



Trussell Trust submission to the Comprehensive Spending Review

The Trussell Trust is an anti-poverty charity supporting a UK-wide network of more than 1,200 food bank centres and together we provide emergency food and support to people locked in poverty, and campaign for change to end the need for food banks in the UK. This submission includes our priorities for both of the autumn fiscal events, and as such includes recommendations related to Annually Managed Expenditure in addition to those relating to Department Expenditure Limits.

Summary

- The measures the UK Government has taken since the start of the crisis have protected large numbers of people from being swept into financial hardship and destitution. Despite this, there has been a sustained increase in the number of households needing to turn to Trussell Trust food banks during the crisis – and around half of these have used our food banks for the first time.
- The vast majority of people that need to use food banks are destitute, meaning that they go without the bare essentials that we all need to eat, stay warm and dry and keep clean. Most people that need support from food banks rely on the social security system.
- Research commissioned from Heriot-Watt University suggests there will be a **61 per cent rise in food bank use this winter**, compared to last year, unless further Government action is taken. This will see food banks in our network alone giving out **six emergency food parcels every minute**.
- Levels of need are forecast to remain extremely high beyond this winter. These projected increases would come on top of already historic levels of need before the pandemic; more than 1.9 million food parcels were distributed in 2019/20, up 18 per cent on 2018/19 and 74 per cent in the last five years.
- The research also shows the **protective effect Government measures have had**. As the nation faces sharp rises in unemployment and increasing reliance on the social security system, it is essential that we take this vital opportunity to weather-proof our social security system
- In this autumn's fiscal event we are calling on the Government to protect people's incomes by **locking in the £20 uplift to Universal Credit** and extending to legacy benefits
- While this will provide welcome protection from next Spring, more immediate measures will be needed to tackle the projected rise in destitution and food bank use this winter, especially as we enter a new phase of lockdowns. We are therefore also calling on the Government to:
 - Help people hold on to more of their benefits to pay their bills through the economic crisis by **suspending benefit debt deductions** until a fairer approach to repayments can be introduced
 - Make local safety nets as strong as possible by **investing in local welfare assistance** in England

Introduction

The Trussell Trust supports a network of 1,200 food bank centres across the United Kingdom. People are referred to food banks in the Trussell Trust network by local partners in the voluntary, statutory and faith sectors, following an assessment of their financial situation. They are provided with a three-day emergency food parcel, and also receive support that can include help with dealing with benefits issues or signposting to other services. The support food banks provide is available to anyone who is in crisis.

The Trussell Trust is committed to ending the need for food banks by working with partners across governments and civil society to ensure everyone has the means to support themselves. People need to use food banks because they cannot afford the essentials, leaving them destitute. In 2017 the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that 1.5 million people experienced destitution at some point, including 365,000 children (1).¹ With year-on-year increases in food bank use recorded since 2017, it is likely that the rate of destitution will have increased during this period.

Levels of need at food banks in the Trussell Trust network were rising steadily in the years before the pandemic. The Trussell Trust's network has seen a 74 per cent increase in the number of three-day food parcels distributed over the last five years, including an 18 per cent increase in the year to 2019/20 (2).²

Covid-19 – The Government's initial response and impact on Trussell Trust food banks

The measures the UK Government has taken since the start of the crisis have protected large numbers of people from being swept into financial hardship and destitution. These include creating the Coronavirus Jobs Retention Scheme (CJRS) and the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme, introducing a £20 increase to the Universal Credit (UC) Standard Allowance and raising the Local Housing Allowance. This was built on by separate measures taken in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland - particularly investment in forms of local welfare assistance.

Despite these measures the pandemic and the accompanying economic crisis has reshaped the landscape of poverty and destitution in the United Kingdom and driven historic increases in levels of food insecurity. In the second quarter of 2020, food banks in the Trussell Trust network have distributed at least 81 per cent more parcels than in the equivalent period of 2019. There has been a significant increase in the proportion of people receiving support from food banks in the Trussell Trust network for the very first time, with almost 100,000 households needing support for the first time between April and June this year.

The impact of the crisis has been disproportionately on children and families. Despite children aged 0-16 accounting for just 20 per cent of the UK population as of mid-2019, the Trussell Trust's statistics show that parcels to children made up 43 per cent of the additional parcels distributed across our network in April 2020 (3).³

¹ Destitution in the UK 2018 (2018), Joseph Rowntree Foundation, <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-uk-2018>

² End of years statistics (2020), The Trussell Trust, <https://www.trusselltrust.org/news-and-blog/latest-stats/end-year-stats/>

³ Mid-year population estimates: Persons by single year of age and sex for local authorities in the UK, mid-2019, (2020), ONS, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/data-sets/populationestimatesforkenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland>

There has also been a significant rise in need among people with No Recourse to Public Funds. Between April and June 2020 there were over 14,000 referrals to food banks in the Trussell Trust network because of issues around No Recourse to Public Funds, almost a threefold increase on the same period last year.

Towards the next phase of the government's response

With the winding down of the CJRS we face a sharp rise in unemployment, and now is not the time to remove some of the most effective social security responses that can help people keep their head above water. There must be a recognition of the unique role the social security system needs to play to protect people from serious financial hardship and to make sure that people already in destitution are pulled out of it swiftly and protected from falling back in.

Analysis carried out by Heriot-Watt University with support from the National Institute of Economic and Social Research estimates that if changes aren't made this autumn, there is likely to be a 61 per cent rise in need at food banks in the Trussell Trust's network this winter in comparison to the same period last year, equating to 846,000 food parcels being given out. This assumes that the CJRS will remain to support some of the hardest hit industries. If this is removed completely then a 78 per cent increase is anticipated (4).⁴

Levels of need are forecast to remain extremely high for 2021. A 63 per cent increase in the number of parcels distributed for mid-2021 is projected, equating to an average of 689,000 parcels distributed in both quarter two and quarter three of 2021. Crucially, this analysis assumes that the uplift to the UC Standard Allowance will be maintained. If this is withdrawn, then a further 10 per cent increase in need for support from food banks is expected. While this demonstrates the need to maintain the uplift beyond Spring next year, more immediate measures will be needed in this autumn's fiscal event to help people through the difficult winter months and avoid the projected 61 per cent rise in food bank use.

Below we detail three key actions that are needed - to maintain and extend the uplifts to UC, suspend benefit debt deductions and invest in local welfare provision. These will support the achievement of a number of Government objectives:

- **Levelling up:** Urgent action is needed to ensure damage is not done to the Government's levelling up agenda. Across the UK an additional 670,000 people are estimated to be at risk of falling into destitution by the end of 2020. The increase would not be evenly spread across the country, with people in some areas at greater risk of falling into destitution than others. Areas with a focus on manufacturing in the North of England, the Midlands and Wales, as well as coastal areas in the South, are projected to experience higher levels of additional destitution than the rest of the country (5).⁵
- **Protecting the recovery:** Out of work benefits can be effective interventions to boost consumer demand, given the high proportion that is spent in the 'jobs-boosting' parts of the economy. A supportive social security system will reduce the long-term economic 'scarring' of widespread unemployment.

⁴ Lockdown, lifelines and the long haul ahead (2020), *The Trussell Trust*, <https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/09/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-food-banks-report.pdf>

⁵ Potential destitution and food bank demand resulting from the COVID-19 Crisis in UK – Rapid research for Trussell Trust, (2020), I-SPHERE at Heriot-Watt University.

- **Improving the experience of Universal Credit:** There has been a shift in the make-up of people relying on our social security system and the people who are arriving at food banks - half of all households arriving at food banks during April-June did so for the first time. With it no longer being feasible to expect people to move quickly back into work, a punitive approach to social security should be avoided. Removing key planks of the response, such as the UC uplift, and maintaining harsh elements such as continued deductions from benefit payments, would have a detrimental impact on family finances but also the experience and reputation of UC.

With this evidence and principles in mind, we have prioritised the following three calls for action. These will not be enough to end the need for food banks on their own, but we believe they will make a significant impact on levels of destitution and ensure our social security system is weather-proofed quickly for the coming storm.

1: Protecting benefit levels - supporting people's incomes by locking in the £20 uplift to Universal Credit and extending to legacy benefits

The case for this measure

At the start of the pandemic, the government announced the biggest boost to social security in a decade – in the form of the uplifts to UC, working tax credits (WTC) and Local Housing Allowance (LHA). The OBR estimates the cost of the uplifts to UC to be £5.5bn in 2020-21, and £1.5bn for WTC (6).⁶ This benefited some of the hardest hit across all nations of the UK.

This measure was desperately needed, with benefit values at their lowest level in decades going into the pandemic. Low-income households experienced five years of real income stagnation leading into the pandemic, in part due to cuts and freezes in social security. Even with the emergency uplifts, families unable to find work during the crisis will on average receive £1,600 less per year in social security support than they would have done in 2011 (7).⁷ Those with children will receive £2,900 less.

This investment has helped to mitigate the worst aspects of the economic crisis - stopping thousands from needing to turn to food banks or becoming homeless. It has also dramatically improved new claimants' experiences of Universal Credit.

There were some limitations to this approach. Increases to the standard allowance have only been for those on UC, with those on legacy benefits missing out. A significant minority (32%) of those that needed to use a food bank in June or July and were claiming benefits were not claiming UC (8).⁸ There are complex reasons why simply moving over to the relatively more generous UC may not be viable for these groups. Our survey (9)⁹ of people that needed to use a food bank during the

⁶ Lockdown, lifelines and the long haul ahead (2020), *The Trussell Trust*, <https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/09/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-food-banks-report.pdf>

⁷ Autumn Budget: keep doing the right thing and keep the £20 lifeline (2020), *Joseph Rowntree Foundation*, <https://www.jrf.org.uk/blog/autumn-budget-keep-doing-right-thing-and-keep-lifeline>

⁸ Trussell Trust analysis of survey of people that needed to use a food bank in the Trussell Trust network. 435 adults aged 18+ that needed to use a food bank across the United Kingdom completed a survey questionnaire between 22nd June 2020 to 31st July 2020.

⁹ Trussell Trust analysis of survey of people that needed to use a food bank in the Trussell Trust network. 435 adults aged 18+ that needed to use a food bank across the United Kingdom completed a survey questionnaire between 22nd June 2020 to 31st July 2020.

pandemic shows that those on legacy benefits were more likely to be affected by disabilities or health issues than those on UC:

- Four in ten households that needed support from a food bank in the Trussell Trust network and were claiming legacy benefits stated that someone within their household had a physical disability (19% for those claiming UC)
- A similar proportion (42%) said that someone in their household was living with a long-term physical condition or illness (26% for those claiming UC)

The Office for Budget Responsibility's 'central scenario' assumes the unemployment rate will rise to 10.1 per cent in 2021 (3.5 million people) (10).¹⁰ With many of these people likely to submit a new claim to UC, removing the uplift would jeopardise the financial resilience of millions of these individuals and families - an income shock that would damage family budgets, financial commitments, and ability to pay rent and for essentials. It would also have likely highly negative impacts on public perception of Universal Credit to maximum numbers of people, likely claiming UC for the first time.

Evidence of impact

Before the pandemic, there was already an established association between the level of benefit payments and prevalence of food bank use. The Trussell Trust's report *State of Hunger* published analysis highlighting that a £1 increase in the weekly value of benefits would mean 84 less food parcels given out in a local authority area per year (11).¹¹

For the most recent report by the Trussell Trust (12)¹², Heriot-Watt University extended this analysis to estimate what the impact of the increases to the Standard Allowance and LHA rates had on existing levels of need at food banks in our network. If the Covid-19 pandemic had not hit and these measures were in place, the analysis shows that levels of need at Trussell Trust food banks may have been suppressed by as much as 32 per cent - primarily driven by the UC increase.

Looking forward to next year, Heriot-Watt's work projects a 63 per cent increase on levels of need for mid-2021, compared with mid-2019. This assumes that the increase to the Standard Allowance will be retained. The analysis shows that removing the uplift to the Standard Allowance would likely further increase levels of need for food banks in the Trussell Trust network by almost 10 per cent. The impact of this would be concentrated amongst larger families, younger people and social renters.

This research highlights the significant positive impact that extending the uplifts to UC would have in terms of reining in rises in destitution. There is also evidence of impact for those on slightly higher incomes. Research carried out by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation shows cutting this lifeline in April would mean around 16 million people will experience an immediate and devastating loss of income, almost 60 per cent of whom are in the bottom three income deciles. 300,000 children could be swept into poverty compared to what would happen if it was maintained (13).¹³

¹⁰ Fiscal responsibility report (2020), *Office of Budget Responsibility*, <https://obr.uk/fsr/fiscal-sustainability-report-july-2020/>

¹¹ The State of Hunger (2019), *The Trussell Trust*, <https://www.trusselltrust.org/state-of-hunger/>

¹² Lockdown, lifelines and the long haul ahead (2020), *The Trussell Trust*, <https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/09/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-food-banks-report.pdf>

¹³ Briefing: Autumn Budget – why we must keep the £20 social security lifeline (2020), *Joseph Rowntree Foundation*, <https://www.jrf.org.uk/file/56341/download?token=2jd-lWq0&filetype=briefing>

Costings

Total annual expenditure of around £9 billion a year (14)¹⁴:

- Keeping the £20 per week uplift (in addition to normal annual uprating by CPI) would cost around £7.7 billion in 2021/22, rising to around £8.4 billion in 2024/25.
- Extending the same uplift to ESA, Income Support and JSA would cost around £1.1 billion in 2021/22, falling to around £300 million in 2024/25.

In addition to the uplift to UC, it is very welcome that the uplift to the Local Housing Allowance will continue beyond April 2020. It is now vital that the Government commits to making sure there is a robust mechanism for uprating rates in line with housing costs.

2: Help the most vulnerable people hold onto more of their benefits by suspending benefit debt deductions until a fairer approach to repayments is introduced

The case for this measure

As demonstrated in *State of Hunger* (2019) (15)¹⁵, benefit levels are often only just above what is required to keep claimants out of destitution, and sometimes insufficient. Removing income from subsistence benefit levels through deductions leaves households vulnerable to being swept into destitution and poverty. Research by the Trussell Trust shows that the debts, arrears and deductions that households have when visiting a food bank are incredibly high. During the crisis, just one in four (27%) households arriving at food banks were not in any arrears on bills, and almost half (47%) were repaying debts to the DWP (16).¹⁶ The reasons for these deductions being made can include repaying advance payments taken out during the five week wait for a first Universal Credit payment, or repaying benefits which may have been overpaid in error.

It was welcome that certain deductions were paused at the start of the crisis, showing the speed and ease with which this measure can be adopted. However, this suspension has since come to an end, and many deductions were not included in that suspension. The burden of repaying advances is particularly acute and during the crisis has acted to suppress the incomes of large numbers of people using food banks. This may help explain why the increase in Standard Allowance has not protected more people from falling into destitution. With historic unemployment rates forecast for the remainder of 2020, the Government must move quickly to protect those that need support from UC by suspending deductions.

The problem of having deductions taken from benefits can compound other debts people may have, and may be pushing people to accumulate more of them. StepChange estimate that 4.6 million people negatively affected financially by Covid-19 have accumulated £6.1 billion of arrears and debt,

¹⁴ Office for Budget Responsibility (July 2020) Fiscal Sustainability Report - July 2020 [Online] Available at: <https://obr.uk/fsr/fiscal-sustainability-report-july-2020/> [Accessed: 7 September 2020].

¹⁵ Trussell Trust, *State of Hunger* (2019) <https://www.stateofhunger.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/State-of-Hunger-Report-November2019-Digital.pdf>

¹⁶ Trussell Trust, *Lockdown, Lifelines and the Long Haul Ahead* (2020): the impact of Covid-19 on food banks in the Trussell Trust network <https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/09/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-food-banks-report.pdf>, page 32,

averaging £1,076 in arrears and £997 in debt per adult, in the first three months of the pandemic alone (17).¹⁷

Suspending the high burden of benefit debts (18)¹⁸ for the duration of the current crisis is a simple and cost-limited way to shoulder some of the burden from those with the lowest incomes, and help them to prioritise repaying other arrears and debts - such as for rent and utilities.

While the private sector has made significant improvements in this regard in recent years, the Government approach to debt collection is still very much out of step. We are calling for a suspension to all benefit debt deductions, excluding third party deductions, until a fairer approach to repayments can be introduced – when the economy will have recovered and household incomes more stable. The Government has previously shown recognition of the impact that deductions can have, for example through the measures announced in the March Budget which are due to come in to force in autumn 2021. This recognition is welcome, and we urge the Government to go further and faster.

Evidence of impact

Survey data of people that needed support from a food bank shows that the pressure of certain types of deductions has grown during the pandemic. During the crisis 73 per cent of those that needed to use a food bank and were receiving UC were repaying an advance payment. This is up from half (51%) in early 2020 and is higher than the average (43%) of all of those that were claiming Universal Credit in February 2020 (19).¹⁹

Suspending repayments during the crisis would provide a vital income boost to people facing destitution. It would also benefit the 1.28 million who claimed an advance between 16th March and 23rd June 2020 (20)²⁰, as well as those experiencing a change of circumstance and the many more who will turn to UC in the coming months.

This will help the most vulnerable most, as from our survey data we know that those arriving at food banks in debt to the DWP are more likely to have mental health problems than those arriving at food banks without such debts. 67 per cent of people arriving at food banks repaying a loan from the DWP reported someone with anxiety in their household, compared to 55 per cent among all those arriving at food banks. The figures for someone with depression in the household were 65 per cent to 54 per cent respectively. This makes tackling deductions essential if the government is to fulfil its manifesto commitment to '*make sure that Universal Credit works for the most vulnerable*'.

Action on high levels of debt and deductions can also have positive impacts on the economy. StepChange highlight the high social costs of problem debt, which damages productivity, education

¹⁷ StepChange, *Coronavirus and personal debt: a financial recovery strategy for households* (2020)

<https://www.stepchange.org/policy-and-research/debt-research/post-covid-personal-debt.aspx>

¹⁸ Benefit debt includes Social Fund loans, recoverable Hardship payments, Advances, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) administrative and civil penalties, tax credits, Housing Benefit and DWP fraud and normal overpayments, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/universal-credit-debt-and-deductions-that-can-be-taken-from-payments#what-is-benefit-debt>

¹⁹ Universal Credit Written Question 54921, (2020), UK Parliament,

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-06-04/54921/>

²⁰ Universal Credit declarations (claims) and advances: management information, (2020), DWP, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-declarations-claims-and-advances-management-information>

and employment outcomes for young people (21)²¹ - and therefore holds back crucial Government priorities such as levelling up and supporting the economic recovery.

Costing

Given this measure amounts to a suspension and not a write-off, costs would relate to reduced cash flow, impacting the central government net cash requirement (CGNCR) but with limited further associated costs.

The fairer approach to repayments we are calling for would have similar costs to the changes being brought in in autumn 2021, to reduce the maximum amount that can be deducted to 25 per cent and extending the repayment period for advance payments from 12 to 24 months. Costs here peak at £165m in 2023-23, falling to £85m in 2024-5 (22)²²; these would need to be adjusted to take account of the higher numbers of people this would now apply to.

We believe a suspension of deductions should be introduced until these measures – alongside other ways to make repayment fairer, such as by carrying out affordability assessments – can be introduced. Bringing these measures in earlier would bring these costs forward.

3: Make local safety nets as strong as possible by investing £250m in local welfare assistance

The case for this measure

In times of unpredictable crisis, including the ongoing reality of ‘local lockdowns’ to control the spread of the virus, local welfare assistance from councils can help people who are struggling to afford the most basic essentials and provide an extra safety net for people who fall through the gaps in national provision. Local welfare assistance grants can provide a relatively small amount of support that prove to be the difference that prevents someone being pulled into a longer-term financial crisis and destitution.

The Government recognised the value of local welfare assistance during the crisis, most notably through the £63m the ‘Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies’. This funding was in addition to the £500m new grant funding for the ‘COVID-19 hardship fund’, announced in March, although this was largely used for council tax relief (23).²³

This came in the context of overall spending in England on local welfare having fallen dramatically over recent years. Even taking into account the £63m Emergency Assistance Grant,

²¹ Costs of problem debt put at £8.3bn; this includes £2.3bn in job losses or lost productivity and £89m due to worse education and employment outcomes for young people.

²² Table 1.12 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/budget-2020-documents/budget-2020#budget-policy-decisions>

²³ Council Tax: COVID-19 hardship fund 2020-21 – Local Authority Guidance (2020), Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/874867/COVID-19_Council_Tax_Hardship_Fund_Guidance.pdf

spending in England on local welfare assistance still stands at £1.85 per person, around an eighth of what Scotland is spending per person (24).²⁴

Not only is spending in England significantly lower than in other nations, but spending by each local authority in England varies significantly leading to a “postcode lottery” of available local support. One in seven local authorities no longer run a local welfare scheme at all (25).²⁵ This is part of the wider regional disparities in spending. Analysis by the New Policy Institute found that almost the entire burden of the reduction in spending by local authorities on disadvantage has been concentrated in the most deprived fifth of all councils – including the North and the Midlands. The analysis included spending on adult social care, child social care, housing support, public health and other services including local welfare assistance schemes (26).²⁶ Investment in local welfare support provides a prime way to address the regional disparity in spending to support people in poverty in the most disadvantaged communities.

The £63m Emergency Assistance Grant was a welcome boost to local welfare provision. However, this funding was only intended to cover provision for 12 weeks – ending in October 2020. The short-term nature of this funding has also limited the scope for improving systems locally – only long-term sustained funding will give LAs the security to design effective systems to support those most in need. We believe there is a vital opportunity to extend this funding and level up across all regions the provision of local welfare assistance, particularly given the likely return of issues related to lockdowns and financial challenges with accessing food.

Evidence of impact

During lockdown, there was an increase in people who had been referred to a foodbank also seeking support from the local welfare scheme. In areas of England that had a local welfare scheme, the proportion of people arriving at food banks who were accessing local welfare assistance increased from 15 per cent before lockdown up to 23 per cent in June and July 2020 (27).²⁷ This was before the Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies came onstream, which will have provided further capacity for local welfare support.

We also know that one in seven areas in England no longer have a scheme, and many schemes are not well advertised or accessible, so it is likely more people would have applied had that option been available to them (28).²⁸ This suggests a significant rise in need, and further funding would likely support these individuals out of challenging financial circumstances.

Local welfare assistance also provides a particularly welcome safety net for those that might otherwise slip through the system due to a lack of eligibility for public funds. Data collected by the

²⁴ Strengthening local welfare support during the COVID-19 outbreak – England briefing (2020), *The Trussell Trust*, <https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/06/Briefing-Strengthening-local-welfare-support-during-the-COVID-19-outbreak.pdf>

²⁵ Strengthening local welfare support during the COVID-19 outbreak – England briefing (2020), *The Trussell Trust*, <https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/06/Briefing-Strengthening-local-welfare-support-during-the-COVID-19-outbreak.pdf>

²⁶ A Quiet Crisis, Local government spending on disadvantage in England (2018), *The New Policy Institute*, https://www.npi.org.uk/files/7715/3669/7306/A_quiet_crisis_final.pdf

²⁷ Trussell Trust analysis of survey of people that needed to use a food bank in the Trussell Trust network. 435 adults aged 18+ that needed to use a food bank across the United Kingdom completed a survey questionnaire between 22nd June 2020 to 31st July 2020.

²⁸ Strengthening local welfare support during the COVID-19 outbreak – England briefing (2020), *The Trussell Trust*, <https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/06/Briefing-Strengthening-local-welfare-support-during-the-COVID-19-outbreak.pdf>

Trussell Trust shows that this is urgently needed. Between April and June 2020 there were over 14,000 referrals to food banks in the Trussell Trust network because of issues around No Recourse to Public Funds (29).²⁹ This is almost three times higher than the same period last year, when just over 5,000 referrals were made for the same reason. Moreover, in the second quarter of 2020, 8,000 emergency food parcels were given to households with children referred to food banks in the Trussell Trust network because of issues around no recourse to public funds - a 38 per cent rise on the previous year (30).³⁰

During the pandemic almost one in five (18%) people referred to a food bank in the Trussell Trust network were born outside of Europe. This is over two times higher than the proportion of people at the start of 2020 (7%) (31).³¹

The DEFRA guidance for the £63m Emergency Assistance Grant stipulated that people with NRPF should not be excluded from local welfare schemes. While implementation of this practice has been patchy, it shows the ability to use local welfare to support this group – something which new funding could further encourage and provide.

Costing

The investment of £63m for local welfare in England through the Local authority Emergency Assistance Grant represented the biggest investment in local welfare in a decade, but is only enough to cover what local authorities need for three months. This opportunity to rebuild local welfare will be wasted if further funding is not allocated for these essential schemes.

An annual investment of £250m in local welfare assistance in England would bring spend in England in line with the median spend across the other nations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It would also represent the extension of the basis of need calculated for the £63m Emergency Assistance Grant to cover 12 weeks across a full calendar year.

Trussell Trust, September 2020

²⁹ Trussell Trust Administrative data collected between 1st April and 30th June 2019 and 2020

³⁰ Trussell Trust Administrative data collected between 1st April and 30th June 2019 and 2020

³¹ Trussell Trust analysis of survey of people that needed to use a food bank in the Trussell Trust network. 435 adults aged 18+ that needed to use a food bank across the United Kingdom completed a survey questionnaire between 22nd June 2020 to 31st July 2020.

1. Destitution in the UK 2018 (2018), *Joseph Rowntree Foundation*, <https://www.irf.org.uk/report/destitution-uk-2018>
2. End of years statistics (2020), *The Trussell Trust*, <https://www.trusselltrust.org/news-and-blog/latest-stats/end-year-stats/>
3. Mid-year population estimates: Persons by single year of age and sex for local authorities in the UK, mid-2019, (2020), ONS, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalescotlandandnorthernireland>
4. Lockdown, lifelines and the long haul ahead (2020), *The Trussell Trust*, <https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/09/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-food-banks-report.pdf>
5. Potential destitution and food bank demand resulting from the COVID-19 Crisis in UK – Rapid research for Trussell Trust, (2020), I-SPHERE at Heriot-Watt University.
6. Lockdown, lifelines and the long haul ahead (2020), *The Trussell Trust*, <https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/09/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-food-banks-report.pdf>
7. Autumn Budget: keep doing the right thing and keep the £20 lifeline (2020), *Joseph Rowntree Foundation*, <https://www.irf.org.uk/blog/autumn-budget-keep-doing-right-thing-and-keep-lifeline>
8. Trussell Trust analysis of survey of people that needed to use a food bank in the Trussell Trust network. 435 adults aged 18+ that needed to use a food bank across the United Kingdom completed a survey questionnaire between 22nd June 2020 to 31st July 2020.
9. Trussell Trust analysis of survey of people that needed to use a food bank in the Trussell Trust network. 435 adults aged 18+ that needed to use a food bank across the United Kingdom completed a survey questionnaire between 22nd June 2020 to 31st July 2020.
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