



Craig Whittaker MP

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Food Poverty in the UK

Thank you for contacting me about food poverty in the UK.

I agree with you that this is a serious issue, with some of the country's poorest families struggling to afford to feed themselves. It is vital to do everything possible to help people with the cost of living.

Ministers are working hard to improve competition to help producers and retailers offer the best prices. There is a range of policies to promote a growing, sustainable food and farming sector and keep prices down. The Government is also working to promote transparency and openness in global markets.

Food banks provide an incredibly valuable service, and I would like to pay tribute to the hardworking volunteers involved. People visit them for a variety of reasons and it is of course highly undesirable that anybody should be in a position where they feel the need to do so.

The welfare system supports millions of people who are on low incomes or unemployed, so nobody has to struggle to meet their basic needs, but I passionately believe that the surest route out of poverty is work. I am delighted that the Government is dedicated to building an economy that works for everyone, and has overseen falls in unemployment, record numbers of jobs, pay cheques rising faster than inflation and income tax cut so that working people keep more of what they earn.

I look forward to this record continuing, and especially welcome the creation of a National Living Wage that is giving two and a half million people a direct pay rise, with those previously on the Minimum Wage seeing their pay rise by over a third.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP