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'FEEDING BRITAIN' REPORT COULD TURN THE TIDE ON UK HUNGER SAYS THE TRUSSELL TRUST

The APPG on food poverty and hunger's seminal report published today goes beyond anything that's been done before on the problem of hunger in Britain. This powerful cross-party document validates what the voluntary sector has been saying for a long time about the distressing reality of hunger in the UK, and it turns the spotlight on the specific problems that need addressing.

Chris Mould, Trussell Trust Chairman says:

"This important report could be a landmark document, but this depends on how we all respond. The report contains a host of well thought through recommendations that would, if acted on by all the key players, make a massive dent in the problem of hunger that haunts our society and blights the lives of many, many of our poorest citizens."

"This document could turn the tide on the challenging problem of UK hunger, which The Trussell Trust has been drawing attention to for over seven years, since we began our 'Hidden Hunger' awareness campaign."

"This independent inquiry makes it clear that there really is a problem. People calling for action on hunger in the UK have not been scaremongering. The overall volume of people needing help from the UK's food banks has to be reduced. The report sums up this point perfectly, saying: "We believe the establishment of 'Feeding Britain', alongside a higher Minimum Wage and a fairer and more reliable benefits system can help rebuild our national minimum to ensure we live in a 'Zero Hunger Britain'"."

Mould continues:

"The sustained and positive response of local communities has been remarkable and is immensely heartening, and it is right that the kindness of countless people who have given to foodbanks has been acknowledged. As the report says: 'If there were a medal for exercising human compassion we would seek that it be awarded collectively to the volunteers of the food bank movement.'

As the majority of Trussell Trust foodbanks are run through churches, it is encouraging to see the inquiry acknowledging that churches have played a central role in the practical, local action right across the country: 'in a country where the church is seen as being in long-term decline, it is the churches through their membership who have brought forward this most extraordinary voluntary welfare development'.

Mould adds:

"The Trussell Trust called for an inquiry in 2013. We are delighted that the All Party Group for Poverty and Hunger, with the support of the Archbishop of Canterbury,

Justin Welby, picked up the baton when others would not. 'Feeding Britain' is a landmark document and stands out from everything that has gone before in its insistence that the causes of hunger in the UK are considered from every relevant angle and that the inter-connectedness of the issues, the principal actors and the range of necessary remedies are now fully acknowledged."

To ensure long term change we need to see the three solutions called for in the report: the national 'Feeding Britain' network, a higher Minimum Wage and a fairer more reliable benefits system, addressed simultaneously. The greatest difference will be made when the people responsible enthusiastically adopt the seventy recommendations that follow the first seven about 'Feeding Britain'.

We welcome the fact that this report has an All Party Parliamentary Group behind it that will be able to regularly review progress in the implementation of the recommendations over the years, and the governments to come, creating an added element of accountability for all those responsible and involved.

"The Trussell Trust is keen to engage fully. We are a leading voice. With over 400 Trussell Trust foodbanks operating over 1,200 foodbank centres distributed across the UK, we have both the presence and the experience", says Trussell Trust Chairman, Chris Mould

The Trussell Trust has a number of the tools that could prove vital to the new national network, 'Feeding Britain': our data collection system; our tried and tested food bank model; our vision for reducing the amount of waste food; the structured relationships with the UK's leading food retailers which we have developed; and our experience with 'back to work' schemes through our social enterprises and supported volunteer programmes.

We wholeheartedly support, and are already implementing, the call for a 'foodbank plus' model. Over 90 percent of Trussell Trust foodbanks currently provide additional services alongside food. The Trussell Trust has a 'More than Food' approach to foodbanks, and we are currently piloting 'Eat Well, Spend Less' – a budgeting and cookery course - as well as piloting a project to host financial advisers in our foodbanks, with the generous support of Martin Lewis, the Money Saving Expert. We expect the financial adviser foodbank model to be fully launched in the UK in the second half of 2015.

The Trussell Trust would like to take this opportunity to thank all those on the All Party Parliamentary Group and the Rt. Rev Tim Thornton, Bishop of Truro, for the sacrifice of time and effort that has gone into this important and timely report.

ENDS

Notes to the Editor

- Every day people in the UK go hungry for reasons ranging from redundancy to benefit problems or receiving an unexpected bill on a low income. Trussell Trust's 400 strong network of foodbanks provide a minimum of three days' nutritionally balanced emergency food and support to people experiencing crisis in the UK.
- In 2013-14 foodbanks gave three days' food to 913,138 people nationwide. Of those helped, 330,205 were children. In the first six months of the 2014-15 financial year almost 500,000 people received 3 days' food, a 38% increase on the same period last year. [Read more on latest foodbank figures](#)
- Everyone who comes to a Trussell Trust foodbank is referred by a frontline professional like social workers, schools liaison officers . CAB and health visitors. Over 27,000 professionals refer to foodbanks in the UK.
- Over 90% of food given out is donated by the public and over 30,000 people volunteer at Trussell Trust foodbanks across the UK.
- Trussell Trust foodbanks do much more than food, they provide a listening ear and help resolve the underlying cause of the crisis. The Trussell Trust is currently piloting having financial advisers in foodbanks, in partnership with Martin Lewis.
- www.trusselltrust.org