



# 2017/18

## ANNUAL REPORT

WORKING TOGETHER TO  
COMBAT POVERTY  
IN SCOTLAND



## CONVENOR'S REPORT

A few years ago the Poverty Alliance revised its strategic plan. So, we made our primary objective to influence policy and practice. We are focussing on achieving this through all the work we do, whether through working with community-based organisations and community activists, or carrying out media and communications work, or delivering training to groups and organisations. This renewed focus has helped us be more effective in taking advantage of opportunities in Scotland to change policy and make a real difference for people living in poverty.

From the negative impact of the Universal Credit rollout, to the increasing numbers of people using emergency food aid, or the dire predictions of poverty increases, it can be difficult to ensure that the views and experiences of our members were heard. In the last year, two pieces of legislation were brought forward where we are proud to say that these views and experiences could be shared. The Child Poverty Act, passed just before Christmas in 2017, was a significant step forward in the fight against poverty in Scotland. We worked with organisations as part of the End Child Poverty coalition to make sure the new legislation was as strong and effective as possible. Particularly, we wanted to push for the creation of a statutory Poverty and Inequality Commission that will ensure that the Scottish Government will be held to account for the actions in its child poverty strategies, as well as its wider approach to addressing inequality. The new statutory Commission will be up and running by July next year, and will bring another important voice to the debate and greater focus on tackling poverty and inequality. We worked hard to make sure that we had a strong basis for the Poverty and Inequality Commission, listening to as many voices as possible through roundtables, engaging with our members, and working with politicians from all parties. It is this kind of focus on collaborative policy change that will make tangible change to lives in the future.

Another important policy change that was implemented in the last year was the new Fair Scotland Duty, which ensures that public bodies in Scotland will have to take into account the socio-economic impact of the major decisions they make. By putting inequality firmly into the decision-making process, it is hoped that this Duty will lead to more rounded decisions, and better outcomes for people affected by poverty.

Key to addressing poverty is making long-term structural changes to the way our society works. It is difficult sometimes to identify where these changes are taking place, or how we can make these changes happen. It can be tempting, and with good reason, to focus solely on immediate action.

When we see the level of need that exists in our society, focusing on long-term change may seem misplaced. However, if we are ever move to the prevention of poverty, rather than only the alleviation, if we are to cure, rather than only treat the effects of poverty, then it is a combination of short and long-term change we need to focus on.

The work of the Poverty Alliance, this year more than others, has illustrated that our focus on shifting policy and practice to reduce poverty in the future is not only justified, but is vitally necessary. With a continuing freeze on working age benefits, underfunded public services, and a predicted sharp increase in child poverty, we need to do more to ensure that our long term policies are contributing to a different direction in anti-poverty activity. Strengthening our network is vital in making this a reality. I would like to say thank you all our members for all your contributions to our network over the last year, and encourage you to stay involved with the important debates that lie ahead.

Anela Anwar

**Convenor**



## DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

As in previous years, the Poverty Alliance finds itself in a positive position with regards to our work and impact. Yet we are operating in a context in which there is little to be positive about for many people living on low incomes in Scotland. It is a perennial problem – we develop and grow as a network, but the problems we are seeking to address do not diminish.

We have seen important developments in the policy context in which we operate over the last year. As Anela Anwar, our Convenor notes, the passing of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act has been a critical step forward. On its own it will not reduce poverty, but it provides a new focus for many of our activities. The signs of this new focus were evident in the production of the first Child Poverty Delivery Plan, Every Child, Every Chance, in March 2018. This comprehensive plan sets the clear direction for the Scottish Government's child poverty priorities over the coming years. Its analysis is one that we commended at the time of publication, and we will work positively with local and national Government to ensure that the priorities in the plan are delivered. We were particularly pleased to see two areas of the Poverty Alliance's own work given a good deal of prominence in the plan – our efforts to encourage employers to pay the real Living Wage, and the support given to our new initiative Get Heard Scotland, that will help more people to contribute to the development of future plans to tackle poverty.

It is important to be clear: these plans will need revised and updated over the coming years, and it is critical that people with lived experience of poverty have the opportunity to contribute to new priorities as they emerge. It is because this context that we need our plans to be flexible and responsive.

Of course, central to this need to be responsive is the dark cloud of Brexit. At the time of writing there is no deal with the EU, and even if one can be agreed the long term implications are far from clear. Not only is there likely to be economic uncertainty, there will also be a real pressure on existing social rights. Anti-poverty campaigners must be vigilant about the potential impact on rights, and we will need to ensure that Scottish Government does all it can to defend and extend rights where they can.

It is not only Brexit that can potentially blow our anti-poverty plans in Scotland off course. The prediction for trends at the moment is not positive.

Forecasts produced for the Scottish Government suggest that more than a third of children could be in poverty by 2021/22. UK social security policies will play a large part in driving these increases, particularly the continued freeze on many working age benefits and the further roll out of Universal Credit.

So over the coming years we will need to maintain pressure on Government in Scotland and at the UK level, the former to ensure that they deliver all they can and the latter to change the direction of policy. Our work over the last year has shown that there is an appetite to maintain that pressure. The continued growth of our Challenge Poverty Week initiative, support for campaigns around the Living Wage or stigma all show the potential to bring about positive change, even in difficult times. However, we need to do more; significantly more. We need a more co-ordinated anti-poverty movement, not just across Scotland, but the UK. The Poverty Alliance as an organisation cannot do this alone, only with the support and involvement of our members and wider network. So our positive steps forward, even in a difficult context, should give us strength to redouble our efforts in the years to come. We face an enormous challenge; we need to show that we are up to it.

Delivery of what is a very wide and challenge programme of work is, of course, impossible without our staff team. We have continued to grow over the last year, and we welcome all our new colleagues. I would also like to thank a very valued colleague, Carla McCormack, who left us at the end of 2017. We are confident that she will go on to make a significant impact in her new role, just as she did with the Poverty Alliance. I would also like to thank all of our board members, particularly Anela Anwar our convenor, Hugh Foy our vice convenor and Nick Bailey our treasurer, for the leadership and support they have provided.

Our network has grown and become stronger this last year. We can see this in our impact on legislation such as the Child Poverty Act or in the development of social security in Scotland. It is also evident in the work of Living Wage Scotland, which we have developed, and that passed the important milestone of 1,000 accredited Living Wage employers in Scotland. Challenge Poverty Week shows the impact and the potential for our work to change the narrative on poverty in Scotland. We do all of this work thanks to our members supporter and our funders. We would like to thank them all, particularly Scottish Government for their continued financial support of our work.

Finally I would like to thank all of the activists that give tirelessly to help us fight against poverty, particularly those involved in the Community Activist Advisory Group. It is their passion, commitment and resilience that helps drive all of our work forward. We look forward to working with all of you again next year to face the significant challenges that ahead.

**Peter Kelly**

*Director*





## KEY ACTIVITIES

In 2017-18 we focused our activity in five areas to would help us fulfil our objectives. These five areas of activity were:

1. To support the development of policy and practice which promote social justice and combat poverty;
2. To work with people and communities to help them challenge poverty;
3. To work with organisations to build a strong anti-poverty network in Scotland;
4. To raise awareness, encourage debate and encourage action on poverty; and
5. To provide high quality research and knowledge about poverty in Scotland

A wide range of activities are carried out by the staff team with our members and many others in each of these areas.

## INFLUENCING POLICY AND PRACTICE

Our work was dominated by two critical pieces of legislation over the last year. The Child Poverty Act was finally passed in December 2017. The legislation was important for a number of reasons: it sets statutory targets for child poverty reduction, it requires local authorities and health boards to report each year on what they are doing to address child poverty, and it sets up a statutory Poverty and Inequality Commission, which will be in place by the middle of 2019. The Poverty Alliance worked with our members, with the End Child Poverty coalition and with our community members to ensure that we had the strongest Child Poverty Act that was possible. The end result was a significant achievement, and it is important that the Act was passed with the unanimous support of the Scottish Parliament. The provisions of the Act will provide a great deal of the focus of the Poverty Alliance’s lobbying and influencing work in the years ahead.

The first Child Poverty Delivery Plan (CPDP) showed strong evidence of our lobbying and advocacy over many years.



Our work on the Living Wage is at the heart of the approach outlined in the CPDP for tackling low pay. We can also see evidence of our work on issues from affordable credit, to the introduction of a new Income Supplement. Our approach to involving people with direct experience of poverty also features, with our new Get Heard Scotland initiative forming a key part of the Scottish Government engagement process for the CPDP.

The other area of critically important work was that around the development of the Social Security (Scotland) Bill. The Poverty Alliance has been engaged in the development of new powers over social security since 2014, and this Bill was an important stage in the delivery of these new powers. We have been closely involved in key Scottish Government working groups, around for example the new Best Start Grant. We have also worked with MSPs during the passage of the Bill, playing a key role in strengthening some of the principles. There is undoubtedly more work to be done in the years to come, but by working with others in the Scottish Campaign on Welfare Reform, we have secured an important set of principles that will guide the approach we take to social security in Scotland.

Our activity has not only been focused on the Scottish Parliament or on issues of social security. We have been active on issues of fuel poverty, and intend to take a strong role in the new Scottish Fuel Poverty Panel. We have also continued to work with the Carnegie UK Trust on issues of affordable credit, work which we hope to continue to build on in the next year.

Our objective is to influence both policy and practice. Without question our most important work in changing practice relates to that with employers.

This work has been focused on encouraging employers in the private, public and voluntary sectors to pay the real Living Wage and to be recognised for doing so through accreditation. We reached a significant milestone in this work when we accredited the 1,000 Living Wage employer in Scotland in November 2017. This means that since we started working on the scheme in 2014 more than 25,000 workers have had a pay increase as a result of their employer becoming accredited. This has put more than £50m into the pockets of low paid workers over this time. Whilst this is excellent progress, we know that it is not enough. Too many people experience in-work poverty and a key cause of this is low pay. Over the next three years we will further develop our work on the Living Wage, focusing more on challenging sectors of the economy and developing 'Living Wage Places'.

2017-18 also saw the recruitment of staff to work on the Menu for Change Project. This project, delivered in partnership with Oxfam Scotland, Child Poverty Action Group Scotland and Nourish Scotland, is seeking to address food insecurity by working with a range of local stakeholders in Fife, Dundee and East Ayrshire. Using Action Learning Sets this project will deliver practical changes in systems at the local level that will ensure that people in crisis can access food in dignified and rights based ways.





## WORKING WITH PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

A key part of the work of the Poverty Alliance is engagement with community based organisations and with people with direct experience of poverty. This allows us to gain a better understanding of the realities of poverty in Scotland, and enables the voice of those most affected by it are heard by policy makers. In 2017-18 we carried out a comprehensive programme with 38 engagement meetings over the course of the year. These allowed us to get a better sense of the issues that were affecting organisations working with people living on low incomes across Scotland.

This programme of engagement allowed us to gather evidence to support our lobbying and campaigning activities, for example gathering evidence for the Social Security Bill, the Fairer Scotland Action Plan and disability and employment.

We also continued to work with our Community Activist Advisory Group (CAAG), ensuring that their views were fed into relevant policy processes. Eight members of CAAG joined the Scottish Government's Social Security Experience Panels. CAAG meetings twice hosted staff from Scottish Government as keynote speakers. In addition we once again supported members of our CAAG to attend the annual European Meeting of People with experience of Poverty in Brussels.



### Networking

Another core aspect of our work is building our network of supporters in the community, voluntary and statutory sectors. All of our work is increasingly focused on considerations of how we build a stronger network, whether it is through our policy and practice work, our community engagement activity, or our campaigning work. Building this network includes essential activity such as providing regular information to our members through our enews service. For example we produced six organisational and individual case studies covering ESA, child poverty and social security.

We delivered opportunities for organisations large and small to network and share their experiences. Over the period 2017 -18 we carried out nine regional networking events that allowed people to come together to discuss key poverty issues such as Fairer Work and the Scottish Social Security Charter.

In addition we also delivered large and small networking events, with our annual conference last year bringing together more than 150 people to discuss the history and future of campaigning against poverty in Scotland. We also organised roundtable events on the Poverty and Inequality Commission and on the Fairer Scotland duty that allowed members the opportunity to discuss key aspects of the anti-poverty agenda in more detail. These types of smaller, member focused events will become an increasingly important approach to supporting our network in the years to come.



## Training

Over the year, in partnership with One Parent Families Scotland (OPFS) and CPAG Scotland, we delivered a comprehensive programme of Poverty Awareness Training across Fife to frontline and policy staff from agencies involved in the Fairer Fife Partnership. We also carried out bespoke sessions for staff employed by Stirling and Falkirk Councils. Our Poverty Awareness Training is becoming an increasingly important aspect of our work. This work will be further enhanced in the coming year as we continue to develop our approach to changing attitudes to poverty.



## Awareness Raising

We have continued to produce a range of publications, including the Scottish Anti-Poverty Review, leaflets, briefing sheets. We also produced a number of parliamentary briefings and evidence papers on social security, the Poverty and Inequality Commission, dignity and respect amongst others.

A key part of our awareness work is with the media. We have continued to undertake a wide range of media work, with more than 140 comments in the local and national media last year. We have also continued to develop and maintain a strong online presence, with more than 10,000 followers on twitter, as well as our main website and Scottish Living Wage accreditation website. We also ensure that we maintain an active engagement with a wide range of organisations by speaking at conferences and events, speaking at more than 20 events reaching more than 1,000 people.

Our campaigning work remains an important way of raising awareness about different aspects of poverty. In addition to our core campaigns on the Scottish Living Wage Campaign and the Stick Your Labels campaign, we ran a short campaign on the benefits freeze, drawing together a coalition of Scottish organisations ahead of the budget in 2017. Our Challenge Poverty week initiative strengthened significantly in 2017, with more than 100 organisations involved in delivering almost 150 actions during the week. The support from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation was critical in helping us create an even better Challenge Poverty Week in 2017. We will be building on this experience, particularly our work on reframing messages around poverty in 2018-19 to ensure that we have a bigger impact on how we talk about poverty.

## SCOTTISH ANTI POVERTY REVIEW



ISSUE 27 SPRING 2018





## RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE

Developing an evidence based for action continues to be a central part of our work at the Poverty Alliance. Building on our long-term interest in tackling food insecurity the Menu for Change project, a partnership with Oxfam, CPAG Scotland and Nourish Scotland, has led to the an increased understanding of how we can tackle food insecurity across both local authorities and Scotland. The research element of this project includes a programme of longitudinal research with people experiencing food crisis. This research will enhance our understanding of why people use food banks and how we can better support people experiencing food insecurity.

We have continued to enhance our research partnerships. A significant development has been the launch of our partnership with the Scottish Poverty and Inequality Research Unit (SPIRU) at Glasgow Caledonian University. This partnership will allow us to work with researchers from the University to undertake interdisciplinary research and policy analysis. We have already undertaken work with colleagues at the Centre for the Social History of Health and Healthcare on maternal healthcare amongst low income women in Glasgow in the 1980s and early 2000s. We expect more of this type of collaboration to emerge in the coming years as our partnership strengthens.

We have remained active in Reinvest, our European wide research project funded by through Horizons 2020, alongside a host of partners from across Europe.

This has allowed us to explore social investment in relation to financial services for those who have experienced addiction. This work has been in collaboration with colleagues from Erasmus University in the Hague and Turning Point Scotland. We have also worked with colleagues at the Scottish Collaboration for Public Health Research Policy at Edinburgh University and University of Strathclyde to better understand the experience of stigma for people living on low incomes. This is work that will become increasingly important for the Poverty Alliance in the coming years.

Our research partnership with Fife Gingerbread has continued in 2017-18. We have been involved in the evaluation of the Making it Work employability project. This is a partnership project involving four agencies, Fife Gingerbread, Clued Up, Citizen Advice Rights Fife and Supported Employment Service (SES) and involved tracking households across the project experiencing an intervention as well as reflections from practitioners across the respective agencies.

Understanding child poverty was a central focus of work led by John McKendrick from Glasgow Caledonian University and Poverty Alliance funded by Aberdeenshire Council. This research helped to provide valuable insights into the experience of rural poverty. Finally work also took place with the Scottish Community Development Centre, engaging with ten community organisations to build the case for a more structured and resourced approach to participatory research. Again, we intend to build on this work in the coming year.



## TREASURER'S REPORT

Over the course of the last year, the finances of the Poverty Alliance have seen a welcome improvement, the outcome of long term approaches to funding. We had increased support from the Scottish Government to support the further development of Living Wage Scotland, helping us ensure that we reached more than 1,000 Living Wage in 2017-18. This has given us a strong basis from which to build our work in this area and to generate additional income in the future.

Our work on food insecurity, funded by the Big Lottery Fund via Oxfam Scotland, has allowed deliver both practice change and research activity. Our research work has become an important source of income, with grants from Aberdeenshire Council, and a range of smaller funds have allowed us to undertake a wide variety of research activity. We have also secured funding from Cancer Research UK, and will continue to receive funding from the European Commission, via the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, as part of the ReInvest Research programme. The support from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to support our Challenge Poverty Week initiative is something that we hope to further develop in the years to come.

Whilst the financial position of the Poverty alliance is strong, we are conscious of the difficult period that lies ahead with significant economic uncertainty feeding through to the voluntary sector. The Board of the Poverty Alliance will work to ensure that the organisation is financially viable and that it is able to carry out its important work to address poverty. The Board will work with our staff team, our members and our funders to ensure that the Poverty Alliance continues to be able to deliver on its core aims. As always, we thank all of our funders, including our members, for their support.

**Nick Bailey**

*Treasurer*

Income	2017-18	2016-17
Scottish Government	521,636	456,422
Local Authorities	30,400	7,067
EAPN	3,883	1,970
DWP (Access to Work)	6,919	-
Fife Gingerbread	-	15,806
Oxfam	62,968	13,858
JRF	13,500	-
Living Wage Foundation	87,867	53,243
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	-	9,107
Membership Fees	5,546	6,110
Donation	1,828	1,633
Other Income	40,448	28,755
Bank Interest	41	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>775,036</b>	<b>594,034</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Charitable activities	704,260	644,740
<b>Total</b>	<b>704,260</b>	<b>644,740</b>

Expenditure		
Net movements in funds	70,776	(50,706)
Balance brought forward	220,045	270,751
Balance carried forward	290,821	220,045

# STAFF AND BOARD, APRIL 2017 - MARCH 2018

## BOARD MEMBERS

Anela Anwar, Oxfam Scotland (Convenor)  
Nick Bailey, University of Glasgow (Treasurer) (co-opted)  
Hugh Foy, Conforti Institute (Vice – Convenor, from 15 September 2017) (co-opted)  
Elizabeth Gore, Energy Action Scotland (Vice – Convenor) (resigned 30 June 2017)  
John Dickie, Child Poverty Action Group  
Jill Wood, Engender  
Bill Scott, Inclusion Scotland  
Irena Paterson, Moray Disability Forum  
Mary McLean, Western Isles Healthy Partnership  
Dave Moxham, Scottish Trades Union Congress  
David Liddell, Scottish Drugs Forum  
Satwat Rehman, One Parent Families Scotland (resigned 19 October 2017)  
Ann Mulgrew, Children Panel (resigned 15 September 2017)  
Fiona Garven, Scottish Community Development Centre (co-opted) (appointed 26 January 2018)  
Rachel McEwen, Scottish & Southern Electricity Ltd (co-opted) (appointed 26 January 2018)  
Emma Richardson, Northumberland Council (co-opted) (appointed 26 January 2018)  
Nuala Watt, Community Activist Advisory Group (co-opted) (appointed 26 January 2018)

## STAFF TEAM APRIL

Peter Kelly, Director  
Robin Tennant, Fieldwork Manager  
Twimukye Mushaka, Senior Fieldwork Development Officer  
Lynn Law, Fieldwork Development Officer (p-t)  
Carla McCormack, Policy and Parliamentary Officer (until 2 January 2018)  
Neil Cowan, Policy and Parliamentary Officer (from 1 March 2018)  
Rachel Thomson, Campaign and Policy Assistant  
Fiona McHardy, Research and Information Manager  
Mary Anne MacLeod, Research Officer (p-t) (until 8 May 2017)  
Julie McGahan, Living Wage Scotland Manager  
Anne Callaghan, Living Wage Programme Manager (Scotland) (until 26 May 2017)  
Jack Evans, Living Wage Scotland Manager  
Lynn Anderson, Living Wage Places National Coordinator  
Philip McGuinness, Living Wage Accreditation Officer (until 27 July 2017)  
Lynn Cunningham, Living Wage Accreditation Officer (from 2 May 2017)  
Anna Baillie, Project Officer (from 8 May 2017)  
Poe McHugh, Administration and Finance Manager  
Judith Robertson, Administrative Assistant (p-t) (until 20 April 2017)  
Patricia Di-Tommaso, Administrative Assistant (p-t)  
Lesley Sherwood, Administrative Assistant (p-t)



WORKING TOGETHER TO COMBAT POVERTY

3rd Floor, 94 Hope Street, Glasgow, G2 6PH  
Tel: (00) 141 353 0440 Email: [admin@povertyalliance.org](mailto:admin@povertyalliance.org)  
[www.povertyalliance.org](http://www.povertyalliance.org)

The Poverty Alliance is a Company Limited by Guarantee  
Registered in Scotland No. 136689 • Registered Office: Standard Building, 3rd Floor Front, 102 Hope, Glasgow, G2 6PH  
The Poverty Alliance is recognised as a charity by the Inland Revenue  
Reference No. ED872/91/JP SCO 19926

