

# £16 million for food charities to provide meals for those in need

The government has today announced up to £16 million to provide food for those who are struggling as a result of coronavirus.

The programme will provide millions of meals over the next 12 weeks and be delivered through charities including [FareShare](#) and [WRAP \(Waste and Resources Action Programme\)](#).

At least 5,000 frontline charities and community groups in England will benefit, including refuges, homeless shelters and rehabilitation services. It will cover rural areas as well as cities, targeting those who are struggling to get food.

Both WRAP and FareShare have well-established networks for funding local charities and delivering food, ensuring support can get to where it is needed as quickly as possible. Part of the fund will also be available for smaller food distribution charities.

These supplies will be in addition to those already donated by supermarkets, hospitality businesses, wholesalers, smaller retailers, suppliers and manufacturers who have been working collectively, co-ordinated by the Institute of Grocery Distribution (IGD).

The funding is part of the [£750 million pot announced by the Chancellor for frontline charities across the UK](#) during the coronavirus outbreak. This is a further step in work to allocate that funding package, with Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport leading on the allocation of funding. It builds on [existing government support](#) for those struggling as a result of COVID-19.

Environment Secretary George Eustice said:

During this difficult time our frontline food charities are doing brilliant work amid a significant increase in demand – working in refuges, drop-in services, homeless centres and other places.

It is absolutely vital they have the resources they need and this funding will help the most vulnerable in our society get the food they need at this enormously challenging time.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

We're doing all we can to support vulnerable people through this crisis and this vital initiative will help provide meals for those who need them.

It is part of the unprecedented £750 million of government funding to provide support for our brilliant charities and volunteers that are so vital to the national effort.

Lindsay Boswell, CEO of Fareshare said:

We welcome this support from Defra to obtain vital food supplies, on top of the generosity already shown by the UK food industry. This will enable us to continue to supply much-needed food and drink to the many thousands of frontline charities and community groups across England that are doing the humbling work of getting meals to very vulnerable people during this crisis.

We want to make clear that this funding will only be used for the procurement of food and drink and that our own running costs are funded through other gratefully received charitable donations. We have seen the generosity of the food industry who have stepped up to donate food and logistical support to help us do this, and government has now come in to play its part alongside . If businesses or local authorities wish to join our efforts in the fight against hunger and food waste, be they in food, logistics or have fleets, we urge them to get in touch with us today.

Marcus Gover, Chief Executive of WRAP, said:

We've worked with Defra to create a grant scheme of support for the many organisations across England who are feeding the most vulnerable among us. In only two weeks we've received a huge response and are finalising the first batch of applications. This additional funding will be used to expand that essential work with support for the very smallest, to the largest charities and enable them to support many more people at this difficult time.

The government continues to urge people to support family, friends and neighbours by helping with shopping for food and other supplies. Information on how to help safely can be found on [gov.uk/safehelp](https://www.gov.uk/safehelp). Those who meet the criteria for support from the NHS Volunteer Responders programme can refer themselves or a family member by calling 08081963646.

Local councils may also be able to offer support and give advice to those who do not have friends and family nearby to help. You can find your local authority [online here](#).

Those who are well and able to get to the shops are also encouraged to do so, leaving online delivery slots for those who need them most.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

The role of FareShare and WRAP is as follows:

- Fareshare – the largest not-for-profit organisation that redistributes food in England and nationwide – will buy food from manufacturers to provide at least 5,000 frontline charities with food.
- WRAP – specialists in sustainability and reducing food waste – will use the extra funding to boost existing work redistributing surplus food in the supply chain. WRAP is already managing the government's £3.25 million fund to redistribute up to 14,000 tonnes of surplus stock during the coronavirus outbreak.

We will also be setting up a Covid-19 Food Charity Grant Scheme, which will enable other charities that provide food to apply online for funding. More details on how to apply for this funding will be available on Monday at [this link](#).

Grocery food retailers, suppliers and manufacturers, coordinated by IGD, are also making significant donations to local communities and charities in response to the outbreak. For example:

- Tesco is providing a £30 million package of support for local communities tackling COVID-19, including a £25 million food donations programme.
- Sainsbury's has donated £3 million to FareShare and Asda donated £5m to community charities to help people through COVID-19.
- Morrison's has promised £10 million of dedicated stock to be set aside in Morrison's supermarkets to be donated.
- Coop has donated £1.5 million of food to FareShare.
- Suppliers and manufacturers have also donated thousands of pallets of food to Fareshare across a range of fresh and ambient food types.
- To see the full list of actions that the supermarkets are taking to support the public please visit the [Defra in the media blog](#).

Further guidance on how to access food and other essential supplies during the coronavirus pandemic is on [gov.uk](#).

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## **Countering online child sexual exploitation and abuse during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic**

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times

- Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Do not meet others, even friends or family.

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

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## [We will meet again: government honours VE Day with UK first-ever skytyping display](#)

News story

'We Will Meet Again' and 'Thank You' messages commemorate those who served during World War II and thank those working on the frontline during the coronavirus outbreak.



- first-ever UK skytyping display commissioned to honour the 75th anniversary of VE Day
- the messages 'We Will Meet Again' and 'Thank You' were seen from over Henstridge airfield in Somerset this morning, capturing the feelings of the nation
- the phrases serve to commemorate those who fought in World War II, as well as those currently on the frontline and keeping the country going during coronavirus

The Department for Transport granted a special exemption for the first-ever UK skytyping display today (8 May 2020) to honour the 75th anniversary of [Victory in Europe \(VE\) Day](#).

The display over Henstridge airfield in Somerset could be seen for up to 20 miles, and saw the messages 'We Will Meet Again' and 'Thank You' etched 10,000 feet above the ground. The messages were to commemorate those who served during World War II, and to thank all of those working on the

frontline, and keeping the country going during coronavirus.

The display was the first since a recent law change introduced by the Transport Secretary, to allow skytyping and skywriting. Skywriting has a strong British history, after being inadvertently discovered by a Royal Air Force (RAF) pilot during World War I, when oil accidentally found its way into a hot exhaust and vapourised, creating a vast and dense cloud of white smoke. British pilots then put the discovery to use, by using it to confuse attacking planes\*.

Today's display was conducted by military veterans from the RAF, French Air Force, British Royal Marines and the Royal Navy.

Grant Shapps, Transport Secretary, said:

Victory in Europe Day will always be a landmark in British history and it is an honour to have commissioned the first skytyping display in the UK to mark the occasion.

With its strong British history, stemming from the creation of skywriting, it seems an entirely fitting way to honour all those who fought for our freedom while also thanking those keeping the country moving during this challenging time.

Published 8 May 2020

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## [A message to Austria from Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab on the 75th Anniversary of VE Day](#)

[A message from Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab to Austria](#)

Transcript:

"Today we commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe. The 8th of May 1945 is embedded in our collective memory. It brought an end to what many hoped would prove to be the war to end all wars. It was a sobering moment across Europe and across the rest of the world where our nations grieved the millions of people who lost their lives including members of my own family who couldn't escape from Czechoslovakia and perished after the Nazis invaded.

So it's with pride and gratitude that we will always remember the sacrifice

and the heroism of those who fell on the battlefield, those who died fighting to defend the freedoms that we cherish today. And it's with the heaviest of hearts that we will never forget the innocents who played no part in the fighting but were taken from our families too often with unspeakable brutality. Today those emotions and those instincts continue to inspire our pursuit of peace, freedom and the international rule of law around the world.

Of course VE day didn't just mark the end of war. It also marked a new era. For Austria, for the UK, for the rest of the world too. VE day gave us hope, it was a new beginning. Built on a promise of peace and stability with a resounding commitment to "nie wieder", never again.

And I am proud of how the United Kingdom supported Austria through the difficult times after 1945. Tens of thousands of British troops were stationed in Austria from 1945-55, and they played an essential role in helping rebuild Austria's infrastructure.

Britain and Austria have been working together for 75 years since VE day and we will continue to work together to strengthen a friendship nurtured by common values and the experience of everything that we have been through together. So it's fitting today that we stand together in the very deepest solidarity and friendship to honour those lost during the bleakest chapter of history but also to look to a brighter future working side by side as a force for good in the world."

German Translation:

Heute gedenken wir des 75sten Jahrestages des Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs in Europa. Der 8 Mai 1945 ist in unserem kollektiven Gedächtnis verwurzelt. Er endete das, was in der Hoffnung vieler der Krieg war der alle Kriege beenden sollte.

Es war ein ernüchternder Moment in ganz Europa und dem Rest der Welt an dem unsere Länder um Millionen Menschen trauerten, die ihr Leben verloren hatten, darunter auch Mitglieder meiner eigenen Familie, die nicht aus der Tschechoslowakei fliehen konnten und starben nachdem die Nazis einmarschiert waren.

Mit Stolz und Dankbarkeit werden wir uns immer an die Opfer und den Heldenmut jener erinnern , die auf den Schlachtfeldern gefallen sind, die gestorben sind im Kampf um die Freiheiten die wir heute hoch halten.

Mit schwerem Herzen werden wir auch die Unschuldigen nie vergessen, die keinen Anteil am Kampf hatten aber dennoch viel zu oft mit unbeschreiblicher Brutalität von ihren Familien getrennt wurden.

Diese Emotionen beflügeln heute unser Streben nach Frieden, Freiheit und internationaler Rechtsstaatlichkeit. Natürlich steht der 8 Mai nicht nur für das Ende des Krieges. Er begann auch eine neue Ära. Für Österreich, für das Vereinigte Königreich und auch für den Rest der Welt. Der 8 Mai gab uns Hoffnung, es war ein neuer Anfang. Gebaut auf dem Versprechen von Frieden und Stabilität mit einer klaren Verpflichtung zu "nie wieder". Ich bin stolz wie

das Vereinigte Königreich Österreich während der schwierigen Zeit nach 1945 unterstützt hat. Zehntausende Britische Soldaten waren in Österreich zwischen 1945 und 1955 stationiert und sie haben für den österreichischen Wiederaufbau eine wichtige Rolle gespielt.

Das Vereinigte Königreich und Österreich haben die vergangenen 75 Jahre seit dem 8 Mai 1945 zusammen gearbeitet und wir werden weiter gemeinsam daran arbeiten eine Freundschaft zu stärken, die auf gemeinsamen Werten und geteilten Erfahrungen basiert. Es ist daher gebührend, dass wir heute gemeinsam und in tiefer Solidarität und Freundschaft stehen um jene zu ehren, die wir im dunkelsten Kapitel der Geschichte verloren haben, aber auch um einer aussichtreichen Zukunft entgegen zu blicken, in der wir Seite an Seite für das Wohl der Welt arbeiten.

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## [British Gurkhas and UK Government rescue mission to help stranded Brits in Nepal](#)

A rescue mission to retrieve more than 100 British travellers stranded in remote parts of Nepal was carried out with military precision – when the British Gurkhas Nepal were called in.

109 British nationals, and a further 28 foreign nationals, were stuck in isolated parts of Nepal when the coronavirus crisis broke out, severely reducing transport routes in the country.

Their remote locations, and the strict lockdown measures, meant the travellers were unable to reach the three charter flights sent to repatriate British nationals back to the UK last month.

Mobilising the British Gurkhas Nepal network, based in Kathmandu, Pokhara and Dharan, and using their local knowledge, UK Embassy staff and soldiers mapped out where the stranded British travellers were, and devised a plan to reach them.

Over three weeks, the soldiers, embassy staff and locally employed drivers, travelled more than 4,000 miles through the Himalayas to 13 different districts, negotiating river crossings and landslides, to reach the tourists scattered across dozens of mountainous towns, villages and national parks.

In some instances, the soldiers and drivers were forced to set up camp for the night on the side of the road because of the long and hazardous journeys.

[The British Gurkhas rescue Brits stranded in Nepal](#)

Sergeant Prakash Gurung, of 29 Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps, rescued a British national from Manang, located in north-west Nepal, before driving the solo traveller nine-and-a-half hours back to Kathmandu to catch a UK charter flight.

Sgt Gurung, who by day is a postal operator, volunteered to complete the nine-and-a-half hour drive to Manang, which nearly had to be aborted part-way through due to a landslide, traversing single-track, treacherous roads to reach the stranded traveller.

Sgt Gurung, who has completed three tours of Iraq, as well as serving in Afghanistan, the Middle East, Kenya and Germany, said:

I stepped up to volunteer because I thought it was a part of my job. Helping people in dire situations gives me a sense of satisfaction. The gratitude people expressed in messages has encouraged me to do more of this sort of work.

Her Majesty's Ambassador to Nepal, Nicola Pollitt, said:

Getting British nationals home in such an unprecedented time is a huge challenge around the world, but in a country like Nepal, with such extreme conditions, it would have been impossible to get everyone back without the close collaboration of the Embassy and British Gurkhas Nepal.

We have been able to reunite more than 700 British travellers with their families in the UK, and that would not have been possible without the tireless work of our Embassy and Gurkha team.

Lt Col Peter Wettenhall, Deputy Commander, British Gurkhas Nepal, said:

British Gurkhas Nepal has a long and proud history of operating in Nepal regardless of circumstance. It is both fitting, and in keeping with the role of the Armed Forces that when called on for assistance that we do our very best to support those in need.

We are delighted that we were able to assist the British Embassy, British Nationals and our soldiers and families in Nepal through this trying time.

As well as bringing home British travellers on the charter flights last month, around 70 soldiers and their dependants from different Regiments of the Brigade of Gurkhas and wider British Army, who were in Nepal on leave and holiday, returned to the UK to join the fight against coronavirus.

Notes to Editors:



- The soldiers involved in the rescue mission were:
  - Cpl Sujan Moktan and LCpl Khopjung Gurung of the 1st Battalion the Royal Gurkha Rifles, Sir John Moore Barracks, Kent
  - Cpl Bimal Rai and LCpl Narendra Rai of the 2nd Battalion the Royal Gurkha Rifles, British Forces Brunei
  - Sgt Prakash Gurung of the 29 Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps, Duke of Gloucester Barracks, South Cerney, Cirencester
  - Capt Khagendra Pun, Cpl Sunil Gurung, Cpl Khagendra Gurung and Cpl Amrit Gurung of 30 Signal Regiment, 250 Gurkha Signal Squadron, Gamecock Barracks, Bramcote
  - SSgt Sanjay Rai, LCpl Prakash Tamang and LCpl Dinesh Ghale of the 247 Gurkha Signal Squadron, Stafford, Staffordshire
  - WO2 Yogendra Limbu of 10 QOGLR, St Omer Barracks, Alison's Road, Aldershot, Hampshire
  - SSgt Sagar Limbu from the Gurkha Staff and Personal Support, HQ Brigade of Gurkhas, RMA Sandhurst, Camberley
  - WO2 Matthew Bavington of the RHQ Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Prince Phillip Barracks, MOD Lyneham, Chippenham
- The Gurkhas also assisted foreign nationals from France, Australia, Ireland, India, Spain, Canada, Germany, Italy, the US and Switzerland.
- More than 20,000 British travellers, on 83 Government charter flights, will have returned to the UK from across South Asia by 7 May.
- To find out more about The Gurkha Welfare Trust visit – <https://www.gwt.org.uk/>

## **Further information**