

together

January 2024

MAGAZINE



Finding a path out of poverty

Read more on page 3 about how food banks like Lisburn Foodbank are working across their communities to test new ways to reduce the need for emergency food

Change is happening

Find out more about our policy work on page 7



Heat or Eat diaries

Read the experiences of real people on page 14



WELCOME

This is it, friends. A new year - and there's never been a more important moment to make sure our voices together are heard.

I want people to look back on 2024 and say, *"That was the start of the end of the need for food banks."*

Your support in this critical year can make change happen.

With a General Election on the horizon, the Guarantee our Essentials campaign is ramping up. In the face of ever-worsening hardship, our research and statistics need to cut through. And with food banks testing more ways to reduce the need for emergency food in their community, we can see every part of society needs to drive this change.

You are a powerful agent for change. Every donation, every social media share, every minute you volunteer, and every name added to our petitions can help end the need for food banks. Read all about it in this issue of Together.

Thank you for being part of the Trussell Trust community. Thank you for the compassion and kindness you've already shown to people facing hunger this winter. Now, let's come together with renewed ambition and commitment, and make 2024 really count.



Emma Revie
Chief Executive



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Volunteers at Lisburn Foodbank, getting ready to open to their community.

LEADING THE WAY

It started with a group of food banks wanting to test new ways of reducing the need for emergency food in their communities. Thanks to you, food banks are now at the forefront of change...

For the last few years, we've been working closely with a group of food banks to test new ways to reduce the need for emergency food in their community. We're now consolidating everything these food banks have been learning so we can share it with the rest of the food banks in our network. But already Danni Malone, Director of Network Programmes and Innovation, is excited...

“This work gives me hope” said Danni, “yes, food banks are under more pressure than ever before and are stretching to their limits, and that could leave us feeling only despair, but they have been so creative, resilient and determined to find a better way of doing things. They've shown change is possible. We can end the need for food banks together.”

It's been five years since the idea to work together in this way was first conceived. Back then, we thought we knew what might reduce the need for emergency food in a community – but we didn't know for sure. So, we brought together a small group of food banks and set them a challenge: *find ways to ensure people don't fall through the cracks in local services.*

“We can end the need for food banks together.

Danni

Your generous support meant huge investment in this group of food banks. Together we made sure they had the right training and people in their teams to bring partners together and think beyond emergency food. Then, we let food banks lead the way...



Food banks regularly meet together to share ideas and solutions.

“Over 330 different projects sprung up, all localised, all people-led, and all over the country;” said Danni.

Food banks set to work removing barriers to support, developing smoother partnerships with local services, and setting up community hubs which brought health, wellbeing and longer-term support into one place. Advice and support that ensures people get the social security payments they're eligible for has proved to be life-changing.



“We will have actual solutions to share”

Danni Malone, Director of Network Programmes and Innovation

In Manchester, for example, food banks involved are convening neighbourhood meetings across the city for grassroots organisations, frontline professionals and people on the lowest incomes, with a view to creating an 'Anti-Poverty Community Manifesto' with hundreds of Mancunians.

"These are genuine signs of hope," says Danni. "And we're capturing the learning. Is the activity reducing the need? What gets help to people further upstream? Are people we've supported still having to come back?"

Today, this group of food banks are busy collecting data to evaluate their projects before sharing recommendations in March 2025. At that point it will be Danni's job to ensure learnings are embedded in future plans.

"We knew there wouldn't be an off-the-shelf solution because communities are so different" said Danni. "But definite themes and common opportunities have emerged. And that's positive. We will have tried and tested solutions that reduce the need for emergency food that we can share with food banks and partners."

Next year, there will be reports, podcasts, videos and more which will help food banks replicate the success this group is seeing. In the meantime, Danni says, "Yes, things are bleak for people this winter. But remember, your support is taking us in the right direction. Change is happening."



"Can we end the need for food banks? I'd say with confidence that our food banks are starting to crack it."

Jonny Currie, Northern Ireland Network Lead

What is this all about?

A group of food banks supported by you to think and do things differently, to trial new ways of reducing the need for emergency food locally.

What's the big idea?

These food banks are discovering the most effective ways to help people in their community, so we can replicate it through other food banks. Ultimately, the aim is to end the need for food banks.

What's the timescale?

This project was conceived in 2019, launched in 2020 and will conclude in March 2025.

MORE THAN FOOD

When a single mum walked into a food bank and asked for help, she needed more than emergency food...

Aisling* had just arrived back in Northern Ireland with her three children. After 15 years, she'd courageously escaped an abusive marriage, and family and friends had loaned her thousands of pounds for flights home.

So, on the day she arrived at Lisburn Foodbank, Aisling was traumatised and starting all over again. At this food bank, Aisling received support which went way beyond an emergency food parcel...

"We just took the burden off," says Lynsey Agnew, CEO of the trust which runs Lisburn Foodbank. "The message was: you don't need to do this alone."

The team helped Aisling apply for benefits, find accommodation and get furniture. They phoned schools and secured places for the kids, then linked up with the uniform bank. "Because of our credibility, schools listen when we say it's an emergency," added Lynsey.

Now the urgent needs have been met, the team have referred the family for counselling and are putting in place support for money matters. When Aisling is ready, she'll be helped to find work. "It'll be a six-month journey at least," said Lynsey, "But by the end we hope Aisling won't need a food bank again."

*Name changed to protect her identity

Thanks to your support...

60
food banks are in this
group across the UK

2020:
the year the first food
banks sign up to test
innovative solutions

330+
new projects and
initiatives launched

With your support, change is happening. You can help us again today by donating whatever you can.

trusselltrust.org/magazine



DRIVING CHANGE

Your support has put the Guarantee our Essentials campaign on the map. Now, with a General Election on the horizon, we're going up a gear.



Food bank and staff from the Trussell Trust raising awareness of Guarantee our Essentials in Leeds city centre

Sandwiched between a Greggs and an office block, the giant green billboard stood out dramatically. “Thousands in Leeds are going without,” it declared. “Universal Credit is falling short. Leeds, will you help?”

For passers-by in the city centre that day the message was clear: People can’t afford the essentials. It’s time for change.

Over the last few months, your support has taken the Guarantee our Essentials campaign to the next level.



ENGAGING THE PUBLIC

For two days in early September, food banks in our network took to the streets for a national moment of action. Billboards went up in Leeds, Cardiff and Belfast, and a digital van in Glasgow. Food bank volunteers and staff across the country held their own events too, creating a moment embedded in our food banks and their communities, calling on local people to sign our petition.

Senior Manager of Audience Mobilisation, Jo Hancock said, “People across our network, the general public, and other organisations supporting the campaign, came together to call for political leaders to introduce an Essentials Guarantee. The media picked up the story and social media was buzzing with campaign activity.”

What you need to know

“Every small action added up, creating a huge campaign moment,” said Jo. “So even if you simply shared a social media post, you were part of something amazing.”

5,356 people signed our petition, calling on UK political party leaders to guarantee our essentials

Four cities targeted in our day of action, plus **100 food banks** signed up to the day of action in their own communities

166 people attended our events at Conservative and Labour party conferences

1.5 million emergency food parcels provided between 1 April and 30 September 2023

16% increase compared with the same period in 2022



CHALLENGING POLITICIANS

Giant billboards greeted politicians arriving at the Conservative and Labour party conferences in the autumn – calling on leaders to acknowledge the public’s concerns about the number of people going without the essentials and commit to take action to turn the tide on rising food bank need.

At the Conservative Party conference, we held a panel discussion event and prayer breakfast. At Labour’s conference, we teamed up with partners including Love Island star and food bank volunteer Amy Hart to host a panel discussion.

What you need to know

“What do we want to see from all this?” asks Zoe Shippen, the Trussell Trust’s Public Affairs Manager. “The clear message from the public and our political leaders is the next election is all about change. That change starts with a commitment to end the need for food banks.”

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

More than 100 organisations have added their names to our letter to UK political party leaders, asking how politicians intend to help millions of households going without the essentials. Charities and groups on board include Age UK, Christians Against Poverty, Mencap, Mind, Oxfam GB, Save the Children, The Big Issue and several church denominations.

Plus, we’re still working in partnership with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, a social change organisation, on the Guarantee our Essentials campaign.

What you need to know

“The issues we’re addressing are complex. We can’t solve them alone,” said Robyn Andreo-Boosey, our Partnerships and Campaigns Manager. “But together, we can see the impact we all dream of.”

Overview of the Essentials Guarantee

Right now, the basic rate of Universal Credit for a single adult is only £85 a week. For many people, that doesn't cover essentials like food, household bills and travel costs – and around 90% of low-income households go without.

An Essentials Guarantee would ensure everyone has a protected minimum amount of support to afford the essentials, such as food and bills.



A member of the public talking with one of our team about our campaigning work

GOING UP A GEAR THIS YEAR

“2024 is going to be crucial – so be ready.”

That's the message from our Public Affairs Manager Zoe Shippen. She said, “The General Election ahead could reset the dial. It's the ultimate way to hold politicians to account. We must talk about food bank need, encourage leaders to look long-term and inspire them for change.”

This year, there will be many ways to get involved. Right now, **there's one vital thing you need to do: sign the Guarantee our Essentials petition.**

Sign the petition
Visit trusselltrust.org/essentials to sign the Guarantee our Essentials petition.

Share it
Share the link on social media.

Tell everyone
Encourage anyone you know to add their name.

GUARANTEE OUR ESSENTIALS



CREATING CHANGE THROUGH MEANINGFUL COLLABORATION

Social change only happens when people who experience hardship participate in creating that change. Over the last year we've collaborated with 118 people with lived experience of financial hardship, and we're committed to growing this work. Today we're sharing two of our projects with people with lived experience of hardship that are helping to change minds, generate ideas and seek solutions together.

Stand for Change: Young People Against Poverty

Young people should be reading about food banks in history books, yet today they are the first generation to be born into a world where widespread emergency food provision is needed across the UK. This generation will likely shoulder much of the work needed to end the need for food banks. Stand for Change is a group of twelve young people aged between 13 and 21 who have experienced financial hardship. Delivered in partnership with BBC Children in Need, the group aims to change minds and narratives around the causes and impact of poverty in the UK, with a specific focus on the voices of children and young people.

The group describes themselves as: **“Young people, from across the UK, who are passionate about a common goal: fighting the causes of poverty and finding solutions for all.**

We've lived through hard times, experiencing the constant worry of financial hardship. We want a better future for ourselves and others. We want to inspire other young people to join our fight against poverty!”

Working with our Participation team, Stand for Change has developed toolkits to help raise awareness of the impact of financial hardship on young people, and inspire other young people to take action in their local communities. The toolkits are available to our food banks and will be developed into an animation for school assemblies, to help start conversations around the subject of financial hardship and hunger with younger audiences.

“Stand for Change has demonstrated the power of collaborative work while highlighting the importance of enshrining young people's voices in campaigns for change.”

Rachel Carter, Head of UK Grants, Partnerships and Programmes at Children in Need



PARTNERS WITH A PADDLE

We are incredibly blessed at the Trussell Trust to also have the support of corporates and organisations. It will take partnerships across all sectors to help us achieve a future without the need for food banks and our corporate partners are helping play a vital role in both food bank operation, but also a future where everyone can afford the essentials.

On the 21st September last year, 14 teams from across our partnerships, including Tesco, Kier, Vodafone, Aegis and TSB joined together to compete in our first ever Dragon Boat Race. The event was the perfect way to raise vital funds for the Trussell Trust as well as providing us an opportunity to raise awareness and network with our key partners.

On a sunny September day at the Docklands Sailing and Watersport centre in Canary Wharf, London, teams competed in 6 boat racing heats. This ancient and fascinating sport required no previous experience for the teams, but they all got stuck in to provide an entertaining and nail-biting competition.

Not only was it an exciting team building exercise but was also a way for our partners to meet other partners who share our vision and raise funds at the same time!

Michelle Breeze from Kier Foundation's team took part in the inaugural race:

“Some of us had worked together before, some met over teams, and some had never met each other before but that didn't stop us! Before we knew it, we were on the water learning fast how to row together as a team. This was such a brilliant event to take part in as a team, and we came 2nd! We're already thinking about tactics for next year.”

The competitors in the race raised more than £15k in sponsorship of their challenge. Thanks to the great efforts of our partners, the Dragon Boat Race will be back bigger and better this June. We look forward to another nail-biting competition and would love other corporates to join us in the race!

OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT

Taking on a physical challenge isn't everyone's idea of fun, so here are some other ways you can support.

DontSendMeACard.Com

Pick from a huge range of cards for any occasion, select us as your charity and donate the amount you would have spent on a paper card and postage.

Support our online stores on Depop and eBay

Go in search for hidden treasures! As well as supporting food banks, you'll be doing something great for the environment- win-win!

GiveAsYouLive.com

Shoppers can donate to their favourite charity, by simply using the Give As You Live website or app to shop at their favourite online stores. It's free to use and we receive 100% of the generated donation.

Give your time

Whether you can regularly commit or just have a few hours, your time helps. With lots of different volunteering roles available, there's bound to be something for you! Search 'volunteers' on our website.

Join us on social

Not only will you get all the latest news, but by sharing posts, you'll also be helping to raise awareness of our work with new audiences.



Donate to your local food bank

Food banks in every area of the UK rely on the generosity of local people to ensure food banks have enough of the right food to make emergency parcels for everyone in your community who needs support.

Donating to your local food bank is easy:

- Look for donation points at the entrances/exits of Tesco, Morrisons, Asda and Home Bargains and donate when you shop.
- Make a donation directly to your food bank. Find locations and opening times at [trusselltrust.org/foodbank](https://www.trusselltrust.org/foodbank)

Pass it on!

By passing this magazine on, you're introducing new people to our work and inspiring them to join our community for change.

HEAT OR EAT DIARIES

“ I’m so cold I live in my bed – like the grandparents in Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.

Marin*

We know powerful storytelling content increases understanding and empathy that can help to drive lasting change. Working with people like Marin, we can help bring the realities of hunger and poverty to the forefront. Our dedicated stories team works with people with lived experience of financial hardship to co-create storytelling content that is informed and shaped by real people’s experiences and bring these to new audiences. It’s critical that people feel confident, comfortable and in control of how their stories are told so the relationships built between the storyteller and our stories team are the foundation of this area of work.

In 2022, we began working with the Guardian to publish a series of articles featuring the stories of people with lived experience of hardship. The series follows eight people as they, supported by our stories team, share their journey through the cost of living crisis, and the impact on them and their families.

Over 50 articles have been published to date, with contributors offered anonymity. Many have gone on to a greater variety of media involvement,



Read the Heat or Eat diaries at www.theguardian.com

growing in confidence around sharing their experiences. One of our contributors, who had felt unable to apply for work, found the experience helped her regain her voice. Alongside volunteering at her local food bank, this built her confidence enough for her to start her first full time job in over two decades and has given her more financial stability and led to a new home.

“ When I started this column last year, and costs were rising, I considered a reduced loaf of bread a treat, and would do mental sums to work out the cost of loo roll per sheet. Now I’ve got a new home I love, and having a full-time job at the food bank, after volunteering there for years, is brilliant.

Sophie*

Sharing people’s stories is a powerful tool to help break down misconceptions about people who struggle to afford the essentials, helping to shift cultural narratives around poverty.

If you have faced financial hardship and would like to know more about sharing your story, please contact story@trusselltrust.org

*Names changed to protect anonymity

JUSTICE AND COMPASSION FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Eighty-four-year-old Jane has lived through a World War, economic recession and a global pandemic. But it was the thought of people unable to afford to heat their homes and put food on the table that truly sparked Jane's sense of justice and compassion.

Four years ago, Jane became a supporter of the Trussell Trust – and now she has taken the remarkable step of remembering the charity with a legacy gift.

“It's scandalous to me that we're supposed to be a very wealthy country, and yet we can't make sure everyone has enough to eat,” said Jane. “What impresses me about food banks is that the work is mostly carried out by volunteers. People devoting their lives to ensuring equality, deserve all the support we can give them.”

Jane is one of many committed supporters who are choosing to remember the Trussell Trust with a gift in their Will. It's a way to make a lasting impact on the world – and create a more just society for generations to come.

“Any support you can give to people so they don't need to use a food bank is important.

Jane

Could you remember the Trussell Trust in your Will?

If you would like to see your values of justice and compassion live on, please join supporters like Jane and leave a gift in your Will to the Trussell Trust. Any gift, no matter the size, makes a difference.

Find out more:

Call our Legacy team on **01722 580170** (9am - 5pm, Mon-Fri), email legacy@trusselltrust.org, or visit trusselltrust.org/legacy



Volunteer at Bradford Foodbank

trusselltrust.org/legacy

1. I'D LIKE TO MAKE A ONE-OFF GIFT

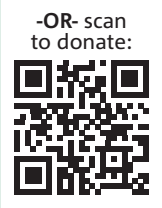
My amount £

I enclose a cheque/postal order or CAF voucher (payable to the Trussell Trust)

-OR- please debit my: Visa Mastercard

Card number:

Start date: / Expiry date: / Name on card:



2. PLEASE COMPLETE YOUR DETAILS

Title: First name: Last name:

Address:

 Postcode:

Email: Mobile number:

3. GIFT AID



Boost your donation by 25p for every £1 you donate. In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below.

I want to Gift Aid my donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past four years to the Trussell Trust

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Date:

We require address details to enable a claim to be made.

4. LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH

We will continue to contact you by post with information about our work, fundraising activities and ways to get involved. If you are happy to receive this information by email or phone, please provide your details:

Email:

Phone:

To change your communication preferences at any time, please call us on 01722 580 178 (between 9am and 5pm) or email supportercare@trusselltrust.org. You can also find out more about how we collect and use your personal information by reading our Privacy Policy at trusselltrust.org/privacy

5. GIFT IN WILLS

I would like more information about leaving a gift in my Will to the Trussell Trust

Data Protection The Trussell Trust will use the personal information that you provide in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. The Trussell Trust is registered as a data controller with the UK Information Commissioner's Office under registration number Z279027X. Your details will be kept safe and secure, only used by us, or those who work for us, and will not be shared, sold or rented to third parties for marketing purposes. We may use information and data you provide for analysis, research or screening purposes in order to help us understand our supporters so we can save resources and deliver the best possible service.

**PLEASE RETURN TO:
FREEPOST THE TRUSSELL TRUST,
VISIT TRUSSELLTRUST.ORG/GIVE
OR CALL 01722 580 178 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)**

Thank you for your generosity. Your donation will be used wherever the need is the greatest.

