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Food banks in the UK



Summary

- 1 Where does food bank data come from?
- 2 How many food banks are there in the UK?
- 3 Statistics on food parcels
- 4 Food banks and the rising cost of living
- 5 Food aid during the coronavirus pandemic
- 6 Food banks in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- 7 Other food aid provision

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Contents

Summary	4
1 Where does food bank data come from?	6
2 How many food banks are there in the UK?	8
3 Statistics on food parcels	9
3.1 UK – Trussell Trust	9
3.2 Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN)	10
3.3 State of Hunger report – characteristics of food bank users	10
3.4 Statistics for regions and nations	11
4 Food banks and the rising cost of living	15
4.1 Food parcel demand increasing in 2022	15
5 Food aid during the coronavirus pandemic	18
5.1 Increase in food bank use	18
5.2 Government emergency food aid provision during the pandemic	19
6 Food banks in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland	21
6.1 Food banks and parcels in Scotland	21
6.2 Food banks in Wales	22
6.3 Food banks in Northern Ireland	22
7 Other food aid provision	23
7.1 Meal providers	23
7.2 Social supermarkets	23
7.3 Food for schoolchildren	24

Summary

The Trussell Trust, a charity working to end the need of food banks, has reported a 15% drop in the number of three-day emergency food parcels it distributed between 31 March 2021 and 1 April 2022, compared to the year before. This was still an increase of 14% compared to the year 2019-2020, before the pandemic. In 2021-22 it distributed 2.1 million food parcels in the UK.

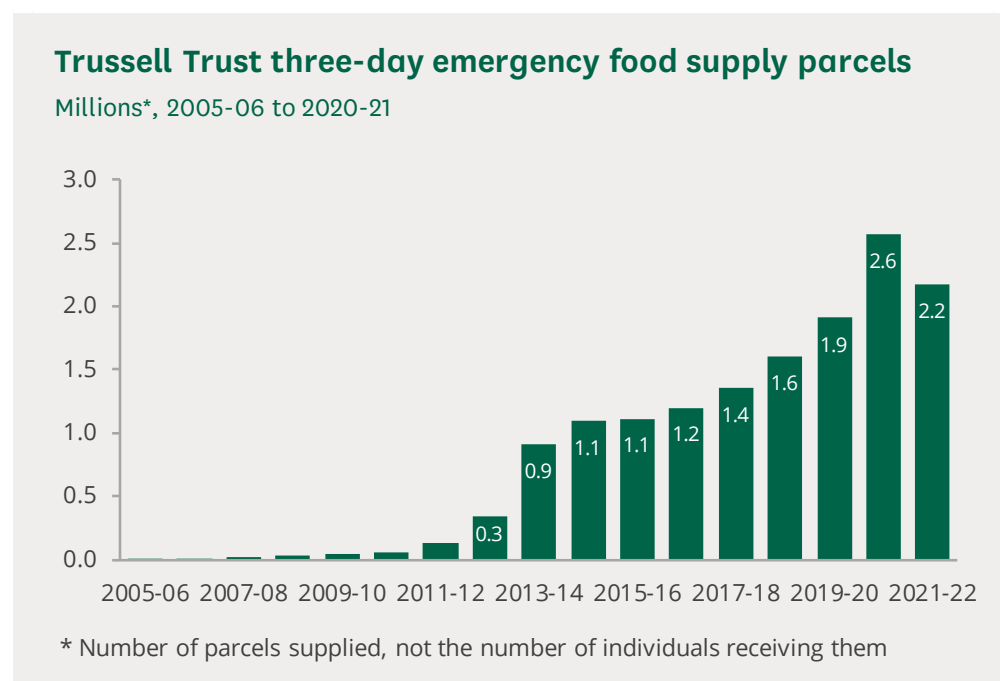
Cost of living crisis

In May 2022, the Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) [surveyed 101 of its organisations representing 194 independent food banks](#) across 94 local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales. 93% of organisations reported an increase or significant increase in the need for their services since the start of 2022. 95% of organisations reporting increases said it was due to the cost-of-living crisis.

The [Trussell Trust](#) opened its first UK food bank in 2000 and operates over half of food banks in the country. IFAN represents food banks outside the Trussell Trust and since 2020 has been collecting data from them across the UK. Both the number of food banks and the quantity of emergency food parcels they distribute has increased over time, with the exception of a partial drop after the Covid-19 pandemic subsided.

How many food banks are there in the UK?

There are over **1,400 Trussell Trust food banks** in the UK, in addition to at least **1,172 independent food banks**. The numbers of food parcels distributed by the Trussell Trust up to March 2022 can be seen in the chart below:



Source: [Trussell Trust End of Year Stats April 2021 – March 2022](#)

London was the region with the highest distribution of Trussell Trust food parcels in 2021-22, closely followed by South-East and North-West England.

How many households use food banks?

Food bank statistics should not be used as a proxy for the measurement of poverty. For statistics on poverty, see the House of Commons Library briefing [Poverty in the UK: statistics](#). The comprehensiveness and accuracy of food bank data, and the number of food aid outlets in existence, will affect food bank figures regardless of any changes in poverty levels.

In its May 2021 [State of Hunger report](#), the Trussell Trust estimated around 2.5% of all UK households (700,000) used a food bank in 2019-20, prior to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In February 2022, the Food Standards Agency published data on food bank usage in England, Wales and Northern Ireland gathered by IPSOS Mori between April 2020 and October 2021. The [Covid-19 Consumer Tracker](#) showed **8%** of respondents had used a food bank or a food charity in April. This rose to 11% by October 2021.

1 Where does food bank data come from?

Food banks are run by volunteers, churches and charities and there is no comprehensive dataset on UK food banks. Data in this paper comes from the Trussell Trust and the Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN).

The Trussell Trust is an anti-poverty charity that operates a network of food banks across the UK while campaigning for the end of their necessity. It is the primary source of data on food bank use in the UK. The trust provides food parcels to people who meet certain requirements and are referred to it by professionals such as doctors, health visitors, social workers and the Citizens Advice.

The Trussell Trust gathers its administrative data from the referrals required to access its support. The Trussell Trust runs over half of the UK's food banks, and has a long archive of published data. However, as independent food banks operate across the UK this data should be considered incomplete.

The [Independent Food Aid Network](#), which represents food banks outside the Trussell Trust, is increasing the amount and range of data and analysis it produces.

Food banks were first introduced in the USA in the 1960s¹ and now exist in many wealthy countries.² [FEBA, the European Food Banks Federation](#) has a map showing the location of its members across the continent. However, definitions of what a food bank is and measurement of what it does varies across countries, so that international comparison is not straightforward.

Food bank statistics should not be used as a proxy for poverty.³ The comprehensiveness and accuracy of food bank data and the number of food banks in existence will affect figures regardless of any changes or stability in poverty levels. The Library briefing [Poverty in the UK: statistics](#) provides information and data on UK poverty.

1 Government food insecurity statistics

The UK Government has included food insecurity in an annual [Department for Work and Pensions survey](#) of household income and living standards since March 2021.⁴ It now includes questions taken from the [US Department of Agriculture's survey](#) to identify households in low and very low food security.⁵

'Low food security' means that the household reduces the quality, variety, and desirability of their diets. 'Very low food security' means that household members sometimes disrupt eating patterns or reduce food intake because they lack money or other resources for food.

In 2020/21, 4.2 million people (6%) were in food insecure households (both low and very low food security). This included 9% of children, 7% of working age adults, and 1% of pensioners.

The Library briefing [Food poverty: Households, food banks and free school meals](#) presents the latest household food insecurity statistics.

¹ Where they are called 'food pantries'

² See *Food Bank Nations: poverty, corporate charity and the right to food* by Grahame Riches, Routledge, 2018, p42 for an international comparison table.

³ Library briefing [Poverty in the UK: statistics](#)

⁴ [Family Resources Survey: financial year 2019 to 2020](#), DWP, 25 March 2021

⁵ [New poverty statistics developed to help government target support](#), DWP, 17 May 2019

2

How many food banks are there in the UK?

As of 2022, the Trussell Trust includes **over 1,400 food bank centres**.

The [Independent Food Aid Network](#) is the UK network for non-Trussell Trust food aid providers. Historically there has been little data on the operation of independent food banks, but this has recently changed.

On behalf of the network, [Sabine Goodwin has mapped independent food banks](#), clarifying how many operate outside the Trussell Trust. There are at least **1,172 independent food banks** in the UK today.⁶

Added to the Trussell Trust's 1,400+ this makes over 2,500 food banks in total⁷, suggesting that reliance on Trussell Trust figures significantly underestimates the use of food banks in the UK.⁸ As with the Trussell Trust food banks, independent food banks can be found across most of the country.

A joint study by the Trussell Trust and the Independent Food Aid Network in 2017 calculated that food bank volunteers contributed more than 4 million hours work that year, worth 'at least £30 million'.⁹

⁶ This does not include those operating from schools, mentioned in the [National Governance Association Report](#) of 2 September 2019, which notes an increase in the number of governors reporting that their school does provide a food bank.

⁷ [IFAN on Trussell Trust and independent food bank numbers](#)

⁸ The Government does not maintain statistics on food banks – see [WPQ UIN 121155](#)

⁹ [Volunteers across the UK giving 'at least £30 million' a year in unpaid work to support foodbanks](#), Trussell Trust Blog, 17 October 2017

3 Statistics on food parcels

3.1 UK – Trussell Trust

The Trussell Trust measures the food it gives out in volume rather than the number of people using food banks. It provides food as ‘three-day emergency food parcels’. It also measures food in tonnes.

A Trussell Trust food parcel typically consists of tinned and dried goods selected across food groups to provide healthy balanced meals,¹⁰ following nutritionists’ guidelines.¹¹ These have expanded to include perishable items since the Trussell Trust partnered with Asda and FareShare in February 2018.^{12,13}

The [Trussell Trust publishes statistics](#) twice a year on its website.

In 2021-22 the Trust supplied **2.2 million** three-day emergency food parcels, a decrease of 15% on the previous year.¹⁴ The general trend of increasing numbers has continued. In 2021-22 there was an increase of 14% compared to 2019-20. The big increase in the year 2020-21 was caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In 2021-22, 832,000 food parcels went to children.¹⁵

Note this data does not include all food parcels distributed in the UK because of the large number of independent food banks that are not part of the Trussell Trust network.

¹⁰ [What’s in a Food Parcel?](#), Trussell Trust website

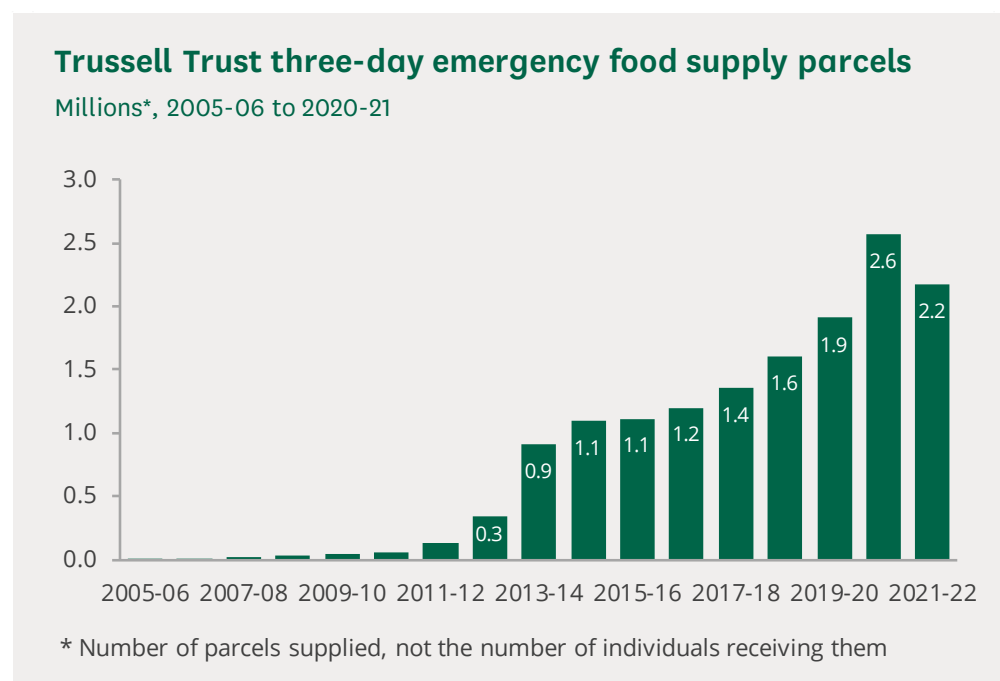
¹¹ [A Nutritional Analysis of the Trussell Trust Emergency Food Parcel](#), Dr Darren Hughes and Edwina Prayogo, UCL, April 2018

¹² [What’s in a Trussell Trust foodbank parcel and why?](#) Trussell Trust, 8 June 2018

¹³ [Asda, the Trussell Trust and FareShare launch £20 million partnership to help a million people out of food poverty](#), Trussell Trust, 8 February 2018

¹⁴ Trussell Trust, [End of year stats](#)

¹⁵ Trussell Trust, [End of year stats](#)



Source: [Trussell Trust End of Year Stats April 2021 – March 2022](#)

3.2 Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN)

In May 2022, IFAN ran a survey of 101 organisations representing 194 independent food banks across 94 local authorities.¹⁶ Of these, 38 organisations had a significant increase and in 55 there was an increase in the need for their services. The top reasons given were the rise in the cost of living, cut to Universal Credit and inadequate wages.

3.3 State of Hunger report – characteristics of food bank users

[State of Hunger](#), first published by the Trussell Trust in November 2019, is the largest ever piece of research into food bank use in the UK. The latest and second report was published in May 2021.

This three-year study is being carried out at Heriot-Watt University and identifies key characteristics of food bank users. It estimates that around 2.5% of all UK households – 700,000 – used a food bank in 2019-20, before the Covid-19 pandemic.¹⁷

¹⁶ [Survey of members of the Independent Food Aid Network \(IFAN\) May 2022](#), IFAN, May 2022

¹⁷ Trussell Trust, [State of Hunger – full report](#), May 2021, p11

It found three factors contributing to a person needing a food bank, (ranked in order of significance):

- (1) not having sufficient income from social security;
- (2) ill-health or adverse life experiences (such as household separation or eviction);
- (3) lack of informal and formal support.

Notably, of those people who have been referred to a Trussell Trust food bank:

- In early 2020, 86% of households were receiving social security
- Three-quarters of people in early 2020 were aged between 25 and 54, with the largest group aged 35 to 44
- By mid-2020, the proportion who were couples with children increased from 19% in early 2020 to 24%
- 42% of people referred to food banks in mid-2020 lived alone vs. 22% of the UK population
- The rate of disability amongst working age people referred was three times higher than the working age UK population
- Nine in ten households had some form of debt; while six in ten had arrears on bills and owed money on loans. Almost half of people referred to food banks owed money to the DWP in mid-2020
- The proportion of people referred to a food bank in contact with the Universal Credit system increased from 43% in late 2018 to 64% in early 2020
- 11% of people referred to food banks in mid-2020 are likely to have NRPF (no recourse to public funds) up from 2% in early 2020
- Nearly three quarters (72%) of people referred in early 2020 had an “adverse life experience” and 37% had an adverse work-related experience in the previous 12 months. The most prevalent adverse experiences included becoming homeless, sick or disabled, family relationships breaking down, domestic abuse etc and loss of employment was the most prevalent in relation to work.

3.4

Statistics for regions and nations

The distribution of Trussell Trust food parcels varies around the country, as the following chart shows. These are absolute numbers, and not calculated proportionately to the size of each area’s population.

Around 60% of food banks are run by the Trussell Trust. There are some areas where the Trussell Trust does not operate, but where independent food banks may distribute food parcels.

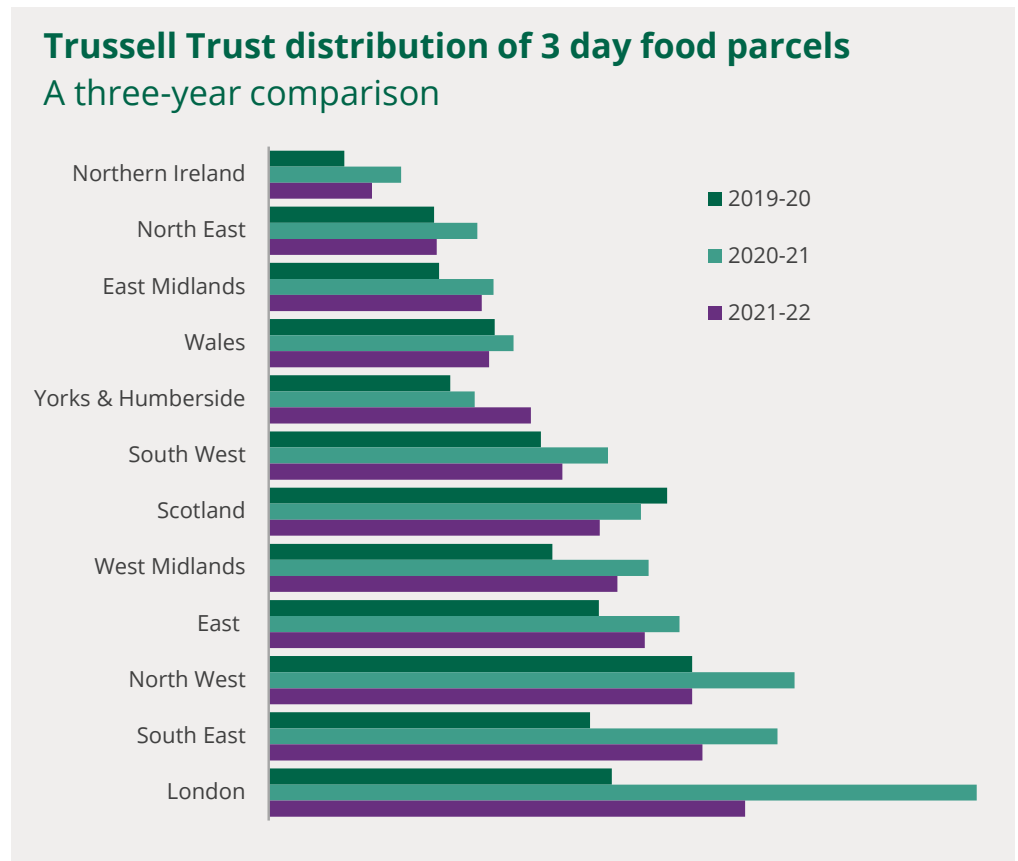


Source: [Trussell Trust End of Year Stats April 2021 – March 2022](#)

While every region and nation of the UK saw an increase in the number of Trussell Trust food parcels distributed between 2019-20 and 2020-21, London was the one region where the number more than doubled.

In most regions and nations in 2021-22, the number dropped compared to 2020-21, but was still higher compared to 2019-20, with the spike caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Yorkshire and Humberside is an exception, where the number of parcels given out has been rising in the last three years. In Scotland, the reverse has been true, and numbers have fallen for a third year in a row. The Trussell Trust notes, however, that “lower percentage increases or decreases should not necessarily be interpreted as demonstrating lower levels of need in these areas as data from food banks in the Trussell Trust network forms only part of the picture of need”. For more information on food banks in Scotland, see the next section.



Source: [Trussell Trust End of Year Stats April 2021 – March 2022](#)

2 Universal Credit and food bank use

In 2019, the Trussell Trust published a report on the links between Universal Credit and food bank use. The five-week initial wait for the first payment especially “has led to acute financial hardship, and damaged households’ longer-term financial resilience”.¹⁸ The key finding was that food bank use was 30% higher a year after the rollout of Universal Credit, and 48% higher after two years.¹⁹

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) commissioned an evidence review on the drivers of food bank use in August 2018.²⁰ This Government has yet to publish this review.

On response to Parliamentary Questions in June 2021 and February 2022, the DWP said:

“The Department reallocated resources to prioritise work to help the COVID-19 effort. This caused delays to some work, including this literature review. The review summarises publicly available information and does not contain any new research carried out by the Department.”²¹

¹⁸ Trussell Trust, [Universal Credit and Food Banks](#)

¹⁹ Trussell Trust, [#5WeeksTooLong](#), September 2019

²⁰ Civil Service World, [DWP to investigate link between Universal Credit and soaring foodbank use](#), 3 August 2018, FOI request from Anthony Collins to DWP, 1 August 2018, reported at www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/research_8?unfold=1

²¹ PQ 16143, [[on the Government’s review of the drivers of food bank demand](#)], 21 June 2021, and PQ [127457](#), 22 February 2022

4 Food banks and the rising cost of living

There are concerns that recent increases in the cost of living will affect food banks. Prices as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) have been rising, putting pressure on household budgets. Further information on the cost of living can be found in the Library briefing [Rising cost of living in the UK](#).²²

4.1 Food parcel demand increasing in 2022

The Trussell Trust saw a 22% increase in demand for food parcels in January to February 2022 compared to the same period in 2020.²³

A Trussell Trust survey found that 17% of people receiving Universal Credit needed to visit a food bank between December 2021 and March 2022. A third of Universal Credit recipients had more than one day in the previous month where they didn't eat at all or only had one meal, and a third had not been able to afford to heat their home for more than four days across the last month.²⁴ More than 93% of food banks surveyed by Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) reported an increase in demand in May 2022, since the start of the year.²⁵

IFAN [wrote to the Chancellor and Prime Minister](#) in April 2022, warning that food banks were “close to breaking point” due to an unsustainable increase in demand, following rises in the cost of living.²⁶ According to the Independent, demand at some food banks has [doubled since the end of 2021](#), while research from the Trussell Trust and Deliveroo estimates that [one in ten parents expects to need to access food banks or other related support in the coming months](#).^{27,28}

²² [Rising cost of living in the UK](#), House of Commons Library Briefing Paper 9428

²³ Trussell Trust, [End of year stats 2022](#)

²⁴ Trussell Trust, [Two in five Brits receiving Universal Credit forced into debt this winter as payments failed to cover soaring cost of living, says the Trussell Trust](#), 17 March 2022

²⁵ Independent, [Rising cost of food will push more families to food banks, say charities](#), 30 May 2022. Based on the May 2022 [IFAN survey](#) of 101 organisations in its network, representing 194 independent food banks.

²⁶ [IFAN's letter to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor](#), 8 April 2022

²⁷ [Britain's food banks 'close to breaking point' amid rapid rise in poverty, Rishi Sunak warned](#), Independent, 10 April 2022

²⁸ [Almost one in 10 parents 'very likely to use UK food bank in next three months'](#), The Guardian, 18 April 2022

Disabled people tend to have higher energy needs than the average citizen, (for example due to running essential medical equipment) and poverty and disability charities say disabled people may have to turn to food banks. The charity Carers UK warns that [32% of disabled people face this situation](#).²⁹

More people using food banks for the first time

A report in the Independent, featuring views from several charity leaders, states many people now using food banks have never used them before, including those considered to be [middle class, students, and those in full-time employment](#).³⁰

A recent survey undertaken by NASUWT, the Teachers' Union, reported that [just under 3% of respondents have used food banks](#).³¹ Research from the NUS in Scotland states that [8% of students in Scotland](#) were using food banks, with students in further education most likely to become dependent on external assistance.³²

As well as the projected increase in the number of food bank users, there are also concerns about a fall in donations, due to people having less spare income to donate to charitable causes. The Big Issue reported that food banks were being forced to use their [cash reserves and ration their food parcels](#).³³

Government intervention

According to the Resolution Foundation, Government support announced in May 2022, along with support announced in February and March is estimated to “in effect offset 82 per cent of the rise in households’ energy costs in 2022-23, rising to over 90 per cent for poorer households.”³⁴ This support may result in a fall in food bank use once these measures come into effect.

²⁹ [Disabled people facing ‘impossible choices to survive’ in cost of living crisis](#), The Guardian, 15 March 2022

³⁰ Independent, [Britain’s ‘desperate’ middle-class are turning to food banks](#), , 26 March 2022

³¹ The Guardian, [Seven in 10 teachers in England thought of leaving in past year, poll shows](#), 15 April 2022

³² NUS Scotland, [Broke: How Scotland is failing its students](#) , 21 February 2022

³³ The Big Issue, [Food banks forced to ration parcels and dip into cash reserves as donations drop](#), , 25 March 2022

³⁴ Resolution Foundation. [Back on target: Analysis of the Government’s additional cost of living support](#), 27 May 2022

3 Food banks are finding new ways to provide food

Food banks are simultaneously experiencing reduced supply and increased demand, due to the rising cost of living. The Trussell Trust is working with other organisations to try and diversify the ways in which it can help people, through its [strategic partnerships](#).³⁵

One such partnership is with delivery service [Deliveroo](#).³⁶ The aim of this is to raise funds by allowing Deliveroo customers to make voluntary donations at the point of order, as well as Deliveroo staff taking part in a volunteer programme.

Another partnership is with [Vodafone](#), with the aim of providing free internet connectivity to those who can't afford it, making it easier to access support services.³⁷

³⁵ [The Trussell Trust strategic partnerships](#)

³⁶ [The Trussell Trust partnership with Deliveroo](#)

³⁷ [Buy One, Give One](#), Vodafone

5 Food aid during the coronavirus pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic resulted in a significant increase in the use of food banks, as lockdowns meant people lost their jobs or were on furlough at 80% of their wages.

5.1 Increase in food bank use

Sharp increase in food bank use during first coronavirus lockdown

The Institute for Fiscal Studies found that food bank users rose by almost 20% between February and April to May 2020. In February 1.7% of the population used food banks, compared to 1.9% in April to May 2020.³⁸

The number of food parcels the Trussell Trust distributed rose by 33% in 2020–21, with a particular spike in April to June 2020.

In April 2020, the Trust saw an 89% increase in the number of parcels distributed and a 107% increase in the number of children needing support from a food bank compared to the same period in 2019.³⁹

During the same period, IFAN reported a 175% increase in the number of food parcels distributed by independent food banks across the UK. To reduce contact and meet growing need, by April 2020, 35% of the independent food banks surveyed had increased the size of their parcels to support people for longer periods of time.⁴⁰

An increase in first-time food bank users

In September 2020, the Trussell Trust found that over half those using its food banks during the first lockdown had never needed one before. Almost

³⁸ IFS, [Living standards, poverty and inequality in the UK: 2021](#), 8 July 2021

³⁹ Trussell Trust, [Summary findings on the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on food banks \(PDF\)](#), 3 June 2020

⁴⁰ IFAN, [Independent food bank emergency food parcel distribution in the UK: Comparing February – April 2019 with February – April 2020](#), 3 June 2020

100,000 households received support from a food bank in the Trussell Trust network for the very first time between April and June 2020⁴¹

A report by IFAN and [Feeding Britain](#) in October 2020 noted the increasing numbers of first-time food bank users during the pandemic.⁴²

5.2

Government emergency food aid provision during the pandemic

Food aid for the clinically vulnerable

In March 2020, Defra put £212m towards support for people defined as clinically extremely vulnerable. This included food boxes delivered to those that were shielding from the coronavirus and the set-up of the National Shielding Helpline.⁴³

Food aid for the economically vulnerable

In April 2020, Defra started distributing grants worth £16m to front line charities that were best placed to respond to the immediate needs of economically vulnerable people. Most of this funding went to the food redistributor FareShare.

In November 2020, the Government announced interventions to support the economically vulnerable during winter. The winter package included a further £16m for Defra to support food charities to buy and distribute food to vulnerable people from the beginning of December for 16 weeks. This funding stream is being managed FareShare.⁴⁴

4 EFRA Committee inquiry on Covid-19 and food supply

In March 2020, the House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee launched an [Inquiry into Covid-19 and food supply](#).

On 30 July 2020 the Committee published its [first report](#).⁴⁵ The recommendations included:

- Defra should continue to provide £5 million in annual funding to FareShare for a further two years. This is to redistribute surplus food to frontline food aid providers.
- The Government should appoint a Minister for Food Security.
- The Government should consult on whether a ‘right to food’ should be enacted in law following publication of the [National Food Strategy](#).⁴⁶

On 14 January 2021 the Committee opened a new inquiry: [Covid-19 and food supply: follow up](#). Its recommendations and the Government responses were published in March-June 2021.⁴⁷

⁴¹ Trussell Trust, [Lockdown, lifelines and the long haul ahead: the impact of COVID-19 on food banks in the Trussell Trust network](#), September 2020

⁴² IFAN and Feeding Britain '[What am I supposed to do? Is it destitution or prostitution?](#)' [Hunger and the need for food banks between March and September 2020](#), October 2020

⁴³ PQ 153134 [[on funding for support to individuals and organisations during the coronavirus pandemic](#)], 11 February 2021

⁴⁴ PQ 153134 [[on funding for support to individuals and organisations during the coronavirus pandemic](#)], 11 February 2021

⁴⁵ House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, [COVID-19 and food supply](#), First report of session 2019-21, HC263, 30 July 2020

⁴⁶ House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, [COVID-19 and food supply](#), First report of session 2019-21, HC263, 30 July 2020, Point 47, page 21

⁴⁷ House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, [Seventh Report - Covid-19 and the issues of security in food supply](#), 29 March 2021

6 Food banks in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

6.1 Food banks and parcels in Scotland

Between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 the Trussell Trust distributed 197,037 emergency three-day food parcels in Scotland. This was a fall of 24,517 (11%) from the 221,554 distributed during the year 2020-21.⁴⁸

Working with [A Menu for Change](#), an alliance of poverty charities, the Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) has been collecting [data on food banks in Scotland](#) that are not part of the Trussell Trust network since 2018.

IFAN [published figures on Scottish food banks \(PDF\)](#) during the coronavirus pandemic in September 2020. It found that the distribution of emergency food parcels by independent food banks had risen by 113% from February to July 2020. It said between February and April 2020 there was a 129% rise, noting this was at the “height of lockdown”.⁴⁹

5 Scotland: Good Food Nation

The Scottish Government is pursuing a [Good Food Nation](#) policy and administers a [Fair Food Fund](#).⁵⁰

In June 2022, the Scottish Parliament passed the [Good Food Nation \(Scotland\) Bill](#).⁵¹ A month later, the [Scottish Government announced it would establish a statutory Food Commission](#), a move backed by the Trussell Trust, IFAN and other organisations.

⁴⁸ Trussell Trust, [Latest stats](#) [accessed 6 June 2022]

⁴⁹ IFAN, [IFAN's latest figures collated from Scotland's independent food banks \(PDF\)](#), 8 September 2020

⁵⁰ Scottish Government, [Good Food Nation policy](#) [accessed 6 June 2022]

⁵¹ Stage 3 [debate](#) of the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Bill.

6.2 Food banks in Wales

Between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022, the Trussell Trust distributed 131,232 emergency three-day food parcels in Wales. This was a decrease of 10% on the year 2020-21 and 2.5% decrease on the year of 2019-20.

In March 2016 [the University of Bangor published findings on food banks in Wales](#). It noted a rise from 16 outlets in 1998 to 157 in 2015 and said this closely matches the situation in England. Maps showing the locations, notable for being rural as well as urban, are included in the [full report \(PDF\)](#).⁵²

6.3 Food banks in Northern Ireland

Between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022, the Trussell Trust distributed 61,597 emergency three-day food parcels in Northern Ireland. Although this was a 22% decrease on the year 2020-21, it was a 36% increase on 2019-20. The spike can be explained by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The [first Northern Ireland Trussell Trust food bank](#) opened in 2012 in Newtownards. In April 2022, The Trussell Trust had 41 food banks in Northern Ireland.⁵³ Some of the food banks are listed on [the Consumer Council website](#).

⁵² Dave Beck and Hefin Gwilym, Bangor University, [Poverty and Food Banks in Wales](#), March 2016

⁵³ Trussell Trust, [Four Ways to end the need for emergency food in Northern Ireland](#), 21 April 2022

7

Other food aid provision

Food aid is not restricted to food banks.⁵⁴ The Independent Food Aid Network estimates there are at least another 3,500 independent food aid providers working beyond the food bank model across the UK. These include social supermarkets, soup kitchens, community food projects and school holiday meal providers.

The following list is not exhaustive but describes some other forms of food aid.

7.1

Meal providers

- [FareShare](#) distributes surplus food to food aid organisations as well as other types of charities. It was founded in 1994, becoming an independent charity in 2004. In 2021-22 FareShare redistributed just under 54,000 tonnes of food, the equivalent of nearly 130 million meals.⁵⁵
- [FoodCycle](#) was founded in 2009 to help communities set up volunteer groups to use surplus food to prepare meals for those in food poverty in their community. Its 2021 Social Impact report stated it served 455,000 meals and launched 16 new projects.⁵⁶

7.2

Social supermarkets

- Social supermarkets are another way to prevent surplus food going to waste. The first, '[Community Shop](#)', which redistributes food and household products, opened in 2013.
- In 2019, The Guardian reported that [social supermarkets were on the rise](#).⁵⁷ In 2022, the newspaper reported that [a new social supermarket will open in East London](#) in September. It said the benefits of offering

⁵⁴ And food banks are not the only form of charitable 'bank' operating in the UK. This model of relief now includes 'baby banks', 'hygiene banks' and 'clothing banks'. See [Clothing banks warn of families in crisis as demand soars](#), The Guardian, 20 June 2021

⁵⁵ FareShare, [Latest figures press release](#), 27 May 2022

⁵⁶ FoodCycle, [Social Impact report](#), 2021 [Accessed 11 July 2022]

⁵⁷ Guardian, [The rise of social supermarkets: 'It's not about selling cheap food, but building strong communities'](#), 19 May 2019

food at accessible prices helps people avoid “the stigma of a handout” and contributes to a sense of community and support.⁵⁸

7.3 Food for schoolchildren

The Library briefings [School meals and nutritional standards \(England\)](#) and [Food poverty: Households, food banks and free school meals](#) provide detailed information on free school meals. Below is a list of other examples of food provision for school children.

- The Government’s [national school breakfast club programme](#) provides funding to schools in disadvantaged areas. Participating schools will receive a 100% subsidy for breakfast club provision until the end of July 2022. The subsidy will then be reduced to 75%. The Government has committed to continuing the programme until July 2023.⁵⁹
- In April 2022, [Magic Breakfast](#), which supplies breakfasts to schoolchildren, found that 69% of UK schools have either no breakfast provision or have barriers to access.⁶⁰
- The Trussell Trust [Holiday Clubs project](#) for children who cannot access Free School Meals during school holidays, provides “meals (breakfast & lunch), as well as a variety of fun activities and learning opportunities to families.” The project was first trialled in the summer of 2016.
- [Feeding Britain](#), a food charity formed in 2015, has also coordinated the [Healthy Holiday programme](#), to feed children during the school holidays.
- During the coronavirus lockdowns, footballer Marcus Rashford successfully campaigned for free school meals to be provided during the school holidays as well as term time. This is covered in the Library’s briefing, [School meals and nutritional standards \(England\)](#).⁶¹
- In February 2021, a YouGov poll, commissioned by the food company Kellogg’s, surveyed 1,100 primary and secondary school teachers from across the UK. It concluded that one in five UK schools set up a food bank during the Covid pandemic.⁶²

⁵⁸ Guardian, [Social supermarkets offer choice and self-esteem to hard-up workers](#), 14 May 2022

⁵⁹ Written Parliamentary Question [122606](#), 22 February 2022

⁶⁰ Magic Breakfast, [Hidden Hunger – The State of UK Breakfast Provision 2022](#), 27 April 2022

⁶¹ House of Commons Library SN04195, [School meals and nutritional standards \(England\)](#), 15 January 2021

⁶² The Guardian, [One in five UK schools has set up a food bank in Covid crisis, survey suggests](#), 4 March 2021

- In 1999, [Greggs Foundation](#) opened its Breakfast Club. The foundation now oversees 680 clubs, providing a breakfast to over 44,500 school children each day, over 8.6 million each year, according to its figures.⁶³

⁶³ [Greggs Foundation – Breakfast Clubs](#), accessed 20 June 2022

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