

New 'Cool for Cats' Ambassador

Find out more about the Trussell Trust's new Ambassador, Glenn Tilbrook from Squeeze, on page 12



Making sure everyone is heard – Find out more about our participation work on page 3



Speaking truth to power
Read how we influenced politicians prior to the General Election on page 9



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Cover photo: © Danny Clifford

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

WELCOME

As a child, I knew two things for certain:

One, I was different. The 'poor kid'. The one with broken shoes and hand-me-down clothes. I often went to school hungry.

Two, it wasn't right. I could see the systems were broken and social security didn't meet our needs. People pitied us or judged us. No one asked us how we felt.

That's why we work so hard at the Trussell Trust to ensure people facing financial hardship have a voice. After all, how can we make things better if we're not working alongside people who live with the challenges every day?

People with direct experience of financial hardship have the ideas, drive and insight to help end the need for food banks.

This issue of Together is dedicated to our community and participation work. Our main feature, on pages 3-6, shows how your support is creating genuine, meaningful opportunities for people with lived experiences to shape our work and policies.

**Change is a gradual process,
but make no mistake, it's happening.
Thank you for being part of it.**



Dave Coffin
Head of Participation





NO ONE IS INVISIBLE, THANKS TO YOU MAKING SURE EVERYONE IS HEARD

People experiencing financial hardship have the insight to help end the need for food banks. Your support is giving them a platform to help drive change...



At the Trussell Trust exhibition stand, in a busy political party conference hall, two people are deep in conversation.

One is a politician, responsible for shaping policy which affects the lives of millions of people. The other is a young person who grew up in care and was ejected from the system to face the world with inadequate funds.

Their conversation is respectful. It's honest and real. And it has the potential to create lasting, meaningful change.

"No one gives a more eloquent, compelling account of how policies can compound suffering than the people who've lived it," says Jill, the Trussell Trust's Lived Experience Connector. "That understanding can't be captured by statistics alone. It's so powerful."



I feel valued as a person with lived experience. It counts, and matters, and is a platform of hope for change. I feel valued and accepted in all groups.

– Toni



150 voices speaking out

For years, we've partnered with people who have lived experience of financial hardship. But recently, your support has taken this work up a notch. Now, 150 people with lived experience are helping shape strategy and policy at every level of the Trussell Trust.

"We're an organisation that walks the walk," said Jill. "By partnering meaningfully with people who have experienced hardship, we enrich our understanding. Everything we do is informed and shaped by the unique views of people who know how policies affect everyday life. It means, when we campaign, we do so from a credible, authentic position."

Our partners include care leavers, disabled people, single parents, elderly people struggling on a state pension, carers, working family breadwinners and people who are long-term unemployed. They come from all four nations of the UK. And they are all passionate about ending the need for food banks.

Shaping the debate

We have created a *Transforming Together Team*, of people who have experienced hardship, who meet monthly to inform and challenge staff from across the Trussell Trust. One month, that might mean discussing content with the social media team. The next month, the team share their thoughts on the *Guarantee our Essentials* campaign. Each time, the group receives feedback to show how changes were made following their input.



Then there are our Policy Advocates. Your support provided training for 13 new advocates recently, delivered by a leading social change organisation (the Sheila McKechnie Foundation). Now, our new advocates join us at events such as the Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast, where they have conversations with politicians and decision-makers.

Photo credits:

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I like challenging the Government's policies to make things more inclusive. I want to see changes that will benefit all of society, so people can have happy, fulfilled, and peaceful lives.

– Nikki



Meanwhile, people with lived experience are helping to shape a new Trussell Trust strategy, due to be launched in 2025. The strategy will set our direction for the coming years and will help lead the way in creating a fairer UK for all.



Finally, our Youth Participation Team has been working with young adults (aged 16-24) from under-represented groups. These young people recently produced an online assembly and teachers' pack for schools, designed to break down the barriers facing young people in financial hardship.

How you help

Your support enables this life-changing work to happen. Whether you donate money, volunteer or campaign, you are part of a powerful movement of change. Jill added, “Living in financial

hardship, the world seems harsh and uncaring. **But you care.** You show people that they matter, and you create real opportunities to share their stories. Thank you.”

“Being a policy advocate has been an enriching experience. I’m grateful for the opportunity to amplify the voices of all of us affected by challenges, to advocate for systemic change.”

– Chika

1,000

young people responded to our survey into youth perceptions of poverty.

150

people with lived experience work in partnership with the Trussell Trust.

13

new policy advocates, ready to influence government policy.

“I’ve lived through needing a food bank and have come out the other side. Since then, I am so empowered to tell my story to anyone that will listen.”

– Amie

18

people regularly help shape our work as part of the Transforming Together Team.

See how your support is creating opportunities and share with others who could participate with us. Sign up to receive our twice-a-year Participation e-newsletter: participation@trusselltrust.org





A NEW LOOK AND FEEL FOR THE TRUSSELL TRUST?

An exclusive update on changes to our brand

As a charity, we have a vision to end the need for food banks and there are many ways to make it happen. These include winning hearts and minds by building understanding of the food bank need and support for our vision.

To get everyone on board, we need to speak clearly and effectively, ensuring we're as accessible and approachable as possible. But research – among supporters, food bank staff, volunteers, and communities across the UK – revealed we could communicate better with people like you, who support us, as well as with people seeking support.

We've listened, and in response we're making some changes to how we look and sound – working with food banks and people who have faced hardship to update our identity. Trials of this refreshed brand were incredibly positive. Supporters told us they felt inspired to get more involved, and people who needed support from food banks said that it will help other people get support more easily, when they need it.

This work has been funded by a generous corporate partner. We're grateful to everyone who's helped develop our exciting new look, and we can't wait to share the results with you in the autumn. So, keep your eyes peeled!



POLITICS WITH A SMALL 'P'?

Why political independence is important

Following the General Election, it's important that the Trussell Trust takes every opportunity to raise awareness of the issues we're facing and build support among politicians from all parties – galvanising the incoming government to take the action required to ensure that no one in the UK needs a food bank.

To achieve our mission, it's vital that we, as a charity, remain politically independent. We never support or oppose a particular political party or politician or tell people who they should or should not support.

Safeguarding our political independence is not only a legal requirement; it's also fundamental to our mission. We need to build broad, long-term support among the public and policymakers to achieve and sustain change – so everyone can afford the essentials.

Helen Barnard

Director of
Policy, Research
and Impact

Photo credits:

© Jess Hurd

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SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER

Now we have a new Government, your support is more powerful than ever. Here's how you're helping communities, spreading the word – and calling on politicians to do better.



79%

of people think poverty in the UK is a major problem

74%

of people agree it's up to the government to change things

*Trussell Trust Public Attitudes Survey, 2023, conducted by YouGov

Photo credits: ©Jess Hurd, ©Richard Haydon

A manifesto for change

Unveiled in May, our Manifesto was used as a key influencing tool in the run-up to the General Election – encouraging politicians to place poverty at the forefront of their agenda.

Our research* shows that 79% of people think poverty in the UK is a major problem – and 74% agree it's up to the government to change things – so it's clear that the public will judge the new government on whether it succeeds in reversing the rise in destitution.

We know that hunger and hardship is damaging our nation's health, holding back our economy, and harming the prospects of our young people. It is only through building a society where everyone can afford the essentials that we can unlock the potential in our communities.

We want all political parties to commit to building a future where no one needs a food bank to survive. This means a social security system that is fit for purpose, with cross-government action to ensure everyone has enough for the essentials.

We will continue to use our manifesto ask the new Government and all political leaders to:

1

Embed an Essentials Guarantee into Universal Credit.

2

Make debt deductions from social security payments more affordable.

3

Develop a long-term strategy and funding for local crisis support.

4

Ensure people on low incomes can access affordable credit and advice on money matters.

5

Make swift, accurate decisions about disability social security support.

6

Overhaul employment support.

7

Scrap the two-child limit.

8

Introduce new workers' rights legislation.

9

Invest in building 90,000 new social homes every year in England.

10

Empower communities with places, spaces, and public transport that build connection.

You can read the full manifesto at trusselltrust.org/manifesto

Why our call for change matters

Our latest statistics show that in the past year, food banks in our network distributed more than 3.1 million emergency food parcels. That's the highest number in our history, and almost double the number of parcels distributed five years ago. 65% of the support provided was for families with children.

This reinforces the need for an Essentials Guarantee – and it's why we continue to call for change, amplifying the voices of the people affected.



Making our voices heard

Across the UK, supporters like you have joined food bank volunteers and staff in reaching out to communities and engaging politicians as part of our 'Summer of Mobilisation'.

This project involved food banks engaging their volunteers and people in their community with lived experience of poverty to 'lay it all out on the table', by writing down their experiences and hopes for the future onto tablecloths – turning them into powerful testimonies for change.

Local MPs and prospective Parliamentary candidates were invited to take a seat and share their thoughts on ending the need for food banks – with social media posts encouraging wider public discussion.

You also showed solidarity by sending in messages of support for food banks. These empowering messages were presented during Volunteers' Week, reinforcing that the public appreciates everything food banks do to help people facing hunger in their communities.

Some of your messages of support to food banks:

"Hang in there and keep up the good work. I'll keep supporting you until you're no longer needed."

"I am outraged that your work is necessary in a wealthy country, but full of gratitude that people are strong and caring enough to do it."

"I stand with you on ensuring everyone can afford the essentials."

**THE TIME
IS NOW**



As a new government sets out its stall, we need your help to call for the vital changes that only political leaders can truly bring about.

With your help, we can do this boldly, unapologetically and effectively. It's time to state our case, get the message out there, bolster public support, hold people in power to account – and ultimately end the need for food banks.

trusselltrust.org/essentials

OUR NEW 'COOL FOR CATS' AMBASSADOR



After years of supporting the charity, lead singer of pop-rock band Squeeze, Glenn Tilbrook, has become an Ambassador for the Trussell Trust. Ahead of the band's 50th anniversary UK tour, Glenn chats to us about his new role...

What first inspired you to support the Trussell Trust?

I watched a BBC documentary about a single mum and her child. She had been re-housed a long way from where she had lived, isolated from family and friends. With no community support, no friends, and not enough money to put food on the table. It was a horrible set of circumstances, and shocking how easily preventable all that stuff would be with the right heart behind policy making.

At previous Squeeze gigs, you've asked people to bring donations towards local food banks. What's the plan for the 50th anniversary tour?

I feel very lucky, in any small way, to be able to help raise awareness. We have volunteers come to the gigs and collect financial and food donations, and someone on the road with us makes sure it gets to local food banks. Our fans are really appalled that there are people in our communities who don't have enough to get by. And they are very responsive to that. People do care, they really want to help.



As an affluent nation, we shouldn't let people be in the position of going hungry. It's shocking that people are.



Photo credit: ©Danny Clifford



You've spoken before about your own experience growing up in a single parent household on a limited budget. Can you tell us more about that?

I remember the shame of feeling we didn't have enough. I begged my Mum not to get me a free school dinner because of the embarrassment. We weren't on the streets, and we weren't starving, but sometimes we were cold and sometimes we were hungry. Today, as an affluent nation, we shouldn't let people be in that position. It's shocking that people are.

How do you feel about becoming an ambassador?

It's really important to me. I'm very honoured. The services the Trussell Trust provide are so amazing and awe-inspiring. My focus is to keep raising awareness and trying to find practical ways, in my industry, to deliver food and money to help people who need it.

BULLETIN BOARD: YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Updates on the issues you've raised

Can I donate via PayPal?

Yes! We've just launched a new, more flexible system for supporter donations on our website. You can now donate in multiple ways – including Apple Pay, Google Pay and PayPal – using a straightforward, secure process.

How green is this magazine?

We're committed to reducing our environmental impact – especially in printing. Supporter mailings are printed on recycled, recyclable paper, using low impact inks, and we work with World Land Trust to balance our carbon footprint.

Last year, we offset the equivalent of 627kg of CO₂ – enabling World Land Trust to protect and restore 120m² of threatened tropical habitat.

WE'RE RIGHT UP THEIR STREET

People's Postcode Lottery players support the Trussell Trust

People's Postcode Lottery has confirmed the Trussell Trust as one of the latest good causes its players will support.

The funding award of £500,000 will help initiatives including emergency grants for food banks, and advice and support on money matters for

people facing hardship – ensuring we can deliver the right support, at the right time.

People's Postcode Lottery players have previously supported specific projects, like our *Help Through Hardship* helpline, but this new endorsement ensures ongoing financial support for our wider work.

“We are very grateful for all the support from People's Postcode Lottery players, and we are delighted to now be one of their regular good causes. Thank you! Together we can make a difference!”

Emma Revie

Chief Executive at the Trussell Trust

GET INVOLVED!

Have fun with family and friends, raise money, and involve your local community – to support people facing hardship

Step Up to the Challenge

Feeling active? Walk, wheel, run or swim for 30 minutes – every day for a month.



“Committing to daily walking nudged me from driving to the shops – or hoping someone else would walk the dog – towards putting on my trainers and getting out there. I loved it!”

– Nia Roberts

Race Against Hunger

An adaptable challenge where you choose your own distance, race time and style.



“It was wonderful to run with my son. Demand for food banks is at an all-time high, so fundraising is vital.”

– Donna Scully

Tea for Trussell

Make like the Mad Hatter by hosting a tea party for colleagues, friends or family.



“My little boy created a tea shop at home, raising almost £200!”

– Jody Page

Find out how you can get involved at trusselltrust.org/events

1. I'D LIKE TO MAKE A ONE-OFF GIFT

My amount £

I enclose a cheque/postal order or CAF voucher (payable to the Trussell Trust)

-OR- please debit my: Visa Mastercard

Card number:

Start date: / / Expiry date: / / Name on card:



WJULMAG24

2. PLEASE COMPLETE YOUR DETAILS

Title: First name: Last name:

Address:

Postcode:

Email: Mobile number:

3. GIFT AID



Boost your donation by 25p for every £1 you donate. In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below.

I want to Gift Aid my donation, and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past four years, to the Trussell Trust.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Date: I am not eligible to Gift Aid.

We require address details to enable a claim to be made.

4. LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH

We will continue to contact you by post with information about our work, fundraising activities and ways to get involved. If you are happy to receive this information by email or phone, please provide your details:

Email:

Phone:

To change your communication preferences at any time, please call us on 01722 580 178 (between 9am and 5pm) or email supportercare@trusselltrust.org. You can also find out more about how we collect and use your personal information by reading our Privacy Policy at trusselltrust.org/privacy

5. GIFT IN WILLS

I would like more information about leaving a gift in my Will to the Trussell Trust

I have already left a gift to the Trussell Trust in my Will

Data Protection The Trussell Trust will use the personal information that you provide in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. The Trussell Trust is registered as a data controller with the UK Information Commissioner's Office under registration number Z279027X. Your details will be kept safe and secure, only used by us, or those who work for us, and will not be shared, sold or rented to third parties for marketing purposes. We may use information and data you provide for analysis, research or screening purposes in order to help us understand our supporters so we can save resources and deliver the best possible service.

**PLEASE RETURN TO:
FREEPOST THE TRUSSELL TRUST,
VISIT TRUSSELLTRUST.ORG/GIVE
OR CALL 01722 580 178** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

Thank you for your generosity. Your donation will be used wherever the need is the greatest.

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