

# How you can support foodbanks during the coronavirus pandemic

As a consequence of COVID-19, those who rely on extra support to receive essential food and resources may find the next few months particularly challenging. For those with unreliable work or increased childcare commitments, as well as those unable to work and at increased risk because of illness, food and resources will be more challenging to get hold of.

Foodbanks are already beginning to be stretched as a result of the strain on resources. As a result, many UK foodbanks are running low on essential supplies such as long-life milk, cereal and pasta and have seen a fall in donations.

As we seek to care for the vulnerable and at risk in our communities, supporting your local foodbank is a practical way to be of help.

## Find your local foodbank

Foodbanks are run by a mixture of networks in the UK. You can search for your local foodbanks here:

Trussell Trust Foodbanks: <https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/>

Independent food aid network: <http://www.foodaidnetwork.org.uk/independent-food-banks-map>

These lists may not be comprehensive – if you can't find one locally through these sites, it may be independent. Local church networks will most likely be able to point you in the direction of your nearest group.

## Find out what they need

Your local foodbank will usually share the key resources they need online, or will have contact details for you to enquire. Long-life products, which are usually most essential for foodbanks, are the products seeing increased demand at the current time. Consider whether you could share these if you have them, or buy and donate them when you see them become available. There may also be increased demand for toiletries – sanitary products, toothpaste etc – and cleaning products. These can also be bought and donated.

You can find a list of products that most foodbanks distribute here: <https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-involved/ways-to-give/donate-food/>.

## Volunteer

Foodbanks rely on volunteers to distribute their resources. Many volunteers may be or feel unable to get involved at this time. If you are able, enquire at your local foodbank as to whether they need extra support to enable them to keep going.

## Bankuet

If you are based in London, Coventry, Brighton or Gateshead, you can donate to your local foodbank remotely. Bankuet is a system set up to enable direct giving between supermarkets and foodbanks, tailored to their need. You can buy a donation package online without leaving the house, and this will be directly given to the partner foodbank.

Find Bankuet here: [www.bankuet.co.uk/](http://www.bankuet.co.uk/)

We continue to hold in prayer those who will be especially affected by the current circumstances. You might wish to use this prayer to support your reflection:

Loving God,

In your very being you exist in relationship,  
living in service and love  
with yourself, and with us.

In reflection of this you call us into community,  
that in knowing one another,  
listening to one another,  
and serving one another,  
we might encounter you.

Through the life and ministry of Jesus Christ  
When you encountered a hungry crowd,  
or a family in need of healing,  
or a group isolated from society,  
you responded with action,  
feeding, resurrecting, welcoming.

Open our eyes to the needs of those around us,  
especially as we encounter new challenges.  
Help us to turn to one another in love,  
responding in action,  
in service of your hope.

Amen.