



**TOGETHER,  
BUILDING A  
NETWORK  
FOR CHANGE**

IMPACT REPORT  
2021-22

# A NOTE FROM EMMA REVIE, OUR CEO

The rapid rise in the cost of living and continuing recovery from the devastating effects of the pandemic has meant we're all feeling the squeeze. But as I reflect on the past year, I'm immediately reminded of the stories food banks have shared with me recently - how parents are skipping meals so they can feed their children and how people are turning off essential appliances so they can afford internet access for their kids to do their homework. These decisions aren't just difficult, they're impossible, and it's not right that anyone has to face them.

Our food bank figures from April 2021 to March this year reflect the stories food bank teams have been telling us. For the first time apart from the first year of the pandemic, food banks in our network provided over two million food parcels to people struggling to afford the essentials. That's an increase of 14% compared to the same period in 2019/20, and 832,000 of those parcels went to children.

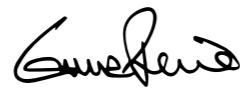
These stories and statistics represent a devastating reality for so many people across our country, and it can be challenging to stay optimistic as we face a situation that looks like it's only set to get worse. But balanced with this concern, I am also inspired by the support and solidarity our food bank network extends to people facing hardship every single day. I'd like to thank each food bank in our network, as well as the 36,000 volunteers and 12,000 churches who support us in a myriad of ways, and have shown such determination and creativity in the face of incredible adversity.

As we emerge from the pandemic and face new challenges, we've offered grants worth £29m to food banks to support their communities in both the long and short-term and unlocked £21m of income for people facing financial hardship. We've worked with a range of partners, storytellers and influencers, keeping the need for food banks at the forefront of the national conversation. We've campaigned to get more money into the pockets of people on the lowest incomes through our policy influencing work, trialling new approaches that put people with lived experience of hunger and poverty centre stage in our movement for change.

None of this would be possible without the kindness and generosity of businesses, partners and supporters. It's this that enables our network to continue providing practical support to people facing hardship in our communities. While we know that there will always be a role for strong community groups looking out for their neighbours, it cannot be right that in one of the richest countries in the world, charities are having to provide essentials such as food to their communities. This is why, as I look ahead to next year, our research and campaigning to change the things that are leaving people without enough money will continue to be such a vital part of the work we do. We have established innovative initiatives such as our Pathfinder Programme and our Together for Change Panel, which I'm excited to see develop and grow our impact in the year ahead. I'm also excited about strengthening our connections with churches and interfaith partners and growing our capacity to help inspire local action and galvanise support for change through communities and the power of our food banks.

The future might feel uncertain, but our vision isn't. We know what is pushing people to need food banks, so we know what needs to change if we're going to build a more just society where everyone has enough money for the essentials.

Together, we can build a future where none of us need a food bank, because none of us will allow it. Thank you for standing with us.



Emma Revie  
Chief Executive



## Our vision is for a UK without the need for food banks

The Trussell Trust supports a network of over 1,300 food bank centres across the UK, providing practical, community-led support for people facing hardship. When people are referred to a food bank, they are provided with a parcel which typically contains three days' worth of nutritious food, as well as compassionate support and advice.

But emergency food isn't a long-term solution to hunger. People need food banks when they don't have enough money for essentials. It's not right that anyone needs a food bank to get by, and we can change this by ensuring everyone has enough income to eat, stay warm and stay dry.

We work with our network to gather research and robust evidence to challenge the structural issues that lead to hunger and poverty, and campaign for change so that nobody needs to turn to a charity to get by.

Our vision is for a future without the need for food banks. We're working towards this in three main ways:

1. CHANGING COMMUNITIES
2. CHANGING POLICY
3. CHANGING MINDS

# 1. CHANGING COMMUNITIES



We're supporting food banks to actively reduce the need for emergency food in their communities through the following programmes:

**Local plans of action:**

We will support every food bank to develop and execute a strategic plan for reducing the need for their services locally, with a particular focus on reviewing their own referral processes, and involving people with lived experience of poverty in the design, delivery and decision-making of solutions.

**Maximising people's incomes:**

With food banks and partners, we will co-develop a range of nationally resourced but locally owned income maximisation initiatives, capturing data to evidence gaps in local service provision and pushing for solutions with and for those in crisis to be able to receive their full entitlement of financial support.

**Transforming volunteering:**

We will provide tools, systems and training to increase the versatility and range of skills amongst our volunteer base across the UK, enabling food banks to draw upon additional support, increasing capacity locally and as a network, to orientate our work towards long term solutions.

# 2. CHANGING POLICY



We're gathering robust evidence to drive policy change so that everyone can afford the essentials through the following programmes:

**Policy Partnerships:**

We will achieve collective impact in the area of eradicating destitution<sup>1</sup> by working in coalition with a defined group of partners at a national and UK-wide level, and supporting food banks to do this at a local level.

**Policy Evidence:**

We will inform policy solutions that end the need for food banks by gathering and harnessing evidence from food bank activity and service delivery models, co-designing and implementing systems to support this.

**Influencing Policy:**

Together with food banks and people with lived experience of poverty, we will hold policymakers to account and drive decisions that end the need for food banks by harnessing our evidence base and collaborating with partners.

<sup>1</sup> Destitution means the inability to afford the essentials we all need to eat, stay warm and dry, and keep clean. This definition is found on p45 of the State of Hunger Report <https://stateofhunger.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/State-of-Hunger-Report-November2019-Digital.pdf>

# 3. CHANGING MINDS



We're building greater public will for a society where no one needs to use a food bank through the following programmes:

**Local Changing Minds:**

As a network, we will grow a movement for change and influence by nurturing and strengthening our common values and vision, challenging our own preconceptions and practice, and harnessing the potential within every aspect of the network; investing particularly in people who have experience of poverty, and mobilising local communities.

**UK Changing Minds:**

At a UK level, we will tackle misconceptions, shift opinions and change behaviours among clearly identifiable segments of the general public by delivering a range of proactive, targeted communications and activations.

**Movement Building:**

Locally and nationally, we will build a crowd of like-minded people (supporters and partners) to work alongside us; inspiring them to take action, exert influence and advocate to achieve our shared goals.



## OUR VALUES



### Compassion

Motivates us to stand alongside people in crisis and provide support and care for individuals.



### Justice

Drives us to insist that it is not right that somebody should experience hunger or poverty, and to take action to change this.



### Community

As people, we are all interconnected, and because of this we have a responsibility to support one another.



### Dignity

We recognise the value of every individual, prioritising other people's needs and concerns in the spirit of friendship.

To achieve our vision of a future without the need for food banks, we must ensure that there are no barriers for people who come into contact with our organisation, whether to access support, work or volunteer with us or to support our work. As an organisation and as a broader movement for change, we are deepening our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion. This includes:

- Using a recruitment platform that anonymises applicants to help us achieve more bias-free recruitment. This has contributed to an increase across all protected characteristics for our successful applicants.
- Providing training and advice for food bank staff, volunteers and trustees, on topics such as safeguarding and modern slavery.
- Translating key food bank resources into seven languages for staff and volunteers to be able to communicate with, and support people for whom English is not their first language.

We know that the participation of people with lived experience of poverty is integral to us achieving our vision, so we are increasing the emphasis on this in all aspects of our work. Our 'Together for Change' panel is made up of a group of people who have faced financial hardship and want to use their expertise to support our vision. The group also brings a variety of life experiences including of the care system, mental health services, debt and bankruptcy, addiction issues, the criminal justice system, learning disabilities, homelessness, and being unable to work due to medical conditions. Through regular meetings with panel members, we are able to bring their unique perspectives into the heart of our work.

Across all aspects of our work, we are working intentionally with 80 people with lived experience, who are influencing our strategies, our programmes and our policy priorities.

## About this report

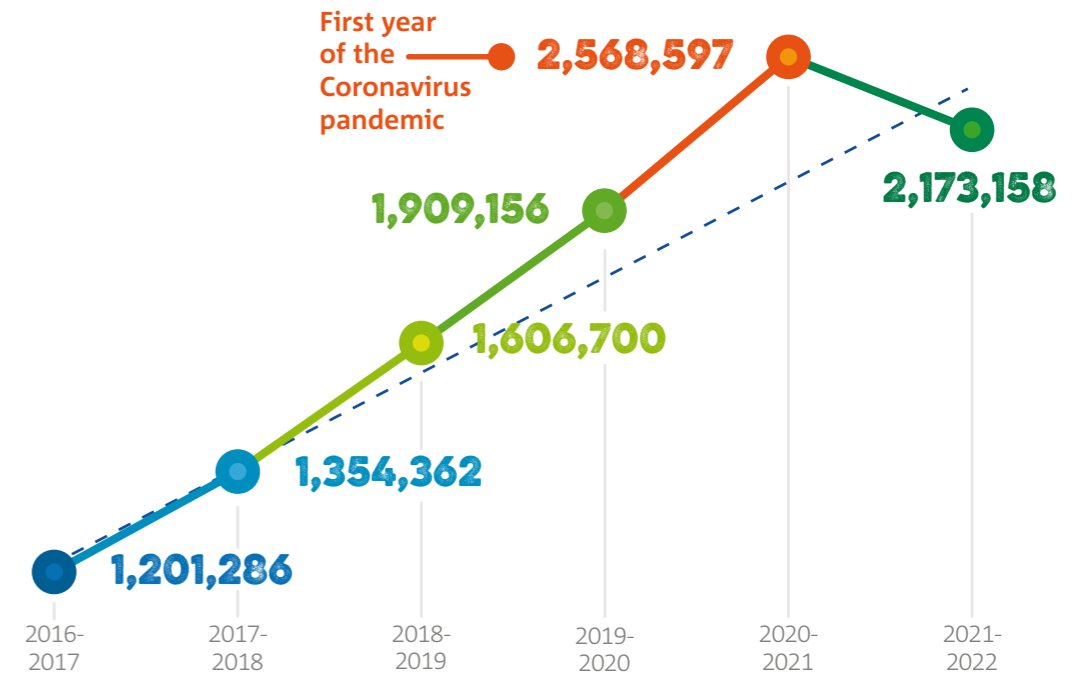
In our second Annual Impact Report, we tell the story of the work we've been doing over the last twelve months - a year marked by the continuing effects of the pandemic and a growing crisis in the cost of living. We will recognise the difference that we and our food bank network have made through hearing from people who have used food banks, food bank teams, and our influencers and corporate partners.

## MEETING THE NEED FOR EMERGENCY FOOD

Last year, food banks in our network distributed over

**2.1 MILLION** emergency food parcels

**832,000** of which went to children



- Food banks have seen an 82% increase in parcels distributed over the past 5 years
- The pandemic was an extraordinary year, but compared to the year prior to the pandemic, food banks distributed 14% more parcels
- And even though the pandemic saw an extraordinary uptick in parcels distributed, a third of our food banks still distributed more parcels in 21/22 than in 20/21

Even as the impact of the pandemic is reducing, food banks are noticing the effects of the £20 a week cut to Universal Credit in October. Food bank managers worry that they are already seeing the impact of this – making real the fears of people like Michelle when she spoke to us in September:

*“I am dreading my next Universal Credit payment in October, which I have already been told will be £86 a month less. Even using the food bank, I am not going to be able to afford gas to last the month. I am already having sleepless nights worrying about how I'm going to keep a roof over our head and find a way of heating our home. I really will be struggling and will be missing meals to ensure my children get to eat and be warm over the coming months.”*

**Michelle - who has lived experience of poverty**

The impact of the cut to Universal Credit is being exacerbated by increases in the costs of the essentials – food, heating and fuel. As the cost of living crisis deepens, we are fully prepared for the need for emergency food to grow. Food banks in our network will be there to provide food and advice to people who need it the most, and to treat them with compassion and dignity.

*“There's a young chap who's had some mental health challenges and has been coming to the food bank for the last three years. Only in the last month has he really sat down and engaged with us. We didn't realise that, when he's been coming to us, he's been testing the water and seeing if we kept our word. He said, 'I've just been checking out that you were safe, and I think you are'. Because it's not about us ticking our boxes, it's about seeing people as individuals and building a relationship with them.”*

**Romsey Foodbank**

# OUR VISION

A UK WITHOUT THE NEED FOR FOOD BANKS

where levels of destitution are so low, and ongoing financial and relational support is readily available, that large-scale emergency food distribution is no longer needed.

£1.8m of income gains were identified for 1,305 people seeking support from food banks.

440 grants worth £29.5m were committed to 265 food banks.

31,726 people were given advice (51% more than the previous year) via the Help through Hardship helpline.

Goal: People seeking support from food banks are able to readily access support to increase their incomes.

Goal: People can access other services such as debt advice or mental health support, and relational support directly from referral partners and other statutory agencies or civil society groups.

77% of food bank vouchers were issued electronically (compared to 17% two years earlier), providing more complete and more accurate data.

First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, committed the Scottish Government to set out a plan to end the need for food banks within the first year of the new parliament following specific calls from our supporters.

25,000 people wrote to their MPs as part of the Keep the Lifeline campaign calling on the government not to cut the £20 increase to Universal Credit. Although the UK government did make the cut, it announced a £500m Household Support Fund, and the taper rate at which Universal Credit is withdrawn as claimants' earnings increase was reduced.

## CHANGING COMMUNITIES

Goal: There is a strong evidence base across food banks which can underpin effective anti-poverty recommendations.

Goal: The benefits system provides timely and sufficient financial support, and is available to all households who need it.

Goal: There is strong cross-party support for social and economic policies that protect households from destitution.

29 parliamentarians from four political parties took part in events organised by the APPG on Ending the Need for Food Banks.

## WHO WE ARE

80 people with lived experience of poverty and food bank use helping us design our strategies and programmes.

Over 1,300 food bank distribution centres.

## CHANGING POLICY

Goal: People with lived experience of poverty play an ongoing part in informing national and local policies to alleviate destitution.

48 people with lived experience of poverty led our Debt to Government, Deductions and Destitution research.

## THE SITUATION

The need for food banks continues to grow, and the social security system remains inadequate for ensuring we can all afford the essentials.

Around 36,000 volunteers giving their time and expertise.

Over 12,000 churches providing donations, food, venues and volunteers.

## CHANGING MINDS

Goal: There is increased awareness of the problem of destitution and its structural causes amongst targeted groups within the UK population.

1/5 of food banks participated in the Keep the Lifeline campaign.

16,837 mentions of the Trussell Trust in the media - 48% more than in 2019/20.

96% of volunteers in our network of food banks agree that the benefits system should ensure that everyone can afford the essentials.<sup>4</sup>

Goal: There is increased public will for long-term solutions to end the need for food banks.

19% of the public now say they are likely to contact their parliamentary representative about hunger or its causes<sup>5</sup>, compared with 16% in 2019,

2.1 MILLION

emergency food parcels were distributed to people in crisis by food banks in the Trussell Trust network between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022.

14% INCREASE

in the number of emergency food parcels distributed by food banks in the Trussell Trust network during 2021/22 compared to pre-pandemic levels in 2019/20.<sup>2</sup>

Over 218,000 supporters actively giving, campaigning and supporting our work.

Goal: A growing number of people have been mobilised to take action to help bring about long-term solutions to end the need for food banks.

Over 20,000 new supporters joined the Keep the Lifeline campaign, raising awareness of the impact of the £20 a week cut to Universal Credit.

OVER 3 MILLION

people receiving Universal Credit are going without at least one of the absolute essentials we all need to keep warm, fed, and clothed.<sup>3</sup>



2.4 MILLION

people experienced destitution in 2019, a 54% increase since 2017.<sup>6</sup>

Over 30 corporate partners collaborating with us.




2 Because of the impact of the first year of the pandemic, 2020/21 was a highly unusual year for food banks in our network, so a comparison in the number of emergency food parcels distributed in 2019/20 and 2021/22 is more representative of the overall trend.  
 3 YouGov: An online survey of 1,506 UK adults claiming Universal Credit, weighted to be representative of all Great British adults claiming Universal Credit (aged 18+). Fieldwork was conducted 24 January – 15 February 2022.  
 4 YouGov Attitudinal Survey 2021: An online survey of 2,011 respondents aged 16+ in Britain, weighted to be representative of the population. Fieldwork was conducted 11 – 24 August 2021. The Trussell Trust Change Makers Survey 2022: An online survey of 205 staff and 1,220 volunteers from food banks in the Trussell Trust's network. Fieldwork was conducted 24 February - 25 March 2022.  
 5 YouGov Attitudinal Survey 2021 and YouGov Attitudinal Survey 2019: An online survey of 12,103 respondents aged 16+ in Britain, weighted to be representative of the population.  
 6 <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-uk-2020>

# CHANGING COMMUNITIES

Our Changing Communities work supports food banks to actively reduce the need for emergency food in their communities.

To achieve this, we aim to:

This year, our impact has been:

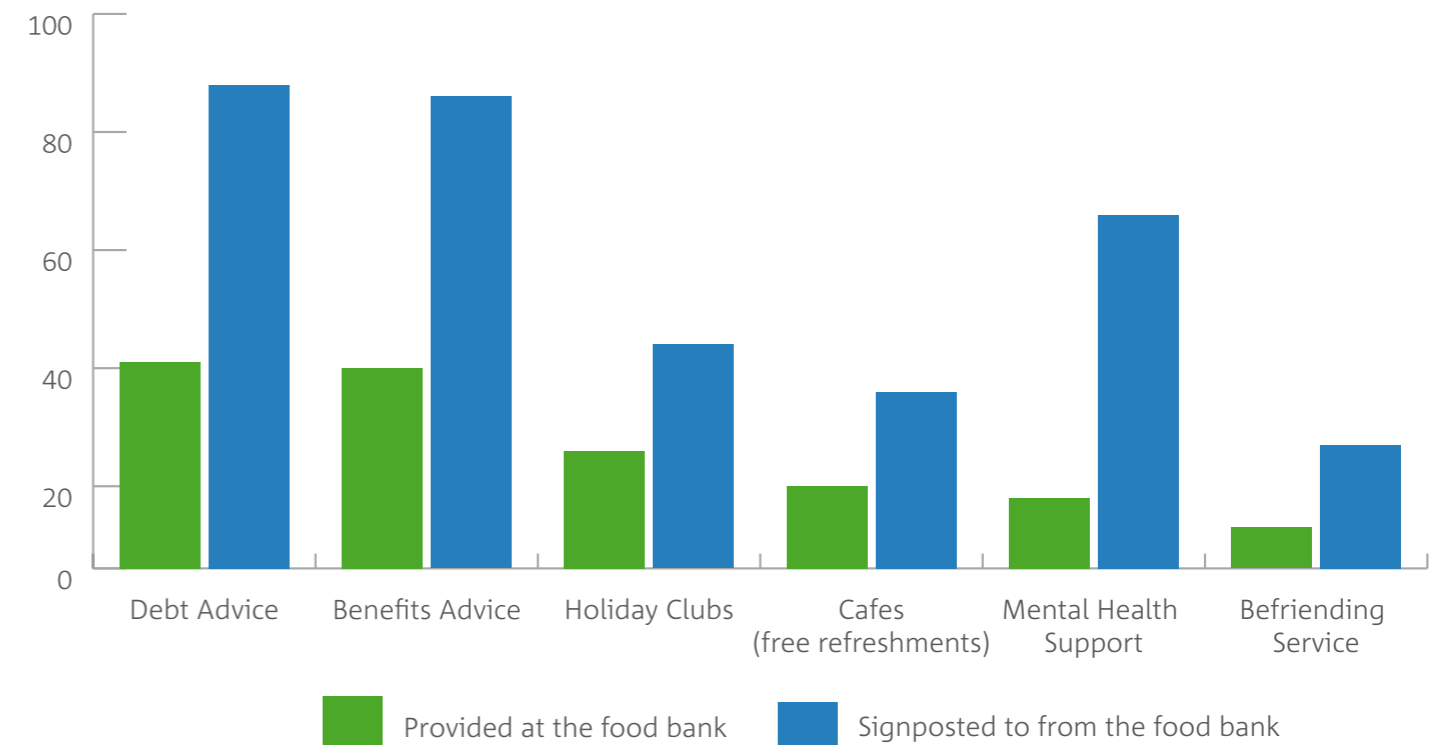
 <p>Improve access to support that helps people <b>increase their income</b></p>	<p><b>£1.8M</b></p> <p>of income gains were identified for 1,305 people seeking support from food banks (between January and March 2022)</p> <p><b>£19.2M</b></p> <p>of income gains were identified for 5,391 callers to the Help through Hardship helpline</p>
 <p>Ensure that people can <b>easily access services</b> such as debt advice, mental health support, and relational support directly from statutory agencies or civil society groups</p>	<p><b>31,726</b></p> <p>people were given advice (51% more than the previous year) via the Help through Hardship helpline to address the root causes of hardship</p> <p><b>41%</b></p> <p>of food banks provided debt advice, and 88% pointed people towards other local providers</p> <p><b>440</b></p> <p>grants worth £29.5m were committed to food banks, helping them to expand and improve their services</p>
 <p>Strengthen the evidence base across food banks so that it can better underpin <b>effective anti-poverty recommendations</b></p>	<p><b>77%</b></p> <p>of food bank vouchers were issued electronically (compared to 17% two years earlier), providing more complete and more accurate data to help us make the case for changes to the benefits system so that it better protects people from destitution</p>

## BEYOND EMERGENCY FOOD PROVISION

The work of food banks goes beyond the distribution of emergency food and a growing number are providing additional services. This is being done either by their own staff and volunteers, by skilled advisors from other agencies who are based in the food bank, or through strengthening relationships with partner agencies to whom people visiting the food bank can be referred.



Proportion of food banks providing these services in their food banks or signposting people to them<sup>7</sup>



<sup>7</sup> The Trussell Trust September Food Bank Network Survey 2021: An online survey of 207 food banks within the Trussell Trust's network. Fieldwork was conducted 2 September to 8 October 2021. These figures do not include food banks who said they used to provide these services before the pandemic.



The social value produced by food banks and the services they provide are significant.

Hope Magherafelt is a charity which was birthed out of the Magherafelt Foodbank. As well as the food bank itself, it runs projects such as debt counselling, money management, a befriending service, and a cooking course.

A recent Social Value Audit calculated that, for every £1 invested, over £12 of social and economic value was returned, producing a total annual return of over £2.2m.<sup>8</sup>

Food banks are increasingly designing their services and strategies with people who have experience of using such services. Indeed, 32% of volunteers at food banks have personal experience of relying on benefits or of living in poverty<sup>9</sup>.

*“Over the years we are coming to realise that participation [of people with lived experience of poverty] is not a project of the food bank but a core part of what we are about. It cannot be an add-on but needs to be integrated. It is easy to see how, if we just treat this work as a project, it gets dropped when we are too busy. But, in the future, that needs to make as little sense as running a food bank while being too busy to give out food does now”.*

**Manchester Central Foodbank**

## “CASH FIRST” APPROACHES

The ‘cash first’ principle is about offering money to people facing financial hardship. Emergency food is a short-term solution to hardship, so we are interested in the ways in which a cash first approach might reduce the need for food banks.

A cash first approach is a more effective way of directing financial support where it is most needed whilst also supporting local economies. It can address the root cause of destitution, meaning being unable to afford the essentials that we all need to eat, stay warm and dry and keep clean, because cash can be spent on all essentials, from food to energy bills. And it respects people’s dignity to manage their finances for themselves, for instance by choosing to buy culturally appropriate food for their household.

Building on a positive relationship between Leeds City Council and charities in the city, the council set up a cash first pilot scheme. Three food banks in the Trussell Trust network (Leeds North and West, Leeds South and East, Wetherby and District) supported the pilot by directing people who are referred to them for emergency food towards the council’s scheme. Other recipients of the pilot scheme were referred directly to it via the council’s Local Welfare Support Scheme. The pilot ran from October 2021 to April 2022. In total, 283 individuals were supported and £45,450 was awarded in cash grants which they could withdraw from a local cash machine. An evaluation of the scheme is ongoing and will contribute to our exploration of the impact of innovative cash first approaches to financial crisis.

Food banks across our network have been developing and promoting the Worrying about Money leaflets with the Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) for the last two years.

These leaflets, each referring to specific providers of advice and support in their local area, are designed to reduce referrals to food banks by pointing people facing hardship to alternative sources of support first. In May 2021, food banks in our network in Glasgow were heavily involved in the development and launch of the city’s leaflet, which has been incorporated into the ten-year Glasgow City Food Plan. A recent independent evaluation found that the leaflet has been viewed very positively and has helped to raise awareness of alternative sources of support amongst staff and volunteers at food banks and referral partners.

In England, we have launched a briefing for local authorities to detail the ways in which they can embed cash first solutions across their policies. This will explore how Local Welfare Assistance schemes can be improved to provide cash transfers to people facing an immediate financial shortfall.



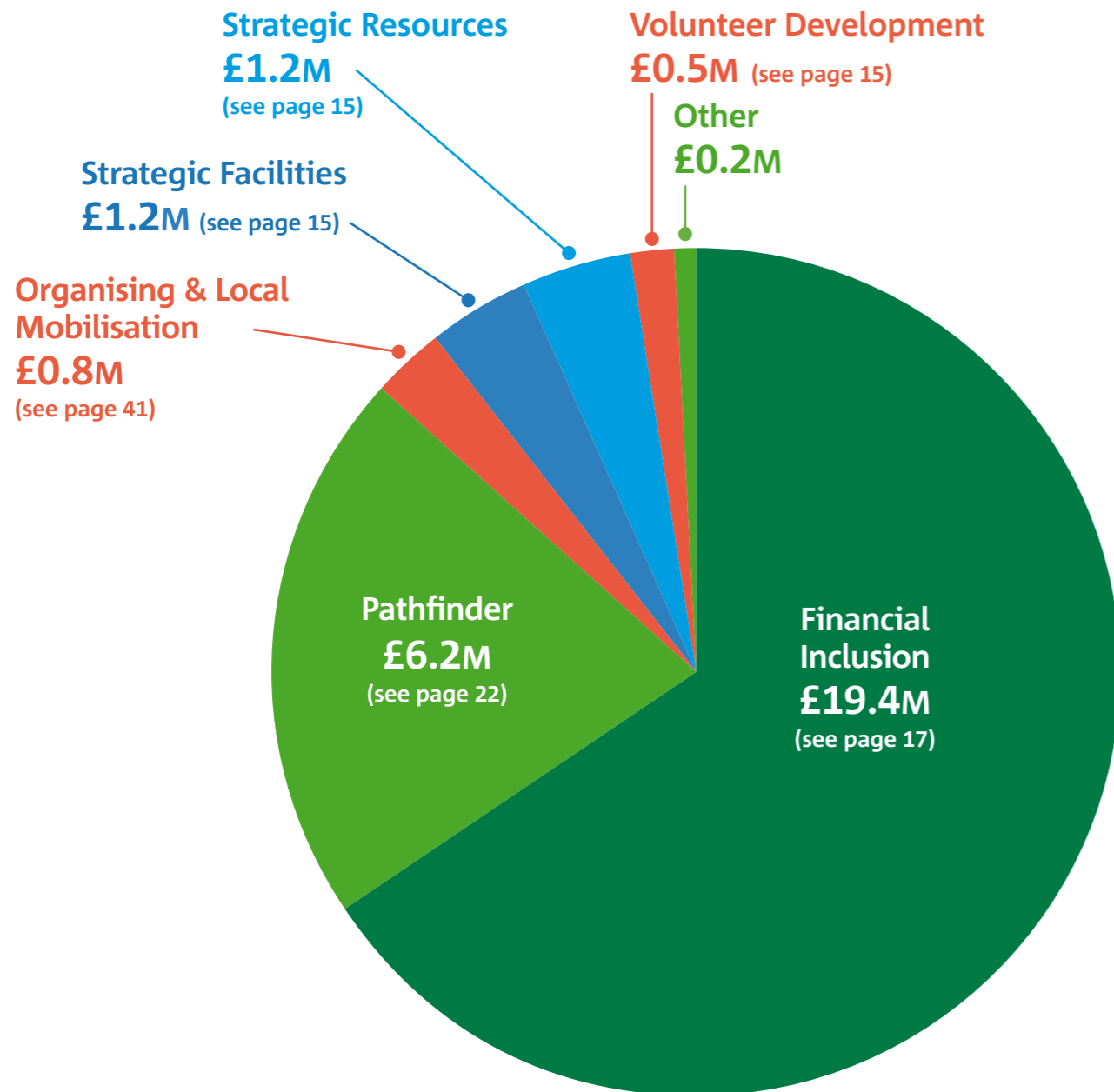
In this coming year, the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Ending the Need for Food Banks (for which the Trussell Trust provides the secretariat), is undertaking a call for evidence on the most effective and dignified ways for communities and all levels of government to support people experiencing a financial crisis. This will involve a cross-party group of MPs gathering evidence from food banks, people needing to use food banks, and other partners to make recommendations in a report to the government. We will also develop participatory research with people who have lived experience of poverty and destitution to understand how they would like to be supported in the event of a financial crisis, as we continue to explore how best to end the need for food banks in the UK.

<sup>8</sup> Calculated using the Social Value Engine with independent support from Rural Community Network NI and Rose Regeneration, and funded by the Department for Communities of the Northern Ireland Executive.

<sup>9</sup> The Trussell Trust Change Makers Survey 2022: An online survey of 205 staff and 1,220 volunteers from food banks in the Trussell Trust’s network. Fieldwork was conducted 24 February to 25 March 2022. 32% of respondents chose one or more of the following options: “I have experience of needing to rely on benefits (social security)”; “I have direct experience of living in poverty”; “I have personally been referred to a food bank in the last 12 months”; “I have personally been referred to a food bank more than 12 months ago”

# FOOD BANK GRANTS

In 2021/22, grants were committed to 62% of food banks. This equated to 440 grants, worth a staggering £29.5m. This figure represents four times as much as we have given in total grants over the previous four years. Food banks in our network know the needs and circumstances of their local communities so our grants programme helps them to invest in personnel and activities that are tailored to meet these needs and move them towards their strategic goals. These grants help food banks to develop strategic plans, improve their facilities, employ skilled advisors, provide training for their volunteers, and much more.



## STRATEGIC FACILITIES GRANT

This grant helps food banks to make improvements in their storage facilities and premises to enhance the quality of their service. We have been able to help food banks to move to better warehousing facilities, create space to house specialist advisors, and open new distribution centres in areas of high need.

*“The new warehouse provides us with a better, flexible and, above all, safer workspace. This meant we could maintain our support throughout the pandemic and work in small bubbles which has kept staff and volunteers safe. The improved location has also meant that we have been able to recruit many new volunteers to support Bath Foodbank after many of our existing volunteers needed to shield or decided they were not comfortable volunteering in the challenging environment of a pandemic.”*

**Bath Foodbank**

## STRATEGIC RESOURCES GRANT

Food banks use this grant to develop strategic plans and tailor their services towards ending the need for the food bank. It has enabled them to recruit new strategic roles or administrative staff to free up time for leaders to pursue their longer-term goals, and to strengthen their relationships with referral agencies which are able to address the underlying drivers that lead to people being referred to food banks.

*“Receiving funding through the Strategic Resources grant has given us the staff capacity to develop a strategic plan for our work over the next few years, focusing on how we can develop our service and our local partnerships to reduce the need for our food bank in the long term”.*

**Wigtownshire Foodbank**

## VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT GRANT

So much of what our network can achieve depends on the volunteers who give their time and skills in food banks across the network. This grant funds volunteer managers, provides training for volunteers, and is used to buy equipment such as laptops and tablets to support them in their role. Food banks have also used the grants for volunteer recognition initiatives in appreciation of the incredible commitment, resilience and agility of food bank volunteers over the pandemic.

Wadebridge and Liskeard & Looe food banks in Cornwall, with the help of a grant from the Trussell Trust and the European Social Fund, have started to run an accredited course for 45 of their volunteers. Richard Curnow, the Chair of Wadebridge Foodbank, says;

*“Volunteer development is one of the keys to the delivery of our Strategic Plan. Considering the predicted future economic conditions in our communities, we particularly need to tackle the issues of accessing services and ensuring financial inclusion for people in rural areas. We can help achieve this by increasing our outreach activity through trained volunteers, some of whom have experienced using the kind of advice that will be provided as a result of the training”.*

Our grants programme will continue to support food banks in 2022/23, and we have launched an emergency fund to help food banks which are themselves struggling with the cost of living crisis, for example as a result of higher utility bills.



## FINANCIAL INCLUSION

It is estimated that over £15 billion of benefits remains unclaimed each year<sup>10</sup>. Our financial inclusion work seeks to address the underlying causes of hardship by providing people with high-quality and timely support to help them to maximise their incomes. This can be helping people to access benefits or other sources of income, making debt repayments more affordable, and addressing wider factors that force people to use food banks.

**38%**  
of food banks in our  
network now offer  
financial inclusion  
services

This has increased from  
**28%**  
in 2020/21



OVER  
**£19M**  
was committed to food  
banks to carry out financial  
inclusion work

This represents almost  
**2/3**  
of our total grant  
expenditure

In the last quarter of the year  
(January – March 2022), figures  
from the first group of food banks  
to start reporting showed they  
worked with

**2,145**  
PEOPLE 

NEARLY  
**£2M**  
of financial gains were  
identified for over half of them,  
averaging at **£1,358** per person

Helping people to get the benefits to which they are entitled or other forms of income can reduce the likelihood of their needing to visit a food bank, having significant effects on their mental and physical health, which we know are two of the main underlying drivers of food bank use.



# HELP THROUGH HARDSHIP HELPLINE

We joined forces with Citizens Advice to establish the Help through Hardship helpline in April 2020, at the start of the pandemic. This partnership brings together the largest provider of free advice and the largest network of food banks in the UK to offer a helpline which provides free, personalised advice and support to help address the underlying causes of hardship, as well as a referral to a food bank if required.

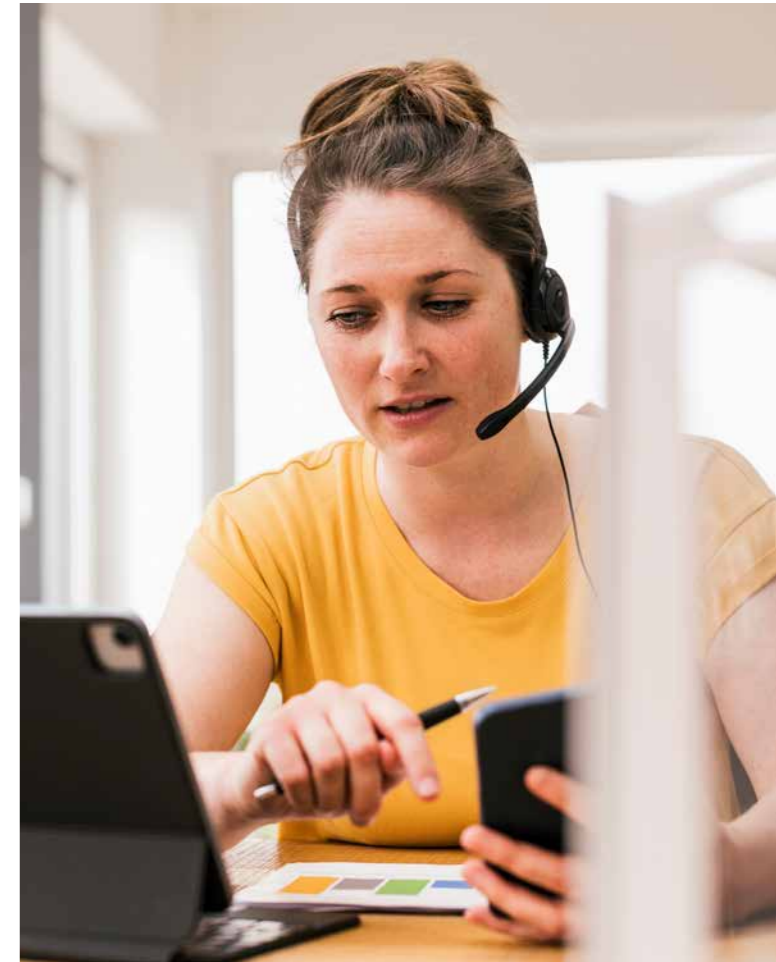


In 2021/22 as demand for the service rocketed, we trebled the number of advisers. Over the year, they handled 96,738 calls made by 36,932 people (some of whom were food bank staff or other third parties), giving advice to 31,726 people.

In order to address the underlying causes of hardship, if our advisers cannot identify income gains for callers, they direct people to specialist onward support in areas such as debt, immigration or housing. They identified £19.2 million of income gains for 5,391 people – an average of over £3,500 per person, with the highest gains going to people with a disability.

89% of callers found the advice given on how to manage or understand their income helpful and 91% were satisfied with their overall experience of the helpline.

An early evaluation of the Help through Hardship helpline showed that 1 in 2 callers described themselves as having poor mental health. This showed the link between poverty and mental health and we have since been delighted to welcome the mental health charity Mind to the Help through Hardship partnership. Seamless transfers are now taking place from the helpline to Mind's Infoline and we are currently exploring how we can further facilitate specialist mental health support for people struggling to afford the essentials at a national and a local level. Our vision is to treat people's needs holistically, offering both immediate help and longer-term support, tackling both poverty and mental health together.



Citizens Advice Wirral is working in partnership with Wirral Foodbank to deliver the Foodbank Plus project. The project helps individuals with the issues they have that lead them to need an emergency food parcel. Jeremy\* lives alone and has physical and mental health problems. He had a rent shortfall due to under occupancy and this had created rent arrears, which he was unable to repay. This was causing his mental health to become worse.

Wirral Foodbank Plus identified that he was potentially entitled to Personal Independence Payment (PIP), due to his ill health and the impact this was having on his daily living, along with potential entitlement to Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP). He was assisted to apply for both and was successful with both applications. This resulted in an award of £89.60 PIP each week, along with a backdated payment of £1,995.

He was also awarded £48.86 DHP each week, along with a backdated payment of £760 which cleared his rent arrears in full. The total financial gain was £2,755 in backdated awards and £7,199 per year from now on.

As a result, Jeremy will be able to stay in his current accommodation, with the threat of rent arrears and possible repossession action in the future removed. The worry of building up further rent arrears debt is also removed, causing him much relief. His weekly income has been increased due to the award of PIP, which means he will be able to afford food and fuel, essential to his good health. He was very grateful for our help and said, "a big weight has been lifted off my shoulders".

\* for privacy we have not used Jeremy's real name

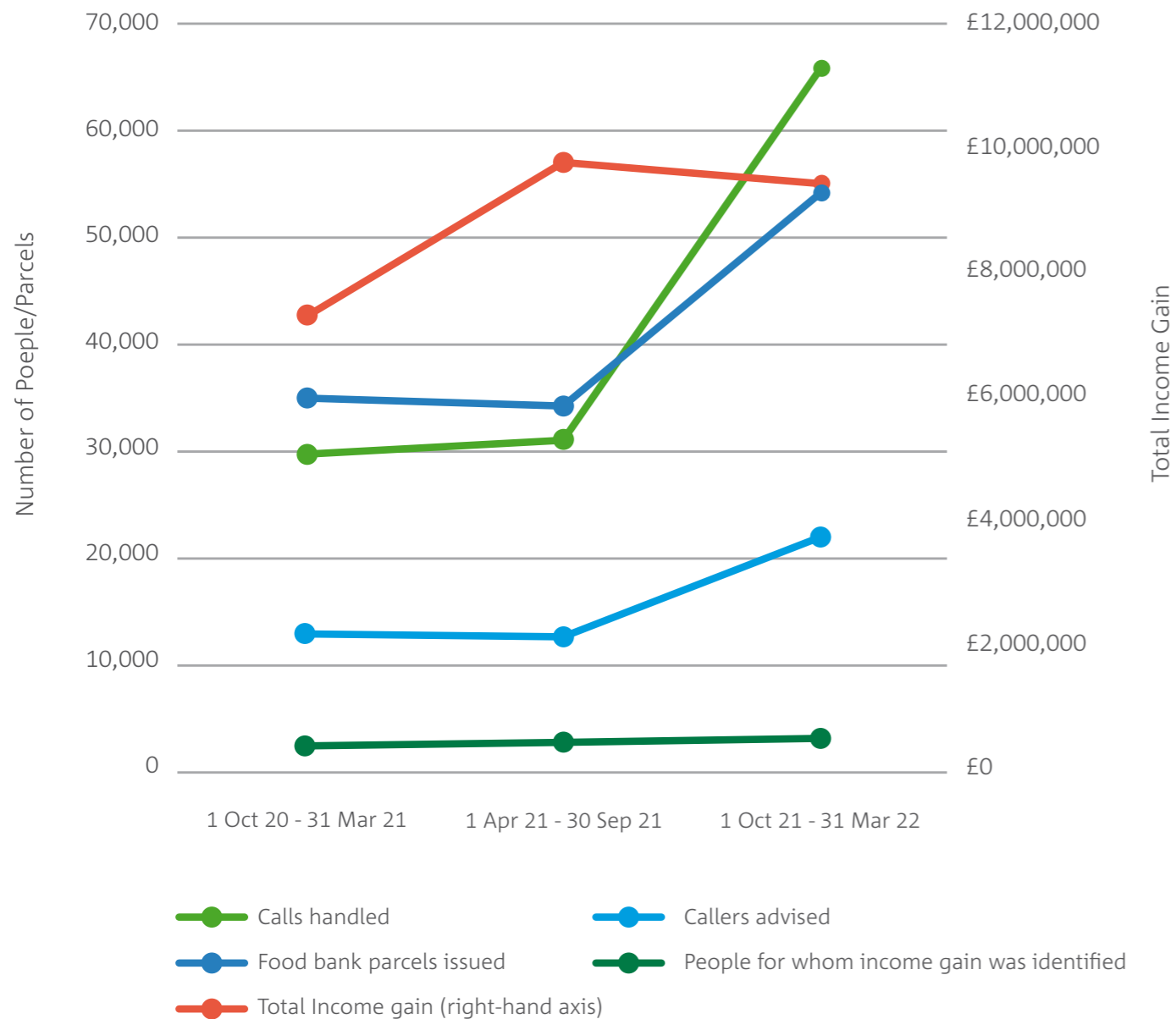


*"Breaking the link between poverty and mental health is a top priority for us at Mind. Our partnership with Citizens Advice and the Trussell Trust will help us achieve this strategic goal."*

**Paul Farmer**  
CEO, Mind

We have provided an online toolkit for food banks looking to establish their financial inclusion work and support these food banks through a UK-wide team of Financial Inclusion Managers. We have strengthened our collaboration with StepChange Debt Charity, Citizens Advice and Mind so that we are better able to refer people who come to our food banks to the advice and services that will stop them having to come back, and to gather the evidence of the causes of individual financial crisis that will influence policy makers.

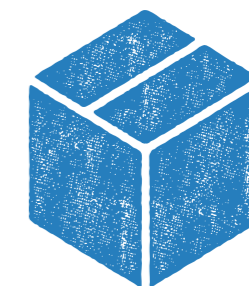
### Help Through Hardship Helpline Caller Numbers and Outcomes<sup>11</sup>



### Help Through Hardship Helpline - totals for the whole lifetime of the helpline (until 31 March 2022)



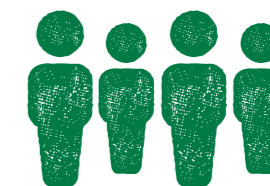
**145,811**  
Calls handled



**148,135**  
Food bank parcels issued



**46,336**  
Callers advised



**7,601**  
People for whom income gain was identified



**£3,524**  
Average income gain



**£26,788,613**  
Total income gain

<sup>11</sup> Although the helpline became operational in April 2020, income gains only began to be recorded in September 2020. To enable comparisons to be made across six-month intervals, this graph gives the figures from October 2020 onwards.

# THE PATHFINDER PROGRAMME

In 2021/22, we fully established our 'Pathfinder Programme', scaling up to 14% of the network from every area of the UK. Pathfinder is an innovation programme, with a focus on testing different approaches to reducing the need for food banks locally. Food banks who have joined the programme have committed to align their energy and resources towards strategic anti-poverty activity, and to sharing their learnings with the wider network of food banks. In response, we have established a dedicated grant fund (which enables strategic activity across a range of disciplines) and provide intensive support to Pathfinder food banks through a specialist team and a range of online and in-person training and learning events.

At Pathfinder food banks, we are exploring three kinds of innovation:

## 1. Trialling initiatives or streams of work before they are launched in the rest of the foodbank network.

Agencies who refer people to food banks are critical parts of the system in which they operate. Epsom and Ewell Foodbank recognised that there was a need to increase the quality and depth of conversation that referral agencies and food bank volunteers have with people in financial hardship. The aim is to ensure that people in hardship are connected to accessible local, financial and relational support earlier than they are currently, which can help reduce the need for the food bank and ensure that a food bank referral is made as part of a wider package of support.

Building on our existing signposting training for volunteers, the food bank recently hosted three online training sessions targeted at both referral agency front line staff and food bank centre volunteers. The sessions were an hour long, entitled 'Conversations with a purpose', and included the food bank vision, active listening, good questions to ask, and hearing from someone with lived experience about the impact that a meaningful conversation can have.

All referral agencies present were encouraged to use the "Worrying About Money" leaflet, co-produced by Epsom and Ewell Foodbank and IFAN.

More than a hundred people – two thirds of whom were from referral agencies – attended one of the three sessions. Positive feedback was received from those who took part and Epsom and Ewell Foodbank are now exploring more creative ways for these agencies to connect more effectively with each other.

## 2. Taking initiatives which are already in place at food banks in the Trussell Trust network and increasing the depth and breadth of engagement.

West Cheshire Foodbank has made some significant changes to its operations because of the input of the Beans on Toast group. This is a group of people with experience of food insecurity which was formed as part of the West Cheshire Poverty Truth Commission. Their vision is for "everyone to have the right to a decent meal of their own deciding by having access to affordable food in a dignified way".

West Cheshire have developed a checklist for dietary requirements for volunteers putting together food parcels to refer to and are offering fresh fruit and vegetables at the food bank. Their distribution centres are becoming "meeting places" so that people receiving emergency food can also get advice to get to the underlying reasons for needing to use the food bank. As a result of a grant from the Trussell Trust, West Cheshire is recruiting financial inclusion workers and is training its staff and volunteers to be able to offer financial advice.

The success of their work with Beans on Toast has encouraged West Cheshire to deepen their engagement with people who have experience of needing a food bank throughout all aspects of their work.



### 3. Combining streams of anti-poverty work recommended by our Together for Change strategy to identify synergies between approaches.

*“Pathfinders opened my mind to see what we need to do to help the most people in the best way – what we need to change, what we need to stop and what we need to start doing. It feels like there is a whole new world of opportunities opening up. Learning from the network of food banks has helped us to ‘steal’ their ideas and meld them with ours to serve our community better. We see a lot that other people won’t and until you understand your community, you won’t know what to do to change it. The data we collect told us that debt was consistently the biggest underlying driver for people coming to the food bank and, as there wasn’t an existing debt service in our community, we were free to set one up in the food bank.*”

*“But we want to end the need for our food bank, and, if we are to do so, it will have to be on the basis of good relationships. We are developing good relationships with our referral partners and, although it takes longer for them to collect data from their clients, we encourage them to do so because it’s really useful.*”

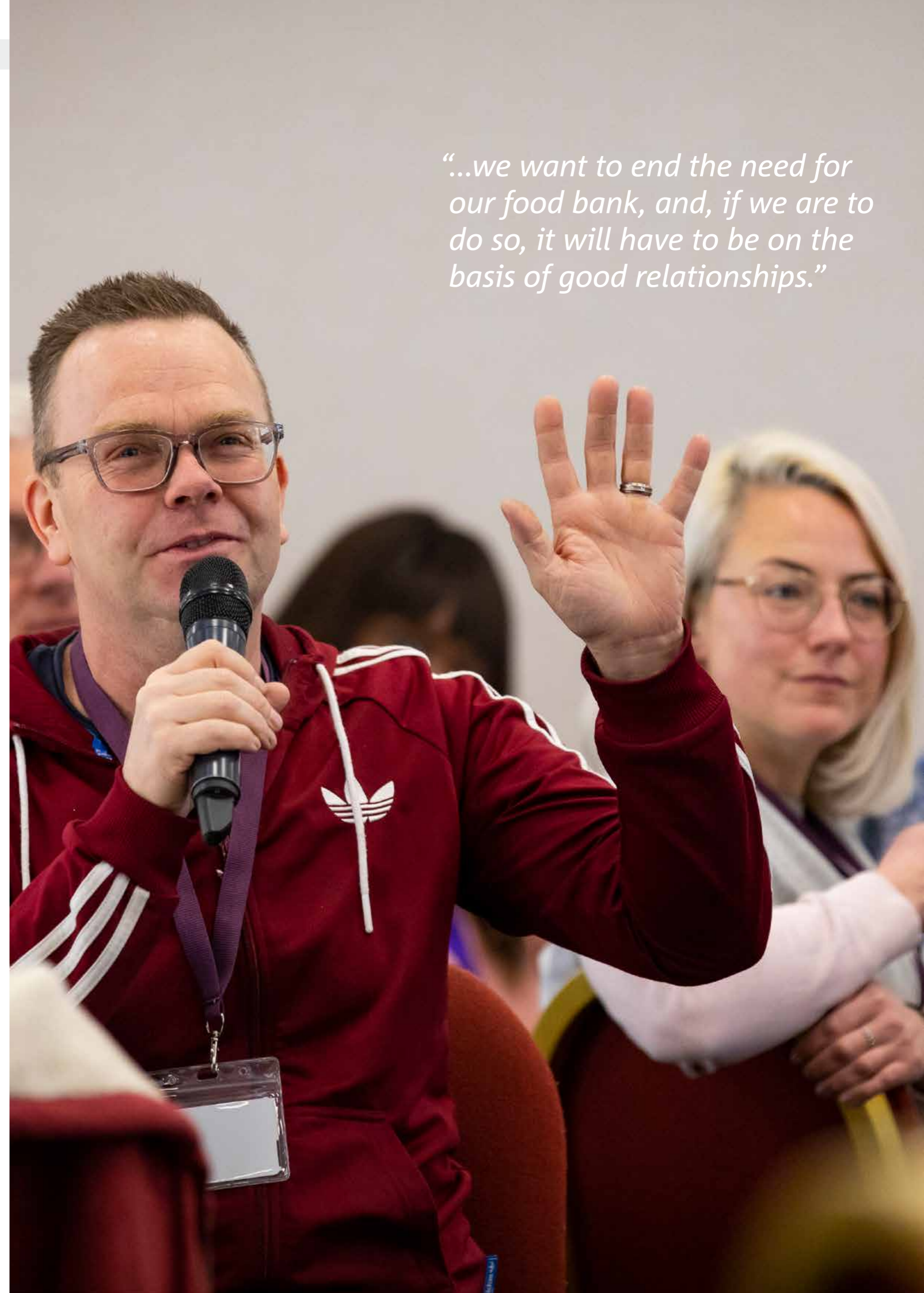
*The data gives us the evidence to approach decision-makers and explain the reasons people are coming to the food bank. We’re not just talking abstractly about what’s going wrong – we know what’s going wrong.*

*“We’re asking people who use the food bank to share their ideas and their stories with us as, although the facts and figures will be useful, stories put some meat on the bones of the data. Stories affect people’s minds because they are something we can relate to, and perhaps will change some of the judgements that we all make about people. We’re encouraging people to use these stories when they write to their MPs because when we all raise our voices together, we can change minds. It might start very small, but you don’t know what will be a catalyst to a bigger change.”*

**Miriam Jones, Carmarthen Foodbank**

The Pathfinder Programme focusses on experimentation and learning. We expect, over the coming two to three years, to identify a range of new approaches which can be tested more widely, before scaling up to achieve greater impact across the Trussell Trust network. In order to ensure that there are short-to-medium term benefits, we have also tasked each Pathfinder food bank to begin work in the three priority areas of Financial Inclusion, Referral Management and Participation. We look forward to sharing learnings from these interventions in our 22/23 Impact Report.

*“...we want to end the need for our food bank, and, if we are to do so, it will have to be on the basis of good relationships.”*





## VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT



**36,000**

give their time and expertise to the Trussell Trust and our food bank network<sup>12</sup>



**32%**

have experience of poverty or needing a food bank<sup>13</sup>

Our Volunteer Development Programme is increasing the skills and opportunities of our volunteers. For the 30,000 people who volunteer in food banks in our network, we are training the food bank staff who manage them, have provided inductions for new volunteers, established an online volunteer management system, Assemble, and run a project to amplify the voice of volunteers in our work and to appreciate their incredible contribution. 35% of the food banks in our network are now using Assemble.

This system has logged 275,016 hours worked by volunteers, meaning that the actual contribution made by volunteers across the whole network is far higher than this, with the equivalent financial resource they provide running into many millions of pounds. 500 staff members of our corporate partners volunteer their time and expertise at food banks in our network.

**96%**

of volunteers think their contribution is valued by the food bank<sup>14</sup>

**85%**

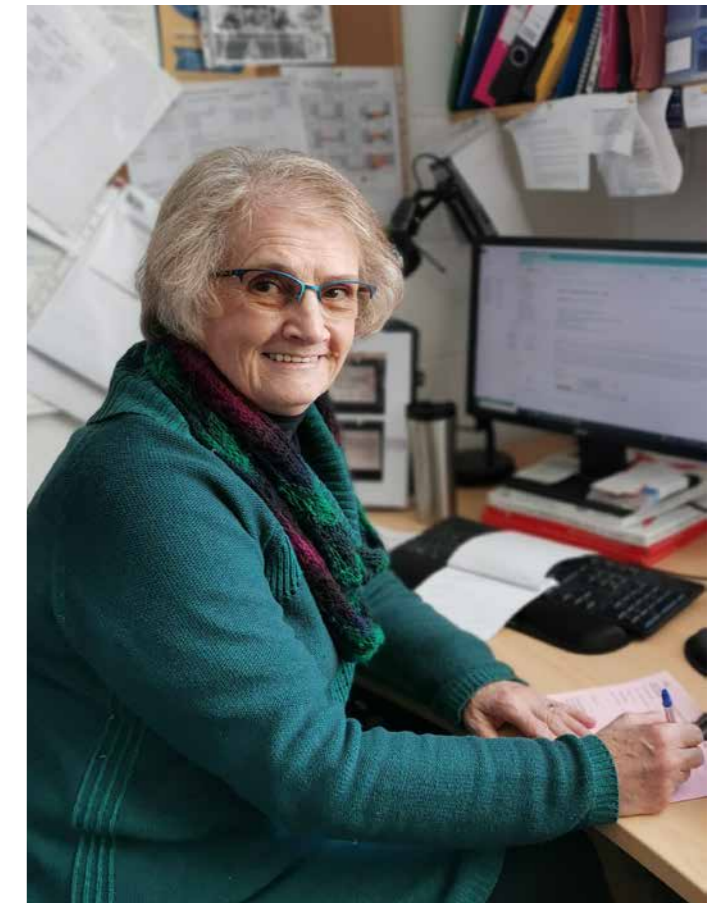
of volunteers think that the food bank cares about their wellbeing

**92%**

of volunteers would recommend the food bank as a great place to volunteer

**92%**

of volunteers feel they are making a difference to other people



<sup>12</sup> A total of 36,000 volunteers support our work, of which 30,000 are in food banks and 6,000 are “micro-volunteers”, primarily supporting our work on social media.

<sup>13</sup> The Trussell Trust Change Makers Survey 2022: An online survey of 205 staff and 1,220 volunteers from food banks in the Trussell Trust’s network. Fieldwork was conducted 24 February to 25 March 2022. 32% of respondents chose one or more of the following options: “I have experience of needing to rely on benefits (social security)”; “I have direct experience of living in poverty”; “I have personally been referred to a food bank in the last 12 months”; “I have personally been referred to a food bank more than 12 months ago”.

<sup>14</sup> The Trussell Trust Change Makers Survey 2022: An online survey of 205 staff and 1,220 volunteers from food banks in the Trussell Trust’s network. Fieldwork was conducted 24 February to 25 March 2022.



# CHANGING POLICY

Our Changing Policy work gathers robust evidence to drive policy change so that everyone can afford the essentials.

Using the evidence gathered through our food bank network, we will:

This year, our impact has been:



Build **strong cross-party support** for social and economic policies that protect households from destitution

**29**  
parliamentarians

from four political parties took part in events organised by the APPG on Ending the Need for Food Banks



See people with lived experience of poverty **playing an ongoing part in informing national and local policies** to alleviate destitution

**48**  
people with lived experience of poverty

led our *Debt to Government, Deductions and Destitution* research to identify how to stem the growing tide of problem debt to government

## COMMITMENT BY THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

**25,000**

Following specific calls from our supporters as part of the Hunger Free Future campaign in advance of the elections to the Scottish Parliament in May 2021, First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, committed the Scottish Government to set out a plan to end the need for food banks within the first year of the new parliament

25,000 people wrote to their MPs urging them to not cut Universal Credit by £20 a week as part of the Keep the Lifeline campaign. Although the UK government went ahead with the cut, our campaigning alongside the broader anti-poverty sector meant a £500m Household Support Fund was created, plus the taper rate at which Universal Credit is withdrawn as claimants' earning increase was reduced, putting more money in the pockets of people on low incomes.

Ensure that the **benefits system provides timely and sufficient financial support**, and is available to all households who need it



Our policy work takes place across the whole of the UK. We submit evidence to select committees in Westminster, act as the Secretariat for the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Ending the Need for Food Banks, speak to politicians in parliaments and assemblies in every nation of the UK, support food banks to lobby their local MPs and councils, and encourage our supporters to contact their own MPs.

Sarah Godfrey has volunteered at Southend Foodbank since 2018, using her skills and professional experience in all aspects of the food bank's work.

*"I have a background in public health," explained Sarah, "and have worked on health promotions and social epidemiology, so understand how food poverty is connected."*

Sarah is deaf and says this hasn't stopped her from volunteering: *"Southend Foodbank is ever so inclusive, and we work so well as a team helping out wherever there is a need."*

As part of the Challenge Poverty Week campaign in October 2021, local council members and MPs were invited to the food bank to help them learn more about their work and the growing need for support in the area. Sarah explained why these kind of connections are important for working towards a future where

nobody has to turn to a charity to get by:

*"We particularly focussed on local issues which is essential for councillors for when they are voting and making decisions that impact Southend. Throughout the warehouse we had posters attached to the shelves. On one side were key stats and research findings from the Trussell Trust, which were pertinent to the local councillors."*

*On the other side were statements and examples of why people visit us. The event was a great success and it was good to see such cross-party engagement; hopefully we were not only able to show them the scale of the problem on their doorstep, but also provide hope and encouragement about what we are doing to help. Nearly all those that attended the event asked if they could come back again and bring colleagues to view the display."*



## PARLIAMENTARY ACTIVITY

In the Houses of Parliament in Westminster, staff from the Trussell Trust met with 22 MPs from five different political parties and four Peers, including two crossbench Peers. We met four times with government ministers and ten times with opposition frontbench spokespeople or shadow ministers. Although not important in and of itself, tracking when "the Trussell Trust" and the food bank network is mentioned helps us to assess the impact of our research and meetings with parliamentarians. Last year, we were mentioned 74 times in the House of Commons (compared to 54 times in the previous year) and 16 times in the House of Lords.

We want parliamentarians to raise awareness and understanding of food bank need, but, more importantly, to call for changes to the benefit system and for a society where food banks are no longer needed.

In Scotland, we worked with food banks and supporters in the run up to elections to the Scottish Parliament in May 2021. Glasgow Southeast and Glasgow Southwest

food banks organised a hustings with their local candidates, which included the First Minister and leader of the Scottish National Party, Nicola Sturgeon, and leader of the Scottish Labour Party, Anas Sarwar. Following these elections, the Scottish Government responded to our campaign by establishing a steering group to end the need for food banks, of which Polly Jones, our Head of Scotland, is a member. Input to the action plan to achieve this aim was sought through a public consultation, to which food banks in our network and supporters responded.

We called for better use of the Scottish Welfare Fund, especially in mitigating the impact of the five-week wait for Universal Credit and the benefit cap. We also called for the establishment of an 'advice-first' principle so that people are not referred to a food bank without being offered advice, including on benefits to which they are entitled. Lastly, we recommended there should be a new Dignity Charter which should be led by people with lived experience of poverty to establish a standard of service for people needing to access social security.

# ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON ENDING THE NEED FOR FOOD BANKS



The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Ending the Need for Food Banks was established in December 2020 to bring together parliamentarians of all parties from both Houses of Parliament with an interest in and commitment to ending the need for food banks.

Now in its second year, the APPG discusses the solutions that are needed to end the need for food banks, as well as make recommendations to the relevant government departments to achieve this shared vision.

The most popular event of the year – with more than 170 attendees, including 20 parliamentarians from four political parties – was an expert panel discussion exploring the findings of the Trussell Trust’s State of Hunger report. Speakers were Baroness Louise Casey (crossbench peer and former government advisor on social policy), Baroness Philippa Stroud (Conservative peer and Chief Executive of the Legatum Institute), Helen Barnard (Director of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation), as well as a speaker with lived experience of poverty.

We put the voices and experiences of the food bank network at the forefront of all the APPG’s work. Food banks in our network provide speakers for APPG events and regularly attend meetings, providing insightful questions and contributions. Our Debt to Government, Deduction and Destitution research (see below) was led by people with lived experience of poverty, and, in the last year, half of our APPG meetings have included at least one speaker who has lived experience of poverty.

Our focus with the APPG in this coming year will be its inquiry into the effectiveness of emergency food and cash as responses to destitution. More information can be found above in the section on cash first approaches (see page 13).



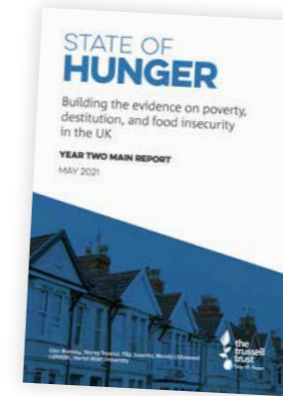
# POLICY AND RESEARCH TIMELINE

## April 2021:

We released our end of year statistics showing that a record 2.5 million emergency food parcels were provided to people from April 2020 to March 2021 by food banks in our network.

## May 2021:

We published State of Hunger 2021, the latest part of the largest ever study into hunger and food bank use in the UK. Carried out by researchers at Heriot-Watt University, this research is helping us to understand the scale of hunger and destitution in the UK and learn how we can work together to build a future where we can all be free from hunger. Key findings include:



**95%**

of people referred to food banks in our network in early 2020 **were destitute, meaning they were unable to afford to eat or stay warm and dry.**

**62%**

of working age people referred to food banks in our network in early 2020 **were disabled - three times the rate in the general working age population.**

## May 2021:

We discussed the design and implementation of the Covid Local Support Grant with ministers and officials in advance of the announcement in May of an additional £160m for households most affected by the pandemic.

## June 2021:

The Scottish Affairs Select Committee published its inquiry into welfare reform in Scotland, citing evidence submitted by the Trussell Trust.

## September 2021:

A new £500m Household Support Fund was announced. This contained an explicit emphasis on helping vulnerable households to afford the essentials. We advocated a lessening of the restrictions associated with this fund, so that it could be better targeted at people in greatest need.



## October 2021:

We organised a public event, jointly with IFAN, on ending the need for emergency food aid in Scotland. Other speakers represented FareShare, the Scottish Pantry Network and Citizens Advice Scotland, and this event was the first time that these organisations had spoken alongside each other publicly.

## November 2021:

We released our mid-year statistics, showing that, between 1 April 2021 and 30 September 2021, food banks in our network distributed 5,100 emergency food parcels a day to people facing hardship, which was an increase of 11% compared to the same period in 2019.

## February 2022:

We released Debt to Government, Deductions and Destitution, a participatory research report exploring the experiences of people with government debt, its impact, and ways towards a fairer approach. See below for more details.

## March 2022:

Tackling Child Poverty and Destitution was released. This report, commissioned by the Trussell Trust in conjunction with Save the Children and authored by the IPPR Scotland, found the new Scottish Child Payment has not yet reduced the need for food banks, but could if it were increased. It also found the Scottish Welfare Fund to be an essential part of the social security safety net for people experiencing destitution. The findings were presented at a roundtable of MSPs, with the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government giving a keynote speech.

**March 2022:** We published The True Cost of Living which shares findings on the rising price of essentials on people receiving Universal Credit, highlighting why the government must urgently uprate benefits in line with inflation.

In this coming year, we will continue to highlight the need for investment in our social security system so that it protects people from destitution and having to use food banks during the cost of living crisis and beyond. We will build on the findings of our Debt to Government, Deductions and Destitution report to advocate a fairer system for the repayment of debts to the government by people claiming benefits, so that these repayments do not push people into destitution. Following the success of our calls to invest in local welfare funding, we will push for long-term funding with clear standards to local authorities to ensure effective and consistent support is available when needed.

*‘Everyone should be able to afford the essentials, and we are committed to ensuring that is the case.’*  
Rishi Sunak, Chancellor of the Exchequer



# DEBT TO GOVERNMENT, DEDUCTIONS AND DESTITUTION

95% of people who need to use a food bank are not able to afford the essentials,<sup>15</sup> and almost half of all households arriving at food banks during the pandemic were repaying debts to the UK government.<sup>16</sup> We wanted to carry out research with the aim of reducing the burden of government debt on people on the lowest incomes, and therefore reducing the need for food banks in the UK.

Driven by our commitment to hearing the voices of people with lived experience of poverty, we worked with a group of 48 individuals – some of whom were dealing with multiple debts and had lived much of their lives in receipt of benefits – asking for their suggestions at regular points in the research to shape subsequent stages. Our research found that:

## 1. The design of the social security system sets people up to fail

*“I think lots of improvements need to be made in the way they deal with overpayments and debts. Firstly, they need to give people warning before deducting money as quite often they start deducting the money before they even tell you about the debt. They hadn’t even written to me or told me about the debt and went ahead and deducted £168 out of my benefit in one month. This was completely unexpected leaving us in severe hardship.”*  
– Erin

## 2. Government debt can cause destitution, meaning people are unable to afford the essentials we all need to eat, stay warm and dry and keep clean.

## 3. The mental health impact of debt – particularly when caused by the government, which many hope would be a source of support - cannot be underestimated.

*“It’s like, remember as a child being on a trampoline and one of the kids falls down – but the other kids won’t let you get back up? They’re all bouncing and you keep getting bounced around, knocked, you can see where the floor is but it keeps on moving. Whatever you do you can’t get back up - everyone constantly pushing you down.”* – Nathan

## 4. The government is often seen to be a less responsible lender than the private sector.

## 5. A punitive approach to collection undermines the ability of the Department of Work and Pensions to recoup payments and to move people into work.

The report was launched at a joint meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Groups on Ending the Need for Food Banks and on Personal Debt and Finance, supported by StepChange Debt Charity. Speakers included members of the Conservative Party, Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats and two members of the research project who spoke movingly about their personal experiences with government debt and the devastating impacts this has had on their lives, including their physical and mental health.

Jonathan Ashworth, Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, committed a future Labour Government to ending the need for food banks. His remarks were also very supportive of the report’s recommendations including dealing with the five-week wait as “an immediate priority” and ensuring people with lived experience were “at the heart” of re-designing the system.

We believe it should be up to people most affected to determine what a ‘fairer’ system looks like and will use the lessons we have learnt from this research in future participative policy development towards a benefits system that provides timely and sufficient financial support and is available to all households that need it.



<sup>15</sup> <https://www.trusselltrust.org/state-of-hunger/>  
<sup>16</sup> <https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/12/Lift-the-burden-Dec-20.pdf>



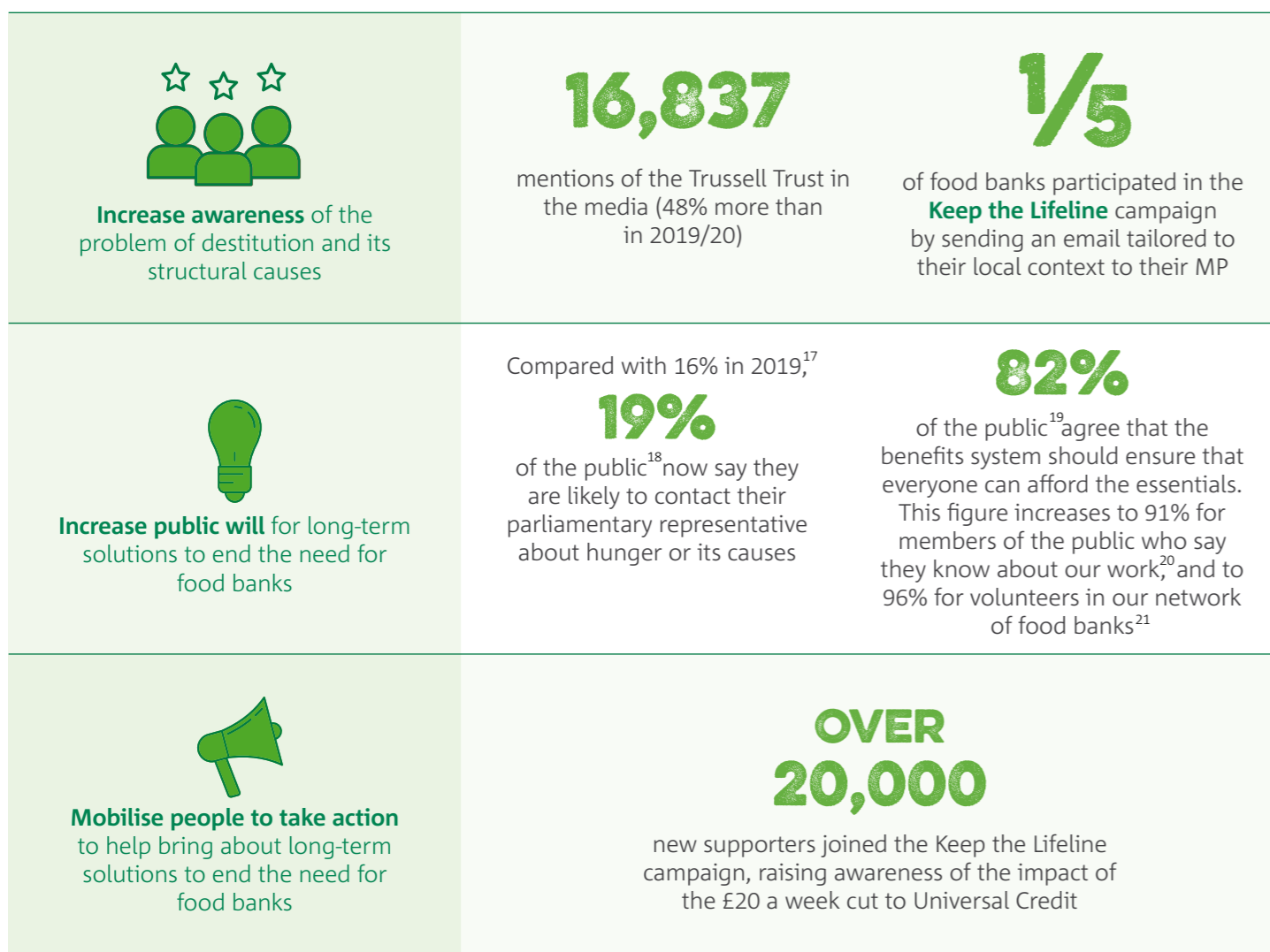
# CHANGING MINDS

Our Changing Minds work aims at building greater public will for a society where no one needs to use a food bank

We know that lasting social change happens when a critical mass thinks and acts differently about an issue. Our Changing Minds work is about influencing attitudes and beliefs about UK poverty, and building support for solutions

To achieve this we will:

This year, our impact has been:



In their communities, food bank staff and volunteers are talking in schools and churches. They are raising the profile of hunger and poverty, helping to create understanding of the main drivers of food bank use, and of ending the need for food banks with local media and their elected political representatives. Nationwide, we are running campaigns such as Impossible Decisions which sought to build empathy for people who are facing devastating decisions caused by financial hardship, such as whether to buy food or pay an essential household bill. Increasingly we are listening to and amplifying the voices of people who have experience of living in poverty.

We know that over eight in ten people in the UK share our view that ensuring everyone has enough money for basic needs should be a high priority for society, and this rises to over nine in ten amongst members of the public who say they know about our work. Over eight in ten people also believe that it is the benefits systems that should be ensuring that everyone can afford the essentials and a similar (and growing) number of people believe that it is failing to meet this expectation. We are encouraged that nearly half of the public would be willing to pay more in tax to fund programmes designed to reduce poverty and that almost three quarters of people share our belief that food banks should not be needed in the UK.

The volunteers who give their time to food banks in our network are very strongly supportive of our view that we need a benefits system that provides sufficient financial support so that everyone can afford the essentials, and

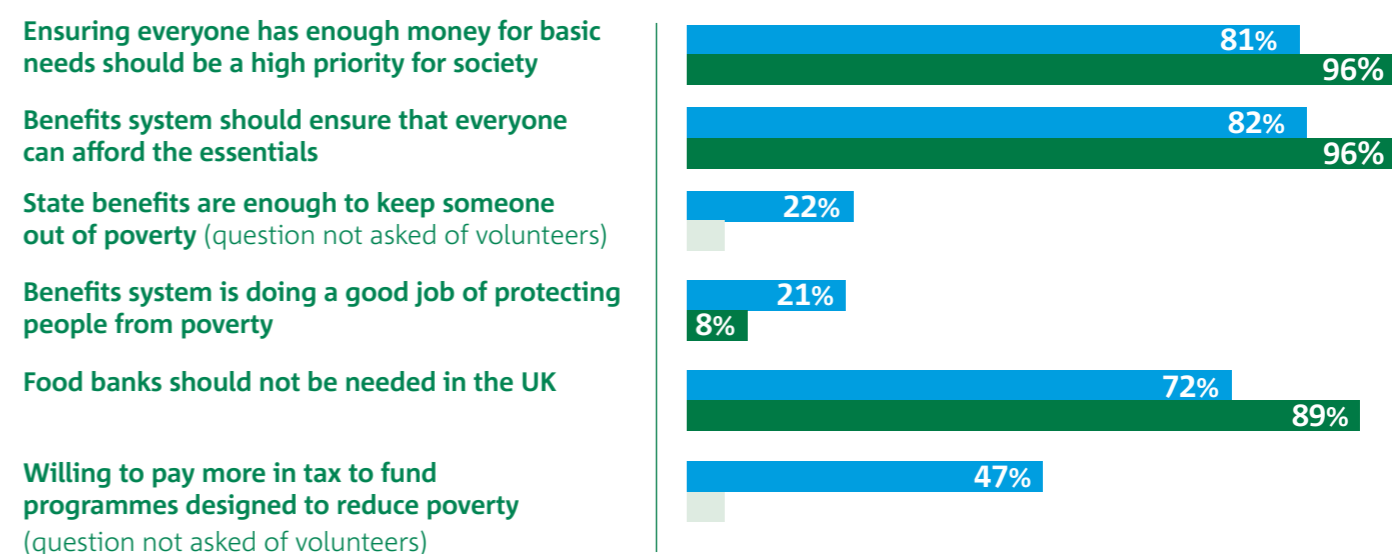


After retiring as a teacher, Jane Baird has been the schools' coordinator at the Forest Foodbank, a volunteer role she has held for the past three years.

*"Having worked in schools for the whole of my career, when I took retirement I wanted to be involved with our local food bank and to use my experience in education. It is sad that there is such a need for food banks in our area and it is really important that children and young people understand why they exist and how they work – they are our advocates for the future"*

of our vision of ending the need for food banks in the UK. Increasingly we are supporting, equipping and empowering this motivated group of people to change minds across the UK.

### Comparing attitudes of food bank volunteers with the general public



■ General public<sup>22</sup> ■ Volunteers in our network of food banks<sup>23</sup>

17 YouGov Attitudinal Survey 2019: An online survey of 12,103 respondents aged 16+ in Britain, weighted to be representative of the population.  
 18 YouGov Attitudinal Survey 2021: An online survey of 2,011 respondents aged 16+ in Britain, weighted to be representative of the population. Fieldwork was conducted 11 to 24 August 2021.  
 19 YouGov Attitudinal Survey 2021: An online survey of 2,011 respondents aged 16+ in Britain, weighted to be representative of the population. Fieldwork was conducted 11 to 24 August 2021.  
 20 YouGov Attitudinal Survey 2021: An online survey of 2,011 respondents aged 16+ in Britain, weighted to be representative of the population. Fieldwork was conducted 11 to 24 August 2021.  
 21 The Trussell Trust Change Makers Survey 2022: An online survey of 205 staff and 1,220 volunteers from food banks in the Trussell Trust's network. Fieldwork was conducted 24 February to 25 March 2022.

22 YouGov Attitudinal Survey 2021: An online survey of 2,011 respondents aged 16+ in Britain, weighted to be representative of the population. Fieldwork was conducted 11 to 24 August 2021.  
 23 The Trussell Trust Change Makers Survey 2022: An online survey of 205 staff and 1,220 volunteers from food banks in the Trussell Trust's network. Fieldwork was conducted 24 February to 25 March 2022.

# MEDIA OVERVIEW

The aim of our media work is to broaden and deepen our engagement with key audiences to build public will and encourage people to take action to end the need for food banks in the UK.

Through our media activity we build understanding of the drivers of hunger and poverty and the underlying issues that push people towards needing to use a food bank. Over the course of the year, the Trussell Trust was mentioned 16,837 times in broadcast, online and press media, which is 48% higher than in 2019/20.

**APR 2021** We released statistics showing that a record 2.5 million emergency food parcels were provided to people from April 2020 to March 2021 by food banks in our network. In the nine days after publishing, there were 1,125 pieces of coverage, equating to a total reach of over 60 million people. The story was featured in 13 printed pieces in UK national newspapers and 35 printed pieces in UK key regional papers such as the [Guardian](#).

**DEC 2021** The Duke and Duchess of Cornwall [visited Wandsworth Foodbank](#) in London, meeting staff and volunteers while taking a look at the emergency food parcels provided to people in hardship over Christmas.



**MAY 2021** We launched State of Hunger 2021, the latest part of the largest ever study into hunger and food bank use in the UK. The story gained almost 500 pieces of coverage in the nine days after publishing including on Channel 4 news.



CEO Emma Revie's interview with the [Guardian](#) was on the front page of the newspaper. She talked about the need for the benefits system to keep up with costs and the resilience of the food bank network during the pandemic.

**CHRISTMAS 2021** LadBaby - with help from [Sir Elton John](#) and Ed Sheeran - reached a [record-breaking fourth consecutive Christmas number one](#) with [all proceeds from the single going towards the Trussell Trust](#).



**SEP 2021** We launched our *Keep the Lifeline* campaign (see page 36) to influence the government not to cut the £20 a week increase to Universal Credit. The campaign received 216 mentions in broadcast media alone, including LBC, Virgin Radio, [iNews](#) and various BBC Stations.



Anoosh Chakelian from the [New Statesman](#), visited Hillingdon Foodbank and reported on the impact of the £20 a week cut to Universal Credit and what it would mean for people who can't afford the essentials.

**FEB 2022** Garry Lemon, Director of Policy, Research and Impact, [appeared on Channel 4 News](#) to advocate the uprating of benefits in line with inflation and a social security system that ensures everyone can afford the essentials.

**OCT 2021** BBC Radio 2's Jeremy Vine show discussed the cut to Universal Credit and featured an interview with Anna - a woman with lived experience of poverty.

**NOV 2021** We released our mid-year statistics, showing that, between 1 April 2021 and 30 September 2021, food banks in our network distributed 5,100 emergency food parcels a day to people facing hardship, which was an increase of 11% compared to the same period in 2019. [We voiced concerns](#) about a likely increase in need for support from food banks in the following six months.

**MAR 2022** Our research with people directly experiencing issues with the benefits system, *Debt to Government, Deductions and Destitution*, was released. Our research participants, who have lived experience of financial hardship – John, Dee and Rosa – featured in a range of news pieces, including [BBC News](#), You and Yours on Radio 4 and BBC Scotland.

*Tackling Child Poverty and Destitution*, commissioned by the Trussell Trust in conjunction with Save the Children and authored by the IPPR Scotland, was released. Examining aspects of the social security system in Scotland, the report is featured in The Herald and STV.



Our media work will continue to increase the visibility of our research and policy campaigns towards us being a leading voice in the anti-poverty conversation. We will expand the pool of people that are heard in the media, including people working or volunteering at food banks and people with lived experience of poverty, alongside key influencers across the church, business and celebrity sectors.



## CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHT: KEEP THE LIFELINE

Before the Budget in Spring 2021, we successfully campaigned to extend the £20 weekly uplift to Universal Credit brought in at the start of the pandemic. Keep the Lifeline was a campaign to make this increase permanent. Before the campaign was launched, our research revealed the devastating impact that cutting this amount would have on people on low incomes like Sharon:

*“This would be a huge chunk of money. It's already hard to pay for the gas and the electricity, the water bill and then eat. I hardly go out as the bus fare is expensive; it's £3.10 to go to town. I try to shop for yellow stickers as much as I can. But it's difficult. This will drive me into more poverty.”*

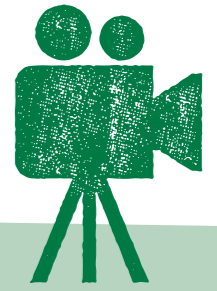
To raise awareness of the need for a social security system that means people can afford the essentials, we put the expertise of our policy and research work, the weight of our supporters' voices, the power of stories of people with lived experience of poverty, and the credibility of the food bank network behind a coalition of over 100 charities, faith groups, academic organisations and business groups.



**25,000**  
people wrote to  
their MP



**20,626**  
new supporters joined the  
campaign for change



**771**  
media mentions



Nearly **2m**  
social media impressions



**1/5**  
of food banks participated in  
the Keep the Lifeline campaign  
by sending an email tailored to  
show their data to their MP



**55**  
mentions of food banks in  
the UK parliament

This is what some of those who joined the campaign said was their reason for doing so:

*“I barely scrape by to feed my children, pay my bills and get them the essentials they so desperately need. The £20 uplift being cut means I will now have to choose between my kids eating and the basics they need for school etc.”*

*“When my husband and I got made redundant at the same time, we were on Universal Credit and it was tiny and not enough. The thought of them reducing it for people is horrifying and £20 a week was pretty much 3/4 of our weekly food shop. This will leave people desperate.”*

*“As a food bank volunteer, I see how difficult it can be for people on benefits, and especially those in low paid jobs, to pay all the essential bills and feed and clothe themselves and their families. The £20 top up can make the difference between having just enough and falling into debt. I feel strongly that taking away this extra money at the moment will lead to desperation for many and be detrimental to the mental health of many more people.”*

Although the campaign was unsuccessful in preventing what the Joseph Rowntree Foundation described as “the biggest overnight cut to the basic rate of social security since the foundation of the modern welfare state”,<sup>24</sup> we won support for our policy aims across all political parties. The UK government announced a £500m Household Support Fund and the taper rate at which Universal Credit is withdrawn as claimants' earnings increase was reduced. By demonstrating public support for investment in social security, we paved the way to future campaigning for the UK government to provide targeted support for people on the lowest incomes.

# CHURCHES AND THE TRUSSELL TRUST

Over 12,000 churches are part of our movement, generously providing venues, volunteers, leadership, donations and more to our network of food banks. More than 300 church leaders took part in a series of breakfasts between April and June 2021 to explore our vision of ending the need for food banks.

Churches are vital to our campaigning and fundraising so we produced resources designed specifically for them as part of our Keep the Lifeline campaign and our Tea for Trussell fundraising event.

Our CEO, Emma Revie, led a seminar at New Wine and we featured in the communion service at the Greenbelt festival.



# ORGANISING AND LOCAL MOBILISATION

As well as our food bank network coming together as part of national campaigns, they bring about change in their own communities. Our new Organising Programme supports food banks to organise, influence, and campaign for change locally. We provide a package of grant funding, training, and ongoing support to give food banks the capacity, skills, and resources to identify local issues, develop influencing strategies and campaign to make change happen to address the underlying drivers of hardship. 15 Local Organisers have started their training, with 45 more to join them during 2022/23.

Arianne Clarke, Influencing and Partnerships Manager of Compassion Acts in Southport, is one of those taking part in the training:

*“The training has been extremely informative and interesting, but perhaps even more useful and enjoyable has been the chance to get to know the other food banks enrolled in the project. The sense of shared passion, knowledge and experience has been truly inspirational.”*

Arianne is involved in the “Going Upstream” element of Compassion Acts’ strategy, which focuses on what causes financial hardship and what can be done to prevent it, including through raising awareness that poverty can and does affect people from all walks of life. Compassion Acts publishes statistics on the scale and causes of poverty. Arianne says,

*“The more people who understand the challenges faced by everyday people, the more likely it is that changes will come. By having more frequent and open conversations about poverty, its causes and possible solutions, we are building a movement of people who understand the issues and collectively are motivated to address them.”*

We see this aspect of our work of understanding and addressing the reasons why people need to come to the food bank as crucial to ending the need for them. As the food bank team in Gateshead say,

*“The real challenge is how do we change the system. It is easy to get focussed on operations – on getting things to run more smoothly – but we need to be more ambitious than that. We developed a shared referral process - trying to work more closely between agencies so as people didn’t need to keep on having to share the same story repeatedly - but we need those in authority to understand why people end up having to come to food banks so regularly and change the circumstances for people. It has to be about understanding the barriers that keep people in poverty.”*



# INFLUENCERS

Over the last year we've worked with a range of high-profile supporters to help build public will for a future without the need for food banks. By tapping into their reach and influence we can engage their audiences to think about the issues of hunger and poverty more deeply.

## LadBaby, social media stars

Mark and Roxanne Hoyle are dedicated supporters of the Trussell Trust, using their social media channels of over 12 million followers to help raise awareness of the drivers of food bank use and build a public will for a future without the need for food banks.

This year's Christmas Number 1 single was their biggest campaign yet, including the help from Sir Elton John and Ed Sheeran on the track as well as an exclusive food bank choir version of the song. Mark and Roxanne were able to embed food banks into the heart of the campaign and work alongside people with lived experience of poverty to build greater empathy and understanding of hunger and poverty in the UK.



## Jack Monroe, anti-poverty campaigner and author

Jack Monroe has been an influential voice in the anti-poverty sector and a dedicated supporter of the Trussell Trust for many years. Jack speaks with real power and authenticity about the need for food banks and often uses her platform and voice to campaign for change to ensure everyone can afford the essentials in life.

Jack has been a very generous supporter of our work and continues to raise considerable amounts of money to support food banks in our network. On top of fundraising, Jack's ability to increase awareness of the cost of living crisis was invaluable. In January her tweet thread on the stark reality of the rise in cost of living and the effect it is having on people already facing hardship was viewed by over 10 million people. Her reach via social media is incredible and results in major coverage across national media. Thanks to Jack's campaigning, large retailers made changes to increase the accessibility of their value products.



## Levi Roots, television personality and businessman

Levi Roots is an active supporter of the work of the Trussell Trust. He has a strong personal connection to our cause, making him an incredibly authentic messenger when speaking out about hunger and poverty in the UK. The businessman and author, who rose to fame on Dragons' Den, volunteered at his local food bank in Brixton to support the centre's work and [raise awareness of our Keep the Lifeline campaign](#). He says,

*"If we all shout with one voice, we can make change happen and that is why I want to support the Trussell Trust's work, to say enough is enough. The government needs to support people from being pushed deeper into poverty."*



## The Reverend Canon Kate Bottley, priest, radio host, presenter and reality star

Reverend Kate Bottley has been a supporter of our work for the last few years and was able to use her expert presenting skills to support our BBC Lifeline appeal which raised over £20,000. Her roots in the Christian faith and passion for supporting people facing hunger make her the perfect spokesperson for our cause. She says,

*"For people living in poverty, the challenges they face each day are unprecedented. People shouldn't be struggling to afford the absolute essentials in the UK – like food, clothing and heating – but more and more are being left with no option but to use a food bank. If ever we needed to reflect on what is happening around us, it's now."*



## Glenn Tilbrook, musician

Squeeze frontman, Glenn Tilbrook, offered food banks within the Trussell Trust network the opportunity to raise funds, as well as collect food donations, on his recent solo tour across the UK. Glenn has supported the Trussell Trust for many years, encouraging food and monetary donations on previous solo and Squeeze tours, as well as also providing providing a platform for food banks to showcase their vital work within their local community to people who attend his shows.



# LOOKING AHEAD

The last five years have seen a huge increase in the number of emergency food parcels given out by food banks in our network. Although we hope that the disruption caused by the pandemic reduces in this next year, we are already seeing the devastating impact that the cost of living crisis is having on people with the lowest incomes. Just as food banks responded incredibly to the pandemic, we know that they will respond to this next crisis.

*“Recently, a paramedic came to us; after paying the rent, council tax and other bills, his wage left him with only a few pounds each week to buy essentials. Rent is so expensive in our area and yet his basic wage is deemed too high to be eligible for housing benefit, the discrepancy is outrageous. It is 2022, and our key workers, the ones who we stood on our doorsteps and clapped for at the start of the pandemic, the ones who risked their lives for us, are now having to visit food banks.”*

**Esther Hurwood, Project Manager, Swale Foodbank**

Over the next year, our commitment to providing emergency food and support to everyone who needs it will remain, as we continue to work towards ending the need for food banks in the UK. We are looking forward to seeing the impact that the following will have:

## Hunger in the UK

Hunger in the UK is a vital research project which will help us to understand more than ever before the scale of need for food banks, who is most at risk of needing support from a food bank, and the primary drivers of hunger in the UK.

Building on the previous State of Hunger project, Hunger in the UK will play an integral part in our efforts to change policy. The research will help us to make important decisions about the policies we, as a network, want to campaign for, ensure politicians and policy makers are hearing the voices of people with lived experience of financial hardship, and ultimately help us to better understand how we can end the need for food banks in the UK.

## Changing Communities Programme Boost

In this coming year, we will boost our Changing Communities work by offering bespoke support to every food bank in our network to tackle the underlying drivers of food bank need, and by empowering them to engage their local community as they build the movement towards ending the need for food banks. New resources and toolkits will be developed across the whole breadth of our work, by building on what we have already learnt about what is working and bringing in external expertise where needed.

## Pathfinders

Pathfinder food banks will remain at the heart of our network's innovative approach to ending the need for their services locally by trialling new approaches and projects.

Building on the evaluation that will conclude in this coming year, we will support all the food banks in the programme to develop their own strategic plan. This plan will be rooted in their knowledge of their local community, their data-driven insights into which interventions will make the biggest impact, and what they are learning from other Pathfinder food banks through our regular gatherings.

## Organising Programme

Building on the lessons learnt from the first cohort of 15 trainees, our Organising Programme will work with a further 45 in this coming year. The focus will be on helping them to build a volunteer campaign team, engage with people with lived experience of poverty, create an influencing strategy, and campaign for change.

Many of these food banks are also part of the Pathfinders programme, so we are expectant of the impact that will be created as different aspects of our strategy are outworked through the same food banks.

## Church Engagement

Churches are at the heart of much of the food bank network, generously providing venues, volunteers, leadership, donations, and more. The aim of our Church Engagement work is to expand and deepen our reach into diverse expressions of church communities and Christian networks across the UK.

This year we will be increasing and intensifying our work with the church, through the development of resources for harvest, Christmas and the rest of the church year, the establishment of a Church Partnership programme, and the creation of a training course for churches who want to partner with us in support of our vision of ending the need for food banks in the UK. We're also planning to deepen our engagement with interfaith partners, widening and strengthening the movement for change.

## Data

The data collected by food banks, referral agencies and directly through the surveys we administer is vital for building our understanding of who comes to food banks and why. We use this to design our services locally, and to advocate for change nationally. This year we will be embarking on an ambitious technology programme to revise and update some of the types of data we capture as part of our commitment to be able to design our services and advocate for change in the best possible way. We'll also be providing resources, training and other support to help food banks to develop their knowledge and understanding around research and data and to take forward local projects or link in with national work.

## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

We know that the work we have already undertaken in pursuit of inclusion is only the beginning of a journey. As we look to the coming year, we will be continuing to ensure that we are growing and celebrating our diversity at the Trussell Trust and challenging any aspects of our work which fail to promote equity. Moreover, we'll be stepping up our support of food banks across the network to ensure that they feel confident, equipped and passionate about ensuring that their own work upholds a strong commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion – particularly through the provision of tailored resources, training and expert advice.

## Participation

During 2022/23 and beyond, we'll continue to build on the strong base of relationships that we have begun to cultivate with people who have had direct experience of financial hardship. We'll bring our Together for Change panel into its second phase and extend the ways in which its members can speak into and influence decision-making throughout the Trussell Trust. Externally, we'll continue to build on our Stories work and policy projects which seek to foreground in key public and policy settings the voices and experiences of people who have experienced financial hardship. We're excited to support this work to flourish more widely in food banks across the UK, as our central support team combined with the peer leadership of food banks who have adopted participatory approaches inspire others to ensure that lived experience is at the heart of our work together.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The food banks in our network are there to provide compassionate, practical support to everyone who comes through their door. But this kind of support shouldn't be needed. Everyone should have enough to afford the essentials. We know that there's a future without the need for food banks, but we cannot reach it without the support of people like you. Whether you are just one person or part of a group, organisation, company or church, your support is invaluable. You are enabling food banks to provide the amazing support they do so well and helping our work towards a future where food banks are consigned to the history books for good. Thank you so much.





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