

POVERTY LEADERSHIP PANEL

Annual Report 2014 - 2015



INTRODUCTION

As co-chairs, we are proud to present the 2014 annual report of the Glasgow Poverty Leadership Panel.

It is important that we all recognise that poverty is not a natural condition. It remains one of our city's biggest challenges, blighting people's lives and blocking the opportunities of too many Glaswegians.

The Poverty Leadership Panel (PLP) and its achievements detailed in this year's report is a key part of our city's response to poverty.

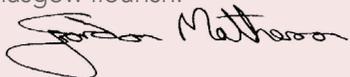
It is, of course, people that make Glasgow what it is; people are our city's greatest asset. Since the inception of the PLP, we have been clear that people who have struggled against poverty will be at its centre. It is people with lived experience of poverty that are our focus – they guide, influence and decide on the priorities we take forward.

2014 was a great year for Glasgow, not least because we hosted the best Commonwealth Games ever. But throughout this period we didn't lose sight of the moral imperative to tackle poverty. For instance, the city launched the 'People Make Glasgow Fairer' campaign to challenge some of the key myths about poverty.

We also know that people need support to survive the impact of sanctions and benefits reform. To this end, we have distributed 20,000 benefit appeals packs, key message postcards and pocket guides to claimants. Importantly, these materials were conceived by and were co-produced with people in poverty.

This report highlights some of the key pieces of work the PLP is engaged in, but we recognise there is a long way still to go. This is why we have our [Action Plan for Change](#). We want to work alongside businesses, the third sector, academia and government with the grave purpose of eradicating poverty in this wealthy city. In the months ahead, the work of the Poverty Leadership Panel will be ever more focused on this ambitious end.

Let Glasgow flourish.



Gordon Matheson

Co-Chair of the Poverty Leadership Panel
Leader of Glasgow City Council



Ghazala Hakeem

Co-Chair of the Poverty Leadership Panel

Springburn sanctions pilot: 3,000 flyers have been distributed through community organisations, schools and food banks. The leaflet encourages people to request a mandatory reconsideration to challenge JSA, ESA and lone parent sanctions.

COMMENTS

“The work of the PLP has gone from strength to strength over the last year. The commitment, shared support and contributions from everyone involved have led to positive teamwork from a diverse group. Working and learning together is the key to plugging gaps in services and creating a better safety net for Glasgow’s people.”

Sandra Collins, Govan Trust

“Our community has benefited from the work of the PLP. We have set up a community group which organises open days and events to help us identify residents’ concerns. We’re currently developing vacant land into a forest play area with seating.”

Angie Jamieson, All in for Parkhead

“By working together, people living with experience of poverty can make a difference in tackling poverty in Glasgow. The work currently done by the PLP gives me hope for a better future.”

Innocent Jakisa, Poverty Alliance

“I’m proud to be part of the Poverty Leadership Panel. The Panel is important for Wheatley Group because it facilitates partnerships which result in more opportunities for our customers and communities. What makes the Panel different is the opportunity it brings for organisations to develop solutions alongside people who have direct experience of poverty. The Panel is a diverse group, but we all share the same ambition.”

Martin Armstrong, Wheatley Group

“We have hundreds of members who want to make a positive difference to their city. We appreciate the importance of the work of the PLP in making sure more of Glasgow’s people have access to the opportunities that successful businesses create.”

Stuart Patrick, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce



Mutual Mentoring Scheme: senior managers in PLP organisations and people with direct experience of poverty have been meeting in pairs over the last 9 months to learn more about each other’s lives.

OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

Attitudes to POVERTY

The 'People Make Glasgow Fairer - Let's tackle poverty together' campaign has been launched in Glasgow City Council, the Wheatley Group and the NHS, with a potential audience of over 50,000 staff. The aim is to make sure that people in Glasgow receive the best services and aren't stigmatised because they live in poverty.



Child POVERTY

The Cost of the School Day project has talked to 340 children and 120 teachers in 8 schools. Each school is now thinking about how their policies and practices can maximise family income, make sure everyone can access learning opportunities and reduce stigma for children from low income families. For example, one school will no longer expect students to have badged uniforms.



Social isolation survey: 485 people across the city participated in our third flash survey on the theme of social networks and isolation. The survey found out for example: not having enough money reduces time spent with our social and support networks, and that this significantly affects our happiness and sense of independence.

OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

Work and WORTH

We asked hundreds of people in Glasgow about what they need to move into long-term work. We will use this information to change how we deliver our services.

We gathered views from different people and organisations about volunteering while on benefits and we're working with the DWP to make it easier for people on benefits to volunteer.



Housing and the LOCAL AREA

Many people want to be involved in local housing matters. We have recruited and trained over 30 volunteers - 'citizen advocates' - who have helped over 80 people in Glasgow resolve their housing problem or worry. We are proud that these local volunteers have just been shortlisted for an Alastair Malloy Inspire Award.



Breakfast club: Work in Parkhead/Dalmarnock has improved breakfast club use by working with a local play organisation. Children attending went from an average of 12 to an average of 50 a day (400% improvement). Teachers have said that children are more ready to learn at the start of the school day.

OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

Welfare REFORM

The right to challenge DWP decisions has been promoted through the distribution of 1500 benefit appeals packs.

19,000 key message post cards and pocket guides have been distributed to libraries, advice agencies, community groups, pharmacies and GP surgeries.

52 training sessions on welfare reform have been delivered to third sector organisations.



Credit and DEBT

Financial advice services to Glaswegians are delivered by 16 third sector advice providers.

In 2014-15, 34,566 people received help with their finances. The total financial gain for these people was over £55.8m. This was £25m in increased income, £15.8m of non-housing debt managed, £12m of housing debt managed and £3m council tax arrears being negotiated.



Involving people: We held a city-wide recruitment exercise to increase the representation on the Panel of people with direct experience of poverty. Advertisements went out across the city. As a result of this process, 8 new members have been appointed. They've been inducted into the Panel and will receive further training so they can contribute fully to the Panel's work.

OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

PARTICIPATION

Local work in communities has reached over 100 people so far. Three events have taken place to identify and agree the priorities of local people. Some work has already taken place, including reclaiming a piece of vacant land and transforming into a natural play space and garden.



Asylum seekers: Following feedback from the Scottish Refugee Council, Glasgow City Council has made it easier for asylum seekers to cash cheques. Now, asylum seekers can cash cheques at the city centre service desk at 45 John St using their Application Registration Card (ARC) as sufficient identification.

