

Renfrewshire Anti-Poverty Strategy



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1. Poverty in Renfrewshire

- 1.1 Poverty in Renfrewshire is a debilitating force which acts as a barrier to the well being of individuals, families and communities. It restricts their ability to play a full and active part in society and restrains individual's abilities to access opportunities which are readily available to others.
- 1.2 Poverty in Renfrewshire tends not to be absolute poverty, but relative poverty. Relative poverty can be defined as "no one should live with the resources that are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect excluded from ordinary living patterns customs and activities" (Townsend)
- 1.3 The key measurement of poverty used by the Scottish and UK Government is "those with incomes below 60% of the UK median", which means that their income restricts their ability to effectively participate in society.
- 1.4 In 2006/07 in Scotland relative poverty affected:
 - 840,000 individuals – 17% of Scotland's population.
 - 210,000 children.
 - 440,000 working age adults.
 - 180,000 pensioners – approximately 20% of all pensioners.
- 1.5 In Renfrewshire it is estimated that relative poverty affects:
 - 25,356 (15%) individuals experiencing income deprivation.
 - 18,340 (46%) children living in low income households.
 - 22.7% of people low-paid.
 - 10,120 pension credit claimants, of which 7,750 received the Guarantee Element.

2. National Context

- 2.1 The recently launched Scottish Government policy “Achieving our potential: A Framework to Tackle Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland” complements other national policy initiatives such as ‘Early Years Framework’ and ‘Equally Well’, to provide a coherent and comprehensive framework for action to combat poverty.
- 2.2 The above policies are designed to support the Government’s solidarity aim to reduce income inequality in Scotland by “increasing the overall income and proportion of income earned by the lowest 30% of people as a group by 2017”.
- 2.3 In addition the Concordat between Central and Local Government and the development of Single Outcome Agreements by Community Planning Partnerships are seen as the principal vehicle for describing how poverty is being tackled at a local level. Within Renfrewshire’s Community Planning Partnership the Wealthier and Fairer Group have primary responsibility for reducing levels of poverty within Renfrewshire. However any anti-poverty strategy requires to take a wider view of relative poverty rather than income levels alone. The manifestations of poverty can include unemployment, low income, poor housing, inadequate health care and barriers to lifelong learning, culture, sport and recreation. Individuals living in poverty can also be living in poor environmental conditions which contribute and reinforce poverty.

Why Is Poverty Important?

- 2.4 When seeking to address poverty it is important to emphasise the reality of poverty felt on a day to day basis which can adversely affect individual health and psychological well being and put stress on personal relationships. Living in poverty can mean:
- Becoming isolated from family and friends.
 - Lacking hope and feelings of powerlessness and exclusion with little control over decisions which affect your day to day life.
 - Lacking information about support and services available to you.
 - Having problems getting your basic needs met and accessing decent housing, health services and schools and lifelong learning opportunities.
 - Living in an unsafe neighbourhood with high levels of crime and violence and poor environmental conditions or in a remote and isolated rural area.
 - Going without very basic necessities because you may not be able to afford essential utilities such as water, heat and electricity or to buy healthy food or new clothing or to use public transport.
 - Being unable to afford to buy medicines or visit the dentist.
 - Living from day to day with no savings or reserves for times of crisis such as losing a job or falling ill and thus falling into debt.
 - Being exploited and forced into illegal situations.
 - Experiencing racism and discrimination.
 - Being unable to participate in normal social and recreational life such as going to the pub or cinema, or sports events or visiting friends or buying birthday presents for family members.
- 2.5 People affected often experience a range of different disadvantages which combine to reinforce each other and trap them in poverty. Poverty limits the opportunity for people to reach their full potential. For instance children growing up in poverty are more likely to suffer poor health, do less well in school and become the next generation of adults at risk of unemployment or long term employment.
- 2.6 Ensuring interventions are sustainable will require the active involvement of residents themselves, to ensure they capitalise on the opportunities that the anti-poverty programmes provide. Linking the strategy to the Community Planning Partnership's community capacity programmes will therefore be critical to the overall anti poverty strategy's long term success.

3. Renfrewshire Context

- 3.1 The Community Planning Partnership and Community Plan provide the mechanisms for delivering, implementing, reviewing and assessing Renfrewshire's approach to tackling poverty in Renfrewshire. The Community Planning Partnership can ensure that a comprehensive approach to tackling the causes and addressing the symptoms of poverty is developed. Community Planning Partners have outlined a range of anti-poverty targets in our Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement which will contribute to the national objectives identified above.
- 3.2 The specific Community Plan headline targets set for Renfrewshire are as follows:
- Reduce the number of workless people by 40% from the 2004 level.
 - Increase the educational tariff score of the lowest performing 20% of pupils by 19%.
 - By 2017, 98% of Renfrewshire pupils will leave school with a qualification in literacy and numeracy (SCQF level 3 or national equivalent).
 - Reduce the proportion of 18–29 year olds whose highest qualification was below SCQF level 6 from 31% in 2007 to 25% in 2017.
 - By 2017, reduce by 5% the number of people whose excessive consumption of alcohol leads to hospital admission or alcohol related death.
 - Reduce deaths from coronary heart disease in the under 75s by 60% over 15 years from 1995–2010 and reduce by a further 10% from 2010–2017.
 - Stem the rise in obesity in Renfrewshire by reducing the level of obesity in children by 5% by 2017.
 - All social rented housing meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015.
 - Reduce crimes of violence by 17% between 2006/07 and 2017.
 - Reduce the number of individual and group incidents of public disorder by 12% by 2017.
- 3.3 Work to achieve these targets will be identified and developed by the Community Planning Partnership Anti-Poverty Strategy Group, who are currently preparing an Action Plan to address the Community Plan targets identified at 3.2. The action plan will be completed by the Community Planning Anti-Poverty Strategy Group by the end of October 2009 and be updated annually to take account of emerging issues, trends and resources available to partners to tackle poverty within Renfrewshire.
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4. Poverty in Renfrewshire

- 4.1 From analysis of current available data and key statistics it is evident that there is a sizeable minority of the population living in poverty within Renfrewshire. The key statistics outlined below provide a comprehensive picture of poverty in Renfrewshire.
- 22.7% of Renfrewshire people are low-paid.
 - 25,356 (15%) of individuals are experiencing income deprivation.
 - 18,340 (46%) of children are living in low income households.
 - 34% of single adult households and 24% of single parent households have an annual net income of less than £10,000.
 - 7.7% of the population aged 16–59 are claiming income support.
 - 10,120 claim Pension Credits.
 - 76.6% of working age people are in employment, 5.1 % are unemployed.
 - 4,629 (4.4%) people of working age claim Job Seekers Allowance.
 - 16,180 (15.3%) of people receive key out of work benefits.
 - 10,520 (9.9%) people of working age are claiming incapacity benefits.
 - 14% of people have no qualifications.
 - 15% of Renfrewshire's households are fuel poor.
- 4.2 In addition to this general picture within Renfrewshire there are areas which display concentrations of poverty. These have been identified using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation which is due to be updated by the Scottish Government in October 2009. This Index provides an indication of where concentrations of poverty exist in Renfrewshire.

5. Key Priority Groups

- 5.1 In relation to individuals and groups some key factors are seen as making a person more at risk of becoming impoverished than others. These factors include:
- Unemployment or having a poor quality (i.e. low paid or precarious) job as this limits access to a decent income and cuts people off from social networks.
 - Low levels of education and skill because this limits a person's ability to access decent jobs and/or develop themselves to participate fully in society.
 - The size and type of family i.e. large families and lone parent families because they have higher costs, lower incomes and more difficulty in gaining well paid employment
 - Gender – women are generally at higher risk of poverty than men as they are likely to be in lower paid employment, tend to have lower pensions, are more involved in unpaid caring responsibilities.
 - Disability or ill health because this limits the ability to access employment and it also leads to an increase in day to day costs.
 - Being a member of a minority ethnic group or immigrant/ undocumented migrants as they suffer particularly from discrimination and racism and thus have less chance to access employment, often are forced to live in worse physical environments and have poorer access to essential services.
 - Living in a remote or very disadvantaged community where access to services is worse.
- 5.2 All of the above factors can contribute to an individual becoming impoverished. Therefore the anti-poverty strategy in Renfrewshire will be targeted on key priority groups who are at greatest risk of falling into poverty. These include:
- **Single households** – 34% of single adult households have a net income of less than £10,000 per annum. The report, 'Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion 2008', by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that the only group where the number of low income people is higher than a decade ago is working age adults without dependant children. Almost half of all adults in receipt of state benefits are of working age and do not have dependent children.
 - **Children in Poverty** – 18,340 children are living in households that are dependent on out of work benefits or child tax credit more than the family element in 2006/07. Research in the UK has demonstrated that children under the age of 10 were more likely to experience poverty than any other age group.
 - **Single Parents** – 24% of single parent households have a net income of less than £10,000 per annum. Research shows that of all households, those headed by a lone mother with dependent children are most vulnerable to persistent poverty and deprivation (Review of poverty dynamics research in the UK, Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2008). The absence of affordable childcare can be a very significant barrier to re-entering the labour market and getting out of poverty.
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- **Unemployed** – 4,629 JSA claimants in April 2009. The impact of unemployment makes it a key poverty risk. The risk of poverty for unemployed people is second only to that of lone parenthood. Long term unemployment is the key determinant of persistent poverty.
- **More Choices, More Chances group** – There were 780 young people in the More Choices More Chances group in 2007. This group of young people aged between 16 and 19 are not in full time education, training or employment. This group is at particular risk of poverty due to their lack of participation in education, training or employment.
- **Elderly** – 33,154 pensionable age. In August 2008 21% of people aged 60 and over in Renfrewshire were in receipt of the guaranteed part of the Pension Credit. Renfrewshire has an ageing population, with the overall number of older people projected to increase between 2009 and 2018. The percentage of the population aged 65–80 will increase by 17.1% from 21,000 to 25,000 between 2009 and 2018. The percentage of the population which is over 80 will increase by 16% over the same time period from 7,000–8,000. Older people living on a fixed income are particularly vulnerable to fuel poverty, and become increasingly dependent on health and social care services. The risk of social isolation and exclusion also increases as people get older.
- **Long term sick/disabled** – 10,660 Incapacity Benefit & Severe Disablement Allowance Claimants. The risk of poverty experienced by this group stems from the fact that if a household member is unable to work because of illness or disability, household income is reduced and household need increases. Approximately 21% of Renfrewshire's population has a long term illness or disability (2001 Census)
- **Homelessness** – The number of applicants assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness in Renfrewshire increased by 29% between 2006/07 and 2008/09 (from 775 to 1,000). The number of cases assessed as being in "priority need" increased from 665 in 2006/07 to 995 in 2008/09; a 375 increase. Recent changes to homelessness legislation have increased demand on homelessness services.
- **Looked after children** – There were 653 Looked After Children in Renfrewshire in 2007/08. Renfrewshire has seen a significant increase in the number of looked after children over the last five years. The rate of increase in the numbers of looked after children is also higher than the Scottish average. The primary cause for the increase in the numbers of looked after children is "care and neglect" issues

(The key priority group information presented above is for Renfrewshire and is drawn from the following sources; Scottish Household Survey, Department for Work and Pensions, Renfrewshire Council Education & Leisure Services, Renfrewshire Council Housing & Property Services, and Renfrewshire Council Social Work Services.)

6. What Does the Strategy Seek to Achieve?

- 6.1 The strategy will seek to intervene to tackle poverty in a number of ways. In particular the strategy will seek to **prevent** poverty, **intervene** where we know poverty exists, **assist** those who are in poverty and seek to ensure that any action taken is **sustainable** in the longer term. Such an approach will require a comprehensive integrated approach to tackling poverty for the key priority groups identified above.
- 6.2 Seeking to break the cycle of poverty is a long term process. The causes of poverty as indicated above are multi-faceted with clear inter relationships between causal factors e.g. unemployment, poor health, low income, poor educational attainment levels etc. It will be important however for the Community Planning Partnership to focus upon underlying issues and activities which seek to prevent poverty in Renfrewshire. The focus of the anti-poverty action plan will therefore be to identify, implement and co-ordinate partner activity and resources which seek to:
- **Help people into work:** Worklessness is a key factor contributing to poverty. This relates not only to a lack of income but also a lack of a perceived worth and ability to progress in society. Being out of work also restricts social networks and can hinder an individual's development.
 - **Improved qualifications:** The ability to access learning and education is critical to improving social mobility. A lack of qualifications also hinders an individual's ability to access and progress within the labour market.
 - **Maximise income and reduce indebtedness:** An ability to maximise income and reduce the burden of debt on individuals and families will form a cornerstone of the anti-poverty strategy. Low income and indebtedness reduces individuals ability to participate in the normal activity of society.
 - **Give children the best start in life:** As a means of preventing poverty this is particularly critical. This will require a range of interventions including health interventions, support to families and educational interventions.
 - **Support vulnerable families:** When considering interventions to tackle poverty it is important to consider whole household income. If families that are vulnerable i.e. due to lack of employment, ill health, low expectations etc this can reinforce the cycle of poverty leading to intergenerational poverty within households.

- **Address health inequalities:** Poor health can be a major contributory factor towards poverty. It can have an immediate impact in relation to an individual's or family's ability to undertake activities which would remove them from poverty. Poor health and poor lifestyle choices can also reinforce poverty within families leading to poor physical and mental health which can perpetuate poverty.
- **Address fuel poverty:** Poor families spend a disproportionate amount of their income on fuel. The poor also generally live in poorer quality accommodation which can be badly insulated and have poor heating systems which contribute to fuel poverty. Such a position reduces individuals and families disposable income and exacerbates poverty.

6.3 In addition the anti-poverty group will ensure planned and future activity in the following areas are addressed from an anti-poverty perspective:

- **Meet housing quality standards:** As a means of improving the immediate environment in which individuals and families live and to tackle issues connected to fuel poverty, meeting the Scottish housing quality standards will be a key aim of the strategy. This will ensure good quality social housing is available at a reasonable cost.
- **Promote equalities:** Discrimination of all forms can exacerbate poverty and this is particularly true in relation to employment discrimination. In addition discrimination can have effects on an individual's health and wellbeing.
- **Develop transport infrastructure and support economic activity:** As a means of preventing poverty an emphasis on supporting the development of the local economy and transport infrastructure to improve travel to work patterns will be critical over the longer term. The economic vibrancy of an area and its transport infrastructure are critical to ensuring the individuals in poverty can access paid employment and therefore assist them to escape poverty.
- **Improve physical environmental conditions in deprived areas:** Poor quality environmental and physical conditions can contribute to ill health and lack of opportunities for physical activity. A poor environment can also be detrimental to an individual and community's health with perceptions of unsafe environments, lack of play facilities for children and young people and lack of facilities to allow positive constructive activity to be undertaken.
- **Reduce crime:** A key element of a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy is to seek a reduction of crime levels. This can range from serious to petty crime to antisocial behaviour. All of these activities can have a detrimental impact on individuals either through their involvement in the criminal justice system or through perceptions of an area being crime ridden leading to disincentives for investments within an area and poor perceptions of the area by the residents who live there.

7. Resourcing the Strategy

- 7.1 Alleviation of poverty will require the sustained and concentrated commitment by all Community Planning Partners. Poverty is a central issue which all Community Planning Partners can contribute to the alleviation of. As indicated above this will require a variety of actions by Community Planning Partners. Therefore it is critical that maximum use is made of existing resources to alleviate poverty in Renfrewshire. It is also important that where partners are committing resource to tackle poverty related issues that these are co-ordinated, coherent and complementary in nature. This will ensure the most effective and efficient use of resources increasing the likelihood of impacting upon poverty levels within Renfrewshire.
- 7.2 In addition to the above resource, the Scottish Government have committed a total of £19,045,000 over 2008–11 of Fairer Scotland Funding within Renfrewshire. A great deal of this funding is designed to tackle poverty. Ring fencing for the Fairer Scotland Funding ceases in 2010/11 and the Community Planning Partnership will seek to maximise the mainstreaming of existing programmes which make a specific contribution to alleviating poverty in Renfrewshire.
- 7.3 In addition community planning partners will seek to prioritise and realign existing resources via their budget process to ensure that they have the maximum impact on alleviating poverty in Renfrewshire.
- 7.4 Community planning partners will also seek, where possible, to leverage external resources to enhance existing anti-poverty service provision designed to prevent poverty or alleviate the symptoms of those experiencing poverty in Renfrewshire.

8. How will we Implement the Strategy in Renfrewshire?

- 8.1 The Community Planning Partnership will seek to ensure that partners are working together in a co-ordinated and coherent fashion. The Community Planning Partnership will do this by:
- Working together at a local and national level between partners and with central government.
 - Ensuring that we make the best use of our existing resources within a best value regime which provides services in the most cost effective and efficient manner to meet the outcomes we have set ourselves.
 - Setting clear, measurable and challenging targets which will be monitored over time to determine the effectiveness of the strategy.
 - Ensuring that clear linkages exist to current partner activity and strategic plans to maximise the benefit of coordinated partner activity.
 - Ensuring that current and future activity is coordinated to avoid unnecessary overlap and duplication and to ensure that complementary activity is undertaken.
 - Producing an annual report on the attainment of specified targets and outcomes to ensure proper accountability and scrutiny.
 - Involving local communities in the design, delivery and implementation of the strategy to ensure ownership of its objectives.
 - Community Planning structures have recently been established and the Wealthier and Fairer Group will take overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the anti-poverty strategy. This places anti-poverty within the context of wider social, physical and economic regeneration objectives and therefore enhances opportunities for integrated and co-ordinated action.

9. Monitoring the Strategy

- 9.1 The Strategy will be monitored on an annual basis with an annual report prepared for the Community Planning Partnership and appropriate community planning partners. Progress on implementing the anti-poverty action plan will be reported on an annual basis to partners and communities via our community planning conferences and will be updated on an annual basis to reflect emerging trends and issues. The Community Planning Partnership will use the current Covalent Performance Management system to provide regular robust information on progress and will be measured against the outcomes contained within the anti-poverty action plan.
- 9.2 A range of performance indicators will be used to monitor progress including:
- Workforce Plus Targets
 - Median earning of workforce
 - School leavers in education, employment and training
 - Looked after children in education, employment and training
 - Educational tariffs score of lowest 20%
 - Under 5's dental decay
 - Obesity levels at primary one
 - Breast feeding 6–8 weeks at deprived areas
 - Alcohol admission 16+
 - Smoking rates
 - Reduction in Coronary Heart Disease in under 75's in deprived areas
 - Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation rates
 - Proportion of people getting into financial difficulty
 - Pregnancy rates in the under 16's
 - Range of crime statistics
 - Proportion of housing stock meeting the quality standards
 - Number of adults who think their neighbourhood is a good place to stay
- 9.3 A range of strategies have been developed either at a national or local level which will contribute to the attainment of the anti-poverty strategy in a number of ways. The specific contribution to particular areas of the anti-poverty strategy are identified in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1

Anti Poverty Strategy – Matrix

	Achieving our potential	Equally well	Early years	Workforce Plus	MCMC	Vol. Sector Strategy	CLAD Strategy	CHP Development Plan	Local Housing Strategy	Alcohol and Drug Strategy	Parenting Strategy	Equality Framework	Safer Renfrewshire	GIRFEC	Adult Literacy	Tobacco Action Plan
Help People Into Work	✓			✓	✓	✓									✓	
Improved Qualifications				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	
Max. Income and Reduce Debt	✓			✓	✓				✓		✓					
Give children best start in life	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓			✓		
Support vulnerable families		✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		
Address health inequalities		✓	✓					✓		✓	✓					✓
Address fuel poverty	✓								✓							
Meet Housing Quality Standard									✓							
Promote Equalities	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		
Develop transport and support economic activity	✓															
Improve physical environ in deprived areas									✓				✓			
Reduce Crime										✓						

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W celu uzyskania takowego, proszę skontaktować się Graeme McLatchie w
Wydziale Prezesa Rady Miasta (Chief Executive's Department) pod numerem
0141 840 3281.