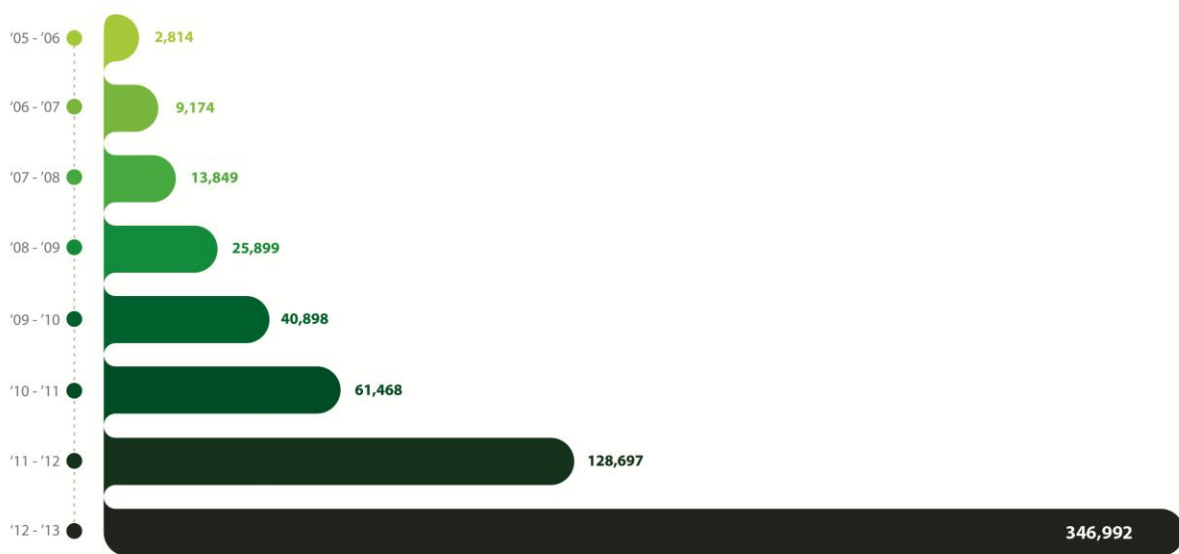


24/04/2013

## BIGGEST EVER INCREASE IN UK FOODBANK USE: 170% RISE IN NUMBERS TURNING TO FOODBANKS IN LAST 12 MONTHS



- Numbers given emergency food 100,000 higher than anticipated
- UK Foodbank charity The Trussell Trust says this must be a wake-up call to the nation



Trussell Trust foodbanks have seen the biggest rise in numbers given emergency food since the charity began in 2000. Almost 350,000 people have received at least three days emergency food from Trussell Trust foodbanks during the last 12 months, nearly 100,000 more than anticipated and close to triple the number helped in 2011-12.

Rising cost of living, static incomes, changes to benefits, underemployment and unemployment have meant increasing numbers of people in the UK have hit a crisis that forces them to go hungry. This dramatic rise in foodbank usage predates April's welfare reforms, which could see numbers increase further in 2013-14.

**346,992** people received a minimum of three days emergency food from Trussell Trust foodbanks in 2012-13, compared to **128,697** in **2011-12** and up from **26,000** in **2008-09**. Of those helped in 2012-13, 126,889 (36.6 percent) were children.

The Trussell Trust has seen a 76% increase in the number of foodbanks launched since April 2012 but has seen a 170% increase in numbers of people given emergency food. Well-established foodbanks that have been running for several years are showing significant rises in numbers helped during the last 12 months. Christian charity The Trussell Trust is launching three new foodbanks every week to help meet demand and has launched 345 UK foodbanks in partnership with churches and communities to date.

Trussell Trust Executive Chairman Chris Mould says:

*'The sheer volume of people who are turning to foodbanks because they can't afford food is a wake-up call to the nation that we cannot ignore the hunger on our doorstep. Politicians across the political spectrum urgently need to recognise the real extent of UK food poverty and create fresh policies that better address its underlying causes. This is more important than ever as the impact of the biggest reforms to the welfare state since it began start to take effect. Since April 1<sup>st</sup> we have already seen increasing numbers of people in crisis being sent to foodbanks with nowhere else to go.'*

He continues:

*'Last year The Trussell Trust estimated that our foodbanks would help 250,000 people in 2012-13, we've helped 100,000 more than that. 2012-13 was much tougher for people than many anticipated. Incomes are being squeezed to breaking point. We're seeing people from all kinds of backgrounds turning to foodbanks: working people coming in on their lunch-breaks, mums who are going hungry to feed their children, people whose benefits have been delayed and people who are struggling to find enough work. It's shocking that people are going hungry in 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain.'*

Only four per cent of people turned to foodbanks due to homelessness; 30% were referred due to benefit delay; 18% low income and 15% benefit changes (up from 11% in 2011-12). Other reasons included domestic violence, sickness, refused crisis loans, debt and unemployment. The majority of people turning to foodbanks were working age families.

Over 15,000 frontline care professionals such as doctors, social workers, schools liaison officers and Jobcentre Plus referred their clients to foodbanks in 2012-13. Foodbanks are community driven with an estimated 30,000 volunteers giving their time across the UK. Over 3,400 tonnes of food was donated by the public in 2012-13. Chris Mould adds: *'Whilst it's deeply concerning that so many people are facing hunger in the UK, the evident willingness of the public to help their neighbours through foodbanks has prevented thousands of crises escalating into disaster. We regularly hear people say that 'the foodbank saved my life' and it's local communities that make that possible.'*

Ends

### **Breakdown of statistics:**

Regional breakdown, age breakdown and ethnicity breakdown of recipients available on request

### **Notes to the Editor**

***Case studies, foodbank visits and interviews with Trussell Trust spokespeople available on request.***

- The Trussell Trust is a Christian charity that partners with churches and communities to open foodbanks that provide three days nutritionally balanced non-perishable food to people in crisis.
- [Recent research](#) by The Centre for Economic and Business Research commissioned by Kellogg's shows that people are spending 20 percent more on food in the UK but eating seven percent less, with many of the UK's poorest cutting down on fruit and vegetables to make ends meet. The research shows that at least 4.7 million people live in food poverty in the UK.
- Foodbanks help to prevent housing loss, mental health problems, family breakdown and crime. As well as providing emergency food, foodbanks also signpost clients to other agencies able to help resolve the underlying cause of the crisis.
- Over 90% food given out by foodbanks is donated directly by the public. In 2012-13, 3,492.44 tonnes of non-perishable food was donated.
- Foodbank recipients are referred by a frontline care professional such as a doctor, social worker, CAB, Jobcentre Plus or schools liaison officer. Over 15,000 frontline care

professionals across the UK referred clients to foodbanks in 2012-13, 50 percent of which are statutory agencies.

- In 2008-09 Trussell Trust foodbanks gave three days emergency food to 26,000 people nationwide; in 2009-10: 41,000 were helped; in 2010-11: 61,468; in 2011-12: 128,697; in 2012-13: 346,992.
- Foodboxes contain at least three days' supply of non-perishable foods such as tinned fruit, vegetables, meat and fish as well as pasta, cereal, UHT milk, sauces, tea, long-life juice. The Trussell Trust works with dieticians to ensure that foodboxes are nutritionally balanced.
- Foodbank clients can receive a maximum of three foodbank vouchers in a row (each voucher can be redeemed for at least three days food), although longer term support is available at the discretion of the foodbank manager.
- The Trussell Trust has launched 345 foodbanks across the UK in locations ranging from the Cotswolds to Tower Hamlets. Three new foodbanks are currently opening every week. The Trussell Trust estimates that there would need to be 750-1,000 foodbanks to provide for people in crisis across the UK. Thousands of people are facing hunger today in towns with no foodbanks.
- The Trussell Trust receives no government funding and relies entirely on the generosity of the public, businesses and charitable trusts. The Trussell Trust is entirely a-political.
- Trussell Trust foodbanks are currently completing the [first ever UK-wide 'trolley push'](#) to help raise awareness of UK hunger and generate funds to help stop it. School children, MPs, firemen, police, dignitaries, town criers, musicians and many local people taking their turn to push 'Phil the trolley' and elaborately decorated shopping trolleys UK towns and cities.
- For more on foodbanks visit: [www.trusselltrust.org/foodbank-projects](http://www.trusselltrust.org/foodbank-projects)
- The Trussell Trust is a Christian charity that partners with local communities to provide practical, non-judgemental help to people in crisis in the UK and Bulgaria:  
[www.trusselltrust.org](http://www.trusselltrust.org)

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