**‘NO ROOM FOR COMPLACENCY’ AS CHILD POVERTY REMAINS HIGH ACROSS SCOTLAND AMID DEEPENING COST OF LIVING CRISIS – NEW DATA**

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

* **Over one in five children across Scotland still living in poverty, despite temporary universal credit increase during pandemic**
* **Urgent action needed at every level of government, say campaigners**
* **Scottish Ministers must *‘act now to double bridging payments in advance of full roll out of Scottish child payment’***
* **‘UK government must commit to ongoing increases in UK family benefits’**
* **Councillors across Scotland urged to use local powers to maximise family incomes and reduce costs as cost of living crisis deepens**
* **Breakdown of Scottish local authority data available below**

Levels of child poverty have remained stubbornly high across Scotland and the rest of the UK despite families benefiting from the temporary Covid-19-related increase to universal credit, according to new research published today by the End Child Poverty coalition.

The research, covering the period to 2020/21, provides the best available estimates of child poverty at local authority level, after housing costs have been taken into account.

Campaigners say the new data shows just how important additional investment in the new Scottish child payment will be to supporting families through the cost of living crisis and to drive forward efforts to meet Scotland’s child poverty targets. The payment was introduced from February 2021 for children under six where families are in receipt of universal credit. Its value was doubled from £10 to £20 per week in April 2022 and it will increase to £25 per week when rolled out to all eligible under 16s by the end of the year. Bridging payments for school aged children were not doubled and the coalition is urging Scottish Ministers to *‘act now to double the bridging payments in advance of the full roll out of the Scottish child payment’.*

However members of the End Child Poverty coalition in Scotland - including Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland, Save the Children, Trussell Trust, Poverty Alliance, Oxfam Scotland, Close the Gap, Aberlour, Children 1st , Home-Start Scotland, Children in Scotland, Parenting across Scotland and One Parent Families Scotland - are also calling on the UK Government to ensure UK benefits keep pace with inflation permanently not just through one-off measures announced by the Chancellor in May (see note 1 below).

The new research by Loughborough University, on behalf of the End Child Poverty coalition, shows that the headline rate of child poverty across the UK fell during 2020/21, primarily as a result of the temporary £20 a week uplift to universal credit brought in during the pandemic. However, the number of children in poverty in Scotland ranged from one in eight children in East Dunbartonshire to nearly one in three in Glasgow - once housing costs are taken into account.

Scotland has lower levels of child poverty than England or Wales. However, campaigners in Scotland say that whilst progress is being made there can be no room for complacency if Scotland’s statutory child poverty targets, which were agreed by all the Holyrood parties, are to be met.

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act requires the Scottish Government to ensure fewer than 18% of children are living in poverty by 2023/24, on course to achieving less than 10% by 2030.

Scotland’s Poverty and Inequality Commission recently warned that meeting the 2030 target will require “more transformational change” to address the drivers of poverty – including action to reshape the economy (see note 2 below). The campaigners also highlight that Scotland’s independent care review, The Promise, was clear that “there must be significant, ongoing and persistent commitment to ending poverty and mitigating its impacts for Scotland’s children, families and communities.” (note 3)

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 newly elected councillors across Scotland to use local powers, including over economic development, housing and financial support, to maximise family incomes and reduce the costs parents face. They say the Scottish government should also ensure that local authorities have the resources needed to effectively deliver local services that tackle child poverty.

They are also urging the Scottish government to double the value of bridging payments being made in October and December to families with school aged children on the lowest incomes. Bridging payments were introduced as providing “[cash equivalent to the Scottish child payment](https://www.gov.scot/news/boost-for-family-budgets-before-christmas/)” for eligible school aged children until full roll out of the Scottish child payment itself. However, they haven’t been doubled as the payment has, despite the growing pressure the cost of living crisis is placing on family finances.

**Speaking on behalf of members of End Child Poverty Ed Pybus, of the Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland, responded to the new figures**:

“The figures show just how big a difference investment in social security can make, and how important the Scottish government’s new Scottish child payment is and will continue to be if Scotland is to end the scandal of children living in poverty. Progress is being made but, as low-income families struggling to cope with spiralling prices know all too well, there is no room for complacency, and we need every level of government to do its bit if we are to meet Scotland’s child poverty targets. The UK government must now commit to ongoing increases in UK family benefits.”

Mr Pybus continued;

“Here in Scotland we urge newly elected councillors to use every tool at their disposal to boost family incomes and reduce the costs families face. That means using local powers to deliver more cash support to families, support decent jobs - especially for women and those affected by disability, and improve access to high quality, free and accessible childcare. Finally, the Scottish government should act now to double bridging payments in advance of the full roll out of the Scottish child payment to ensure school aged children get the same support as the under sixes who are already benefitting from the payment.”

\*Data detailed in this press release are numbers of children living in poverty in year 2020/2021

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

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Local authority** | ***Number of children in poverty*** | ***Percentage of children in poverty*** |
| Aberdeen City | 6421 | 18.3% |
| Aberdeenshire | 6749 | 14.2% |
| Angus | 3809 | 20.6% |
| Argyll and Bute | 2325 | 18.9% |
| City of Edinburgh | 13358 | 17.2% |
| Clackmannanshire | 2084 | 23.9% |
| Dumfries and Galloway | 5171 | 22.9% |
| Dundee City | 5287 | 22.5% |
| East Ayrshire | 4911 | 24.0% |
| East Dunbartonshire | 2383 | 12.5% |
| East Lothian | 3640 | 18.9% |
| East Renfrewshire | 2453 | 12.8% |
| Falkirk | 5872 | 21.5% |
| Fife | 13863 | 22.1% |
| Glasgow City | 28909 | 29.4% |
| Highland | 7734 | 20.5% |
| Inverclyde | 2213 | 18.2% |
| Midlothian | 3539 | 20.0% |
| Moray | 3341 | 21.3% |
| Na h-Eileanan Siar | 669 | 16.7% |
| North Ayrshire | 5394 | 24.7% |
| North Lanarkshire | 14156 | 23.2% |
| Orkney Islands | 640 | 18.2% |
| Perth and Kinross | 4433 | 18.7% |
| Renfrewshire | 5759 | 19.5% |
| Scottish Borders | 3592 | 19.5% |
| Shetland Islands | 769 | 18.7% |
| South Ayrshire | 3505 | 20.6% |
| South Lanarkshire | 10659 | 19.6% |
| Stirling | 2698 | 18.1% |
| West Dunbartonshire | 3549 | 23.4% |
| West Lothian | 7263 | 21.1% |

Estimates by Westminster constituency are also available [here](https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/child-poverty/)

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors**

For further information, or requests to speak to Scottish members of End Child Poverty please contact Ed Pybus, CPAG in Scotland, on 07903 638 226 or Fiona King of Save the Children on 07815 108 889

* The research was carried out by Dr Juliet Stone at the Centre for Research in Social Policy, at Loughborough University using data released by the Department for Work and Pensions, [Children in low income families: local area statistics,](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2021) published in March 2022. This is based on benefits and tax credits administrative data and is before housing costs. The figures are adjusted to take housing costs into account, and calibrated to Households Below Average Income (HBAI).
* Calculating poverty ‘after housing costs’ gives a more accurate measure of how much families have to live on. Progress against Scotland’s statutory child poverty targets is measured on an ‘after housing costs’ basis.
* **NOTE:** These statistics are calibrated to regional 3-year averages from Households below Average Income for the financial years 2018/19 to 2020/21. The HBAI figures for 2020/21 are less reliable than earlier years due to sampling issues related to the pandemic. Caution should be used in interpreting HBAI statistics for 2020/21 due to sampling issues related to the pandemic. Further information is available [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-for-financial-years-ending-1995-to-2021).
* Report and data all available [here](https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/child-poverty/).

**Notes on how the data should be interpreted**

* The figures are based on the Department for Work and Pensions Children in low income families: local area statistics which estimates the poverty rate before housing costs. A statistical model is used to estimate child poverty after housing costs which draws on household survey data alongside local area statistics on private rent levels.
* Local estimates of poverty are subject to small statistical fluctuations from year-to-year. Users are advised to treat annual variations in the data with a degree of caution and instead focus on the longer-term trend.
* Where local authorities and Westminster constituencies are coterminous the estimates may vary due to data available and different modelling needed.

**Note 1** In May, the former Chancellor announced a £650 one-off Cost of Living Payment for those on means tested benefits and confirmed that the Government will use the usual rules for uprating benefits in April 2023, increasing them by September’s value of inflation,

**Note 2** See <https://povertyinequality.scot/publication/poverty-inequality-commission-child-poverty-scrutiny-report-2021-22/>

**Note 3** see <https://www.carereview.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-Promise.pdf>

**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](http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk).

End Child Poverty’s [*Manifesto for Ending Child Poverty: Priorities for Scottish Councils*](https://cpag.org.uk/end-child-poverty-scotland) can be found [here](https://cpag.org.uk/end-child-poverty-scotland)

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, Parenting across Scotland, Poverty Alliance, Save the Children and the Trussell Trust.