



### **Trussell Trust – Key messages to local authorities**

Food banks are under exceptional pressure at this time and are working hard to maintain the support they provide to people in their local communities. Local authorities can support their food banks at this time by:

**Having a clear approach to supporting people and understanding how food banks fit in.** At this time food banks remain focused on supporting those who are in financial crisis. It is not the role of food banks to support people simply because they may be self-isolating or finding it hard to get the food that they need because of non-financial reasons.

**Considering how you can support your local food banks.** It's important to keep in touch with your local food bank to understand their situation and how you can support them.

For example:

- Can you help with the transport of food eg with supplying vehicles and/or drivers who have had Disclosure checks from Disclosure Scotland and can help deliver emergency food parcels?
- Can you help to coordinate volunteer enquiries or fill volunteer vacancies, which may arise as result of food bank volunteers needing to self-isolate or look after children?
- Can you help with the sourcing of food during times when it may be difficult to do this via supermarkets eg through access to wholesalers or council suppliers?
- If you are a referrer to the food bank, please ensure that people who need support are still able to reach you (such as online or telephone) and please ensure that you find a way for the food bank to still receive a copy of the referral voucher (through using e-referral, sending a scan of voucher, or posting). Please liaise with your local food bank to find a solution that will work for them.

**Ensuring your emergency crisis grant scheme is working smoothly** – this could consist of:

- Ensuring that people in financial crisis are considered for crisis grants rather than being referred to a food bank by default
- Telling your local food banks about any discretionary support that you are able to provide, so that food banks know how people can access it and can direct people to this support.

**Communicating to the wider public** – There has been a surge in interest from the public in how to support food banks. Through your communication channels you can share messages about how best to do this. The best form of support may vary by local areas, but it's likely the main message will be for people to donate food and to check online which types of food are most needed.

This information has been provided by the Trussell Trust which covers approximately two thirds of the food banks in the UK, but this guidance may also be useful for independent food banks.