

ANNUAL REPORT
2007 / 2008

**THE POVERTY
ALLIANCE**
WORKING TOGETHER TO COMBAT POVERTY



BOARD MEMBERS 2007-2008



Irene Graham,
(Convenor) Save the Children

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

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

Louise Carlin,
Oxfam Scotland

Marion Davis,
One Parent Families Scotland

Tesfu Gessesse,
Black Community Development Project

Elizabeth Gore,
Energy Action Scotland

John Harvey,
Iona Community

Dave Hewitt,
Pilton Community Health Project

Martin Johnstone,
Scottish Churches Social
Inclusion Network

Myra Mackenzie,
Angus Against Poverty

Mary McLean,
Western Isles Healthy Partnership

Jim Milne,
Dundee Anti Poverty Forum

John Mulvey,
Scottish Local Government Forum
Against Poverty

Agnes Tomlie,
Scottish Women's Convention

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STAFF TEAM **APRIL 2007 - MARCH 2008**



Peter Kelly,
Director

FIELDWORK

Robin Tennant,
Fieldwork Manager

Isabelle Gray,
Fieldwork Development Officer
(until March 08)

Michelle Kerins,
Market Researcher (PAT)

Dr Jan Flaherty,
Fieldwork Development Officer
(March 08-August 08)

POLICY AND INFORMATION

Sally Mackenzie,
Policy and Campaigns Officer

Lynn Burnett,
Policy Officer (until June 07)

Mhoraig Green,
Research Fellow (Scottish Poverty Audit)
(until April 07)

Rachel Jury,
Communications Development Officer
(until April 08)

ADMINISTRATION

Poe McHugh,
Administrator

VOLUNTEERS AND PLACEMENTS

Sinead Gormally,
(University of Strathclyde)

Sara Disanto,
(Humbolt University, Berlin)

CONVENER'S REPORT

As we report on the activity of the Poverty Alliance over the last financial year, it is hard to imagine that so much could have changed in such a short period of time. In the matter of a few short weeks the impact of the credit crunch has finally become fully realised, with financial institutions being swallowed whole by their competitors and the entire financial system relying on handouts from the state to keep their heads above water. As these institutions demand and receive a commitment of billions of pounds, we continue to make the case for the government to invest a mere £3bn in the next budget to end child poverty. The changes that are taking place now will determine the issues that we must address over the coming years and the battles that will inevitably be fought.

Reflecting on the past year, the Poverty Alliance has shown itself willing to engage with the changes that have taken place in Scotland, whether political, economic or social. The impact of the election of a minority SNP Government in May 2007 and the significant changes in control in many Local Authorities is only now beginning to be felt. The new relationship between the Scottish Government and Local Authorities is having significant repercussions for how we address poverty in Scotland. In some ways the new approach could herald a phase of experimentation, of testing new approaches to tackling poverty. But at the same time it may also lead to some vulnerable groups losing out in the battle for scarce resources. The challenge for the Poverty Alliance will be ensuring that the voices of individuals living in poverty and organisations representing them are heard wherever decisions are being taken that will affect their lives, whether this is at the national or local level.

The Poverty Alliance has played a key role in the End Child Poverty Coalition which organised a march and rally on Saturday 4th October which brought 10,000 people on to the streets of London to call for the government to end child poverty. The Alliance also plays a role at the European level as an

active member of the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)

The Alliance made significant steps forward over the last year in engaging with the Scottish Government. We have been closely involved in consultations on the development of the new anti-poverty framework, working hard to make sure that people in poverty had their voices heard in the process. But despite this close working relationship we have retained our most important role – that of an independent and critical voice in the debate about poverty and how to address it.

As we move into more difficult economic times, it will be all the more important to retain this independent and critical stance. With unemployment rising and the decline in poverty coming to an end, it is all the more important to raise our voices to defend people at risk of poverty. We have laid the groundwork for a positive engagement with the Government in Scotland, particularly through our new Evidence – Participation – Change (EPIc) project. But we will always retain our right to criticise when necessary and to campaign for changes that are required.

As this report shows the Alliance has carried out a great deal of work on a number of different fronts. We have made real progress over the last year, not least in securing stable funding for the next three to four years. I would like to record my thanks to all the members of staff and my fellow board members for helping to create those achievements. We have had a number of staff join and leave team over the last year and we wish them all well, particularly to Isabelle Grey one of our longest serving members of staff, who has moved on to the Scottish Women's Convention. Finally we look forward to working with all the members of the Alliance, both old and new, in taking forward the fight against poverty over the coming year.

Irene Graham
Convener

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

DELIVERING ON OBJECTIVES, APRIL 2007 – MARCH 2008

WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

The projects outlined below highlight some of the key areas of work that we undertook during the course of the year that sought to work directly with individuals and communities experiencing poverty. In addition to this project work we are always seeking to engage with community organisations and others that are active in the fight against poverty. We will work with groups and individuals to help them take action against poverty, and to strengthen their arguments and resources for doing so.

If you are interested in finding out more please contact our new Fieldwork Development Officer, Twimukye Mushaka: twimukye.mushaka@povertyalliance.org

Bridging the Policy Gap: This was a major project, part funded by the European Commission, designed to feed into the development of the National Action Plan on Social Inclusion 2008-11. It developed an innovative approach to bringing together representatives of local communities with local and national policy makers. A series of two day events were organised by the Alliance in Swansea, London and Glasgow looking at a local play strategy (Swansea), access to employment for people with disabilities (Newham, London) and at the Working For Families Funding (Glasgow). The project successful brought together people affected by the policies with local and national policy makers, stimulating debate and engagement around what works in tackling poverty. A number of recommendations were made, both in relation to engaging people in poverty to policy development, and to the policies themselves. The results of the project were launched at a conference in Glasgow, which was addressed by Stewart Maxwell MSP, the Minister for Communities and Sport in the Scottish Government and Anne McGuire MP, the Minister for Disabled People.

For more information about this project contact Sally Mackenzie: sally.mackenzie@povertyalliance.org or visit: www.povertyalliance.org/btpg

Moving On: This was a two year project which was finished in November 2007. The project was aimed at young people who are preparing to move on from secondary school and may be at risk of social exclusion. After an intensive development phase the project has worked successfully in three secondary schools in Glasgow. In addition to producing training materials and information for young people about to leave school, young people involved in the project organised a hustings meeting before the Scottish elections. A final conference was addressed by Nicola Sturgeon MSP, the Deputy First Minister. We will be following this project up with a seminar looking at the issues raised for young people making the transition from school.

For further details contact Robin Tennant: robin.tennant@povertyalliance.org .

Scottish Borders Commission on Poverty and Social Exclusion: In November 2007 the Scottish Borders Council took the initiative in setting up a Commission to look at the problems of poverty and social exclusion in the area. The members of the independent Commission are drawn from a range of backgrounds. The aim of the Commission was to develop a better understanding of the problems experienced by people living in poverty in the Borders and to help develop new approaches to tackling these problems. The Poverty Alliance was funded by the Commission to carry out a programme of work to engage people with experience of poverty in the process. We had a full-time member of staff, Jan Flaherty, based in the Borders who carried out an extensive programme of work, talking with groups and individuals across the region. The report from this project will be published alongside the Commission's final report in November 2008.

Anti-Poverty Framework Consultation: At the beginning of 2008 the Scottish Government launched a discussion paper on developing a new framework to help deliver its anti-poverty goals. Additional funding was secured to engage with people experiencing

poverty on the issues raised in the discussion paper. A report from this work was produced and will appear on the Alliance's website when the framework is launched later this year. This was an important project that provided opportunities for people living in poverty to discuss issues directly with Ministers and officials. We are hopeful that the principle of more and regular engagement will be enshrined in the new framework when it is launched later this year.

Heat or Eat: This was a drama project which was designed to give voice to the experience of women living in poverty. Interviews were carried out with a number of women living in poverty in Glasgow which formed the basis of a script for the drama. The play, which timed to coincide with International Women's Day was performed four times at the Arches Theatre in Glasgow to around 100 people. We are grateful to the Big Lottery Fund, the Scottish Women's Convention and Oxfam for their support for this project. A transcription of the interviews is available from the Alliance, as is a DVD of the performance.

WORKING WITH PROFESSIONALS

Poverty Awareness Training has remained a key area for the Alliance's engagement with a broad range of staff that have a responsibility for addressing poverty issues in their day to day work. This work has traditionally been delivered to workers in Local Authorities. In 2007-08 we were funded by BLF to carry out business development to help enhance this programme of work. A part-time worker, Michelle Kerins, was employed to carry out this work. During the course of this work we carried out a number of pilot training sessions to help develop new materials and better tailor the materials to different audiences. The pilot sessions were successful and the project has demonstrated support for this programme of training. We intend to now seek resources to implement the key recommendations emerging from the project.

We have worked with a wide range of organisations, delivering talks and

presentation related to poverty in Scotland. Amongst some of the organisations we have worked with over the last year have been trade unionists, funding bodies and academics amongst many others. Over 1000 people have taken part in events where Alliance staff members have had an input.

In addition to the activities outlined above, we have continued to organise our programme of regional seminars aimed at staff in a range of organisations, including local voluntary organisations, statutory bodies, trade unions, academics and others. The theme of this year's seminar series, which were carried out in eight locations across Scotland, was employment and poverty. This was the second annual series of seminar and we anticipate delivering a bigger series of seminars in the coming year.

INFLUENCING SOCIAL POLICY

As in previous years the Poverty Alliance has worked through a range of different forums and activities in order to influence social policy. This section of the report focuses on the Poverty Alliance's involvement in a wide range of partnerships to influence the development of social policies. Much of the work referred to under 'Working with Communities' can also have an impact on the development of improved social policies, particularly the responses to consultations and joint meetings between policy makers and communities.

In order to have effective engagement in policy development the Alliance works through a variety of networks, as highlighted below. In addition to networking and campaigning work, we also seek to engage with politicians, Government and with Parliament directly. This can take a variety of forms from presenting evidence to Parliamentary committees, for example to the Scottish Affairs Committee, or being represented on important Government advisory groups, such as that for the development of the new Anti-Poverty Framework or for the revision of School Clothing Grants. This has become an

increasingly important aspect of the Alliance's work and will continue to develop in the years to come.

Social Policy Task Force: The Alliance has continued to play a leading role in work to develop an ongoing dialogue with policy makers regarding the development of the National Action Plan on Social Inclusion. We have provided strong support for the Social Policy Task Force (SPTF) to engage with DWP officials in the future development of the NAP and related issues. The SPTF is a group formed by the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) and the UK Coalition Against Poverty (UKCAP) and is made up of a number of anti-poverty organisations from across the UK including CPAG, Oxfam, Age Concern, Single Parent Action Network, ATD Forth World. In 2007 the Alliance supported a number of community activists to attend a Conference of People Experiencing Poverty in Warwick which was organised by the SPTF in partnership with the DWP. We have also played a strong role in the DWP Stakeholder Group which brings together a number of Whitehall Departments with representatives from devolved administrations.

The new National Action Plan on Social Inclusion was published in September 2008 and we will now be working to ensure its effective implementation.

For further information about the SPTF and how to get involved please contact Peter Kelly:

peter.kelly@povertyalliance.org

UK Coalition Against Poverty: In addition to the work with the SPTF, the Poverty Alliance has continued to work with the UK Coalition Against Poverty and provides Scottish representation on the Board of UKCAP. The two Scottish representatives on the board of UKCAP are now Harry Cartmill of West Lothian Poverty Action Forum and John Mulvey of the Scottish Local Government Forum Against Poverty.

For further information about UKCAP visit: www.ukcap.org

CAMPAIGNING

European Anti Poverty Network: The Alliance continues to play an active role in the work of EAPN in Scotland and the UK. Much of this work finds its expression in our engagement in the NAP Social Inclusion, although we have been increasingly active in ensuring that EAPN messages and positions are communicated to UK Government Ministers. Progress has begun to be made in making the Alliance's activity in this area more directly relevant to the concerns of our members in Scotland. In June of 2007 we held a seminar in Edinburgh on tackling poverty in the European context. This event was addressed by senior civil servants from the DWP as well as by representatives from European Organisations. We hope to make a European seminar an annual event in Scotland.

The coming period will be increasingly important for European issues. The European elections in June 2009 and the EU year Against Poverty in 2010 will be opportunities for raising the profile of the Alliance's work on European anti-poverty issues.

For further details on the European work of the Poverty Alliance contact Peter Kelly: peter.kelly@povertyalliance.org.

Policy Forums: Two policy forums were held during the year. The first looked at sustainable development and poverty and the second focused on migration. More than 50 people from the community and voluntary sector, policy makers and academics attended these events. As a result of the migration forum the Scottish Migrants Network was set up and is now jointly organised by Oxfam, Positive Action in Housing and the Alliance. The network has recently received funding from the Scottish Government to carry out a poster campaign on minimum wage rights. Reports from these seminars are available. To find out more about the policy forums contact Peter Kelly.

Scottish Campaign on Welfare Reform: There was less activity on this campaign during the last year. A short joint response to the 'In Work, Better Off' green paper, which proposed significant changes to the welfare system for lone parents, was submitted by SCOWR. During 2008 we expect develop the campaign, drawing in new members and building a stronger coalition to address the changes that are currently proposed in the welfare system.

For further information contact: sally.mackenzie@povertyalliance.org

End Child Poverty: During 2007-08 the Alliance took an active role in the End Child Poverty campaign by joining the board of the London based organisation. We have worked with other members in Scotland, including Save the Children, CPAG, Barnardos, One Parent Families Scotland, on a variety of activities including organising a series of series of successful fringe meetings at the main Scottish Party political conferences. In addition we worked with members to encourage the Communities and Local Government Committee in the Scottish Parliament to carry out a new enquiry into child poverty in Scotland.

For more details about activities contact: sally.mackenzie@povertyalliance.org

Scottish Living Wage Campaign: This campaign was launched at the Alliance's AGM in October 2007. Since then a campaign group has been meeting regularly to look at how best to take forward the campaign. An early priority for members of the campaign steering group has been establishing what a realistic level for a Scottish Living Wage target figure should be. Funding has been secured from the STUC, Church of Scotland and the Scottish Government. We expect this research to be launched in November 2008 and we will then be looking at key targets for the campaign.

For further information contact: peter.kelly@povertyalliance.org

TREASURER'S REPORT

Get Fair: The Alliance has played a strong role in the early development of this new campaign. We have set up a Scottish steering group and expect the campaign to take an increasingly important role in the run up to the next UK general election.

For further information about the campaign please visit:

www.getfair.org.uk

Publications and Information: Our email based news service has continued to receive very positive feedback due to the range and quality of information it contains. The number of subscribers to the service has stabilised, with around 800 people now receiving regular updates from the Alliance. Three editions of the Scottish Anti Poverty Review have now been produced and have included articles from a range of academics and representatives of other important organisations. We are currently revising the Review, along with our website, and both will be re-launched at the end of 2008. In addition to the publications associated with individual projects such as BTPG, we have also produced briefing papers on a number of issues such as in-work poverty, the Scottish Government anti-poverty framework, and attitudes to poverty.

Peter Kelly
Director

In November 2007 an independent review of the Alliance's core funding from the Scottish Government received a positive evaluation. This allowed the Alliance to negotiate a further round of three year funding, giving us much needed financial stability. In addition, despite significant pressures on their own resources, we have managed to maintain a strong level of financial support from a number of local authorities based in west central Scotland. We are particularly grateful to Glasgow City Council for their continued support of the work of the Poverty Alliance, and to local authorities in North and South Lanarkshire, and North Ayrshire.

Over the last year we have continued to develop and expand our project work. We completed work on a number of projects that began in 2006-07 including the Poverty Audit project, funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the Bridging the Policy Gap (BTPG) project, funded principally by the European Commission, the Moving On Project, funded by the Tudor Trust and Scottish Government. In addition to completing these projects we also received new funding to run a number of smaller projects including a small market research and business planning project designed to help develop our Poverty Awareness Training funded by the Big Lottery Fund (BLF). We were also funded by BLF, the Scottish Women's Convention and Oxfam to carry out a small drama project 'Hard Work'. Additional project funding was received from the Scottish Government to carry out consultation work on their poverty discussion paper. Finally we received support from Scottish Borders Council to carry out consultation work on their Commission on Poverty and Social Exclusion.

Overall, the Poverty Alliance's finances are in good shape. We maintained our core income broadly in line with previous years. The loss we record this year is attributable to our failure to secure all of our funding from the European Commission. This is very disappointing but we are confident that this will not be repeated in future years. In addition to the revised strategic plan we will also develop a new approach to funding

from Scottish Local Authorities. As noted in previous year we have seen a long term erosion of financial support from Scottish Local Authorities. Despite the constraints on local government in Scotland we believe there are opportunities to develop sources of funding from Local Authorities. We will build on this activity over the coming year in order to encourage a greater number of authorities to provide financial support to the Alliance.

Over the coming year we will seek to build support from Scottish Local Authorities outside of west central Scotland. This will be a challenge, given the current financial constraints that many Local Authorities face, but is nevertheless important in terms of diversifying our funding base. We will continue to develop proposals for project funding where appropriate. The application to the Big Lottery Fund referred to in last years report has been successful. Evidence – Participation – Change (EPIc) is a four year project with a budget of more than £750K. This will make a significant contribution to the finances of the organisation. Overall then, the Poverty Alliance has managed to secure very stable funding for the next three to four years, stability which will enable the staff to spend more time delivering on objectives than in raising funds.

Copies of our full audited accounts are available from our Administrator, Poe McHugh:
poe.mchugh@povertyalliance.org.

Nick Bailey
Treasurer

INCOME

£

Scottish Government	199,554
Local Authorities	61,947
Big Lottery Fund	20,000
European Commission	13,987
DWP	13,199
UK CAP	4,500
EAPN	5,061
Oxfam	6,500
Scottish Consumer Council	2,679
JRF	2,472
City & County of Swansea	2,000
SWC	2,000
Membership Fees	4,210
Other Income	17,914
Bank Interest	6,338
Total	362,361

EXPENDITURE

£

Cost of generating income	27,801
Charitable activities	348,989
Governance costs	6,829
Total	383,619
Net Surplus	(21,258)
Balance b/fwd 2006/07	128,841
Balance c/fwd 2007/08	107,583

We would like to thank all our funders for their support during 2007-08: the Scottish Government, Glasgow City Council, North Lanarkshire Council, South Lanarkshire Council, North Ayrshire Council, the Department of Work and Pensions, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the European Commission, the City and County of Swansea, the Big Lottery Fund, the Church of Scotland, Oxfam, the Scottish Women's Convention and the UK Coalition Against Poverty.



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Over the coming year we will continue to seek support from Scottish Local Authorities outside of west central Scotland. This will be a challenge, given the current financial constraints that many Local Authorities face but is nevertheless important to diversifying our funding base. We will continue to develop proposals for projects where appropriate. The application to the Big Lottery Fund referred to in the previous year has been successful. Evidence of the impact of the – Change (EPIc) is a four year project with a budget of more than £750,000, making a significant contribution to the organisation. Overall the Alliance has managed to secure funding for the next three years, providing stability which will enable the Alliance more time delivering on objectives and raising funds.

Copies of our full audited accounts are available from our Administrator, Poë McHugh:
poë.mchugh@povertyalliance.org

Nick Bailey
Treasurer

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