**CHILD POVERTY RISING IN EVERY SCOTTISH LOCAL AUTHORITY – NEW DATA**

**Embargoed until: 00:01 19 May 2021**

**Interviews, further briefing and stats available. Images available** [**here**](https://we.tl/t-E8fOJUFnRm) **(please credit Save the Children).**

•Child poverty rising in every Scottish local authority area, even before impact of Covid pandemic

•Urgent action needed at every level of government, say campaigners

•Scottish local authority data available below

Child poverty has risen in every Scottish local authority since 2015, according to new research published today by the End Child Poverty coalition. The new data shows the scale of the challenge faced by UK, Scottish and local government if commitments to end child poverty in Scotland are to be met.

The research by Loughborough University, on behalf of the End Child Poverty coalition, shows that, even before the pandemic\*, levels of child poverty in Scotland ranged from nearly one in six children in the Shetland Islands and East Renfrewshire to nearly one in three in Glasgow - once housing costs are taken into account. Across the UK the North East of England has seen the most dramatic rise in child poverty in the past five years with child poverty rising by over a third - from 26% of all children to 37% - over five years.

Scotland has lower levels of child poverty (24%) than England (30%) or Wales (31%). However, campaigners in Scotland say that there can be no room for complacency if statutory child poverty targets agreed by all the Holyrood parties are to be met.

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act, passed unanimously by the last parliament, requires the new Scottish government to ensure fewer than 18% of children are living in poverty by 2023/24, on course to less than 10% by 2030. Councils and local health boards are also required to publish annual Local Child Poverty Action Reports setting out action being taken at local level to tackle child poverty. The End Child Poverty campaigners are urging that local powers, including over economic development, housing and financial support, are all used to maximise family incomes and reduce the costs parents face. They say the impact of COVID-19 on women’s employment in particular is now pushing many women and their children into greater poverty.

Speaking on behalf of members of End Child Poverty John Dickie, director of the Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland, responded to the new figures:

“Solid foundations have been laid in Scotland for future progress on child poverty, not least the introduction of the Scottish child payment and an increasing focus on action at local level. But this new data is a stark reminder that child poverty was still rising in every part of Scotland, even before the pandemic struck. The challenge now is for government at all levels to use every power they have to boost family incomes and reduce the costs that struggling parents face.

“The new Scottish parliament must act on election promises and make tackling child poverty its top priority. The cross party commitment to at least doubling the Scottish child payment needs to be implemented as a matter of utmost urgency in order to help meet the 2023/24 targets. But child poverty also needs to be a priority at local level. Local powers, including over economic development, housing and welfare, must be used to maximum effect to ensure all families have a disposable income fit for giving children a decent start in life.”

The End Child Poverty coalition is also calling on the UK government to recognise the scale of the problem and its impact on children’s lives. They say a credible UK government plan is needed to end child poverty across the UK, including a commitment to increase UK child benefits. Given the extent to which families are already struggling, the £20 per week cut to Universal Credit planned in October should also be revoked they say, with the support also extended to those still receiving financial assistance from the old benefit system, referred to as ‘legacy benefits’, before they are switched to Universal Credit.

Mr Dickie continued:

“The figures speak for themselves – the situation for children couldn’t be starker. We all want to live in a society where children are supported to be the best they can be, but the reality is very different for too many. The UK Government can be in no doubt about the challenge it faces if it is serious about ‘levelling up’ parts of the country hardest hit by poverty. After the year we’ve all had, they owe it to our children to come up with a plan to tackle child poverty that includes a boost to children’s benefits. And they need to scrap plans to cut Universal Credit given parents and children are having a tough enough time as it is.”

\*Data detailed in this press release are numbers of children living in poverty in year 2019/2020

**Estimates of children living in poverty, below 60% median income after housing costs, by Scottish local authority.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Local authority** | ***Number*** | | ***Percentage*** | | **Percentage point change (2015-20)** |
| **2014/15** | **2019/20** | **2014/15** | **2019/20** |
| Aberdeen City | 6288 | 7545 | 18.7% | 21.3% | 2.6% |
| Aberdeenshire | 7586 | 8204 | 15.6% | 16.7% | 1.0% |
| Angus | 4138 | 4598 | 21.1% | 24.0% | 3.0% |
| Argyll and Bute | 2808 | 3000 | 20.7% | 23.3% | 2.6% |
| City of Edinburgh | 13948 | 16046 | 18.6% | 20.3% | 1.7% |
| Clackmannanshire | 2205 | 2443 | 24.2% | 27.3% | 3.1% |
| Dumfries and Galloway | 5583 | 6205 | 23.3% | 26.7% | 3.4% |
| Dundee City | 5650 | 6425 | 23.8% | 26.8% | 3.0% |
| East Ayrshire | 5167 | 5754 | 24.4% | 27.3% | 2.9% |
| East Dunbartonshire | 2799 | 3161 | 15.2% | 16.3% | 1.0% |
| East Lothian | 4130 | 4808 | 21.9% | 24.5% | 2.6% |
| East Renfrewshire | 2713 | 3064 | 15.0% | 15.8% | 0.8% |
| Falkirk | 6430 | 6980 | 22.7% | 24.8% | 2.1% |
| Fife | 15123 | 16981 | 23.6% | 26.4% | 2.7% |
| Glasgow City | 26223 | 32480 | 27.1% | 32.2% | 5.1% |
| Highland | 8592 | 9205 | 21.4% | 23.6% | 2.2% |
| Inverclyde | 2757 | 3003 | 20.9% | 23.8% | 2.9% |
| Midlothian | 3562 | 4289 | 21.8% | 23.9% | 2.1% |
| Moray | 3454 | 3768 | 20.8% | 23.4% | 2.6% |
| Na h-Eileanan Siar | 773 | 881 | 17.5% | 20.7% | 3.3% |
| North Ayrshire | 5790 | 6274 | 24.8% | 27.9% | 3.2% |
| North Lanarkshire | 15202 | 16604 | 23.9% | 26.5% | 2.6% |
| Orkney Islands | 711 | 815 | 20.3% | 22.7% | 2.4% |
| Perth and Kinross | 4869 | 5515 | 19.9% | 22.6% | 2.7% |
| Renfrewshire | 5768 | 6997 | 19.3% | 23.1% | 3.8% |
| Scottish Borders | 3985 | 4612 | 20.9% | 24.2% | 3.3% |
| Shetland Islands | 571 | 663 | 13.3% | 15.8% | 2.5% |
| South Ayrshire | 4048 | 4366 | 22.7% | 24.8% | 2.2% |
| South Lanarkshire | 11839 | 12840 | 21.5% | 23.1% | 1.5% |
| Stirling | 3046 | 3293 | 19.6% | 21.3% | 1.7% |
| West Dunbartonshire | 3685 | 4189 | 23.4% | 26.8% | 3.3% |
| West Lothian | 7499 | 8740 | 21.3% | 24.6% | 3.3% |

Estimates by Westminster constituency are also available [here](http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/local-child-poverty-data-2014-15-2019-20/)

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors**

For further information, or requests to speak to Scottish members of End Child Poverty please contact Beverley Kirk, Save the Children – 07977 777 097 / 0131 527 8244.

•The research was carried out by Dr Juliet Stone and Professor Donald Hirsch at the Centre for Research in Social Policy, at Loughborough University based on the latest Before Housing Cost child poverty data from DWP published in March 2021.

•Report and data all available [here](http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/local-child-poverty-data-2014-15-2019-20/) [Local child poverty data 2014/15 - 2019/20 | Improving the lives of children and families](http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/local-child-poverty-data-2014-15-2019-20/) (endchildpoverty.org.uk)

•For a family of one adult and one child, 60% of median income, after housing costs, in 2019/20 was £223 week

•For a family of one adult and two children, £280 week

•For a family of two adults and one child, £343 week

•For a family of two adults and two children, £400 week

•Where local authorities and Westminster constituencies are coterminous the estimates may vary due to data available and different modelling needed.

•This new data include previous years from 2014/15. Due to a small technical adjustment in the official figures, past data are slightly different from those published previously.

**About End Child Poverty**

End Child Poverty is a coalition of organisations from civic society including children’s charities, child welfare organisations, social justice groups, faith groups, trade unions and others, united in our vision of a UK free of child poverty. For more details visit: www.endchildpoverty.org.uk

End Child Poverty members in Scotland include Aberlour, Action for Children, Barnardo’s Scotland, Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) in Scotland, Children 1st, Children in Scotland, Close the Gap, Engender, Home-Start in Scotland, One Parent Families Scotland, Oxfam Scotland, Poverty Alliance, Save the Children and the Trussell Trust.