

Food banks in the UK 英國食物銀行

Vocabulary: Poverty 貧窮

When looking at Western Europe, we don't usually think about poverty - but in fact, some people in modern-day Britain are so **hard up** that they can't **afford** to buy food. They are **hooked on** computers. Some spend up to six hours a day on their **gadgets**. They can be playing games live with others elsewhere in the world, **updating their status** on social media, **texting** friends or looking for the latest **app to download** to their **tablets** or **smartphones**.

Back in 2008, the **financial crisis** caused a lot of **redundancies**. Then there were the cuts to the **welfare system** in 2013 which added to the problem - and many British people **fell into debt**. It's estimated that 500,000 people in the UK have turned to **food banks**, just to **get by**.

Steph Hagen, who works in a Nottingham food bank, says: "People do not go to a food bank because it's an open door. It's a case of they go to it because they need to. With our food bank - we are an independent one, and we have **limited stocks** - everyone who comes through our door has no income whatsoever."

There are checks and **referrals** to make sure nobody is **abusing the system**. If a doctor or a social worker thinks someone needs to use a food bank - even for a short time - they can give them **vouchers**. Then the people in need take the vouchers along to the food bank and they get **handouts** for three days.

Churches and individual **donors** provide most of the food in the banks. But some businesses might help out too.

And what sort of food is offered in food banks? Hagen says: "Basically, we've got porridge. We do occasionally get fresh produce but it's very rare, especially in the winter months. It's like, tinned fruit, tinned **ready meals**. We have to give out 'no-cooking' food parcels because people can't afford the gas and electricity".

Community spirit has a lot to do with food banks. **Volunteers** say they are a great meeting place for people who are lonely and depressed. And when facing a crisis, some** beneficiaries** might need to feed not only their belly - but also their soul.

Find the answers from the given text

1. What caused many British people to fall into debt?
2. How do food banks make sure people are genuinely in need?
3. Where do the items in food banks come from?
4. Why do food banks mostly offer people tinned food?
5. Which word in the article means 'stomach'?

Choose the correct answer

1. Martin lost his job about a year ago. Now he lives off _____ from his parents.

a voucher	handouts	referrals	redundancies
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2. Ann needs _____ to help her distribute food and clothes to the victims of the earthquake.

volunteers	beneficiaries	doctors	welfare system
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3. You've got to control your spending! It's not good to _____

get by	cut the welfare system	afford nothing	fall into debt
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4. Mr Jones, take this _____ to the food bank and they will give you a food parcel.

handout	voucher	income	crisis
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5. Sorry, mate, I can't lend you money. I'm _____ myself.

volunteer	handout	redundancies	hard up
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Vocabulary

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- hard up adj. 拮据，經濟困難
→補充
- to afford v. 負擔得起，買得起
→補充
- financial crisis n. 金融危機
→補充
- redundancy n. 裁員
→補充
- welfare system n. 福利體系
→補充
- to fall into debt n. 負債
→補充
- a food bank n. 食物銀行（食物賑濟處）
→補充
- to get by v. 勉強過活
→補充

Steph Hagen, who works in a Nottingham food bank, says: "People do not go to a food bank because it's an open door. It's a case of they go to it because they need to. With our food bank - we are an independent one, and we have **limited stocks** - everyone who comes through our door has no income whatsoever."

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- **limited stock** n. 有限的存貨，庫存有限
→補充
- **a referral** n. (官方的) 送交、移交，引見
→補充
- **to abuse the system** v. 濫用制度、體系
→補充
- **a voucher** n. 票券，代金券
→補充
- **a handout** n. 救濟品
→補充

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- a donor 捐贈者
→補充
- a ready meal 現成食品
→補充
- community spirit 社區精神
→補充
- a volunteer 志願者
→補充
- a beneficiary 受益者，受惠者
→補充