

Glasgow Local Child Poverty Action Report 2024/25

Glasgow is a city defined by its incredible strengths. Yet, the persistent grip of poverty, especially child poverty, continues to limit the potential and futures of too many. Tackling family poverty is not just a priority for the Council and NHS, it is the single focus priority declared by all our community planning partners. Through our Community Plan and Children's Services Plan, we are united in purpose. Our collective actions are powerfully aligned with the Council's Strategic Plan, the NHS GG&C Annual Delivery Plan, and the [Turning the Tide Strategy](#) - together, we are driving change and striving for a future where every child and family can thrive.

Our collective ambition is to move further and faster in tackling the root causes of child poverty and to make support more accessible and responsive to families' needs. This year's Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR) provides some examples of our whole family, whole community and whole system work over the last year, which is progressive and which we are very proud to present on behalf of all the partners working to address child poverty in Glasgow. Glasgow's third sector is a key partner in tackling child poverty and some 230 organisations have engaged in the 'No Wrong Door' network to tackle child poverty.

While we would like to only report success, we recognise the profound challenges facing families, communities, and services—challenges shaped by the wider economic context, shifting funding landscapes and needs. This past year has brought significant changes, including the closure of targeted programmes and a reduction in third sector capacity, which have inevitably impacted progress.

We continue to work closely with partners to soften these impacts, working to help ensure families stay connected to the vital services and supports they need. But there is much to do, and as partners we will continue to deepen our commitment to effective delivery and integration, focusing on our individual families and their needs as we strive to make sure everyone can benefit from a flourishing Glasgow.

Jann Gardner

Chief Executive, NHS GG&C

Susanne Millar

Chief Executive, GCC

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Glasgow Community Planning Partnership (GCPP)

Glasgow's refreshed Community Plan (2024–2034) signals a renewed and ambitious single focus commitment across all partners to reduce child and family poverty.

During the year the Child Poverty Pathfinder has become embedded as a Programme, the principle means for the Community Planning partners to work together to tackle poverty. The earlier pathfinder provided strong foundations by creating a team of staff from across the community planning partners, testing new ways of working, listening to families and practitioners, and learning from these experiences.

The Children's Services Executive Group, working through Glasgow Community Planning Partnership (GCPP), is also a key driver for creating the conditions that foster a good childhood. The Children's Services Plan (CSP) involves health and social care, education, Police Scotland, Glasgow Life, alongside third sector partners including Aberlour, Children First, Right There, and Quarriers. The upcoming CSP for 2026–2029 will include our commitments to promoting children's rights (UNCRC Incorporation Act 2024). This reflects the rights-focused nature of children's services and incorporates feedback from children and young people, who emphasised the importance of freedom from poverty, safety, education, health-promoting services and food security.

Given the breadth of activity over the past year, it's not feasible to capture everything within the scope of this high-level report. As previously, a list of many of the initiatives can be accessed, with follow-up information in the child poverty tracker (LCPAR Year 7). The tracker provides information on the extensive range of public and charitable interventions that have taken place during the year. All these efforts are proactively working to mitigate child poverty. As Ian Bruce, CEO of Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector (GCVS), reflected:

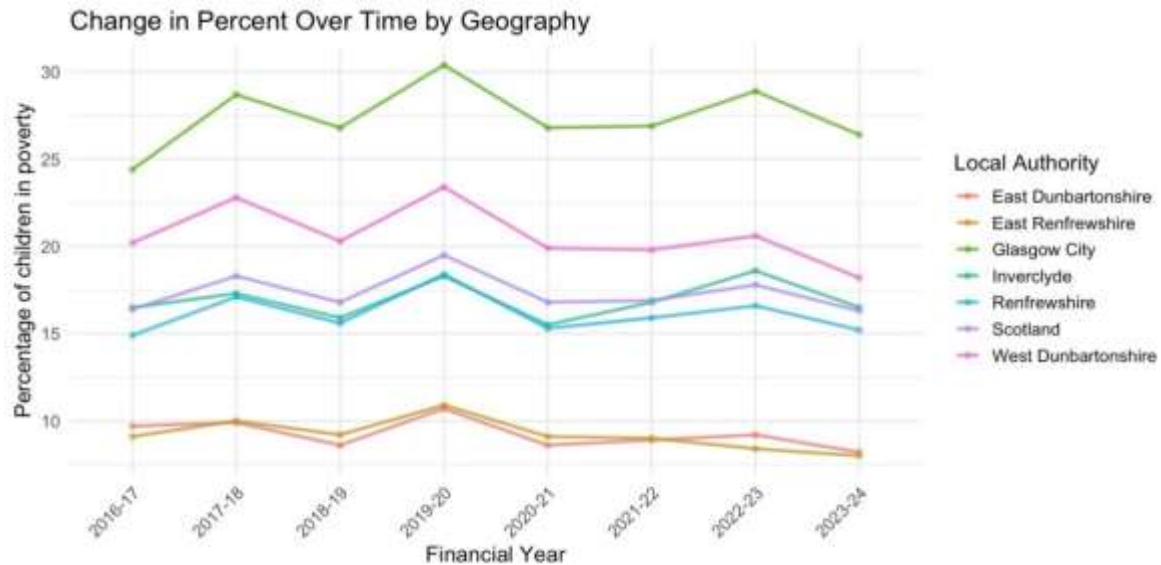
"Despite operating challenges, the third sector have continued to adapt with creativity and commitment, expanding peer support networks, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring that families remained connected to vital support in their communities."

How are children's experiences of poverty changing in Glasgow?

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) have changed some of the ways in which they calculate child poverty rates. They have applied this retrospectively to enable us to continue to compare across years. The calculation now incorporates income from the Scottish Child Payment. This shows a reduction in the last reporting year across a number of local authorities, and a significant reduction in Glasgow City. It is likely that the Scottish Child Payment is contributing to local change.

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After housing costs, End Child Poverty estimates that there are more families in relative poverty, over a third of children in the City (36%) in the most recent dataset (2023/24).

We can see that.

- Just over a quarter (26%) of children in Glasgow (25,690) lived in relative poverty in 2023/24 – down from 29% the previous year.
- This is 61% higher than for Scotland overall (16%), and the highest local authority in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde
- Child poverty estimates after housing costs have risen since the pandemic to a high of 36% in 2023/24
- Local data shows that on average, families are £117 per week below the poverty line, up from £107 in 2020

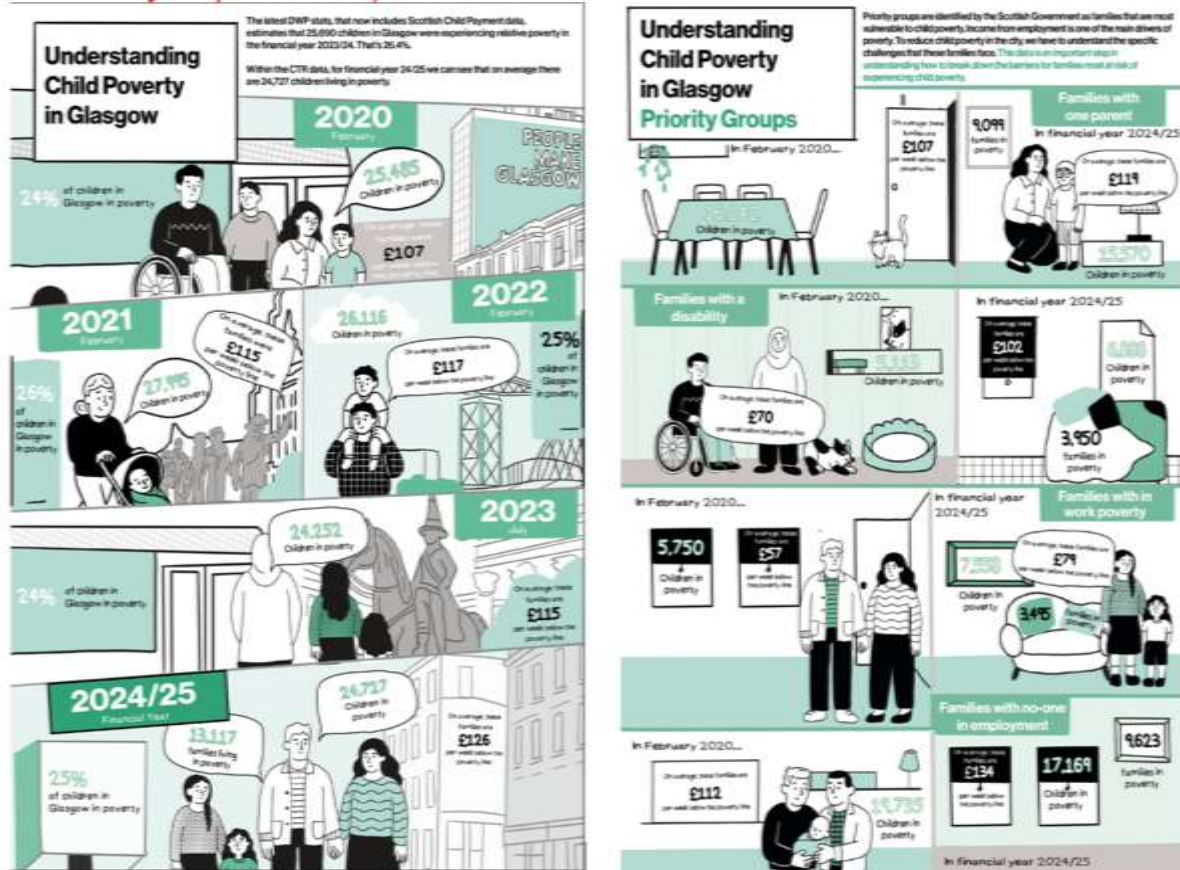
National and local data continues to show the scale of the challenge for Glasgow's families. Glasgow's local intelligence provides insight to the types and proportion of families for which the situation is not improving and indeed getting worse.

Families experience poverty in different ways depending on their circumstances, with many facing multiple disadvantages that are often compounded by discrimination.

The Centre for Civic Innovation (CCI) has worked with partners to improve the way we understand who is most affected and how. The infographic below summarises the priority groups at greatest risk.

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Figure 3: Understanding Child Poverty in Glasgow (Civic Centre of Innovation Infographic, 2025)



Every year we report where available on the experiences of poverty across protected characteristics. The picture is consistent across the years. Children living in lone/single parent households represent over half of those living in poverty.

- **Lone parents (mostly women)** – 15,570 children in poverty; average of £119 per week below the poverty line.
- **Families with disability** – children in families with adult disability increased from 5,113 (2020/21) to 6,888 (2024/25).
- **Minority ethnic families** – 1 in 3 children in poverty are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

The health board (NHSGGC) undertook a Health and Wellbeing Survey (2024) involving home interviews with 2,638 adults from six minority ethnic communities: African, Chinese, Indian, Arab, Pakistani, and Polish. More than half (53%) of participants lived in households with at least one child under the age of 16. Overall, 3% of participants identified as seeking asylum. Nearly half (45.7%) of respondents resided in the 15% most deprived areas in Glasgow. Respondents identifying as African, Arab, and Pakistani were among those most likely to report difficulty meeting an unexpected expense of £35, experiencing food insecurity, and other indicators of financial hardship. These findings enhance our understanding of the scale and diversity of financial challenges affecting minority ethnic residents.

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The impact of poverty on women is a key feature in many of our annual reports, including the poverty experienced by women and girls experiencing violence. In 2024/25, the Glasgow Violence Against Women Partnership (GVAWP) has been actively working across multiple fronts to address and prevent violence against women and girls. GVAWP have re-aligned their city-wide strategic plan to the seven priorities of the Scottish Government's Equally Safe strategy and Scottish Government funding was extended to March 2026 for seven Glasgow-based projects, safeguarding existing supports for women and girls for the year. All these projects take an anti-poverty approach.

GVAWP have collaborated on a 'Women Destitution & No Recourse to Public Funds' Project, developed with Glasgow Women's Aid, which was able to support 30 women from diverse backgrounds with legal advice and short-term accommodation. Alarming rises in reported domestic abuse and rape has led to the creation of a Women's Safety Action Plan and Safety Charter. By tackling these interconnected issues, the partnership directly supports efforts to reduce child poverty and improve overall wellbeing for women, girls and their children.

Glasgow is also acting to lever the expertise, experience and networks of academics and practitioners through the Health Determinants Research Collaborative (HDRC Glasgow). The HDRC is in its first of five years, funded through NIHR to invest in the city's capacity to clarify and tackle the root causes of health inequalities, chief among them child and family poverty. At the heart of this collaboration is a shared ambition to support a cultural shift in how evidence is used, valued, and acted upon across the city's public service landscape. By embedding researchers into the Child Poverty Programme, HDRC Glasgow is acting as a critical friend and broker in the city's actions to reduce child poverty. www.hdrcglasgow.com

Tell Your Story: Learning from Families and Practitioners

Data alone cannot explain the full picture of poverty and how it impacts on families. To better understand how these inequalities are experienced by families and what would make a difference, Glasgow's Child Poverty Programme, undertook a '*Tell Your Story*', co-design process. This brought together insights directly from families and practitioners and built on evidence from the [All Age Childcare Report](#) and [Glasgow's Promise](#). In total, the learning reflects the experiences of hundreds of families and organisations across the city. Together these insights describe four key stages of accessing help that really matter to families: making contact, telling your story, getting support, and keeping in touch.

They told us they need:

- A trusted key worker.
- Family-friendly spaces with co-located services.
- Anti-stigma, relationship-centred approaches.
- Digital tools to reduce duplication.
- Childcare and flexibility.

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“The partners working together and the ideas we’ve come up with align really well with the citizen’s vision. It lets us know we’re on the right path and have one vision and voice to make changes.” – Amber, GEMAP Scotland

These insights, from both data and families affected by poverty, underline the importance of delivering a joined-up ‘whole’ response through community planning.

Watch the [Tell Your Story](#) video

Whole Family approaches

Many services in Glasgow incorporate support that considers all family members, as indicated in the tracker. Below we set out two examples of ‘whole family approaches’ one focused on a city approach (Glasgow Helps) and the other on a targeted approach (primary care whole family programme).

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Glasgow Helps. Glasgow Helps is a service set up to support families and individuals in Glasgow to access the right support at the right time. Whether someone simply needs information about local services in their community, or help dealing with a wide range of complex issues, Glasgow Helps provides a clear entry point into the wide network of support available across the city. By connecting people to the right help quickly and with care, the service makes it easier to navigate challenges and aims to prevent problems from escalating to crises.

Glasgow Helps adopts a person-centred, strengths-based approach to support, taking the time to understand what matters most to people rather than relying on fixed assessments. By working at the right pace, the service aims to ensure people feel understood and that they have the space and support needed to discuss what matters most to them. Support is shaped around the whole family and delivered in partnership with a strong network of services across the city. Housing, money advice, employability, ESOL, mental health and community resources can all be part of the response.

Rather than dealing with these issues in isolation, Glasgow Helps recognises how closely connected they often are and helps families to address them in a way that feels manageable and builds longer term resilience. The service also works to ensure that networks of support remain in place within communities after Glasgow Helps steps back, with 100 per cent of people who have given feedback saying they now have a better understanding of the services and supports available to them locally. Since October 2023, 7,844 individuals have engaged with Glasgow Helps. The three most common presenting issues at first point of contact were food, fuel and finance, reflecting the ongoing pressures of food insecurity, energy costs and wider financial hardship.

Stephanie, a young mother raising her daughter alone, was referred by her health visitor. After leaving her job when she gave birth, she was experiencing financial difficulty, social isolation and low confidence. Glasgow Helps focused initially on practical support, providing income maximisation advice to stabilise her finances. As trust grew, the service was able to introduce her to local parent and child groups, giving her the chance to build connections and confidence at a manageable pace. In time, she was also linked with employability services to support her longer-term goal of returning to work.

By focusing on her strengths and priorities and coordinating support through trusted partners, Glasgow Helps reduced barriers and created a more secure environment for Stephanie and her daughter. She described feeling more hopeful about the future and optimistic about giving her child a strong start in life.

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Primary Care. During 2024 Glasgow secured a new opportunity to respond to many of the issues raised through 'Tell Your Story' using a Whole Family Support Programme delivered through Primary Care. This supports twelve General Practices (all in booster wards) by embedding a part-time Family Wellbeing Worker (FWW) in each. FFW's build on the Community Link Worker model with a family focus, receiving referrals from across the primary care team, most often GPs.

Includem delivers this service and their FWWs provide direct emotional, social, and practical support, in a trusted setting to support families to thrive. This includes supporting families to access a range of wraparound services, as shown in the diagram



FWW's work closely with financial advice and a new Family Finance Adviser (FFAs) role, able to work with families on financial well-being.

The programme has several community elements, with 29 charities with funded programmes and Glasgow Life supporting families through Family Learning/Live Well, ESOL, Read and Play, and a Children's Club Budget. This holistic approach has uncovered the importance of play for families with additional support needs and there have been 359 attendances across three venues to new play opportunities in a matter of months. Community play sessions for younger children also saw steady engagement, and 61 fitness memberships were issued.

Over the first four months 131 families were referred to FWW's. There are several larger families referred (7+), and there are waiting lists in most of the participating practices. A number of families are getting help with immediate basics (food, bedding) before they can engage with

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A young mother was referred by her GP for support during a deeply challenging time. Pregnant with her second child, she was coping with the trauma of domestic abuse, her partner's imprisonment, upcoming court proceedings, and mounting debt. Her mental health was suffering, and her baby was also affected—struggling to sleep, which further impacted her wellbeing.

The FWW became a steady source of emotional support, first by simply listening and building trust. Once a relationship was established, they worked together to identify practical needs. Housing was a priority, and the worker helped her apply for accommodation closer to family support. They also connected her with a number of the services in the programme, which has led to increased childcare hours—giving mum some much-needed respite.

A key turning point came when the worker noticed the baby's sleep issues were linked to an unsuitable sleeping arrangement. They secured a proper cot bed through the Includem Young Person's Fund, which significantly improved sleep for both mum and baby.

Thanks to this wraparound support, mum's mental health improved. She gained control over her finances, accessed food and cooking support, and engaged with services that helped her feel more stable. Although she declined some services due to a planned move, the support she received made a lasting difference.

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other services. As anticipated a high number of referrals include issues related to mental health, poverty and housing. FWW's experiences demonstrate the complexity of genuinely providing whole family support. A number of families are also presenting with additional support needs.

Whole community approaches – where I live

Glasgow's Community Plan has also committed to a place-based approach as a key strategy to address family poverty. This includes two strands of activity: a more localised approach to engaging affected families to build solutions (Booster Ward Demonstrations of change) and a community development approach to support thriving childhoods.

- **Booster Ward Demonstrations of Change.** The child poverty programme has used locally held Council Tax Reduction (CTR) data to identify the 10 Multi Member Wards (MMW's) with the highest levels of child poverty (over 40%), these are referred to as 'booster' wards and shown in purple in the map below. In the last year the first three booster wards have been developing and testing community led interventions with local families, providing early insights into the key local challenges and solutions. There will be phased development across all booster wards over the next three years.
- **Building on the legacy of the earlier Thriving Places programme,** a refreshed place development strategy targets 8 neighbourhoods experiencing the most severe child poverty. These are recognisable communities within the Booster Wards and shown in pink on the map below. Together they receive £1.5m (2024-27) funding to strengthen the local social infrastructure. They are using these resources for community-led action, events, and collaboration with the voluntary sector.

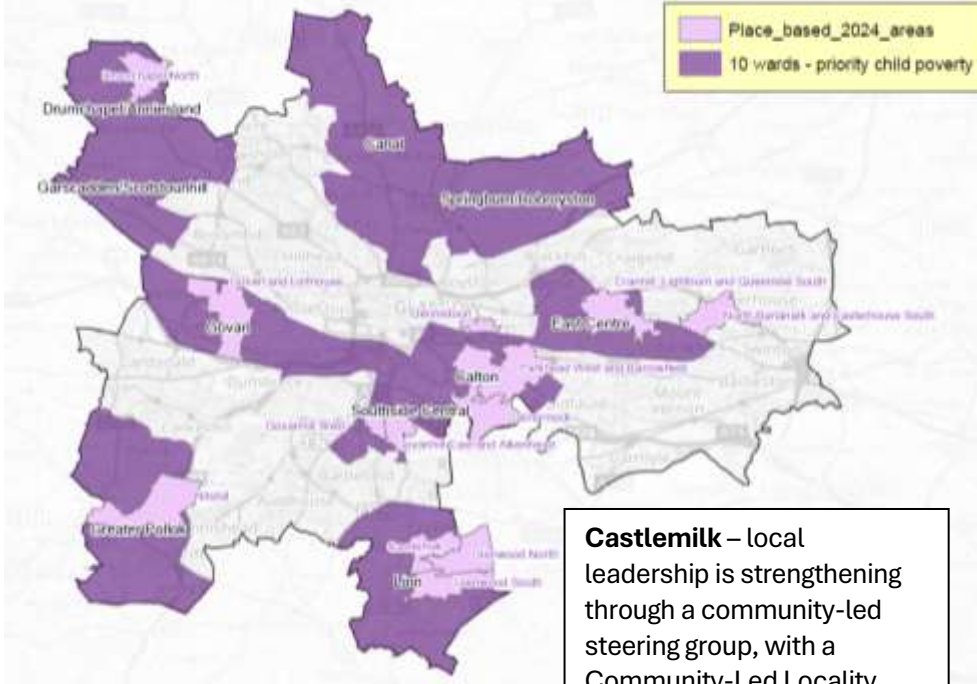
These approaches acknowledge that meaningful change must occur not only within families but also across communities to foster and sustain environments where families can thrive. They also highlight the essential role of the third sector in connecting families with wider systems, particularly reaching those least likely to engage with statutory services. By addressing practical challenges such as food insecurity, digital exclusion, and childcare, these approaches help reduce stigma and build the trust necessary for long-term engagement.

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Drumchapel – G15 Thriving Place has launched a three-year Strategic Community Development Plan, centred on climate justice, poverty reduction, and community wellbeing, including food support, youth activities, and employability drop-ins.

Calton Demonstration of Change is with families with children aged 0–5 who are at risk of poverty, delivered in partnership with Clyde Gateway. Aimed at supporting parents in finding and maintaining quality employment. The programme includes five key components: childcare, employability, ESOL (English as a Second Language), employer engagement, and data & learning.



Castlemilk – local leadership is strengthening through a community-led steering group, with a Community-Led Locality Plan in development and an anchor organisation expected to accelerate delivery.

Community Case Study in Calton Demonstration of Change. In early 2025, Clyde Gateway piloted an afterschool childcare/activity programme (2hrs twice weekly) at Baltic Street Adventure Playground to test whether short, structured provision could enhance family income. Children were collected directly from school.

- 11 children joined almost immediately.
- Parents took on extra shifts, extended hours, and enrolled in courses or placements. "I could pick up extra shifts without worrying about childcare."
- Parents reported noticeable improvements in confidence and behaviour.
- Families of children requiring extra support highlighted the pilot's importance.

By aligning childcare with employability, the pilot showed how modest, flexible provision can deliver improvements in family income while supporting children's wellbeing and development. This pilot shows how targeted, flexible childcare can be a cost-effective anti-poverty tool.

"Our afterschool pilot at Baltic Street has lifted a real weight from families. The kids love the freedom to engage in self-directed play, help in the garden, and look after the animals, while families gain peace of mind and a bit more breathing space. It's also helping parents and carers to build new social connections through the playground community, which makes a big difference to how supported they feel" Alan Kennedy, Exec Director Baltic Adventure Playground



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The 'Tell Your Story' work described the need for relational based approaches that work across communities, services and families. The Trauma-Informed Neighbourhood Initiative in another of the Booster Wards (Greater Pollok) represents a pioneering effort to address the root causes of trauma, poverty, and mental health issues at the neighbourhood level. This initiative is funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and is led by Sanctuary Housing and the NHS. It builds upon the place-based approach to integrate trauma-informed practices across various sectors including education, health, housing, the community, and even the local Shopping Centre.

The initiative prioritises relationship-building to tackle poverty and embed trauma-informed practices. By fostering trust, resilience, and community-led support networks that promote healing, empowerment, and equitable access to resources, this relational work aims to break the cycles of disadvantage.

The key strategies of the Trauma-Informed Neighbourhood approach include:

- Community education and awareness workshops
- Parent trauma-informed parenting awareness workshops and support groups
- Trauma-informed leadership and staff training
- Teacher training for trauma-sensitive classrooms
- Group support and one-to-one support for individuals impacted by trauma
- Sustainable support through digital platforms



Parents engaged locally report

- Greater emotional awareness and understanding of their children
- Improved relationships and stronger connections with their children
- Effective use of positive reinforcement strategies
- Increased confidence in handling challenging behaviours calmly
- Noticeable improvements in their children's behaviour and emotional well-being

Whole System Approaches

In Glasgow, our Community Plan priorities also recognise the critical impact of how our 'systems' influence outcomes. The Community Planning Partnership has committed to delivering change in Glasgow through public service reform that drives forward the Christie

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principles. Key to these changes are shifts in how work is resourced as well as what we value to demonstrate progress and success.

Over the last year, we have worked closely with Scottish Government to identify opportunities to rethink how funding can best be used in the city. As a first step, Glasgow has established an aligned funding resource that brings several discrete grant awards together to be used collectively towards transformational change. The creation of the Whole Family Early Intervention Fund in 2024 kick started work to identify further opportunities to re-imagine the use of targeted funding allocations. Beginning with funds awarded to the Local Authority by Scottish Government, this work sought to identify the scope to operationalise the Verity House Agreement through more flexible, locally appropriate use of funding.

Whilst this process focused on understanding opportunities for flexibility to facilitate the *integration* of funding into a shared ‘pot’, it has also informed the potential to articulate an increasing *alignment* of funds as a precursor to that. The value of focusing resources towards preventing and intervening earlier with families in child poverty in the booster wards, as well as the 0-5 cohort has been agreed. Opportunities to align existing funding much more closely to mitigating family poverty have manifested themselves in areas such as the prioritisation of Booster Ward areas for investment in children’s play areas across the city.

Alongside work to deliver flexibility on what is funded, the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) is developing a new Performance Framework that redefines how Glasgow measures what it has invested in and its success in tackling family poverty. This recognises the importance of shared accountability **and** capturing the impact of our collective endeavor to inform actions going forward.

Rather than simply counting activities or outputs, the Framework is structured around the enabler themes of the Community Plan and combines diverse types of information to understand how our actions impact across families and specifically our priority and protected characteristic groups. Development follows an iterative, sprint-based approach with input from critical friends and senior stakeholders across community planning partners and with Scottish Government. An initial framework was approved by the CPP Strategic Partnership in March 2025 and is now being further refined.

Another example of our whole systems approach is reflected in our Glasgow Futures Strategy and Partnership (GFP) in supporting parents into quality and sustainable employment. GFP have worked with the child poverty team to have a clearer focus on parents; those furthest from the labour market and on creating paid placement opportunities for those ready to take the next step.

Roadmap

Approach

Iteratively Deliver

Sprint-based approach to delivery, co-designing with representatives of partners with regular reporting of progress to critical friends and senior stakeholders

By Feb 2025

Key points of delivery for framework

Initial Core

Define initial measures, map available data, outline delivery plan by Feb 2025.

Established framework

Framework is operational, regular narrative and reporting in place, mechanism to evolve solution to meet changing needs by Apr 2025.

Ongoing data improvement

Beyond April 2025, continue to refine the Framework, focussing on longer term measures.

By Apr 2025

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In 2024–25 the GFP enabled:

- **Supporting Families** – working via primary schools and nurseries with families furthest from the labour market, enabling more seamless referrals.
- **Financial Inclusion Support Officer (FISO)** – providing welfare rights and money advice through schools.
- **Universal Credit Project** – assisting parents to make correct claims first time, linking families to learning and employability.
- **REACH Project (Education Services)** – supporting children with mental health conditions and neurodiversity while engaging parents who reduced or gave up work to provide care. This revealed a hidden group of families unexpectedly experiencing poverty, now being supported via No Wrong Door.
- **Clients to Colleagues** – offering paid work placements to parents from Booster Wards. In 2024–25, placements were developed in transport and financial inclusion. Of 7 parents trained for transport roles, 6 are now employed. In financial inclusion, 12 parents were recruited (50% minority ethnic), with 10 expected to complete by August 2025.

It is recognised that the current national reporting framework (No One Left Behind) does not fully capture this work. Discussions are underway with Scottish Government to shape more appropriate and integrated reporting mechanisms.

Looking Forward

Glasgow has made important progress over the past year in joining up support to families and developing further ways to mitigate child poverty. The embedding of the pathfinder into being the child poverty programme within the Community Plan has created the conditions for more systemic, sustainable action. We are now beginning to see how Demonstrations of Change, Glasgow Helps, Tell Your Story, and the No Wrong Door network can reshape the way families experience support. The NHS and Council are continuing to join up and provide as much support as they can for their patients and residents.

Over the next year, Glasgow will:

- Strengthen place-based working in the eight neighbourhoods, aligning child poverty objectives with community-led action.
- Further develop and refine our Child Poverty programme and ‘Demonstrations of Change’, using learning to inform action in relation to the core city challenges
- Support and sustain the third sector, recognising its critical role in trusted relationships and prevention.
- Identify and initiate city-wide public service reform opportunities to improve how, when and where partners collectively facilitate change
- Develop the CPP Performance Framework into a robust tool for accountability and learning, underpinned by lived experience.

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