



For immediate release

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**Accent Housing launches sector-wide campaign to help the Trussell Trust
meet huge demand for emergency food parcels**

Accent Housing has today launched a nationwide campaign to raise £1m for the Trussell Trust, which is working with its network of food banks across the UK to support the rapidly increasing number of people unable to afford food as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

The *More than Homes* campaign – backed by the National Housing Federation, Chartered Institute of Housing and the Northern Housing Consortium – will provide a huge boost for the UK-wide charity. Its network of food banks experienced an 81% surge in demand for its emergency food parcels during the final two weeks of March 2020, compared to the same period in 2019. The number of parcels given to children has soared by 122%.

The Trussell Trust runs a national network of 1,200 food banks with the help of more than 28,000 volunteers. Before the COVID-19 crisis hit, the charity was already responding to a 20-30% year-on-year increase in demand – but [figures published last week](#) suggest more people will be needing help than ever before in the coming months.

Three quarters (75%) of the money raised through the '*More than Homes*' campaign will be distributed directly to local food banks.

The remaining 25% will be used by the Trussell Trust to fund nationwide support to help manage volunteers, refer people to food banks and distribute parcels directly to people's doors, so food banks can continue to support people safely during the coming months.

The campaign – which has received support from a number of housing associations already – calls on the sector's collective efforts to work together to help residents and the people in their communities experiencing hunger.

Paul Dolan, Chief Executive of Accent Group, said:

"The housing sector's social purpose has never been clearer – nor has there been a more appropriate time for us to come together and tackle this as one. Vast numbers of people will be facing hardship as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, and our organisations are right on the frontline. We are collectively responsible for housing six million residents as we fight the biggest battle in modern peacetime; a global pandemic which has presented unprecedented challenges on a scale we could have never imagined."

"We know two of the basic necessities in life are to have a roof over your head and food on the table. Yet we see the injustice in society day-in-day-out as these basic provisions aren't afforded to all. Battling the economic impact of the crisis today isn't something that can be achieved by government or any organisation working alone. It demands the collective power of people and organisations uniting to meet the challenges our society faces. We need to work to right this social imbalance by not only supporting people in the now, but also thinking strategically and as a collective for the longer-term."

"There is no suggested donation to *More than Homes* – contributions large and small will have the ability to make a phenomenal difference to those in need."

Emma Revie, Chief Executive of Trussell Trust, said:

"We're working round the clock with our network to understand each food bank's situation, offer guidance, and work out how we can best support them. The resilience of food banks is nothing short of outstanding. We know we can't do this alone, so we are truly grateful for any support housing associations can give in these incredibly difficult times."

Kate Henderson, Chief Executive of the National Housing Federation, said:

"This is a great idea, bringing together charitable organisations at the heart of local communities to support those most in need. Food banks provide an invaluable service to people who are unable to cover the cost of living and it is more important than ever that they are able to keep running at this time. Throughout this crisis housing associations have been finding new ways to support vulnerable groups and people struggling financially."

Gavin Smart, Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Housing, said:

"Food banks already provide a critical service to households across the country, and the need for this vital support has increased significantly as a result of the current outbreak. As social landlords housing associations play a central role in supporting communities they work with. This initiative will build on that social purpose and local presence to help foodbanks rise to the huge challenge created by coronavirus. I look forward to more housing associations joining those who have already committed to this initiative and helping the Trussell Trust to support as many people as possible through this unprecedented crisis."

Tracy Harrison, Chief Executive of the Northern Housing Consortium, said:

"Housing associations are anchor institutions, rooted within their communities, with a strong social purpose. They are already playing a vital role in supporting the most vulnerable across the North. By coming together as a sector, we can ensure this excellent scheme continues to provide valuable support to the people who need it most."

To find out more about the *More than Homes* campaign, please visit www.accentgroup.org/more-than-homes or email morethanhomes@accentgroup.org

To make a donation, please visit: <https://donate.trusselltrust.org/morethanhomes/>

-Ends-

Notes to editors.

About the Trussell Trust:

- The Trussell Trust is an anti-poverty charity that supports a network of more than 1,200 food bank centres across the UK.
- It takes more than food to end hunger. The Trussell Trust therefore does three things: supports its network to provide emergency food to people referred; helps food banks to provide on-site additional help or signpost people to relevant local charities to resolve the cause of referral; and brings together the experiences of hundreds of communities on the front line to challenge the

structural issues that lock people in poverty, and campaign for long-term change so we can see a future without the need for food banks.

- Read more at trusselltrust.org

About Accent Housing

Accent is proud to have provided homes and services for a diverse range of customers and communities since 1966.

As a national housing association with over 20,500 properties spread over the North, East and South of the country, Accent already provides homes to around 35,000 people.

Accent puts their customers first and exists to improve lives, providing people with high quality homes, affordably.

To find out more information about Accent, visit www.accentgroup.org

Follow the campaign on social media with **#MoreThanHomes**

Contact

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