

SNP blame welfare cuts for rise in food banks

The SNP has said that families using food banks this Christmas Day is a result of the “Dickensian impact” of welfare cuts.

The Trussell Trust has said that between April and September of this year more than 15,000 children have used a food bank and figures show that 48% of people using food banks have done so as a result of benefit cuts and delays. Food banks are expecting a rise in demand over Christmas and will be open on Christmas Day.

The Child Poverty Action Group has estimated that by 2020 up to 100,000 more children will live poverty in Scotland, as a result of on-going tax and benefit changes. However, the proposals set out by the Smith Commission will leave key powers for tackling poverty and creating a fairer social security system at Westminster.

Commenting, SNP Work and Pensions spokesperson Dr Eilidh Whiteford MP said: “It is a disgrace that in a country as wealthy as Scotland food banks will be open on Christmas Day and will be relied upon by families with children. “Heartless Tory Ministers are cutting £6 billion from the incomes of the least well-off in Scotland and fully £1 billion of these cuts will directly impact on children – and we are now seeing the Dickensian impact of these cuts.

“But with both the Tories and Labour committed to further austerity and social security cuts, we face the prospect of 100,000 more children living in poverty by 2020.

“In the New Year Scotland will have an opportunity at the General Election to send a message to Westminster that the Scottish Parliament must have the powers it needs to tackle poverty and inequality.”

The NEN has a list of the food banks which are open on Christmas Day [here](#).