



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Mr David Cameron  
Prime Minister  
Cabinet Office  
70 Whitehall  
London SW1A 2AS

23 September 2013

*Dear Prime Minister*

I was able to ask you at Prime Minister's Question Time a year ago about your reaction to the spread of food banks and their continual expansion. Like you, I see the immediate need the food banks offer but I am, like most, equally concerned that food banks are becoming an institutional part of our welfare state.

Might I therefore ask you to initiate a short enquiry so that it will become possible to answer the following questions and from the answers build an effective antipoverty strategy for families who draw help from the local food bank?

The questions I believe we need to answer include:

- What are the causes that influence why families become hungry?
- What immediate food support exists and for how long is it required?
- How does the issue of debt influence this demand?
- What part of budgetary and household skills can be improved to help tackle this problem?
- How difficult is it now to live on benefits in terms of their being a reliable source of income?
- How can the government's Work Programme be improved to better support families in food poverty?
- Why does it appear that the statutory services are largely inactive in the face of hunger?

The Rt Hon Frank Field MP DL



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If the present trends continue we will see food banks operating in most constituencies and a number of banks operating in some. I would hope that the short enquiry might lay the basis of the strategy that would prevent this scenario.

I would be happy to discuss this proposal with members of your staff and I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank Field'.