



ing - are run or supported by churches, according to figures setting
munities.

The findings – which amount to the largest survey to date of the extent of the Church of England’s work with some of the most vulnerable in society – show that 80 per cent of congregations are involved in one or more forms of social action.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said: “From food banks to debt counselling and lunch clubs to language classes, these figures spell out for the first time the sheer scale and range of our churches’ commitment to their communities.

“We are doing more to love and help people in need than at any time since 1945.



helps us to act.”

Data gathered from 13,000 churches shows that the biggest area of work is in food banks - with 60 per cent, or nearly 8,000 churches - involved in either running or supporting food banks through volunteers, donations and providing venues.

Nearly a third, or 32 per cent, of Church of England churches run or support parent and toddler groups; just over a quarter, or 26 per cent, lunch clubs; and just over one in five, or 22 per cent, community cafes. Holiday clubs and breakfast clubs, often providing meals to children from low income families, are supported or run by nearly 17 per cent of churches.

Other community action projects supported or run by the Church of England's churches involved a range of activities from bereavement support and community gardens to music events and English language tuition.

The figures on the extent of social action by Church of England churches were collected as part of the annual Statistics for Mission 2017 survey.

One such project hosted by the Church of England is [Micah Liverpool](#), the social justice charity based at Liverpool Cathedral. It runs a food bank from St Bride's church on Thursdays and a community market on Mondays in St Michael in the City church providing a free hot lunch and selling surplus food from supermarkets at low cost.

Paul O'Brien, Executive Director of Micah Liverpool, said: "The food bank at St Bride's is one of the biggest food bank pantries in the North West, we fed 218 people in the space of two hours on Thursday. At St Michael's we have a multi faith charity called 'Faiths for Change' that provides free meals from the food that we get that day from supermarkets through FareShare.

"On average we feed around 220 people a week through food parcels. We then have up to 20 people a week shopping in the community market and then also receiving a meal which is available for free."

Notes to Editors

- The social action findings from Statistics for Mission can be downloaded [here](#).
- The findings are based on returns from around 13,000 of the 16,000 Church of England churches and relate to activities during the calendar year 2017.
- It is the first time that parishes have been asked for details of social action work as part of Statistics for Mission research. A press release on the full Statistics for Mission report will be available soon.
- Other case studies are available.