

HISTORY OF FOODBANKS

The concept of food banks was developed in the U.S.A by John van Hengel in Phoenix, Arizona in the late 1960s. Van Hengel a retired businessman, volunteered at a soup kitchen trying to find food to serve to neighbours facing hunger.

How did Food banks get started in the UK?

Launched in 2000, Salisbury Foodbank was the first foodbank in the UK. In 1996 Paddy and Carol Henderson were working for a UN feeding programme, when they met Baby Boris, a street baby living at Central Railway Station with his 14-year-old mother. They founded the Trussell Trust which has grown exponentially.

Other food banks soon followed but were run on an individual basis, independently. Collectively they are now known as the Independent Aid Food Network.

Why are food banks important in UK?



Food banks support people so that they can resolve the crises they are facing, help them break free from poverty by providing additional support to help resolves the crises they are facing so that they don't need to use a food bank again the future.

Debt advice, mental health support and benefit guidance is available.

Why is there/was there a rising need for Food Banks?

According to Research:

- *UK Social Security is inadequate and has been designed to be so.
- *Welfare reforms over past decade have negatively impacted some of the most vulnerable in society – especially single parent families and people with disabilities.
- * Chronic poverty experienced by those on low income, both in and out of work leaves people unable to cope with life shocks, either financial or personal.
- * Benefit delays and sanctions are income shocks and are a leading cause of food poverty.
- * There is a strong link between mental ill-health and poverty.

Who is doing research?

The All party Parliamentary Group on Hunger. Trussell Trust, Heriot Watt University, House of Commons Library, Scottish Government, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the Food Foundation and many others.

What did the CEO of the Trussell Trust who give guidance in running 118 Foodbanks in Scotland have to say?

“How can anyone in this country stay warm and dry and buy food on just £248 a month after rent? People struggling in extreme poverty are pushed to the doors of food banks because they don’t have enough money to survive. Hunger in the UK isn’t about food – it’s about people not being able to afford the basics.

“We know we can change this. We need to change the conversation around poverty and take action together. We need government at all levels to commit to ending the need for food banks once and for all and to develop a plan to do so. It’s time for government to make this a priority – to recognise that it must be an essential part of their levelling up agenda to work towards a hunger free future where we can all afford the basics.”

Emma Revie, Chief Executive of the Trussell Trust

What is the Scottish Government doing to prevent food insecurity?

Autumn 2021

Proposals to end the need for food banks as a primary response to food insecurity have been published.

Views are being sought on the *Scottish Government's draft national plan*, which is supported by food bank operators, including the Trussell Trust and Independent Food Aid Network.

The plan follows action during the pandemic to prevent food insecurity through strengthening household incomes and the delivery of cash-first responses to financial hardship.

Social Justice Secretary Scottish Government Shona Robison said:

“We share the same vision as food bank operators – they are not a long term solution to poverty. Our draft plan sets out what we will do within our powers – including introducing a shopping voucher pilot scheme - to make food banks the last port of call.

“Our latest report reveals the extreme poverty faced by people at food banks going into the pandemic, with just £248 a month on average to survive on after housing costs. That money needs to cover energy and water costs, council tax, food, and other essentials.

This is unacceptable.

It's time for change – and that will only be possible as we raise our voices together to call for an end to the need for food banks.

We need your help. We're calling on government at all levels to commit to ending the need for food banks and developing a plan to do so, and we need you to get involved”.

This new report is part of State of Hunger, 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 hunger free future.

“Despite our fixed budget and limited powers we are taking action to support those in poverty, including discussions around establishing a minimum income guarantee for Scotland.

“Sabine Goodwin, co-ordinator of the Independent Food Aid Network, which represents more than 500 food banks across the UK and 84 in Scotland said: "As the cut to Universal Credit and cost of living increases exacerbate poverty in Scotland, the publication of the draft national plan to end the need for food banks couldn't be more timely.

“With a cash first, collaborative approach to food insecurity as the cornerstone of this plan, a time when food banks will no longer be needed to plug the gaps left by financial hardship is within sight.”

When did we get a Food Bank?

Peeblesshire Food bank was founded in 2013 by the priest from the Anglican Church in Peebles and others in religious establishments and some volunteers (such as myself).

We joined the Trussell Trust to get advice/guidance on best ways of managing. Had to have a board with a manager, secretary and treasurer and be registered as a charity.

In 2020 we got funding to hire a manager, she is Fiona .Previously everything was run by volunteers. We are located at Cavalry Park. Our foodbank relies on your goodwill and support.

What is our local situation?

Peeblesshire Food Bank provided 740 3-day emergency food packages in the year 2021 to people in crisis, this includes children.

What's in a typical food parcel?

A typical food parcel contains a minimum of three days of nutritionally balanced, non-perishable, tinned and dried foods that have been donated by our local community. A typical food parcel includes: breakfast cereal, soup, pasta, rice, pasta sauce, baked beans, tinned meat, tinned vegetables, instant mash, UHT milk, tea, coffee, sugar, tinned dessert and biscuits. Some foodbanks also provide vegan or vegetarian.

The parcels are delivered at a convenient time to the client by a volunteer.

How can people get a food parcel?

Usually referred by an agency such as Citizen's Advice Bureau, schools, churches, social work dept. Scottish Borders Housing Association and Peeblesshire Youth trust.

Will the food parcel cater for my whole family?

Our foodbank will adapt your food parcel according to the number of adults and children indicated by the referring agency. We will also endeavour to provide foods that are age appropriate and in suitable quantities for your children. .

Where do we get our food from?

Over 90% of the food distributed by foodbanks is donated by the public – that's why your food donations are absolutely vital to our ability to give everyone referred to us a balanced and nutritious three- day supply of food.

If you are happy to drop off food donations, please see the table below for our food collection point locations:

Donations of food can also be made to the warehouse at the opening times or please ring the foodbank mobile 07413484174. Or see website.

We always welcome donations and promise to use them to provide help to people in crisis. Occasionally we send food to other nearby foodbanks to support their work particularly if they experience shortages.

Office hours Mon, Tues, Thurs - phone Peebles 588654

How can a volunteer help in the Cavalry Park warehouse?

When the food comes in from the supermarkets, or direct from volunteers each item has to be checked. All food products have a due date on them and if they are passed the due date we must throw them out, so every tin etc has to be checked and then filed on the shelves with the same item. Then food parcels need to be made up according to the specification lists and number in the family.

Where else do we get food?

Twice a year the supermarkets let us stand at the entrance of their shop and ask people if they would like to donate something for their local

Food bank before they leave the shop. The supermarket matches what is donated.

Do we accept cash donations or regular monthly payments?

Yes, we do.

Summary

From the book *Hungry Britain*:

“The growth in Foodbanks has not grown unnoticed. The dominant political power over the last ten years, the centre-right C Party, had consistently argued that the cause of increased food bank usage is not the reduction in local and National government welfare spending or a lack of stable work that pays well but bad life choices and the increased availability of free food. Combined with a moralizing discourse about who deserves benefits, the need to reduce the welfare bill, the increased numbers in employment, and support large parts of the media and general public, they have been successful in defending their positions over the last seven or eight years”.