

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Embargoed until: 00:01 on Monday 5th June 2023**

**Contact:** [**media@ncb.org.uk**](mailto:media@ncb.org.uk)

**NO SIGN OF A REDUCTION IN CHILD POVERTY IN THE SOUTH EAST: 1 IN 4 CHILDREN STILL LIVING BELOW THE POVERTY LINE**

The End Child Poverty coalition has today published an analysis by Loughborough University, providing a new child poverty map of the UK. Once housing costs are factored in, child poverty remains stubbornly persistent in the South East of England with 1 in 4 children in the region living in poverty, a level that has not changed since End Child Poverty began publishing data for local areas in 2015.

Although the levels of child poverty in the South East are not as bad as some other UK regions, the new figures estimate that in seven local authorities, more than a third of children are living below the poverty line, and in all these areas, the numbers have risen steadily since 2015.

The parts of the South East with the highest percentage of children living in poverty include:

* Southampton – 35.8% of children living in poverty (a total of 17,942 children) in 2022 – a rise of 3.1 percentage points between 2015 and 2022.
* Thanet – 35.8% of children living in poverty (a total of 10,219 children) in 2022 – a rise of 1.8 percentage points between 2015 and 2022.
* Slough – 35.4% of children living in poverty (a total of 16,243 children) in 2022 – a rise of 2.2 percentage points between 2015 and 2022.
* Hastings - 34.9% of children living in poverty (a total of 6,583 children) in 2022 – a rise of 2.8 percentage points between 2015 and 2022.
* Portsmouth – 34.6% of children living in poverty (a total of 14,621 children) in 2022 – a rise of 3.5 percentage points between 2015 and 2022.

It is estimated that nearly half a million children in the South East are now living in poverty (25% of the region’s population of children and young people aged 0-19) after housing costs are factored in to Government data.

The End Child Poverty coalition is calling on the government to take urgent action to reverse child poverty and provide a brighter, fairer future for the young people of the UK. This should start with scrapping the two-child limit for those claiming Universal Credit, as evidence shows children with two or more siblings are more likely to be going through poverty in England and Wales.

**Anna Feuchtwang, Chief Executive of the National Children’s Bureau said:**

*“Evidence shows the multiple ways that poverty can negatively impact the health, development and academic and employment potential of children and young people.*

*“Rishi Sunak says the numbers of children in poverty is reducing, but once you factor in housing costs this is simply not the case. He also says the best way to tackle child poverty is to get parents back to work, but that’s not possible without properly resourced high quality childcare options that are available in every area.*

*“The pledge to increase investment in early years childcare made in the Budget statement in March was welcome, but plans to increase early years child to staff ratios are disappointing and we also need an integrated strategy to renew and rebuild a critically under-resourced children’s workforce.”*

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors**

* The full report ‘**Local indicators of child poverty after housing costs, 2021/22**’ as well as tables with Constituency and Local Authority data and further information about the coalitions’ key positions are available [here](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1GZECuwl1NVrqgvfV4jHELt2jT0WZ9UUp).
* The End Child Poverty Coalition is made up of 101 organisations including child welfare groups, social justice groups, faith groups, trade unions and others. Together with a group of Youth Ambassadors, members campaign for a UK free of child poverty. Further information on the Coalition can be found [here](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/yljl9ie7e6hnq3x/AAAL1KZKpzNahRhIWLnX2RJQa?dl=0&preview=End+Child+Poverty+Policy+Positions+Designed.pdf).
* The statistics on local child poverty rates after housing costs presented in today’s report are calibrated to the Department for Work and Pensions’ (DWP) Households Below Average Income (HBAI) dataset for FYE 2021 and FYE 2022. The DWP’s data has undergone extensive quality assurance prior to publication but, due to sampling issues related to the Covid-19 pandemic, users are encouraged to exercise caution when interpreting this data. We further recommend that users of these Local Child Poverty Statistics focus on longer-term trends to understand how poverty has changed in an area rather than year-on-year changes which are prone to fluctuations.
* More information about the DWP’s Households Below Average Income dataset is available [here.](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-for-financial-years-ending-1995-to-2022)