

## UK foodbanks double numbers fed in one year



**UK Foodbanks have fed 128,697 people in crisis nationwide in the last 12 months, over 100% more than the previous year. The Trussell Trust, which sets up foodbanks to provide emergency food to people in crisis, is seeing a huge increase in demand for its services and is currently launching two new UK foodbanks every week to meet the growing demand. 100 new foodbanks have launched in the last year alone, taking the total to 201 nationwide.**

Figures released today by national foodbank charity The Trussell Trust show that the current economic climate is seeing many more people struggle to put food on the table, including families who are in work. Over 45,000 children were fed by foodbanks in 2011-12.

Numbers of adults and children fed nationwide have increased from 61,468 in 2010-11 to 128,697 in 2011-12 financial year. For many foodbank clients, the rising cost of food and fuel combined with static incomes, high unemployment and changes to benefits have forced them into a crisis where they cannot afford to eat.

The single biggest reason that people were referred to foodbanks was benefit delay (29%), followed by low income (19%). Other reasons for referrals include delayed wages, domestic violence, sickness, unemployment, debt, benefit changes, refused crisis loans, homelessness and absence of free school meals during school holidays. All those who received emergency food were referred by frontline care professionals such as doctors, social workers and Citizens Advice Bureau.

Trussell Trust Executive Chairman Chris Mould says: 'Foodbanks are seeing people from all walks of life turning to us for help when they hit crisis. The current economic situation means that times are tough for many. Every day we meet parents who are skipping meals to feed their children or even considering stealing to stop their children going to bed hungry. It is shocking that there is such a great need for foodbanks in 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain, but the need is growing.'

He continues: 'As the Government's latest budget begins to take effect we anticipate that more people in poverty will be forced to turn to foodbanks for help. We are urging more churches and communities to support and start foodbanks. Our vision is to see a foodbank in every town in the UK, creating a nation where no-one needs to go hungry.'

Foodbanks are run by groups of churches in partnership with local communities. All food given out is donated by the public: 1,225 tonnes of food was collected in 2011-12. Foodbanks engaged support from 4,360 volunteers, 1,423 schools and 2,023 churches across the UK.

The Trussell Trust anticipates that numbers fed by foodbanks could exceed 500,000 in financial year 2015-16.

Ends

## Notes to the Editor:

- Foodbanks provide a minimum of three days non-perishable emergency food to people in crisis.
- The Trussell Trust runs the only network of foodbanks in the UK. The Trussell Trust partners with local churches and communities to launch foodbanks in their towns. There are currently 201 foodbanks across the UK. Foodbanks are operating from Cornwall to Inverness, with 30 projects launched in London so far.
- In 2008-09 Trussell Trust foodbanks fed 26,000 nationwide; in 2009-10: 41,000 were fed; in 2010-11: 61,468; in 2011-12: 128,697.
- The fastest growing foodbank in the UK is Coventry foodbank, which launched in January 2011 and fed 7,500 people in 2011-12, half of which were children. Coventry foodbank has fed the most people of all the UK foodbanks.
- Foodboxes contain three days of nutritionally balanced, non-perishable foods such as tinned fruit, vegetables, meat and fish as well as pasta, cereal, UHT milk, sauces, tea, long-life juice.
- Foodbank clients can receive a maximum of three foodbank vouchers in a row (each voucher can be redeemed for at least three days food). Clients can receive up to nine vouchers per year, although longer term support is available in exceptional circumstances.
- Foodbanks signpost clients to other agencies able to help resolve the underlying cause of the crisis. A client struggling with debt, for example, would be referred to CAB or Christians Against Poverty who specialise in resolving debt problem.
- 13 million people live below the poverty line in the UK, 1 in every 5 people.
- The Trussell Trust receives no government funding and relies entirely on the generosity of the public, businesses and charitable trusts.
- The Trussell Trust's vision is that every town should have a foodbank, creating a nation where no-one needs to go hungry.
- 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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