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## National Grid helps vulnerable families to stay safe...

National Grid is working with foodbank charity The Trussell Trust to provide free carbon monoxide detectors to vulnerable families in Birmingham.

18 Feb 2016

This new pilot scheme starts this Thursday (18th February) in Birmingham where The Trussell Trust has been provided with 1,000 detectors, each worth £15, to distribute through nine of its foodbanks in the area. If successful, National Grid will extend the initiative across the country with the potential to reach hundreds of thousands of families in crisis.

The Trussell Trust aims to end hunger and poverty in the UK. Its 400 strong foodbank network is increasing its services to provide 'More than Food' including money management, fuel vouchers and cookery courses. Last year they gave 1,084,604 three-day emergency food supplies to people in crisis.

"We're really grateful for the support from National Grid. People are referred to a foodbank when they hit crisis point. We speak to parents who will drink another mug of sugary hot water instead of eat dinner with their children because they can't put enough food on the table for the whole family. When your income won't cover the basics, however far you stretch it, a carbon monoxide detector is yet another expense you simply can't afford. By giving away monitors to people, we hope to raise awareness of CO poisoning and save lives," commented Helen Franks, corporate partnerships manager for The Trussell Trust.

Marie Ward, National Grid's head of customer operations said, "Carbon monoxide is a killer and badly fitted or unserviced gas appliances in the home can pose a very real danger. But we understand that, for some people, there is a choice between buying a CO detector that could save their life and putting food on the table. By teaming up with The Trussell Trust we will be distributing detectors to 1,000 families and saving them from having to make that decision."

The CO detectors emit an audible warning which alerts people to dangerous levels of carbon monoxide in their home. Known as the 'silent killer', carbon monoxide poisoning kills over 50 people a year, with 4,000 more attending hospital with carbon monoxide symptoms. An odourless, colourless gas, carbon monoxide is not easily detected and symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning can be confused with flu.

Warning signs of appliances that aren't working properly include lazy yellow or orange flames rather than crisp blue ones, black marks on or around the appliance and too much condensation in the room. Anyone who has concerns about the safety of their gas appliances should call the national gas emergency service on 0800 111 999.

– Ends –

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Notes for editors

Trussell Trust Foodbank end of year figures for West Midlands

Between 1st April 2014 – 31st March 2015, 1,084,604 people in crisis across the UK were provided with three days' emergency food. During this period 104,300 people in crisis across the West Midlands were provided with three days' emergency food.

Regional breakdown for this period:\*

COUNTY	ADULTS	CHILDREN	TOTAL
Shropshire	2,439	1,458	3,897
Staffordshire	14,821	8,583	23,404
Warwickshire	9,303	4,992	14,295
West Midlands	30,338	20,576	50,914
Worcestershire	7,532	4,258	11,790
	64,433	39,867	104,300

\* NB because we work with a live data system, numbers will increase with time as foodbanks input more data into the system. The numbers above are accurate as of 16/04/2015.

Steve Smith from National Grid and Juanita Murray, food bank manager

About The Trussell Trust

- Trussell Trust foodbanks provide three days' nutritionally balanced food and support to people in crisis in the UK. In 2014-15, 1,084,604 three day emergency food supplies were provided to 1,084,604 people in crisis. Almost 400,000 of these went to children.
- In the West Midlands during this period, 104,300 three day emergency food supplies were provided to people in crisis; over 39,000 of these went to children.
- Every day, people in the UK go hungry for reasons ranging from redundancy or bereavement to welfare problems or receiving an unexpected bill on a low income. Everyone who comes to a Trussell Trust foodbank is referred by a frontline professional like CAB, housing associations and children's centres. Over 30,000 professionals refer to foodbanks in the UK.
- Over 90% of food given out is donated by the public and over 30,000 people volunteer at Trussell Trust foodbanks across the UK.
- Trussell Trust foodbanks work to resolve the underlying cause of people's crisis. Volunteers are trained to signpost people to other agencies, and as part of the charity's More than Food approach, many foodbanks also host additional services like debt and money advice, holiday lunch and breakfast clubs. Read more on the upcoming roll out of The Trussell Trust's 'financial triage' programme.
- You can find out more at [www.trusselltrust.org](http://www.trusselltrust.org)

Notes to Editors:

National Grid is pivotal to the energy systems in the UK and the north eastern United States. We aim to serve customers well and efficiently, supporting the communities in which we operate and making possible the energy systems of the future.

National Grid in the UK:

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.
- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at <https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news>

National Grid undertakes no obligation to update any of the information contained in this release, which speaks only as at the date of this release, unless required by law or regulation.

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