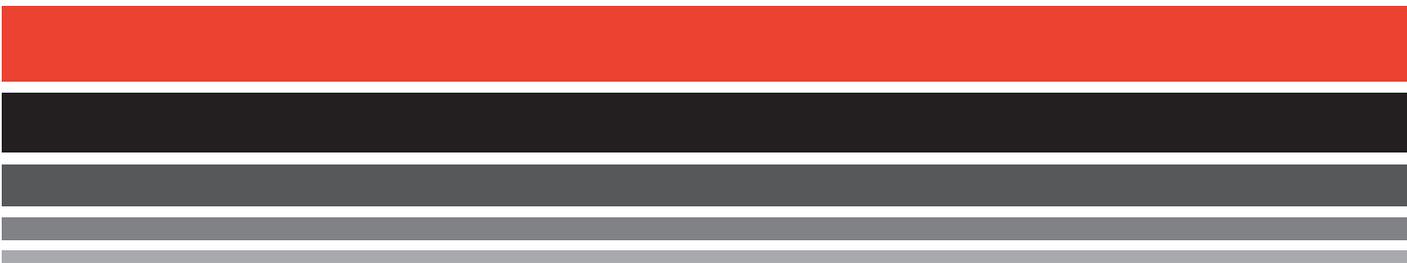


NO TURNING BACK:

The Poverty Alliance Annual Report 2013-14



WORKING TOGETHER TO COMBAT POVERTY

CONVENOR'S STATEMENT

The independence referendum took much of the attention in 2013-14, and will dominate the political scene for the coming year and beyond, but there was much to be done to address growing poverty whilst the constitutional debate went on. Over the last year a range of issues continued to grow in importance including the growing problem of food poverty, the problems of low pay and under-employment, or the issues of public attitudes to poverty. It was right that these issues played an important part of the referendum debate, but we were also clear that changes in our constitutional arrangements could not delay action to address these important problems.

I am pleased then that the Poverty Alliance has continued to play an important role in demanding change in these and other areas. Over the last year we have continued to feed into the on-going development of the Scottish Welfare Fund and in the approach to addressing in-work poverty in Scotland, both by ensuring more employers pay the Living Wage and by lobbying for the inclusion of the living wage in public procurement. Real progress has been made in these and other areas over the last year.

The last year was a difficult one financially for the Poverty Alliance, but I am pleased that we have come through the year stronger, with improved core funding from the Scottish Government and a new range of projects that will help us lobby for the real change that is needed. As always I would like to thank my fellow board members and the staff team at the Alliance for all the work they have done to help keep the network on track in Scotland, and for laying the basis for our future development.

After 10 years being associated with the board of the Poverty Alliance, and several years as convenor of the Board, I have decided it is time to stand down. It has been a privilege to serve on the board and it is good to know that the organisation is in a strong position to go on and make a bigger impact on poverty in Scotland. I hope that if you are not a member of the Alliance you will join and help us in making sure that we make a real difference to those living on low incomes in Scotland.

Jim Boyle

Convenor



DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

For many years the Poverty Alliance has often returned to the question of 'what makes a good society'. We most recently asked the question at the first SATP in 2010. It is perhaps a question that is particularly difficult to find a definitive answer, but it one that is important that is asked on a regular basis if we are interested in finding solutions to poverty. During the last year we were pleased that the referendum debate allowed this question to be asked over and over again, and for the answers to that question to be found most often in terms of how we address poverty.

Over the last year we have continued to seek new ways and approaches to get the message about the need to tackle poverty. We have been pleased that we were able to maintain our research capacity, allowing us to be part of research looking at health inequalities (with EAPN) and at international strategies for tackling poverty (with the New Policy Institute). Both of these projects will feed into our lobbying and campaigning work in the year to come.

We have also ensured that we implemented some of the legacy issues from the Evidence, Participation, Change (EPIC) Project that was completed in 2013. Our work with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to ensure the views of people with experience of poverty were fed into their UK Anti Poverty Strategy Programme was one area where this legacy was taken forward. JRF also funded the preparation work for the 5th Scottish Assembly for Tackling Poverty that took place in early 2014, paving the way for the Assembly in March 2014. One of the key lessons that the EPIC project highlighted was the need for greater public awareness around poverty. The launch of Challenge Poverty Week in 2013 was an important step forward in concentrating our activity around raising awareness of poverty. With more than 30 organisations pledging their support this was a definite success. We will build on this in 2014 and hope to do even more in the years to come.

Alongside the new developments and projects we have continued to take forward the campaigning, lobbying and engagement work that is central to our role. In doing this work, whether campaigning on the living wage or welfare reform, the involvement of our members and of people with direct experience of poverty has been crucial. Thank you to all of those who have been involved for their support over the last year.

The coming year will be an important one for the Poverty Alliance. Like all other civil society organisations we will be looking to capitalize on the increased engagement and interest in social justice issues that has come about because of the independence referendum. Over the course of the year we will also be revising our strategy for the period 2015-17, and will expect to identify opportunities in this new strategy to make a bigger impact on poverty by making use of any new powers that come to Scotland. We will, of course, be engaging with our members and other stakeholders in the process of developing this strategy, and we hope you can be involved.

As always I would like to thank all our Board, the staff team, all our volunteers and the members who have contributed to the work of the Poverty Alliance over the last year. In particular I would like to thank both Maggie Kelly and Eddie Follan who left the Alliance last year after contributing so much to our work around welfare reform and the living wage. They have left a strong legacy to build on. Finally I would like to pay a special thanks to Jim Boyle, our outgoing Convenor. Jim has contributed a great deal to the Alliance over the last 10 years, both as a board member and such an important organisation. I look forward to working with all of you again in the year to come, and to continuing to take forward the fight against poverty in Scotland.

Peter Kelly

Director

WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

As many of the changes in our social security system have begun to have an impact, it has been all the more important that the Poverty Alliance has sought to engage with those people most affected. Over the last year we have continued to build on the activity of previous years to ensure that the work of the network is informed by this direct experience.

Our core activity, funded by the Scottish Government, has continued to place community engagement at its center. We have continued to engage with a wide variety of large and small grassroots and local organisations. These have included organisations such as Fresh Start, West Pilton Community Association, Justice & Peace Edinburgh, Stirling CAB, COPE Drumchapel, Clackmananshire Kinship Carers, Women Refugee Strategy Group in Glasgow, Fife Gingerbread, Scottish Tenants Information Service, Bridging the Gap Gorbals, Karibu, Volunteer Action North Lanarkshire and St. Andrew's Young Mums Support Group in Dundee. Our engagement with local groups has helped inform our lobbying and campaigning work, feeding into consultation responses, evidence to Scottish Parliament Committees and into our media work.

Over the last year our project work has helped support activity to engage with people with experience of poverty. Central to this has been activity to help feedback and comment on the development of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's UK Anti-Poverty Strategies Programme. This included setting up a panel of community members who discussed and reflected on the research findings emerging from the programme. This work also included engagement with community organisations

across Scotland and culminated in the 5th Scottish Assembly for Tackling Poverty. Reports from the work are due to be published shortly.

We also carried out a range of other engagement work with community groups during the year. This included focus groups and event organisation for Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board to engage with parents on issues of child and family poverty. This concluded with an event for parents to discuss the child poverty plans that had been developed by the Glasgow Community Planning Partnership. We also carried out engagement work for the Shelter Scotland Housing and Wellbeing Commission, organizing focus groups and one to one interviews that were fed into the Commission.

We also completed a two year programme of community engagement work for West Lothian Council. This work not only fed in directly to the development of the West Lothian anti-poverty strategy but helped lay the basis for the Glasgow Welfare Trackers project which is now underway.

In all of our work with grassroots community organisations we seek to ensure that our engagement has an impact on both policy and the debates about how we tackle poverty. The examples given about are just a flavour of the work we do in this area. Over the coming year we intend to ensure that there is an even greater coordination between our grassroots community engagement work and our policy work.

BUILDING THE NETWORK

Our strength as a network lies in our membership. We stabilized this membership over the last year at around 200 members. Even in times when many community and voluntary organisations have been focused on keeping their doors open we have been pleased that so many have remained with the anti-poverty network in Scotland. Over the last year we have begun to put into operation plans, to find new ways to engage with our membership and bring them into the life of the network more effectively. Challenge Poverty Week, which we launched in October 2013, was one way to do this. More than 30 organisations supported the initiative and we hope to build on this in years to come.

We have continued to maintain strong relationships with key networks in Scotland, including the Scottish Drugs Forum, the Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector, Energy Action Scotland and the Scottish Refugee Council. Over the coming year we will be revising the way we work with all of our members, and will be seeking to develop even more inclusive and participatory ways of working with our members. This will include new approaches to involving members in responding to consultations, shaping the policy priorities of the organisation and providing greater opportunities for member networking and development.

We have also sought to take a leading role in networking across the UK and to play a role in the European Anti-Poverty Network. There remain significant challenges in resourcing networking activity at both of these levels but we

will continue to refresh our efforts in these areas. Over the course of the last year members of the network have contributed to the development of EAPN work through the membership of a task force on in-work poverty, as well as by hosting study visits from our partner networks.

In 2013-14 we will finalise plans for redeveloping EAPN in the UK and hope that many of our supporters will be able to take an active part in this activity in the future.

CAMPAIGNING AND INFLUENCING CHANGE

Our lobbying and campaigning work has never been more important than now. With real pressure on people both in and out of work, it is vital that the Poverty Alliance makes a real contribution to finding effective solutions to the problems people face. As always we can only do this work in partnership with others, and based on the real experience of those living in poverty. In campaigning work has been focused on two key areas: welfare reform and in-work poverty.

The Scottish Campaign on Welfare Reform (SCoWR), has continued to be central to our activity on addressing welfare reform. We supported the launch of a revised manifesto in November 2013 that we have used extensively in our lobbying work. With the departure of Maggie Kelly from the Policy Officer role we had less opportunity to feed into some of this activity, but we are now re-engaged with SCoWR and will help to ensure that it remains a key part of the social security debate in Scotland. In addition to our activity with SCoWR we have also continued to contribute to the Scottish Government's Welfare Reform Scrutiny Group and to the Scottish Parliament's Welfare Reform Committee. In April 2013 we supported a number of community members to make contributions to one of the Committee's 'Your Say' sessions. We will continue to find ways to allow individuals

with experience of poverty to feed into these important processes.

In work poverty: The problems of low pay and of in-work have become increasingly central to the work of the Alliance in recent years. It is now seven years since we launch the Scottish Living Wage Campaign, alongside the STUC and Church of Scotland. Real progress has been made over that time and we are happy to report that progress has continued over the last year. New supporters have become engaged in the campaign, notably the Scottish National Union of Students, joining an already strong group of civil society organisations leading the campaign. One of the issues we identified last year was the need to do more to ensure that more employers were accredited as part of the UK wide Living Wage Employer scheme. Over the course of the last year we have secured an agreement with the Living Wage Foundation to work in partnership with them to promote the scheme in Scotland. Funding from the Scottish Government has allowed us to engage with a wide range of employers that will see the number of Scottish companies that are recognized for paying the living wage increase significantly over the next year.

These have been the main areas of focus for

our policy work over the last year. However we have also contributed to developments around food poverty, fuel poverty, child poverty and community empowerment. As we continue to build our policy and campaigning resources we expect to make an even bigger impact in these areas in the future.

RAISING PUBLIC DEBATE ABOUT POVERTY

Addressing the negative public attitudes that exist about people living in poverty and about the role of social security has continued to be a focus for the Poverty Alliance over the last year. In June 2013 we launched a new video at the Scottish Parliament that sought to address head on some of the myths that exist about poverty in Scotland. This was made with people with direct experience of poverty and was part of the Stick Your Labels campaign.

Our more important development in the area of public attitudes was the development of Challenge Poverty Week. This is an attempt to bring to public attention not only the problem of poverty, but to highlight all those things that are being done to address it now, particularly by communities themselves. Dozens of organisations hosted meetings and events, and the week received good coverage in the local and national media. This week has provided a strong basis from which we can mobilise even more people to highlight what they are doing to combat poverty.

Finally, we worked with SCVO and other leading voluntary organisations on the the development of the 'Scotland's Outlook' campaign, which sought to bring to the attention of the wider public the reality behind the statistic on poverty. We will continue to work with SCVO as they develop this campaign in the future.

With punitive welfare reform likely to remain on the political agenda at Westminster over the next year, it will be important that we do more to raise awareness about the reality of poverty and to address the myths that exist. We will comprehensively revise our Stick Your Labels campaign over the next year, ensuring that it fits with a range of other Poverty Alliance activities including Challenge Poverty Week.

FUNDING AND FINANCES

The financial position of the Poverty Alliance has been a challenging one now for a number of years, as it has been for many voluntary organisations. In 2013-14 we saw the continuing decline of our core income. It was only through the hard work of the staff and board of the Poverty Alliance that we were able to make it through the last year without any forced reductions in staffing. We made difficult choices during the course of the year in order to reduce our projected deficit, including delaying the replacement of staff who left the organisation. This undoubtedly allowed us to make important savings, but it did increase pressures on the remaining staff team. However I am very pleased to report that we have been able to identify new resources that have allowed us to fill those important positions and expand the project work of the organisation. As we revise the strategic plan for the period 2015-17, a crucial element will be ensuring that we have a solid financial base from which to build our network. The Poverty Alliance will have an important role to play over the coming years, but we will only be able to do this if we have a greater element of financial security.

Over the last year we have continued to expand the project work of the Poverty Alliance. This has included projects funded by Fife Gingerbread, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the European Anti-Poverty Network, Shelter Scotland and Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board amongst others. This has allowed us to increase income and is an approach that we expect to continue in years to come. We would like to thank all those funders that have supported our work over the last year.

FUNDING AND FINANCES

The Scottish Government remains the key funder for the core work of the Poverty Alliance. We recognize that government funding is under pressure at the moment, so were pleased that the Scottish Government decided to increase our funding for the coming year. This has brought much-needed financial stability to the organisation and will allow us to plan more effectively for the future. The Scottish Government has also announced that they would provide financial support for the new Scottish Living Wage Accreditation Initiative, which will help us target employers across the country.

Glasgow City Council is now the only local authority that provides on-going support for our core work. This has allowed the Alliance to continue to take a strong focus in Glasgow. As in previous years, we remain grateful to Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government for their continued support of the work of the Poverty Alliance. Their support for our core activities provides the platform from which we can bid successfully for project funding, as noted above.

Whilst there will be an element of greater financial stability to our core finances over the next two years, we recognize that there is still much to do to respond to the increasing need for our work. We are confident that we will meet those challenges by working with our funders, members and our staff team. As always, we thank all of our funders, including our members, for their support.

Nick Bailey

Treasurer

Income	2013-14	2012-13
Scottish Government	162,152	169,500
Local Authorities	55,700	52,524
EAPN	9,742	1,824
Big Lottery Fund	35,922	178,869
Fife Gingerbread	10,000	-
New Policy Institute	19,668	-
JRF	43,184	-
Shelter	17,928	5,000
Membership Fees	5,300	6,935
Donation	490	215
Other Grant	985	-
Other Income	21,969	26,689
Bank Interest	162	236
Total	383,202	441,792

Expenditure		
Cost of generating income	31,057	31,075
Charitable activities	355,104	425,874
Governance costs	11,173	11,796
Total	397,334	468,745
Net Surplus	(14,132)	(26,953)
Balance b/fwd	190,093	217,046
Balance c/fwd	175,961	190,093

STAFF AND BOARD, APRIL 2013 - MARCH 2014

Staff Members 2013-14

Peter Kelly, *Director*

Robin Tennant, *Fieldwork Manager*

Poe McHugh, *Administrator*

Kathryn Collins, *Administrative Assistant*

Twimukye Mushaka, *Fieldwork Development Officer*

Fiona McHardy, *Community Research Officer*

Laura Darling, *Assistant Development Officer (until May 2013)*

Lynn Law, *Fieldwork Development Officer (p-t)*

Maggie Kelly, *Policy and Campaigns Officer (p-t) (until October 2013)*

Eddie Follan, *Policy and Campaigns Officer (p-t) (until July 2013)*

Board Members 2013-14

Jim Boyle, (*Convenor*) *Oxfam Scotland*

John Dickie, (*Vice- Convenor*) *Child Poverty Action Group*

Nick Bailey, (*Treasurer*) *University of Glasgow (co-opted)*

Elizabeth Gore, *Energy Action Scotland*

Myra Mackenzie, *Tayside Social Inclusion Network*

Mary McLean, *Western Isles Healthy Partnership*

David Liddell, *Scottish Drugs Forum*

Dave Moxham, *Scottish Trades Union Congress (co-opted)*

Susan Archibald, *Archibald Foundation*

Thomas Sinclair, *Friends of Volunteering in Clydesdale (resigned 27 April 2013)*

Satwat Rehman, *One Parent Families Scotland*

Claire Telfer, *Save the Children*

Murdo Mathison, *Shelter Scotland*

Irena Paterson, *Moray Disability Forum*

Suzi Macpherson (*co-opted*)
(*appointed 10 December 2013*)





WORKING TOGETHER TO COMBAT POVERTY

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