice and he is not eligible for Council Tax Support (CTS). They had brought a bunch of Council Tax bills and CTS letters. They didn't understand how CTS worked or how it was calculated.

Resources:

Internal-

External-

<https://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

Options Discussed, Advice Given & Actions Taken:

He confirmed the figures used by CTS were correct.

I explained to the client that when they started receiving the pension, the CTS was recalculated and reduced, which increased the CT to be paid. The client had also worked during this period, which would have been included.

When the CA started, this was also included in the CTS calculation, which reduced their eligibility to zero so they no longer get CTS.

The client wanted to know why the amount owed was higher in the later Council Tax bill. I explained that it was for a shorter period of time, therefore, the payment per month is higher. I highlighted on the bills that the new bill had deducted the amount already paid. Also, neither bill brought in had CTS as the first was before they had applied and the other was after they were ineligible.

The client also wanted a benefit check to see if he was eligible for CTS now.

A benefit check was completed and they were eligible for NSESA and CTS. I explained NSESA but the client did not want to apply as it would reduce his UC.

He already knew how to apply for CTS and after our session, felt confident in applying by himself.

Outcome:

The client understood his Council Tax bill and why it kept changing. He understood his CTS better and is confident in handling it by himself now. He became aware of what benefits he was eligible for and made decision on whether or not he wanted to make a claim.

Any Unusual Factors or Difficulties For Client:

The client was confused about how his CTS worked and felt lost with all the letters that he had received. I had to go through all his paperwork and clarify his timeline multiple times to understand what changes were happening and why. This took a long time as the client was very confused throughout.

What Was Learned:

The client learnt how CTS worked and how to read his Council Tax bill.

Case Study 3

Client Seen By: Halimah

Date: December 2025

Location: South Wigston

Client Profile & Case Background:

The client was reaching state retirement age but his wife would remain under SP age for another year. They did not have any dependents. They lived in a rented accommodation. They currently receive UC. The client had received an SP invitation letter.

Summary of Issues & Needs Assessment:

They wanted help applying for SP. They wanted to know if they can apply for PC and how this change will affect their UC, especially their housing element.

Resources:

Internal-

External-

Options Discussed, Advice Given & Actions Taken:

I helped the client apply for State Pension, which was successful.

I explained that they cannot apply for Pension Credit until both have reached state retirement age.

I explained that their Universal Credit entitlement will remain the same e.g. they will still get the housing element, however, their deductions will change as it will include State Pension.

I reminded them that their Universal Credit will end when the client's wife reaches state retirement age. Housing Benefit was explained as a replacement for help with their rent.

They agreed to return when the wife is near to or has reached state retirement age, for a benefit check to check eligibility for Housing Benefit and Pension Credit and if eligible, help applying. She will also be helped in applying for State Pension.

Outcome:

State Pension claim was successful.

Both have a better understanding of Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Pension Credit and State Pension.

They will return for a benefit check next year at the wife's change of circumstance and possibly benefit applications.

They were very thankful for the support and wanted to continue with our support in the future.

Any Unusual Factors or Difficulties For Client:

The client and wife were older, did not know benefits and struggled with the internet and computers. Information had to be repeated multiple times for them to understand, especially the client.

What Was Learned:

The client and wife learned more about their current and potential future benefits so they have more control over their finances.

Contacts

Service Delivery Manager, Amanda Murgatroyd - amurgatroyd@helpinghandscentre.co.uk

CEO, Amy Davies - adavies@helpinghandscentre.co.uk

Our Chair, Nigel Swan - nswan@helpinghandscentre.co.uk

Website : www.helpinghandsadvice.co.uk

Phone: 0116 278 2001

We also have accounts on the following social media platforms:

Facebook

X (formerly Twitter)

Instagram

LinkedIn