



HUNGER
FREE
FUTURE

BUILDING A HUNGER FREE FUTURE TOGETHER

TOGETHER FOR CHANGE
OUR STRATEGY 2020-25



WELCOME

In recent years, food banks in the Trussell Trust network have seen an extraordinary growth in the number of people needing emergency food. Last year, the network provided a staggering 1.9 million three-day emergency food parcels to people in crisis, and in the last five years alone need has risen by 74%.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact too, with food banks reporting an 89% increase in need in April 2020 compared to the same period last year.

This winter, food banks are expecting to give out an emergency food parcel every nine seconds.

“Hunger is not an issue for charity, it’s an issue for justice”

Sarah, who has experience of living in poverty, West Cheshire Poverty Truth Commission

“Having to go to the food bank was my lowest point. I had no pride by then, it felt strange. I was frightened.”

Elliot who has experience of living in poverty

And behind each of these statistics is a person in crisis, who shouldn’t have to use a food bank to get by.

No one should have to feel like Elliot. Everyone should have the dignity of buying their own food.

This can’t go on. And it doesn’t have to.

Food banks offer an incredible service to people in crisis, and will continue to do so for as long as they’re needed. But this service *shouldn’t* be needed. It simply isn’t right that anyone should need to turn to a food bank for support.

In creating this strategy, we have faced a choice between accepting food banks as the ‘new normal’ or looking to create a more dignified, compassionate, just society where food banks are no longer needed.

Our vision is for a UK without the need for food banks. With this strategy, we’re inviting our network of food banks, people living in poverty, our partners, everyone to work alongside us to bring about real, long-term change.

We’ll work locally and nationally to tackle the issues driving food bank use, like problems with the benefits system and a lack of support services, while continuing to support our network to serve their communities with the best practical and compassionate support.

We know our goal is ambitious and that we can’t get there alone – but by working together for change, we can create a different future.

This booklet is designed to give you an introduction into our strategy. For more information please go to trusselltrust.org/strategy

It’s time to end the injustice and begin a Hunger Free Future. Keep reading to find out how you can get involved.



Emma Revie



ABOUT THE TRUSSELL TRUST

We’re here to end the need for food banks in the UK.

We support 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.

Our most recent figures for the number of emergency food supplies provided by our network: trusselltrust.org/news-and-blog/latest-stats/

The Trussell Trust’s food bank network brings together volunteers, staff and supporters of all faiths and none to make a difference. Local churches play a vital part in this work, with around 12,000 churches actively involved in donating food, and providing venues, volunteers and financial support for food banks.

You can read more about our work at trusselltrust.org

Making a difference

I sit so downhearted on that old wooden chair
My hair is unwashed and my youngest in care.
The flat feels so cold and a draught chills my feet
As I gaze at the bills I know I can't meet.

How did I get here, does anyone care?
So many have plenty, it's all so unfair.
Childcare's so expensive and wages so low
So what shall I do? I really don't know!

My eldest is hungry, there's little to eat
And help from the Social expenses won't meet.
My eyes fill with tears, but then I think 'Soap!'
For a friend's little gift had given me hope.

She'd been to the food bank where people were kind
And whatever your background a welcome you'll find.
The food that's donated will help you get through
And if you need some advice that's available too.

Now – I've talked to my doctor who quickly agreed,
That a voucher for food bank would help with my need.
So while life is still hard, I know others do care
And give thanks to them all for the love that they share.

Gill*, who was referred to Redbridge Foodbank

* not their real name





OUR VISION IS FOR A UK WITHOUT THE NEED FOR FOOD BANKS

We exist to support people in crisis.
To make sure that no one goes hungry.
To help food banks serve their communities.

But as a society, we need to make a choice.
Between a future where food banks are normal,
And one that's different.
One that's better.
One that's more just, more compassionate, more dignified.

One where Gill doesn't need to use a food bank.
One where children only read about food banks in history books.

We speak up with people in crisis.
We speak up alongside people who need us,
With people who can't afford food,
Who can't afford heating,
Who feel they have nowhere else to turn.

Together, we are powerful.
Our voices are loud
And change is possible.
Together, we can build the future we all need.
Together, we can build the future we all deserve.

Thank you for being part of it!

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

As a society, we believe in justice and compassion. That everyone should have a home. That everyone should be able to afford food. That everyone should have electricity, heating and a place to feel safe.

But every day, too many people aren't able to feed their families, pay their bills, or keep warm. Every year, more and more people are needing to access emergency food. And as the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic unfolds, it's more vital than ever that we act to stop people from being swept into poverty.

"Throughout the UK, food banks have become 'the norm' in our society and it almost feels that we are the 'safety net' for people who do not have enough money. Either through the benefits system or that their income is too low for them to buy enough food. In this day and age, everyone should be able to afford food for themselves and their families."

Fionnuala, Antrim Foodbank

WHAT'S DRIVING PEOPLE TO FOOD BANKS?



£52

the average weekly income after housing costs of people referred to a Trussell Trust food bank



94%

of people referred to a food bank in the Trussell Trust network are experiencing destitution.

Problems with the benefits system



Two-thirds of people referred to food banks have had a problem with the benefits system in the last year.



40% of people referred to food banks are having money taken off their benefits to repay debts, with the vast majority repaying the government.



Key problems are reduced payments, being turned down for disability benefits, being sanctioned, and delays in payments, like the five-week wait for Universal Credit.

Health problems and challenging life experiences



75% of people at food banks have a health issue or live with someone who does.



54% of people at food banks live in households affected by a mental health problem.



Most people referred to food banks have had at least one challenging life experience in the year before needing to use a food bank, like eviction, divorce, or losing a job.

Lack of support



Most people either didn't have or had exhausted formal or relational support, and had nowhere else to turn.



Local sources of support like statutory services, voluntary organisations and churches are often stretched to capacity.

"It's emotional feeling like you've literally hit the bottom, that you have to depend on other people to feed your kids."

Carey, who has experience of living in poverty

You can find out more about these statistics from our State of Hunger research report at stateofhunger.org

WHAT CAN WE DO?

"It's 2020, people shouldn't be needing food banks."

Lisa-Marie, who has experience of living in poverty



The good news is that it's in our power to change this. This year we've already made incredible changes to the way we live, work and look after each other. And if we take action now, we can build the biggest ever movement to end poverty in the UK.

Nearly half the UK public now sees food banks as a normal part of UK society. It shouldn't be like this. No charity can replace the dignity of being able to afford your own food, and our new strategy aims to build a society where everyone has enough money for the essentials.

This Christmas, join us to begin a Hunger Free Future.

"If people are getting the help they need and then don't need the food bank, we hope that will eventually help us reduce the numbers coming through our doors."

Sam, Portsmouth Foodbank

HOW WE'LL ACHIEVE OUR VISION

OUR VALUES

Our values are at the heart of everything we do, helping us and the food banks in our network navigate tough decisions and support communities effectively. The Trussell Trust is based on, shaped, and guided by Christian principles. These values have strong roots in Christian teaching and practice, whilst also being accessible and meaningful for people whatever their background. These values provide a strong shared foundation for collaboration towards our goal of ending the need for food banks in the UK.



COMPASSION

We stand alongside people in crisis and provide support and care.



COMMUNITY

We're all connected, and we all have a responsibility to support one another.



JUSTICE

It isn't right that anyone should experience hunger or poverty, and we must change this.



DIGNITY

Every person matters, and every person should be treated with respect.

"We want to challenge inequality, support wellbeing and always strive for something better for people experiencing crisis"

Holly, West Cheshire Foodbank

"Everyone is very friendly here, even the people that come here [for help]. The volunteers find time to talk to you, even though you're a stranger. They're really helpful. It's nice to talk to someone."

Ann, who has experience of living in poverty

"Anything we can do that increases their capacity to deal with their current situation we will try to do and by walking alongside them and cheering them on to find solutions, to me, this is the essence of treating someone with dignity."

Debbie, Bournemouth Foodbank

OUR THREE AREAS OF WORK

To create change, we're prioritising three areas of work:



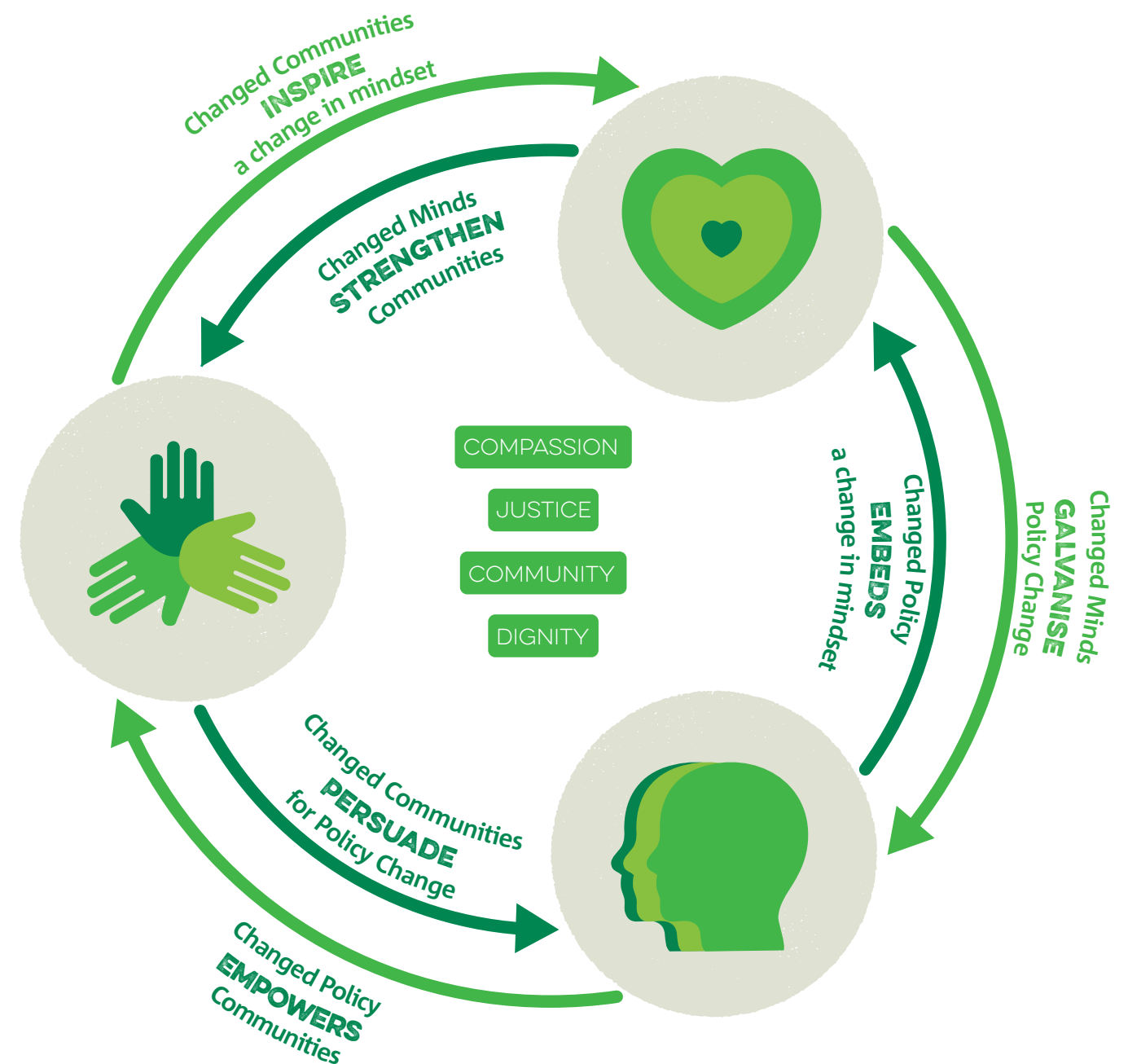
CHANGING COMMUNITIES



CHANGING POLICY



CHANGING MINDS



CHANGING COMMUNITIES

The Trussell Trust network of food banks is truly remarkable at connecting people with a passion to serve others to come together and challenge injustice across the length and breadth of the UK. Every day, thousands of volunteers turn up to stand alongside people experiencing crisis and show them solidarity and friendship. Our Changing Communities work is about unlocking even more of the potential of food banks and other local services, as they support people in crisis in their area.



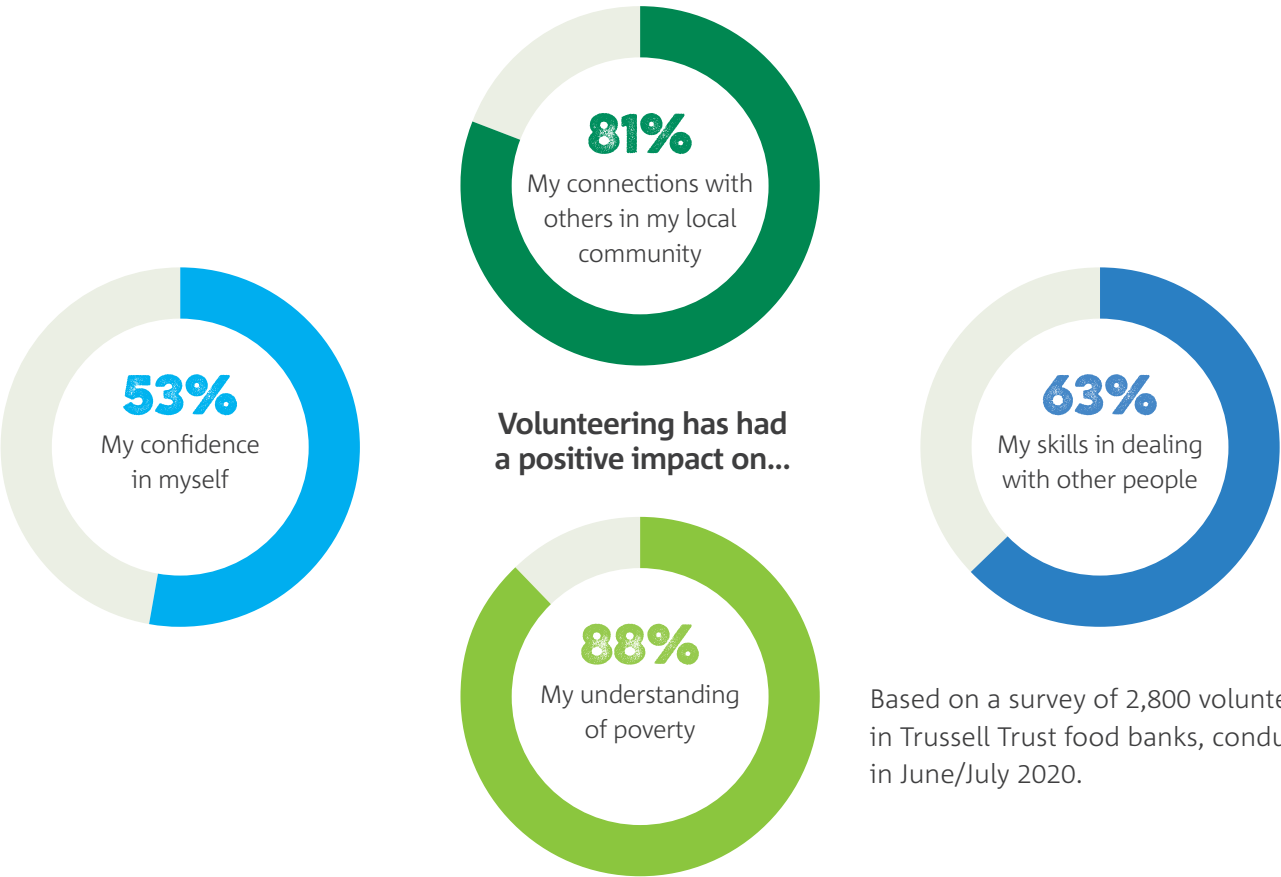
By 2025, we'll provide tailored support to every food bank in the Trussell Trust network to help them to tackle the underlying drivers of poverty locally.

We'll support food banks to:

- Develop and execute a strategic plan to reduce the need for their services locally
- Develop initiatives with people in crisis and other partners to help them access the financial support they're entitled to
- Increase their volunteers' skills and versatility, by providing tools, systems, and training

"The advice worker at the food bank was kind and patient – she asked me the right questions and seemed to understand my condition. She helped me write to my consultant for further information and my disability payments were reinstated"

John, who has experience of living in poverty



Based on a survey of 2,800 volunteers in Trussell Trust food banks, conducted in June/July 2020.

Changing Communities in action – working with Citizens Advice on a national helpline

We've been working with Citizens Advice to develop a free helpline for people who don't have enough money for essentials. The independent helpline offers personalised support to people struggling to afford the basics - helping to maximise incomes, identifying wider advice that could make a difference, and offering a quick referral to immediate support, like a food bank, if needed.

By providing people with some of the tools, advice and connections needed to move out of crisis, the helpline is putting the changing communities strand of our strategy into action. Instead of being referred to a food bank in the absence of other support, someone calling the helpline is taken on a seamless journey which connects the immediate provision of essentials with wider advice and wrap-around services. By plugging people into tailored support at this stage, we can help tackle the reason why they don't have enough money for essentials before they've even been referred to a food bank.

"I just wanted to say thank you so much for your assistance in getting me a food parcel. I would like to pass my thanks on to the people who delivered it too. I reached out for help in the morning and by the afternoon I had received my help. How lucky I am to live in this country where food is delivered to those who can't afford it."

Mark*, who used our Citizens Advice helpline during lockdown

*Not their real name



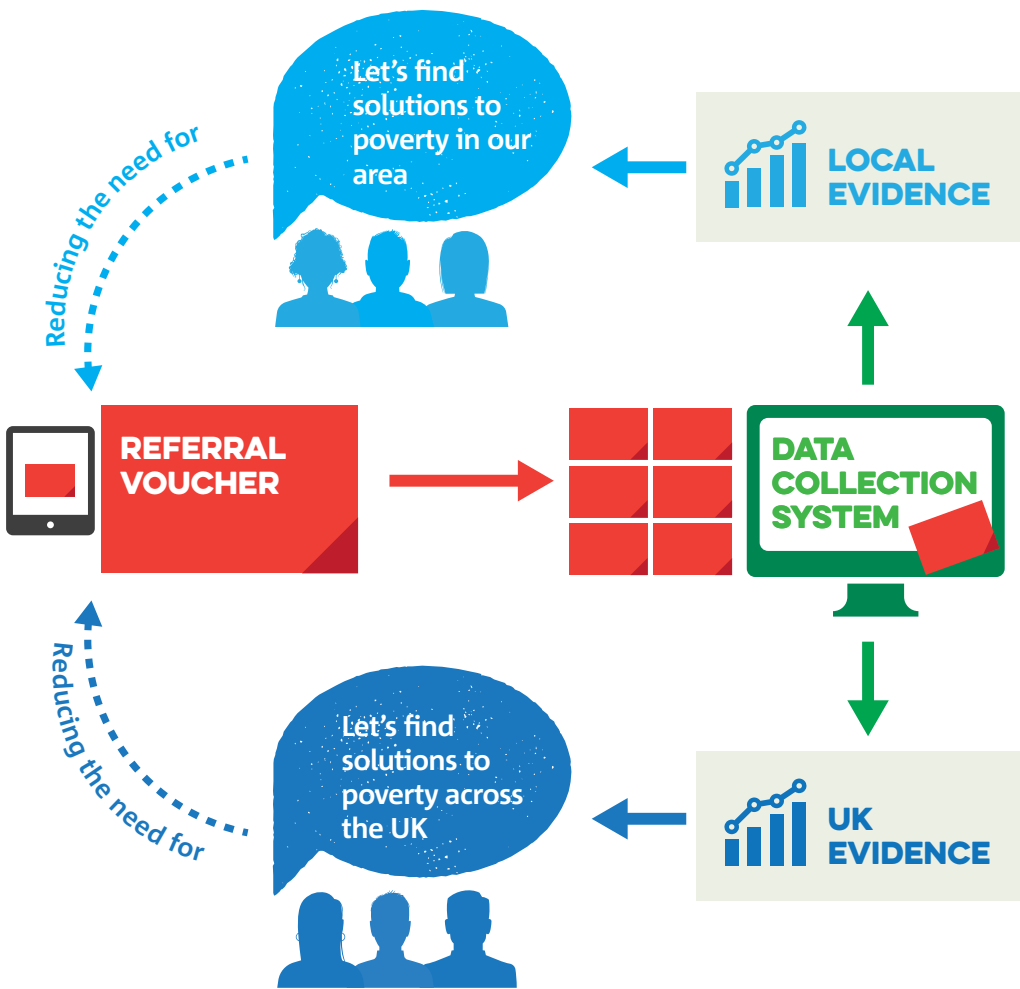
CHANGING POLICY

Changing Policy is about influencing policy development and implementation, both UK-wide and locally, in ways that are targeted towards supporting people affected by destitution. The data we gather from the frontline work of food banks helps us to advocate for effective anti-poverty solutions and to push for the change we want to see in society.

By 2025, we will achieve policy change to help eradicate destitution, working with our partners, food banks, and people who have used food banks.

We'll work to:

- Achieve collective impact by working with our partners and supporting food banks to do this locally
- Build an even stronger evidence base to help support our calls for change
- Hold policymakers to account and drive decisions that end the need for food banks.



The data captured on referral vouchers across over 1,200 food bank centres is brought together through our Data Collection System. This allows us to look at local and national trends, and empower people in the Trussell Trust network and beyond to advocate for better solutions, which will ultimately reduce the need for a referral in the first place.

Changing Policy in action – nationally

At the start of Covid-19, food banks in our network saw an 89% increase in need for emergency food parcels. To help provide a lifeline to people being swept into poverty by the storm caused by the pandemic, we partnered with a coalition of charities including Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), The Children's Society, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), StepChange, the Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN), and Turn2us to call for funding for local authorities in England to ensure grants are quickly distributed to help people stay afloat as part of a temporary Coronavirus Emergency Income Support Scheme.

The government listened and acted on this call. Shortly after the Prime Minister announced a new 12-week £63 million fund scheme 'to be distributed to local authorities in England to help those who are struggling to afford food and other essentials due to coronavirus'.

Over the coming years, we will be working in partnership with organisations across all four nations to make sure that we hold our governments to account and that policies work for everyone. While there is still a lot to be done, it's clear that change is possible when we come together.

"As organisations committed to compassion, dignity and justice, it's incredibly important for Turn2us and the Trussell Trust to collaborate. Only together, guided by experts by experience, can we authentically advocate for long-term policy solutions to end the grip of poverty. Building on our operational connections, we have already been able to share evidence about the scale and drivers of poverty in the UK and influence for positive change alongside our other friends and partners in the sector. This joint approach, working together for change, helps to increase clarity and impact in our partnership working. We look forward to standing shoulder-to-shoulder as we work towards a future without the need for wide-scale crisis support."

Tom Lawson, CEO of Turn2us



Changing Policy in action – locally

"We have written, on behalf of ourselves and Middleswich Foodbank, to two councillors about local welfare provision. I think that changing local policy is important because the pandemic has shone a light on the lack of direct support in the community. It's food banks that often pick up and discover the underlying causes of crisis going on. There are often so many layers to a crisis and food banks have the time to find these layers. The pandemic has given us the impetus to turn this situation into a positive. Nobody now will deny that policies need to change during this period so it's an ideal time to say we need to come together and work out how best to support our local communities."

Jane, Nantwich Foodbank

CHANGING MINDS

Changing Minds is about helping people to see not only the immediate need, but also to understand the long-term drivers of food bank use and to take action. We know that this is really important to many food bank volunteers and staff, who tell us that the ability to participate in influencing for change at a national level is a key reason for being part of our network. Food banks and the Trussell Trust have high levels of awareness in UK society, and vital support from local communities, celebrity influencers, corporate supporters, churches, and others. We need to draw on this support and build momentum to grow a movement for change.



By 2025, we will increase public will for long-term solutions to end the need for food banks by building a movement for change.

We'll work to:

- Support food banks to influence for positive change in their local communities.
- Shift opinions and change behaviours among the general public at a UK-wide level.
- Build a combined movement of like-minded people who are ready to take action and build a Hunger Free Future.

“As vital as it is, getting emergency food to people can’t be the only thing we do. We need to talk to people about why emergency food is needed, and what has to change so people can afford their own food. We need to build empathy for each other, and our understanding of why this is happening to so many. I’m here to play my part. I think when people understand, they really do care, so I’ll be using my platform to carry on these conversations. With more of us talking, listening and understanding, we can help create a future where no one needs a food bank.”



Liam Payne, singer-songwriter



The groups of people who form our growing movement for change



“We need to create a public tipping point in thinking so that people move from thinking it’s your own individual fault that you’re in poverty to there are systems and structures that lock people in poverty and we can fix those - that’s the kind of shift we need to see.

We need to move from blame and shame to compassion and change. We know people on their own can’t solve this but we think the Trussell Trust is a great organisation to help us to try to convert that compassion that exists in the network into a trigger for justice for people who are really struggling to keep their heads above water.”

Abigail Scott Paul, Joseph Roundtree Foundation

Changing Minds in action – working with British Gas volunteers during the Covid-19 lockdown

Shortly before the announcement of a UK wide lockdown in March 2020, British Gas approached the Trussell Trust with the offer of volunteer time and logistics support. During the 12 week project, more than 1,700 volunteers from British Gas were involved in supporting the Trussell Trust and the network of food banks in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

The experience helped deepen understanding about poverty and build connections between British Gas volunteers and people pushed into poverty in local communities.

Two ‘Seeing is Believing’ online discussion events where participants heard from food bank project managers and the Trussell Trust team helped raise awareness and understanding of food banks amongst over 475 members of the British Gas team who took part.



“It was brilliant really because you could just see the difference it made... And it just opens up your eyes really to people who do need that support.”

Lewis, British Gas Volunteer

“I have really enjoyed the experience and it has opened my eyes to people’s struggles. I will definitely be looking into volunteering longer term.”

Lewis, British Gas Volunteer

And British Gas also used their own influence and voice to raise awareness and promote engagement around the issues of hunger and poverty, with social media posts attracting over 30,000 likes or reactions across Facebook and Twitter, combining with a TV advert to reach an estimated audience of over 24 million people.

WHO WE'LL WORK WITH

We won't be able to do this work alone – it's only when we work together that change is possible.



People who have used food banks should be involved in how we design and deliver services, and how we create change. People experiencing crisis should always be central to our thinking and our work – we must create solutions with people, not for them, if we want to have an impact.

"We are the voice of people who can speak up, people who are too afraid, too stigmatised. That's why I speak up, for those who can't. And people listen and things change."

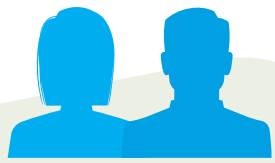
Penny, who has experience of living in poverty



People who lead and deliver food banks are incredible. The dedication, commitment, and tenacity of our project managers and volunteers are astonishing, and we'll do all that we can to support each food bank individually over the coming years.

"The work we do here is about the whole community and the whole person, and seeking to transform people who are in this local community."

Rebekah, Waterloo Foodbank



Churches play a vital part in the Trussell Trust's food bank network. More than 12,000 UK churches have contributed to our network in some way. Across the country they provide venues, volunteers, leadership and donations that make it possible for food banks to respond to people in crisis, and to campaign for change. And in the coming years, we will continue to depend on the close support of the Christian community.

"A partnership between the Trussell Trust and local churches is such a crucial element of addressing a sense of need, both a practical need and a sense of community connection."

Graham Tomlin, Bishop of Kensington



Partner organisations are vital in helping us to address the complicated, overlapping issues driving people to food banks. We'll work with organisations like StepChange and Shelter, businesses like Tesco and Asda, and operational partners like British Gas and Unilever to support people in crisis effectively and safely.

"The Children's Society stands with the Trussell Trust in their new vision to end the need for food banks, and we are proud of our close partnership."

Mark Russell, CEO, The Children's Society



Our supporters are key to all our work. From people who write to their local MP to those that cycle hundreds of miles to raise funds for us, from people who pray for us to those who volunteer to collect donations at work – all of these people are a huge part of our work. And it's only together, locally and nationally, that we can grow this movement to truly begin a Hunger Free Future.

"It's been amazing to see so many local people from all walks of life pitching in together to help their community."

Catherine, food bank volunteer



People who can shine a spotlight on our work help us to raise public awareness and improve understanding of the causes of poverty. We will continue to work with people and institutions who can inspire, inform, and activate people to take action to end injustice and begin a Hunger Free Future.

"When I was growing up, food banks weren't a thing. As my son grows up, I want to be part of building a future where everyone has enough money for the essentials – because this can change."

Liam Payne, singer-songwriter

Collaboration in action – working closely with partner organisations like Child Poverty Action Group

'Over the past years, we at CPAG have been pleased to work as partners alongside the Trussell Trust, pushing for the long-term solutions that will help to end child poverty in the UK for good. Our common conviction that poverty is not inevitable underpins our joint efforts to advocate for policies which will reduce, and ultimately end the need for wide scale emergency food distribution. The statistical evidence and ground-level experience that the Trussell Trust brings together from food banks across the UK complements our own data on poverty, and helps us to become a powerful joint voice for change when we work together.'

Alison Garnham, CEO of Child Poverty Action Group



THE DIFFERENCE WE WANT TO MAKE

"We really don't want to have to exist so we don't want to be the thing that people need."

Frederique, Weston Super-Mare Foodbank

Ultimately, the success of our strategy looks like a UK without the need for food banks – a UK where levels of destitution are so low, and financial and relational support so robust, that large-scale emergency food distribution is simply no longer necessary.

This is a long-term goal, and not something we anticipate becoming a reality in the coming five years. But setting our direction towards this vision helps us to make significant steps towards its realisation.

Over the next five years, we expect to achieve tangible change across our three areas of work in the following ways:

Changing Communities

- People needing a food bank are able to get help to access the financial support they're entitled to.
- People can increasingly access the services they need (like debt advice or mental health support) directly from other local agencies, organisations, and churches, helping avert crisis.
- There is a strong, growing evidence base across food banks which can underpin effective local and national anti-poverty decisions.

Changing Policy

- Our benefits system increasingly provides support when it's needed and at the right level.
- There is strong cross-party support for policies that protect people from destitution.
- People who have had lived experience of food bank use are informing and shaping national and local policies to reduce destitution.

Changing Minds

- Key groups in the UK are more aware of and empathetic towards the structural causes of acute poverty.
- Across the UK, more people are convinced that food banks aren't the best long-term solution to poverty.
- A growing number of people are taking action (personally, socially, and structurally) to help bring about a Hunger Free Future.

Over the coming years, we'll be keeping track of our progress in all of these areas, to help make sure we're continually working towards our long-term goal.



HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

The strategy we are committing to is bold and stretching. And the problems that we will tackle through our work together are deeply challenging. It will require us not only to plan to the best of our ability, but also to adapt and adjust to changing circumstances in the future.

As we embark on this new journey together, it can be helpful to remember the founding story of the Trussell Trust. Often, people ask about our name.

We are called 'the Trussell Trust' because the original investment of money to start the charity was left in legacy by Betty Trussell, the mother of one of the charity's founders.

A quarter of a century after this investment into a future that she could not have envisaged, Betty Trussell's contribution continues to impact lives for the better.

Likewise, here and now and to the best of our ability, each one of us can play a part by investing our skills, our energy and our passion, recognising that in our own small way, we are leaving our own legacy. And our common legacy is this - a future where nobody goes hungry, because nobody will allow it - a Hunger Free Future.



Betty Trussell

JOIN WITH US

Working together, we can create a Hunger Free Future.

We know our strategy can only succeed if we all come together to call for change. And we want you to join us.

The issues of poverty and food bank use affect us all, and we can all do something about it. We know that people use food banks because they have no other choice – and it's in our power to change this, to fix the issues that are driving people to food banks.

Whoever you are and however you want to get involved, there's a way for you to join us.

Find out more about our campaigning, volunteering, and fundraising opportunities now at trusselltrust.org.

Right now here are five things you can do:



Share your story: If you've faced the challenge of being unable to afford the basics in life and would be happy for your local food bank to work with you to share your story to create change locally, you can find your local food bank here trusselltrust.org/find-a-foodbank and get in touch. Or if you'd be happy for the Trussell Trust to work with you to share your story to create change nationally, you can get in touch by emailing press@trusselltrust.org.



Support your local food bank: While we work towards ending the need for food banks, it's vital that food banks are able to support people in crisis in their communities. If you're able to donate food or money to your local food bank, please continue to do so. And every time you donate, why not take an action to help challenge the underlying drivers of poverty too, by signing a petition, sharing on social media, or writing to your MP?



Support the Trussell Trust: You can also make a one-off or regular donation to the Trussell Trust via trusselltrust.org/make-a-donation and help us end injustice and begin a Hunger Free Future.



Taking action: Visit our website trusselltrust.org to find out more about getting involved by supporting the Hunger Free Future campaign. Whether you give time, money or your voice - or all of these - you'll be a part of a movement of people bringing about change.



Getting involved at church: If you're connected to a local church, visit trusselltrust.org/get-involved/church-support for resources that can help you support our long-term vision. This includes prayer resources and information about signposting to referral partners.

TOGETHER

we can create a

FUTURE

where

NOBODY GOES HUNGRY

because

NOBODY

★ WILL ALLOW IT ★

Together we can create a Hunger Free Future.



**HUNGER
FREE
FUTURE**



trusselltrust.org

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