



## Hunger Free Future

The Trussell Trust are campaigning to end hunger and destitution in the UK. And they need your voice, your support, and your agreement that everyone should be able to afford the essentials in life, like food. **Every nine seconds, a person in crisis could need a food parcel this winter.** This can't go on - and you can help to change it.

So join now and add your voice to our campaign to help create a Hunger Free Future. If we act together, we can build a future where no one goes hungry and everyone has enough money for the basics. So please, add your name TODAY.

Sign up here: <https://trusselltrust.givesafely.org/join-us-social/>

If you need more information about why your voice is needed - more than 1.2 million emergency food parcels were given to people struggling to afford essential this year, between April and September. Food banks in the UK saw a 47% increase in demand during the Covid crisis. More than 1.2 million emergency food parcels were given to people struggling to afford essentials by the 1,393 food banks in the Trussell Trust's network. These figures, released by the Trussell Trust are only the tip of the iceberg, because many people will have been helped by other community groups, the charity warns.

This is an increase from 843,655 parcels handed out during the same period of 2019, when there were 1,486 food banks operating across the UK. These latest figures include 470,854 emergency food parcels provided for children - up from 309,090 last year, and the equivalent of nearly 2,600 parcels every single day.

These figures highlight the level of need across the UK, but they do not include the number of people helped by the countless new community organisations, independent food banks and local authorities, which have stepped up during the pandemic to support their communities, the charity stresses.

The top three reasons for someone being referred to a food bank during this time were low income (47%), benefit delays (9%) and sickness or ill-health (6%).

A typical emergency food parcel contains enough food to last one person three days. However, during the crisis food banks have also been distributing seven-day parcels. The 1.2 million figure is a combination of the two, meaning the increase in the total volume of food given out to support people outstrips the increase in the number of parcels.

Emma Revie, chief executive of the Trussell Trust, said: "Throughout 2020, communities across the country have stepped in to provide vital support to people left without enough money. Volunteers in food banks have been working hard under extremely difficult circumstances to make sure support is there for people struggling to afford essentials.

But it's not right that any of us are forced to a charity for food, at any time of year. In the last few weeks, we've seen incredible compassion and concern for people facing hunger following Marcus Rashford's brilliant campaigning. And it's hugely welcome to see the government build on steps already taken by providing significant new funding for local councils in England.

This vital local support must work in coordination with a national welfare system that is strong enough to act as a lifeline to anyone struggling to afford the essentials. This pandemic has shown the unexpected can hit us suddenly, with devastating consequences for people's lives. But it's also shown we can make huge changes to the way we live and look after each other. It's shown that when we come together to push for change, the government responds. Together, we can build a hunger free future."

The Trussell Trust has welcomed recent steps made by the government to prevent people from falling into destitution - including the announcement of the £170m Covid Winter Grant Scheme for England. But the charity is concerned that food banks will still see high levels of need over the winter and beyond - particularly as redundancies recently hit a record high, doubling since the previous quarter.

So it is asking the Government to ensure money is kept in the pockets of the people who need it most by locking in the £20 rise to Universal Credit, brought in at the start of the pandemic. People currently excluded, such as people receiving payments through the legacy system, must get this money, too, the Trust believes.

A Government spokesperson said: "We are committed to making sure that the most vulnerable in our society are protected and we've put in place a strong package of support to ensure children and their families do not go hungry during this pandemic. Our additional £400 million of funding includes £170 million to help families stay warm and well-fed this winter, a further £16m to provide immediate support to front-line food aid charities and £220 million Holiday Activities and Food programme."

The Government has recently confirmed the £20 UC uplift will remain in place until March 2021, and has already taken steps to help ease the burden of UC debt repayments, including reducing the maximum deduction from 40% to 30% of a claimant's standard allowance. From October 2021 this will be reduced further to 25% and the time available to repay an advance will be doubled to 24 months. The Government will continue to keep all measures under constant review.

Article by Annie Gouk: In Your Area

Elle Weaver, Development Manager

**TOGETHER  
IN SUSSEX** 