

“FEEDING HOMELESS PEOPLE IS NOT COST EFFECTIVE” SAYS DEFRA

“DEFRA has no policy for managing and reducing the 17 million tonnes of waste produced by the food chain each year. As a result, this massive mountain of waste goes to landfill.

However, estimates suggest that a quarter of this food is still fit for purpose and perfectly good to eat, and as a result, can be used to feed the many thousands of vulnerable and disadvantaged people that FareShare support each day”, said Tony Lowe, the Chief Executive of FareShare (see Notes).

FareShare has been assisted with funding from the Government’s Landfill Tax Credit Scheme in the past (see Notes). As a result of a review of the scheme, this funding has been withdrawn and no alternative help has been offered by DEFRA.

“At a time when the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has just published a report highlighting that the political challenge posed by social deprivation is likely to intensify in the future, it makes no sense for an organisation helping to relieve this deprivation to be refused support by the Government.”

“The new BREW (Business Resource Efficiency and Waste) programme, launched in November by Margaret Beckett, is worth over £284 million, however the only initiative in programme towards the food industry waste mountain has been to establish research projects into minimising the food packaging used by supermarkets” said Lowe, “despite diverting thousands of tonnes of food from landfill for ten years, FareShare has been deprived of essential funding for work that is both environmentally useful and socially inclusive”.

“We have attempted to have discussions with DEFRA to ascertain how they are going to make inroads into this growing environmental and social problem, but found both the Food Directorate and the Waste Directorate have no plans and are unwilling to meet with us. As result of this neglect, we will have to seek alternative sources of funding, or seriously curtail our operations”, concluded Lowe.

For more information please contact:
Alex Green, Marketing Director
Email. alex.green@fareshare.org.uk
Tel. 0207 394 2461 or mobile. 07779580393
www.fareshare.org.uk

NOTES:

- 1) FareShare is the national food charity that redistributes surplus product from the food and drink industry to disadvantaged and vulnerable people in the community.
- 2) Last year FareShare were able to contribute food for over 2.5 million meals, and each week 12,000 homeless and vulnerable people have regular and nutritious food everyday. The annual value of this work is estimated at £5 million. These are resources released so that 250 local community charities are able to provide other additional services to their clients.
- 3) LANDFILL TAX CREDIT SCHEME: The last government created the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme (LTCS) through the Landfill Tax Regulations 1996 and ENTRUST was appointed as the administrative body for the scheme. In brief, the government allows some of the money it levies on operators of landfill sites to be used to benefit communities and the environment. Landfill operators can contribute up to 20% of their landfill tax liability to environmental bodies in return for a tax credit.