Tour de Trussell - challenge yourself this year and help us fight hunger and poverty in the UK!

Find out more on page 15
Happy New Year! I hope you had a positive beginning to 2019.

For many of us, the festive period may have been a time of joy and celebration, but for some, it was a time of increased stress and worry. Food banks in our network faced their busiest period of the year as people struggled to heat homes and put food on the table because they simply couldn’t afford the basics. We stand with the many people in our country facing insecurity and hunger and pray for this new year to be filled with hope and justice.

Next month, I will have been a part of the Trussell Trust team for a year. During this time, I have had the privilege of meeting the teams of thousands of people who are there on the frontline, working with people referred to food banks to ensure that they are receiving the best care and support possible – providing hope. Working at a food bank is not a 9-5 job. It takes compassion and dedication, which I have seen in spades right across the country. At busy periods, such as Christmas, this care and devotion never dwindles, despite the often-long hours.

Our recent figures suggest that last month was the busiest period on record for people needing the support of food banks. This makes for uncomfortable reading for anyone who stands with us in our mission to end hunger in the UK.

At the Trussell Trust we look forward to 2019 with hope and a fiery commitment to seeing structural changes implemented that will protect people in our communities from ever getting to the stage where they need a food bank. As a country we are proud to have systems in place that take care of people whenever help is most needed. We need to make sure those systems are working and where people are being thrown into crisis, we do not sit by. We will continue to campaign for change until the need for food banks has ended.

Thank you for standing with us.

Emma Revie
Chief Executive
Winter 2019

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CHRISTMAS NUMBER ONE

The race to be Christmas number one is always an exciting one, and many of you may have seen that YouTube sensation LadBaby scooped the coveted prize with his family’s rendition of ‘We Built This City’ by Starship.

The sausage roll inspired hit was in aid of the Trussell Trust and we are beyond thankful for the awareness and funds it has helped raise to end hunger and poverty in the UK. Speaking about the Trussell Trust, LadBaby, (real name Mark Hoyle) and his wife Roxanne said: “When we had children, we went down to a one parent income and it was really hard. Although we didn’t go to a food bank, we got very close. There are over 14 million people living below the poverty line in the UK and four million of them are children. It’s hard when you have to feed a family on a budget and a lot of people can’t so we decided to donate all our profits to the Trussell Trust.”

PROFESSOR GREEN

In November rapper and songwriter, Professor Green spent time volunteering at his local food bank in Lewisham as part of the Unilever campaign, which saw a five pence donation to the Trussell Trust from special packs of PG tips, Hellmann’s, Colman’s, Knorr and Marmite, bought in Tesco.

Speaking of his experience, the musician, said: “It was heartbreaking to speak to some of the people who have had to turn to food banks for emergency support. For so many people in the UK, it only takes one bit of bad luck – an unexpected expense, a health issue or a delay in their benefits payment to bring everything tumbling down.”

Our huge thanks to Unilever, Tesco and their customers – not only did this campaign raise awareness of the issue of poverty and hunger in the UK, but the funds raised will help us continue our work to support people in crisis.
LIZ POLLARD’S DEPARTURE

In October we said a fond farewell to our Head of Trustees, Liz Pollard, who has played an integral part in fighting UK hunger with the Trussell Trust and has been a familiar face to staff and volunteers across the organisation.

On leaving, Liz said: “Over the past 21 years it has been my honour to serve on the Board of Trustees at the Trussell Trust – a period over which we grew from one small food bank in Salisbury to a UK-wide network that last year distributed over 1.3 million three day emergency food supplies.

“Though it is deeply troubling that so many should need the support of a food bank in 21st century Britain, it has been a great privilege to have played a small part in responding to this crisis. Over the years I have worked alongside so many amazing volunteers and staff offering support to those among us who need it most.”

We thank Liz for her relentless contribution and unwavering support in fighting poverty and injustice in the UK.

TESCO FOOD COLLECTION

The 2018 Tesco Food Collection, supporting the Trussell Trust and FareShare, was held between 30 November and 1 December in stores across the country. The event brought together food bank teams, Tesco colleagues and shoppers to increase donations ahead of Christmas and create reserves ahead of a busy winter period.

Food bank teams and volunteers greeted shoppers as they entered the store, handing out shopping lists of their most needed items. Naturally, in the run up to Christmas, there were some festive items on the list, as well as the regular requests.

We’re thrilled to announce that the amazingly generous Tesco customers donated 880 tonnes of food to local food banks across the UK. We’d like to thank each and every one of you, as well as all the volunteers, food bank teams and, of course Tesco for supporting the fight against hunger.
FIVE WEEKS TOO LONG

When we get ill, we expect a doctor to talk to us about our symptoms. If a fire begins in our home, we expect the fire brigade to put it out. These are problems – often beyond our control – that we have come together to take collective responsibility for. We pay our taxes and in return we expect support when we, or our neighbours, need it most.

Similarly, in the event of family breakdown, illness, disability or any of the many things that could lead to job loss or reduced income, we expect our benefits system to be the anchor that stops us being swept away by the tides of poverty.

We’re a country that prides itself on making sure proper support is in place for each other when help is most needed – and our benefits system was created to do exactly this. But Universal Credit, which replaces six other benefits with a single payment, isn’t currently the poverty-fighting reform that was promised.

More and more people are moving onto Universal Credit and will to wait at least five weeks for a first full payment. Some people are left waiting longer. This is leaving many people without enough money to cover the basics.
People supported by Universal Credit shouldn’t need a food bank’s help but we’ve found that in areas where Universal Credit has been rolled out for 12 months, food bank use has increased by 52%, compared to 13% in areas where it hasn’t. Even when an application goes to plan and the wait lasts five weeks, many are still referred to food banks struggling with debt, rent arrears and issues with mental health.

There are other problems with Universal Credit, but the five week wait is one of the key reasons why we’ve seen a rise in people needing food banks where it has been rolled out.

The government knows five weeks is too long, and has done two things to try to help people struggling with the wait:

1. While you’re waiting for a first payment, you can apply for some of it to be paid early - this is then taken from your payments when they come through. But this puts people between a rock and a hard place: no money now or not enough money later?

2. If you’re already supported by some benefits under the old system, the government has said these will carry on being paid for two weeks. But this is only for some people from July 2020, and it still leaves a three week gap.

A five week wait is too long – it needs to end.

If you’re interested in campaigning with us to change structural issues behind food bank use so we can end hunger in the long term, turn to page 8 to find out more.
No one should need to turn to a food bank. As a nation we expect no one should be left hungry or destitute – illness, disability, family breakdown or the loss of a job could happen to any of us. We owe it to each other to make sure sufficient financial support is in place when we need it most.

With the help of our network of food banks and the information that volunteers input into the data system, we’ve already achieved some big changes in government policy and on Universal Credit in particular – for example scrapping the phone line charges and seeing an additional £1.5 billion put back into the system in last year’s budget.

Now we want to build on that success. Over the next few months we will be campaigning to end the five week wait on the first payment of Universal Credit.

Sometimes our campaigning will be very public and sometimes we will make the case for change behind the scenes. Whether it’s the Westminster government, devolved nations, city regions and local councils, we won’t shy away from calling for policy changes required.

But we know we can’t do it on our own. If we’re going to end hunger and poverty in the UK, we’re going to need the help of everyone. Many food banks in the network are already doing great work in their community, analysing data, doing research and calling for change. We’re still a small team but we want to support food banks as much as possible to do more. We’ll also be doing more in coalition with other organisations, like End Hunger UK and the Lift the Ban campaigns.

Expect to hear more soon about how you can get involved!
SUPPORTING YOUR FOOD BANK AT LENT

ADLENT CALENDAR

You can help food stocks last into the summer by taking part in Adlent, a great way to help over the period of Lent. Simply use the pull-out Adlent calendar and collect or donate one item of food for each of the forty days of Lent, starting on 6 March and finishing on Thursday 18 April. You can take part as an individual, community group, at work or at school.

1. Get in touch with your local food bank and let them know that you are planning to do an Adlent calendar.

2. It’s always nice to include some seasonal treats, but remember that your donation may well be given out some weeks after Easter and Easter eggs and chocolate bunnies might not be so desirable in June!

3. Arrange with your local food bank a suitable time to drop your donation off with them, so they can ensure that someone will be there to receive it.

40P FOR 40 DAYS

We are asking people to join us in taking small actions to transform lives by giving up 40 pence for 40 days during Lent. With the addition of Gift Aid this comes to £20.

At the end of Lent, bank the money you’ve raised and send a cheque (made payable to the Trussell Trust and write ‘Lent’ on the reverse) together with a Gift Aid form to: Freepost Trussell Trust (no address required).

You can also call us on 01722 580 178.
Please check with your local food bank to find out the opening times and if there is anything in particular they’re running short of. You can find your local food bank here: www.trusselltrust.org/find-a-foodbank/

trusselltrust.org
www.trusselltrust.org
enquiries@trusselltrust.org
01722 580 180

The Trussell Trust is Reg. Charity in England & Wales (1110522) and Scotland (SC044246). Reg. Ltd Co. in England & Wales (5434524).

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Please use hashtag #AdlentCalendar to spread the word!
MEET THE TEAM

We’d like to introduce you to some of the Trussell Trust team, who work so hard across the UK to help people who are living in food poverty.

**ANNA ASARE-MENSAH**

**Job:** Executive Assistant to the Director of Operations.

**How long have you worked for the charity?** Eight months.

**What is your favourite part of the job?** Getting to interact with all the different teams in Salisbury and beyond on day to day basis.

**What is your favourite food?** I can never turn down a ham & cheese sandwich!

**IAN ESSON**

**Job:** Area Manager in Scotland.

**How long have you worked for the charity?** Eight months but I was a Food Bank Manager for two years.

**What is your favourite part of the job?** Working with Project Managers to develop and deliver projects that will benefit food bank guests.

**What is your favourite food?** Mexican – it’s so sociable!

**JOIN OUR TEAM!**

trusselltrust.org/jobs

If you are interested in working with the Trussell Trust visit our jobs page. You might be just what we’re looking for!
Job: Head of Volunteer Management

How long have you worked for the charity? Five months.

What is your favourite part of the job? I’m in a new role and it’s early days so I feel like I’m still learning my way around, but I’ve been bowled over by how welcoming everyone has been. The passion and compassion felt by staff has been obvious and is a great thing to be surrounded by. I’m really looking forward to linking with everyone more, getting to meet those volunteering on behalf of the Trussell Trust and contributing to the great work being done by the charity.

What is your favourite food? Pad Thai – it’s the best!

Job: Area Manager, Essex and East Hertfordshire.

How long have you worked for the charity? Seven months.

What is your favourite part of the job? I’ve really loved visiting all of the food banks in my area to get to know them better. As I’ve done so, I’ve been blown away by the resourcefulness of the food banks to generate local support, and the incredible, varied and sometimes creative ways that the local communities have chosen to respond. The food banks just would not work without the thousands of hours and tonnes of food that individuals across the UK donate every day. It’s humbling to be working alongside such people and food banks.

What is your favourite food? Hands down, it’d have to be cake! For me, the classics are still the best: a Victoria sponge, coffee and walnut, or carrot cake will always win me over.
CHALLENGE YOURSELF IN 2019

To find out more about our event please head over to trusselltrust.org/events.

Together, let’s make 2019 a year that counts. This is your chance to help us in the fight against UK hunger, and what better way to do it than to take on a yearlong fundraising challenge to really make 2019 one to remember for all the right reasons!

This upcoming challenge was inspired by one of our fantastic fundraisers, Paul Fredericks.

Paul wanted to do something big in 2018 to mark his 60th birthday by taking on a challenge like no other; to walk 2,018 miles throughout 2018, setting himself a fundraising target of £2,018.

You can get involved by requesting a Challenge Yourself 2019 fundraising pack by emailing fundraising@trusselltrust.org or give us a call on 01722 580178. You could run 21.9 miles in a day, cycle 219 miles over a long weekend, or bake 2,019 cupcakes to sell throughout the year. You can create your very own challenge, so get involved today!

If challenging yourself across the whole year sounds too much then why not choose a specific month in 2019 to fundraise? You could choose anything from a sponsored parachute jump or abseil to a charity bake off or even a sponsored silence. The opportunities really are endless. If you would like to take on a fundraising challenge for the Trussell Trust then get in contact with our friendly fundraising team. We’d love to hear from you!

Paul’s target was to raise £1 for every mile he walked in 2018. Paul says “I have always been a keen walker; being out in the countryside has great physical and mental health benefits. You do not need to go far in this country to find peace and tranquillity. I chose to support the Trussell Trust because I wanted to make a contribution to society.”
Are you a cycling enthusiast? If you feel inspired to take on a new and exciting challenge for 2019, then why not sign up to the Tour de Trussell?

This exhilarating cycle ride takes place over two days and covers a distance of 126 miles. Tour de Trussell really is a challenge like no other; you’ll be taking in stunning scenery whilst weaving your way through some of the most picturesque countryside in the UK, the stunning North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Beauty.

Pushing off from our busy distribution hub in Coventry and finishing at the home of the Trussell Trust in Salisbury, the ride won’t be easy, but knowing you’re cycling to help us stop UK hunger will make your efforts and aching limbs worth it.

So why wait? Get on your bike and start cycling; push off to help us to break the poverty cycle. Spaces are limited so you’ll need to be quick, sign up today!

Register today for your fundraising pack: trusselltrust.org/events or call 01722 580 178
My colleague Amy and I spent a few hours at Foleshill Foodbank and met a team of people who work together to create a food bank experience without fear and judgement, supporting people who are struggling and need a little help to get back on their feet.

From the moment we walked in we didn’t stop. The food bank, based in a church hall, was packed with tables and chairs and most of them were full. The noise of chatter and movement of people filled our ears and, as we dodged a couple of pushchairs and people carrying cups of tea, it soon became clear that Amy and I would have a busy few hours ahead of us.

Amy was allocated a spot on the fresh food section. The fruit and vegetables, fresh baked goods and some meat and ready meals are distributed on top of the standard three day emergency food parcel. I was asked to sit with guests and chat to them about their dietary preferences and requirements before packing the parcels. My first guest was a young man in his twenties. He explained that he was made redundant some weeks before and he had found it hard to get work.

The next people I spoke to were a young couple with a small child. Their cause for needing the help of their food bank was one I heard time and time again throughout the session: benefit delays and problems related to Universal Credit.

Over the next few hours I watched the shelves depleting. The generous donations from the public and businesses were flying out in bulging bags as volunteers packed parcels, topped up with fresh produce. I was astounded at the numbers coming through the doors right until the end of the session.

Was it always like this?
I wondered. 'Yes' came the answer from the food bank team. 'Every single session is busy.'

Volunteer Susan, who has been with the food bank for seven years says: “One of the most challenging aspects about helping at the food bank is when we run short of food.”
One of the things that struck me most, was the passion and commitment from the team. The care and consideration they applied to their assigned task was relentless. They considered whether the guests had children, who might enjoy a treat, or whether they had food intolerances or other preferences based on faith or culture.

Even more inspiring, they do their work with a smile on their face and a sense of humour. When talking to some of the people receiving help on the day it became clear why this atmosphere is so critical - firstly, the space they have to move around in is limited and is crammed full of food so if you can’t laugh as you leapfrog over a crate of carrots and Belgian buns, you might struggle; secondly, the volunteers are hearing from people who are going through some of the most painful times of their lives and it’s hard not to be affected. Their professionalism and dedication, which is mirrored in food banks across the country, means they are able to provide the very best service to their guests. Volunteer, Paul explains: “We’re a very close group and we enjoy helping each other and supporting others. There’s a great community spirit at Foleshill Foodbank.”

I ask them what it’s like to support people at Christmas. Val explains that, despite being busy, it’s a special time of year. “We often have extra bits donated, like advent calendars, chocolate and gifts for children, so we can make Christmas a little bit less hard.” This sense of community and commitment to supporting others serves the team well, but it’s that extra attention to detail we see in food banks and the special care at such a challenging time of year that makes them so inspiring to me. Despite being extremely busy and demand often outstripping supply, the team remains committed to playing their part in ending UK hunger on a local level.

As the session ends and the last guest leaves the church hall the team sits down for a well deserved cup of tea. Amy and I marvel at the pace of the session and how well they all work with each other, despite the challenges. It’s clear that the issue of hunger and poverty is not going to have a quick or simple solution, but this gang of volunteers really is proof that it takes more than food to fight UK hunger and as long as they’re needed, they’re not going anywhere.
Over 50 food banks in our network will benefit from this new funding, which is the first stage of a three-year programme. From recruiting specialist advisors to purchasing additional storage space, the grants aim to better enable food banks to provide the right support, at the right time to help people break free from poverty.

Chief executive Emma Revie says: “No one should need a food bank’s help but while we work in the long-term to tackle the structural issues that lock people in poverty, food banks are providing vital, emergency help right now to people in crisis. We’ve never been in a position to support food banks to deliver this help to this extent before – the scale and nature of Asda’s investment is unprecedented. These grants will provide crucial additional support to food banks, increasing the diversity and breadth of services to enable them to offer even more support for people at the point of crisis and tackle the underlining causes of poverty.”
Epsom & Ewell Foodbank

“With demand on our food bank accelerating alarmingly, we cannot simply increase the scale of what we do, it is just not sustainable. Using this grant, we plan to take a different approach; to meaningfully address poverty in our community and tackle the rising demand. We want to explore the root causes of poverty and begin to transform systems and cultures within public, private and voluntary sector organisations in East Surrey through a Poverty Truth Commission (PTC). The Commission will bring together civic, political and business leaders with individuals who have lived experience of poverty. They will work together over a period of 12 to 18 months to understand and address the causes and symptoms of poverty, ensuring that those affected by poverty, and their stories, are central to decisions made about how to tackle it. Let’s hope that the outcome is the exit plan for our food bank!”

Leicester South Foodbank

“We are extremely grateful for this grant from Asda which will enable us to purchase a vehicle and increase our sustainability. This vehicle will allow us to collect more food donations, which means we can provide more emergency food parcels to people in crisis. We will also be able to offer our service to people who are unable to come to the food bank themselves, either because they live in isolated rural communities or are not able to access public transport due to health or financial reasons.”

Cannock & District Foodbank

“This grant funding from Asda will help equip and run a café at our food bank centre, creating a community focal point. The café will allow people in crisis to obtain food, help and further signposting. We will be able to work closely with Citizens Advice and other agencies to offer advice, support and interviewing facilities within a warm, friendly and accessible atmosphere. Bringing resources together at a time when many agencies are having to cut back their opening times and staffing, will provide opportunities to reach the elderly, single parent families and others at high risk of poverty.”

The most common funding requests from food banks in the Trussell Trust’s network were for strategic staff, warehouse facilities to store donated food, specialist advisers and support to provide additional services, like budget cookery courses.

Alongside the grant scheme, which will continue throughout the partnership, the campaign will also support the Trussell Trust’s work through a ground-breaking research project to better understand the root causes of hunger and poverty, and help provide more fresh food in food banks across the country.
The Trussell Trust is a charity founded on Christian principles that partners with local communities to combat poverty in the UK.

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