

Glasgow's Local Child Poverty Action Report

2023/24

Welcome to Glasgow's Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR) 2023/24

The existence of child poverty in our city continues to challenge our city partners to do better for our children, young people and families. The Health Board and Local Authority, whilst responsible for the formal reporting on actions taken to address this, are keen to highlight the ongoing commitment of partners across the city, and nationally, to work alongside us to rise to this challenge. Our third sector partners continue to be crucial and valued partners in shaping and delivering actions to mitigate, prevent and challenge child poverty.

Last year our LCPAR focused on the emerging work to better align our strategic approach to tackling child poverty, recognising the importance of partnership working and alignment of ambition. In this report, we describe the significant progress that has been made to secure this, laying strong foundations for the future. This collective approach is crucial to focus our efforts on a shared goal, to maximise our resources and to jointly demonstrate the impact that we can have together.

This work has required intensive joint working across the public and third sector and commitment to bold actions. We are humbled to be able to describe the progress made strategically but also, to once again, provide detail of specific activities undertaken to reduce the impact of poverty on families.

As we reflect on the progress made over the last year, we also set out our commitments for the coming year, building on the progress made to ensure that we Get it Right for Every Child.

Jane Grant

Chief Executive, NHS GG&C

Susanne Millar

Chief Executive, GCC

Last year's Glasgow's Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR) described the hugely important foundational effort undertaken to secure improved strategic alignment to tackle child poverty. Alongside a continued commitment in both the Council's Strategic Plan, and the Health & Social Care Partnership's Strategic Plan, poverty was also embedded within the city's updated Integrated Children's Services Plan. The Health Board has also restated its commitment in its updated three year delivery plan (2024/2027). This articulates key actions towards the ten Scottish recovery requirements for the Health Service. The plan continues to recognise and commit time and resources to tackling health inequalities affecting patients, delivering on the anchors strategy towards building community wealth and working with partners to reduce child poverty.

Strategic Alignment - Glasgow Community Planning Partnership (GCPP)

Glasgow's refreshed Community Plan, agreed in February 2024 by the Community Planning Partnership, places eradicating family poverty at the very heart of the city's shared agenda. This sends the strongest statement yet that as a collective, Glasgow's leaders are committed to changing **how** we work to tackle child poverty. City partners have committed to supporting the delivery of bold and sustainable new ways of working and continuing the public service reform necessary for this.

<p>Tackling poverty, in particular child poverty, is no longer <i>on</i> the agenda, it <i>is</i> the agenda for Glasgow.</p>

The GCPP provides the necessary strategic leadership to be brave, as well as a city framework to co-ordinate the activity that will contribute to delivering the required reform. This includes; building on the nine-year journey undertaken by Children & Families Services, the review of Community Planning, the review of Thriving Places, the refreshed Integrated Children's Services Plan, Whole Family Wellbeing Fund, the Glasgow Child Poverty Pathfinder, a range of child poverty initiatives across the city, and work to improve the use and understanding of data (CCI).

The GCPP sets out our aspiration to focus on person-centred and place-based approaches, working intensively with those families and communities that we know

need more. It has committed to addressing the fragmentation and duplication that we know persists across our system, and to build an infrastructure of joined up services underpinned by holistic, person-centred support. It seeks to ensure that we can collaborate productively to secure access to 'the right support, in the right place, at the right time' for our citizens. Most importantly, the GCPP places the citizen at the very heart of this work, supported not just with immediate, crisis driven need, but with longer term goals and aspirations, to build resilience and ultimately to self-manage.

Crucially, as well as shared governance, the GCPP will also shape shared accountability. With each partner working to secure the same commitments, and with performance measured collectively rather than in individual siloes, we can truly demonstrate our collective endeavours. Early work to understand how best to demonstrate the impact of our shared approach has been progressed by the Child Poverty Pathfinder. This provides the foundations from which the GCPP will co-design a single performance framework for the city that evidences impact and articulates outcomes secured for children, young people and families through the alignment of policy and funding levers.

The GCPP has committed to producing a ten-year Action Plan detailing our shared approach, and the associated performance framework by February 2025.

Glasgow's Child Poverty Pathfinder

The city's commitment to tackle child poverty through bold action continues to be explored by our Child Poverty Pathfinder. This partnership with the Scottish Government has secured capacity to shape our transformational change work and shift the identified barriers to reform into enablers. The intensive research and early adopter work undertaken in the Pathfinder has further informed city actions, including the alignment of our efforts through the Community Plan.

Key areas of progress include;

- Detailed research that has improved our understanding of the indirect impact of a lack of financial resources. As well as evidencing the correlation between economic and social challenges, it has been possible to calculate the additional cost of child poverty to public services and the Glasgow economy. In 2022/23 alone, this lies between £823m and £1.09 billion. This expenditure is reactive

in nature, responding to the challenge and seeking to mitigate the impact. Preventative action can shift the focus of interventions and ultimately reduce the costs. This work has been pivotal to articulate the necessary policy alignment required to make progress.

- Development of a collaborative No Wrong Door infrastructure to provide joined up support 'in the right place, at the right time' for those in need of assistance. Over 140 organisations across the third, housing and public sectors have committed to further shaping this model in Glasgow, including agreeing a shared holistic person-centred support approach.
- Identification of ten Booster Wards where child poverty levels are at their highest and agreement to target activity to families with a child aged 5 or under to maximise the preventative opportunities. Early work has been commenced to deliver 'Demonstration of Change' projects in three of these wards; Southside Central, Calton and Govan.
- Creation of an aligned change fund that reflects the need to underpin shared policy intent with improved funding flexibility. The Whole Family Early Intervention Fund brings together a number of specific funding allocations to better co-ordinate the use and impact of these resources. It also affords collective oversight of allocation decisions that will progress the GCPP's shared ambition. This change fund currently totals £22.1m and will be used to invest in transformational change work across the city.

Additional information on the Child Poverty Pathfinder is available [here](#).

Continued Collaboration with the Third Sector

The third sector are a crucial partner in our work to address child poverty. As well as delivering key support direct to families, organisations are also committed to participating in shaping and participating in our evolving joined up No Wrong Door infrastructure. Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector (GCVS) hosted a discussion session with some of the third sector organisations addressing family poverty as part of the LCPAR preparation. Fifteen organisations shared their experiences over the last year, the highs and lows, and the considerations for the future LCPAR work. Many examples of co-designing interventions with families were shared, with the common themes of food, travel, mental health, English language/interpreting, maximising

income and childcare components being essential to have been considered and included for most.

People were proud of the amount and range of work that had been achieved in the last year, and the efforts of local partners to help each other to support families in need. However, there was a wide recognition that families were presenting with more complex and severe poverty, and people shared their fear and anxiety for the future of some of the families they were working with. The stigma of poverty was very much affecting how families engage, and through the discussion it was evident that poverty needed to be addressed within a more positive context – be it work, food, friendship, play, learning, creativity as families want better for their children and engage best on those terms. Organisations were also frustrated and angry with the limitations of funding models that only allow short term solutions and concerned that child poverty will remain a huge issue.

As a result of Third Sector support, some of the impact on children, young people and families has been significant. Families have demonstrated an increase in confidence and independence, and are able to voice their needs and advocate for themselves. This has led to numerous examples of a Peer Support model being established in communities where people are helping one another. There was a strong consensus that families should be driving what they need with the support from services working together at a very local level.

The early work of the pathfinder and the funding flexibilities being sought by partners in Glasgow was very welcomed and encouraged.

Understanding Child Poverty in Glasgow

Each year, the Centre for Civic Innovation uses data held by Glasgow City Council on Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit to understand more about the children living in families in receipt of these. This provides a statistical report that details the level of child poverty *at a point in time each year* and can be accessed [here](#). This year the report will also include insights from citizens on their experience.

The report will be published in early Autumn but early analysis shows the continuing challenge for the city.

Understanding Child Poverty in Glasgow

The DWP publication estimates 33,508 children in Glasgow are living in poverty. The below stats are taken from our Council Tax Reduction system, and capture 73% of the children estimated to be in poverty by the DWP. What this years data shows us, is that whilst the levels of poverty in Glasgow haven't changed drastically in the past year, the depth of poverty has increased significantly, with families in Glasgow on average £11 per week worse off than this time last year.

2020
February

25,485

Children in poverty

PEOPLE
MAKE
GLASGOW

24% of children in Glasgow in poverty

On average, these families were
£107
per week below the poverty line

2021
February

On average, these families were
£115
per week below the poverty line

27,995
Children in poverty

26% of children in Glasgow in poverty

26,116
Children in poverty

25% of children in Glasgow in poverty

2022
February

On average, these families are
£117
per week below the poverty line

2023
July

On average, these families are
£115
per week below the poverty line

24,252
Children in poverty

14,837 Children in persistent poverty

24% of children in Glasgow in poverty

2024
July

25% of children in Glasgow in poverty

On average, these families are
£126
per week below the poverty line

14,680
Children in persistent poverty

24,419
Children in poverty

Understanding Child Poverty in Glasgow Priority Groups

Priority groups are identified by the Scottish Government as families that are most vulnerable to child poverty. Income from employment is one of the main drivers of poverty. To reduce child poverty in the city, we have to understand the specific challenges that these families face. This data is an important step in understanding how to break down the barriers for families most at risk of experiencing child poverty.

In February 2020...

16,142
Children in
poverty

On average,
these families were
£107
per week below
the poverty line

Families with
one parent

In July 2024...

15,355
Children in
poverty

On average,
these families were
£124
per week below
the poverty line

9,682
Children in persistent poverty

Families with
a disability

In February 2020...

5,113
Children in
poverty

On average,
these families were
£70
per week below
the poverty line

In July 2024...

6,740
Children in
poverty

On average,
these families were
£124
per week below
the poverty line

4,576
of children in
persistent poverty

In February 2020...

5,750
Children in
poverty

On average,
these families were
£57
per week below
the poverty line

Families with in
work poverty

In July 2024...

3,875
of children in
persistent
poverty

On average,
these families were
£75
per week below
the poverty line

7,378
Children in
poverty

In February 2020...

On average,
these families were
£112
per week below
the poverty line

19,735
Children in
poverty

In July 2024...

Families with
no-one in
employment

10,805
of children in
persistent poverty

On average,
these families were
£134
per week below
the poverty line

17,041
Children in
poverty

Over the last year improved access to the data used to track and understand the *detail* of poverty in the city has been secured. Using this, Glasgow's Child Poverty Dashboard has been created, an interactive tool that provides much greater insight into the distribution, depth and characteristics of child poverty. The dashboard, which can be accessed [here](#), has been used to inform how we target our actions, in particular identifying our Booster Wards, whilst ensuring that individual families cannot be identified.

Alongside this work, the city has also embarked on an innovative Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC). Glasgow was successful in being awarded a £5.25 million research and development grant to tackle health inequalities. The grant is from the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) to the partnership made up of the Council, the Health Board, and the University of Glasgow. The partnership's successful application focuses on child poverty and using data and research to inform and influence decision making on the wider determinants of health that affect child poverty - such as employment, housing, education, and the physical environment. During 2024 the partnership is in its development phase with the full five-year programme commencing in January 2025. The development year is focused on project set up including recruitment of the project team and onboarding of key partners and stakeholders to develop a shared vision and action plan.

The risk of growing up in poverty continues to be disproportionately higher for local families with particular protected characteristics, and escalates with intersectionality. This is true across the UK and here in Glasgow. The last Action Plan described the wide range of work across all protected characteristics at greater risk of child poverty. In this report we focus on key developments for those living with a disability (child or adult in the home), maternity and women (the majority of single parents) and LGBT+ families.

Disabled people face a higher risk of poverty. In August 2023 the Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH) published a report, in collaboration with Glasgow Disability Alliance, which examined the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis on the lives, health, and wellbeing of disabled people. It includes the direct experiences of disabled

people living in Glasgow and a scoping review of emergent evidence from across the UK.

This affects every aspect of life for a family with a disability. The report highlighted disabled people living in Glasgow with unheated homes, going hungry, and having severely restricted opportunities to socialise and participate in their community. On average, disabled households (with at least one disabled adult or child) need an additional £975 a month to have the same standard of living as non-disabled (disability price tag) families.

Glasgow City Council has been examining the information it holds on families with at least one person (child or adult) in receipt of disability related benefits. They have information on 3 of every 4 children in relative poverty in the city. This has shown an increase (39% since last Autumn) in the number of households with someone (child or adult) in receipt of disability related benefits, most often this has been an adult.

These increases are most stark in our neighbourhoods already experiencing some of the highest levels of child poverty. The data shows that most of the new claims were from families already experiencing poverty (already claiming council tax reduction or housing benefit) but not previously in receipt of disability related benefits.

This change coincided with the transfer of disability benefits from DWP to Social Security Scotland and the new Adult Disability Payment. It is likely to relate at least in part to more claims being processed under the new conditions.

In Glasgow 79 General Practices, those servicing our poorest communities, host a money advice worker in their practice one day a week or fortnight. In the last year, the service has supported 936 adult disability claims, over half of which were for adults with children. There were also 62 child disability claims. In total, awards of over £4.2m have been secured. A survey of patients shows that 80% of survey users have never accessed financial advice support before demonstrating its significant impact on supporting patients to recognise that disability related benefits are there to support people facing similar health challenges to theirs, and to successfully claim.

Although receiving disability related benefits *has* helped families, the data reveals that for most this has sadly not been enough to lift them out of poverty.

The Health Board has continued to develop supports for women affected by poverty during their **pregnancy**.

The Maternity Emergency Grant (MEG) was launched as a pilot late in 2022. The pilot sought to better understand the barriers and priority needs for pregnant women when accessing Hospital appointments. When required, an immediate cash payment of up to £50 is available. This is accompanied with longer term support and referral to alleviate the crisis. This has been funded by Glasgow Children's Hospital Charity and last year the project received 897 referrals for between £5 and £50. These funds, which totalled £38,963, were mostly spent on travel (£21,000), food (£12,500) and clothing (£5,000). The most referrals into the service were made from the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital and over 26% of onward referrals were for money advice and food support.

Glasgow City Health & Social Care Partnership, in collaboration with Glasgow City Council, have broadened support available for families experiencing sudden financial hardship. Whilst previously only available through social workers, this has now been expanded to also enable Health Visitors and Family Nurse Practitioners to authorise Section 22 payments. This facilitates assistance where it is inappropriate to make a social work referral – specifically where there are no other child care needs or risks identified.

For many families, their Health Visitor/Family Nurse is the first person they have trusted to discuss money worries (80%). This payment has been used to address crisis need including Infant Formula, baby food and nappies but it also provides an opportunity to connect families into further support. Over 95% of the families supported with this payment were also referred to other services

Single parenthood has numerous challenges which make it harder for financial security. Public Health Scotland and One Parent Families Scotland have worked in collaboration to support the co-design and delivery of a targeted parental employment demonstrator project for low-income single parents across Glasgow to maximise parental income. Single parents have been able to share their voice and influence the

design of the programme. As well as supporting parents into work with Public Health Scotland, this also provides a model of employment support for others.

Since the LGBT Health Needs Assessment described in last year's report the Health Board has commissioned a consortium of charities to provide wellbeing support services to LGBT people. This work has further highlighted concerns around financial hardship with 25% of LGBT young people in Glasgow reporting that they do not have enough money for basic expenses. In the coming year joint work will be undertaken with the wider financial inclusion network in Glasgow on LGBT+ inclusive practice.

Glasgow continues to deliver an array of services and supports to mitigate the impact of poverty and prevent the experience of poverty at all. Information on a snapshot of this activity is available [here](#). This 'tracker' will be updated regularly to maintain insight to this crucial work.

More detailed case studies, illustrating the impact of the city's work for families will be available in the Child Poverty Data Report due to be launched in Autumn.

As a city, we hold significant amounts of data and we are making good progress on accessing and co-ordinating this to inform services. But our data only tells part of the picture. We cannot properly support families out of poverty if we do not understand the reality of living in poverty. The United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)(Scotland) Act 2024 commenced this summer, enabling Scotland to join over 200 countries worldwide in legally protecting the human rights of our children. It covers all aspects of a child's life, including their right to 'a sufficient standard of living' and their right to be heard. It places duties on a number of public organisations, including the council and the health board.

Within Glasgow these duties are already at the heart of the Glasgow's Children's Services Plan and our annual Local Child Poverty Action Plan. We will continue to ensure that children and young people are involved and included, and their views are influential in the development and delivery of our child poverty responses and plans. We would like to thank all the young people, children and families who have already let us know that reducing poverty needs to be of utmost importance to enabling them to grow up well in Glasgow as part of our children's services planning engagement.

Looking Forward

Our priorities for 2024/25 include;

- Using the strategic oversight of our city approach to child and family poverty through Glasgow's Community Planning Partnership and the constituent Children's Services Executive Group to develop a shared action plan;
- Further building our understanding of the impact having children has on family finances and supporting all families to access the best advice to avoid and minimise child poverty;
- ensuring that addressing child poverty is embedded in all our service planning;
- securing co-ordination of resources and funding flexibility to facilitate more effective delivery of our shared objectives, including the delivery and implementation of the Whole Family Early Intervention Fund;
- developing further shared data insights, including better understanding of shorter term trends including how families move in and out of poverty throughout the year;
- co-designing a shared performance framework to evidence our collective impact on child and family poverty in the city;
- building on our engagement with people affected by poverty, to best understand lived experience and use co-production to reshape, join up and improve service development and delivery;
- embedding the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child across our work;
- continuing to shift our focus from crisis response to prevention and early intervention activities including how we utilise our assets (staff, services, funding, buildings);
- building on the pathfinder and the public sector reform agenda to make the necessary system change to support our endeavours to address the levels of child poverty; and
- determining the opportunities that the Verity House Agreement brings to consider funding and sustainability challenges.