*[Your address and postcode]*

Dear *[MP Name]* MP,

I am writing to ask that you urgently address the root causes of growing food insecurity in our constituency.

The Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) has identified at least 1,052 independent food banks operating across the UK in addition to 1,393 Trussell Trust food banks, food banks run by schools, universities, hospitals and the Salvation Army. *[If you would like to add in a figure for the number of independent food banks in your constituency please contact* *ifanconnect@gmail.com* *with the name of your constituency]*

IFAN’s latest data showed an 110% increase in the number of 3-day emergency food parcels distributed by independent food banks from February to November 2020 compared to the same period in 2019. You can read various reports on independent food bank data collated by IFAN since March 2020 [here](http://www.foodaidnetwork.org.uk/ifan-data-since-covid-19).

Job losses, lockdowns and school closures are increasing the need for emergency food aid. The impact on people’s livelihoods across the UK has compounded a poverty crisis that long pre-existed the Covid-19 pandemic.

People visit food banks because they cannot afford to buy food. However, receiving a temporary emergency supply of food will not resolve the financial crisis they are facing. The distribution of emergency food parcels cannot solve the escalating poverty driving food bank use.

Like the [Independent Food Aid Network](http://www.foodaidnetwork.org.uk/), I would like to see a country which doesn’t need emergency food aid and in which good food is accessible to all and would ask that support measures that would see:

* the temporary £20 uplift to Universal Credit to be made permanent and extended to legacy benefits;
* the removal of the benefit cap and the two-child limit;
* waiting time for Universal Credit removed, so that advance payments are no longer loans;
* the end of the sanctions system;
* the permanent suspension of No Recourse to Public Funds status;
* employers consistently paying a Real Living Wage;
* an end to zero-hour contracts

The devastating and long-term impact of poverty is well-documented. The above changes would help to significantly reduce poverty that is impacting millions of people across the UK. The Government should no longer rely on the compassion of volunteers to fill this ever-growing gap and appropriate benefits and incomes that match the cost of living should be accessible to all.

Please can you reassure me that you will do what you can to prevent charitable food aid from being further normalised in this country and to address the root causes of poverty driving rapidly rising food insecurity in the UK.

I very much look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

*[Name/Email/Any other contact details]*