

Resource Spending Review: Equality and Fairer Scotland Statement

May 2022

Foreword

We are pleased to present this Equality and Fairer Scotland Statement. It sets out how we will address the key challenges and realise the opportunities to tackle inequality, promote human rights, and build a fairer Scotland through the Resource Spending Review. For the first time in over a decade we have been able to set out multi-year spending plans and provide greater certainty and stability to our partners. Breaking the cycle of single-year funding and taking a longer-term view supports the Scottish Government's strategic approach and ambition to achieve a more equal society.

The Resource Spending Review comes at a time when people, communities and organisations are facing an unprecedented increase in the cost of living, with significant pressure hitting those on the lowest incomes the hardest. Alongside this, the entire nation is still recovering from the COVID-19 crisis, which was more harmful for those experiencing the greatest inequality. The consequences of the UK's exit from the European Union continue to reverberate, adding to the cost of living crisis, and impacting on some groups more than others. Finally, the illegal war in Ukraine is causing significant global shocks which we are starting to feel now and are likely to continue for some time.

This underlines the need to continue with the Scottish Government's equality, fairness, and human rights agenda. The deployment of public finances is a key lever in a government's toolkit to tackle inequality and realise human rights. Resource funding pays for many public services, funds numerous organisations and initiatives, pays for Scottish social security benefits, and pays the salaries of public sector workers. What we fund, and how, can have a significant impact on addressing inequality and socio-economic disparity.

As the Resource Spending Review sets the strategic funding framework, this statement considers nine strategic opportunities and challenges flowing from previous Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statements, and how we will address them. Many of the subsequent funding decisions we take will have a direct impact on the lives of people, which is why equality, fairness, and human rights continue to underpin decision-making and delivery across the Scottish Government.

Kate Forbes, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy

Shona Robison, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government

Introduction

What is the Equality and Fairer Scotland Statement?

The 2022 Resource Spending Review (RSR) is the first spending review for resource budgets that the Scottish Government has undertaken in over a decade. We have taken an innovative approach to address the issues arising from the spending review. The spending review focuses on the overall direction of our public finances over the remainder of the parliamentary term. It offers a strategic funding framework for the Scottish Government and our many partners to plan for the future, rather than detailed budget information.

In line with the core RSR publication, in the Equality and Fairer Scotland Statement (EFSS) we have taken a strategic approach wherein we detail and consider, based on evidence, some of the key opportunities and challenges that the Scottish Government faces over this parliamentary term; what these mean for inequality, fairness, and human rights; and how the spending review and other initiatives respond. In doing so we have taken a cross-government lens and built upon the work taken forward annually over the past decade to analyse the equality impacts of the Scottish Budget. Our approach is informed by the wider landscape, which includes the Public Sector Equality and Fairer Scotland Duties, and the work of the Equality Budget Advisory Group (EBAG). In particular we note EBAG's recommendations¹ on measures to improve the Scottish Budget process, which we will respond to in Summer 2022. This landscape also includes our work to further embed equality and human rights across Scottish Government policy and delivery through the development of a mainstreaming strategy and key programmes, like the development of a Human Rights Bill.

Further to this, the EFSS sets out how we will undertake impact assessments of the early-stage proposals outlined in the RSR in the future.

What is the Resource Spending Review?

The RSR has been developed in a period of substantial uncertainty, shocks and changes, which continue to transform the world in which we live. As set out in the spending review, since December 2021 we have seen the devastating Russian invasion of Ukraine, a worsening cost of living crisis and the highest level of inflation for more than 40 years. This cements the need for the Scottish Government to provide as much clarity as possible to stakeholders, partners, and citizens.

Within this context, the spending review sets out high-level spending parameters for each portfolio for the remainder of the parliamentary term (2023-24 to 2026-27) and details potential reform and efficiency options that will be taken forward to improve the delivery of outcomes and the Scottish Government's fiscal sustainability. Budgets will continue to be published annually and provide a greater level of detail.

As the name suggests, the RSR is focused on plans for resource spending. Resource spending is money that is spent on administration and the day-to-day delivery of services and

programmes, such as school meals, concessionary bus travel, and most public sector salaries.

The RSR builds on the Capital Spending Review published in 2021, which sets out Scotland's multi-year plans for infrastructure investment. The outcome of a targeted review of the Capital Spending Review has been published alongside the RSR, providing updated spending allocations. Together these two spending reviews give a high-level picture of Scotland's multi-year public spending plans.

Our approach to impact assessment in the RSR

We have considered equality, fairness, and human rights impacts throughout the spending review process, not only in this statement. This has covered both the external consultation process and the internal elements of the spending review.

As part of the public consultation, we asked respondents to provide views on equality and human rights impacts that should be considered in the context of the spending review's priorities and the primary drivers of public spending. The public consultation opened on 9 December 2021, with the publication of the Resource Spending Review Framework², and closed on 27 March 2022. It received 72 responses, 15 from individuals and 57 from organisations. The online consultation was complemented by six external engagement sessions with stakeholders in March, April and May 2022. This included a session with EBAG. An analysis of the responses to the consultation and the engagement has been published alongside the RSR.³

In response to our consultation question on equality, respondents provided the following views:

- Tackling inequality and realising human rights should be a key focus of the spending review. Respondents identified a range of groups of people who should be considered, including those with protected characteristics.
- Impact assessment is a vital element of decision making and should be an integral part of any process such as spending reviews. It should not be limited to analysis that only considers the final outcomes of a decision or budget allocations. Assessments should include analysis disaggregated by protected characteristics and socio-economic disadvantage, as well as intersectional analysis where possible.
- It is important to seek out and include the views of more marginalised communities and include those with lived experience in exercises like the spending review.
- Human rights and gender responsive approaches to budgeting provide examples of valuable tools to ensure that proposals and policies address inequality.

Throughout the internal process to develop, refine, and agree proposals for the RSR we integrated various elements of impact assessment, building on available evidence and existing assessment.

The Scottish Government will review the equality, fairness, and human rights assessment of the spending review process itself to improve our approach going forward. In particular this

will be with a view to what this might mean for the annual Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement (EFSBS) and our ambitions to further embed equality and human rights in the Scottish Budget process, as outlined in the Bute House Agreement and 2021-22 Programme for Government.

Our approach to the Equality and Fairer Scotland Statement

To produce the EFSS analysts and policy professionals working across each of the Scottish Government's ministerial portfolios were asked to consider nine key opportunities and challenges facing the Scottish Government. More detail on the specific opportunities and challenges is included in the next section.

For each opportunity and challenge, portfolios were asked:

- What does evidence tell us about the potential impacts on inequality and what is effective in reducing inequality and maximising positive impacts?
- What is the Scottish Government's response?

This information was used to draft the sections below on opportunities and challenges. In these, we have focused on the key evidence around inequality and how the Scottish Government has responded or proposes to respond. Taking this overarching view of the key areas of focus allows us to set out an evidenced basis for some of the inequalities that the Scottish Government will tackle over the next four years.

The financial information in the spending review has been provided at Budget level 2 (i.e., sub-portfolio level, for example Community Health Services within the Health and Social Care portfolio), in anticipation of the additional work now required to produce more detailed financial planning information. As the RSR sets out, we intend to collaborate with our partners and stakeholders in developing more comprehensive plans. In line with this, many of the proposals for reform are at an early or conceptual stage. As such, it has not been possible to undertake meaningful individual impact assessments on a portfolio-by-portfolio basis, as would be the case in the EFSBS. Instead, we propose to use the evidence presented in this statement as a framework for future impact assessments as the proposals are developed and taken forward. More information on this approach, and where we will produce information around our impact assessments, is provided in the [Next steps](#) section of this document.

Opportunities and Challenges

This section outlines the key contextual opportunities and challenges that the Scottish Government faces in the medium-term and considers how the proposals within the spending review and wider initiatives respond. These opportunities and challenges are reflective of the priorities set out in the spending review around addressing the climate crisis; tackling child poverty; building a stronger, fairer and greener economy; and building stronger, more responsive public services.

The nine challenges and opportunities are not the only contextual issues faced by the Scottish Government but provide a summary of key issues that need to be considered.

The opportunities and challenges are summarised below.

Summary of opportunities and challenges

1. Support an economic recovery which continues to progress action to tackle structural inequality in the labour market, including through good green jobs and fair work.
2. Ensure that the devolved taxation system is delivered in a way which is based on ability to pay and that the devolved social security funding increases the resources available to those who need it.
3. Ensure that inequalities in physical and mental health are tackled through the effective delivery of health and social care services as well as broader public health interventions.
4. Build digital services that are responsive to individuals and address inequality of access to digital participation.
5. Deliver greater progress towards meeting statutory child poverty targets.
6. Deliver greater progress towards closing the attainment gap.
7. Improve the availability and affordability of public transport services, to ensure those more reliant on public transport can better access it.
8. Ensure that policies, action and spend necessary to mitigate and adapt to the global impacts of climate change deliver a just transition for people in Scotland.
9. Better realise the right to an adequate home that is affordable, accessible, of good quality, and meets individual need whilst ensuring that progress on tackling current inequality of housing outcome is addressed.

The following table illustrates the National Outcomes and key human rights relevant to each opportunity/challenge. Equality Outcomes⁴ are also referenced. The human rights were

selected from the list of core rights set out by the First Minister’s Advisory Group on Human Rights Leadership.

Table 1: Opportunities and challenges – National Outcomes and human rights

Opportunities and Challenges	Relevant National Outcomes	Relevant Human Rights
<p>1. Support an economic recovery which continues to progress action to tackle structural inequality in the labour market, including through good green jobs and fair work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy • International • Fair Work & Business • Poverty • Children & Young People • Culture • Human Rights • Environment • Communities • Education <p>The Scottish Government Equality Outcome on employment is also relevant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to work (and to work in just and favourable conditions) • Right to an adequate standard of living • Rights for women, minority ethnic groups, disabled people, children
<p>2. Ensure that the devolved taxation system is delivered in a way which is based on ability to pay and that the devolved social security funding increases the resources available to those who need it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy • Fair Work & Business • Poverty • Children & Young People • Human Rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to social security and social protection • Right to an adequate standard of living • Right to adequate housing • Right to the protection against poverty and social exclusion
<p>3. Ensure that inequalities in physical and mental health are tackled through the effective delivery of health and social care services as well as broader public health interventions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Poverty • Communities • Children & Young People <p>The Scottish Government Equality Outcome on Health is also relevant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health • Right to an adequate standard of living, including housing, food, protection against poverty, and social exclusion • Right to a healthy environment including the right to benefit from healthy ecosystems which sustain human wellbeing as well as the rights of access to information, participation in decision-making, and access to justice • Right of access to justice

Opportunities and Challenges	Relevant National Outcomes	Relevant Human Rights
4. Build digital services that are responsive to individuals and address inequality of access to digital participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy • Poverty • Communities • Children & Young People • Education • Fair Work and Business • Health • Environment • Human Rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health • Right to an adequate standard of living, including housing, food, protection against poverty, and social exclusion • Right to education • Right to take part in cultural life
5. Deliver greater progress towards meeting statutory child poverty targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy • Poverty • Communities • Children & Young People • Education • Fair Work and Business • Health • Human Rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to an adequate standard of living, including housing, food, protection against poverty, and social exclusion • Right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health • Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence • Right to a healthy environment • Right to social security and social protection
6. Deliver greater progress towards closing the attainment gap.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Poverty • Communities • Children and Young People • Health • Human Rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to education • Right to an adequate standard of living, including housing, food, protection against poverty, and social exclusion
7. Improve the availability and affordability of public transport services, to ensure those more reliant on public transport can better access it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy • Poverty • Communities • Children & Young People • Environment <p>The Scottish Government Equality Outcome on transport is also relevant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to an adequate standard of living, including housing, food, protection against poverty, and social exclusion • Right to a healthy environment including the right to benefit from healthy ecosystems which sustain human wellbeing as well as the rights of access to information, participation in decision-making, and access to justice. • Right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health

Opportunities and Challenges	Relevant National Outcomes	Relevant Human Rights
8. Ensure that policies, action and spend necessary to mitigate and adapt to the global impacts of climate change deliver a just transition for people in Scotland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment • Poverty • International • Human Rights • Fair Work & Business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to an adequate standard of living, including housing, food, protection against poverty, and social exclusion • Right to a healthy environment including the right to benefit from healthy ecosystems which sustain human wellbeing as well as the rights of access to information, participation in decision-making, and access to justice.
9. Better realise the right to an adequate home that is affordable, accessible, of good quality, and meets individual need whilst ensuring that progress on tackling current inequality of housing outcome is addressed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty • Communities • Human Rights • Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to an adequate standard of living, including housing, food, protection against poverty, and social exclusion • Right to a healthy environment including the right to benefit from healthy ecosystems which sustain human wellbeing as well as the rights of access to information, participation in decision-making, and access to justice.

We provide further details on each of the opportunities and challenges after the ‘Next steps’ section.

Next steps

The Resource Spending Review sets out the high-level parameters for resource spend within future Scottish Budgets and provides a long-term plan focused on outcomes. It also sets out the case for innovation and efficiency in the delivery of public services and a range of initial proposals to achieve this.

This EFSS, and the ongoing gathering and use of relevant evidence, will provide a framework to support the development of specific Equality Impact Assessments and Fairer Scotland Duty Assessments. It also supports the consideration of human rights as we take forward impact assessments. We will continue to use, build and understand the evidence as we develop the proposals for reform and efficiency outlined in the spending review. Impact assessments will be progressed for proposals and considered as an integral part of the design, decision-making process and, where taken forward, implementation. Given the potential impact of the public service reform proposals, it is vital that impact assessments are fully integrated to ensure we can understand the potential impact of any decisions and how to best mitigate any adverse impacts.

The Scottish Government plans to provide an update on progress against the commitments in the spending review, alongside more detailed financial information, as part of Scottish Budget 2023-24. As such, we plan to use the accompanying EFSBS as a milestone where we set out progress on impact assessments related to the proposals outlined within the spending review. This will provide stakeholders with an opportunity for fuller scrutiny within the current financial year.

Further to this, we will use our learning from the spending review process and the production of this EFSS to improve our processes around equality, fairness and human rights assessment. We will integrate this improvement piece with our work to take forward the recommendations made by the EBAG.

Opportunity/Challenge 1: Support an economic recovery which continues to progress action to tackle structural inequality in the labour market, including through good green jobs and fair work

What does the evidence tell us?

- Groups that have traditionally faced disadvantage and/or are under-represented in the labour market include people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, young people, minority ethnic people, women, and disabled people. There are barriers to participation in the labour market that result in significant and persistent employment and pay gaps for these groups – in some cases, barriers simultaneously affect certain groups, and therefore actions should be designed to tackle multiple barriers.⁵
- Barriers related to geography – particularly for those living in island or remote communities – can also lead to significant disadvantage. Scotland faces challenges with respect to deep seated regional inequality in economic activity with many communities in Scotland facing significant social challenges linked to poor economic performance, as evidenced by high levels of deprivation or child poverty in regions with low economic performance.⁶
- Some sectors – such as tourism, hospitality, retail, culture and the arts, and leisure – were particularly impacted by COVID-19 and the restrictions put in place to control the spread of the virus. Compared to the average, these sectors have lower shares of contractually secure employment and higher shares of the workforce are younger people aged 16 to 24, disabled people and people working part-time.⁷
- Young people are especially vulnerable to unemployment and long-term employment ‘scarring’, are more likely to earn less than the real Living Wage,⁸ and are more likely to be financially vulnerable and in unmanageable debt.^{9,10}
- Disabled people are less likely to be in employment, earn less on average, are less likely to have access to fair work, are more likely to be underemployed, and are more likely to have no or low qualifications.^{11,12,13,14,15}
- Women experience barriers in the labour market that lead them to be paid less on average than men, driving aspects of the gender pay gap and contributing to the existence of child poverty.¹⁶ These relate to the type of jobs women are more likely to do, how much these jobs pay, and whether women can move into higher-paid jobs.¹⁷
- Women were around three times more likely to work in a sector shut down during the pandemic than men, with single mothers with low qualifications being particularly overrepresented in these sectors.¹⁸ Unpaid housework, childcare, and unpaid care undertaken by women also increased during the pandemic.¹⁹
- Mothers suffer a big long-term pay penalty from part-time working, on average earning about 30% less per hour than similarly educated fathers. Some of this wage gap can be attributed to mothers being more likely to work part-time or take time out of the labour market altogether.²⁰
- Minority ethnic workers are more likely to work in some of the sectors most impacted by the pandemic and may be at greater risk of the ‘scarring’ effects of unemployment.^{21,22} Minority ethnic people are also more likely to face discrimination when accessing the labour market.²³

- The lives of many trans people at work remain difficult, and they face discrimination, bullying and harassment at every stage of employment.²⁴ Some trans people find getting into work difficult or challenging, with prejudice and stereotyping having negative impacts on their employment prospects.²⁵

What are we doing to address this?

Securing a stronger, greener, fairer economy is one of the defining priorities of the RSR. The National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) articulates a vision of a wellbeing economy, thriving across economic, social and environmental dimensions. The NSET sets out an aim that, by 2032, Scotland's economy will significantly outperform the last decade, both in terms of economic performance and tackling structural economic inequality, with people at the heart of an economy that offers opportunities for all to succeed and where everybody, in every community and region of the country, will share in our economic prosperity. The NSET identifies five policy programmes, based on analysis of evidence, that are designed to tackle long-term structural challenges, build on our economic strengths, and position Scotland to maximise the greatest economic opportunities of the next ten years.

Within the NSET, the Fairer and More Equal Society Programme aims to reorient our economy towards wellbeing and fair work, to deliver higher rates of employment and wage growth, to significantly reduce structural poverty, particularly child poverty, and improve health, cultural and social outcomes for disadvantaged families and communities. Examples of commitments in the strategy that will help achieve these aims, tackle discrimination, and help advance equality and human rights include:

- Delivering on the commitment to require payment of the Real Living Wage in Scottish Government contracts from October 2021.
- Simplifying the employability system by implementing No One Left Behind, including building on the principles of the Young Person's Guarantee to develop an all-age guarantee of support for those most disadvantaged; and supporting parents to increase their incomes from employment as part of cross government action set out in the [Best Start, Bright Futures: Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-2026](#).²⁶ This activity will initially be supported by almost £113 million investment in 2022-23, of which £81 million is targeted towards tackling child poverty through an offer to parents.
- Taking further steps to remove barriers to employment and career advancement for disabled people, women, those with care experience, and people from minority ethnic groups through relevant action plans and strategies, including sectoral strategies.
- Providing an efficient and resilient digital infrastructure including through continued investment in improved broadband and mobile coverage for residential and business premises. Enhancing the resilience of digital infrastructure through direct international links to the internet and the development of data centres aligned with renewable power sources.

For further details of actions to address inequality in digital participation, see [Opportunity/Challenge 4](#).

To advance understanding of equality and human rights issues and embed them within the policymaking process, the NSET has committed to establish a Centre of Expertise in Equality and Human Rights to work across the Economy portfolio within the Scottish Government, as agreed in the [Economy Recovery Implementation Plan](#).²⁷ To build on Scotland's leading work on integrating wellbeing into its measurements and policy development and monitor how we are performing as a wellbeing economy, we will publish a Wellbeing Economy Monitor. This will look beyond standard economic indicators such as productivity and employment rates to also incorporate measures such as fair work indicators, financial security, child poverty, and greenhouse gas emissions. We will also publish an annual progress report from the NSET Delivery Board to enhance public accountability, and this report will include equality monitoring.

The RSR acknowledges that action and investment from all parts of government is required to deliver on our future plans in a greener and fairer way. However, government cannot and should not do everything on its own and, active collaboration with national and regional partners across the private, public and third sectors will be crucial for realising Scotland's ambitions. The RSR acknowledges that we must make smart choices about investment in tackling child poverty and addressing the climate crisis, in order to deliver a stronger, fairer, greener Scotland.

Opportunity/Challenge 2: Ensure that the devolved taxation system is delivered in a way which is based on ability to pay and that the devolved social security funding increases the resources available to those who need it

What does the evidence tell us?

- Analysis published alongside the 2022-23 Scottish Budget shows that the Scottish Government's Income Tax policy choices since 2016-17, combined with changes in the UK-wide Personal Allowance, have been highly redistributive and have protected low-income taxpayers. On average, lower earners, women, younger and older people particularly benefit.²⁸
- It is estimated that 19% of Scotland's population (1.03 million people each year) were living in relative poverty after housing costs between 2017-20.
- Just under a quarter (24%) of children were in relative poverty after housing costs between 2017-20, equivalent to 240,000 children.²⁹
- Poverty rates are particularly high for children in a minority ethnic household (38% in relative poverty between 2017-20), in a lone parent household (38% between 2017-20), in households with a mother under 25 (55% between 2015-18), in households with a child under 1 (34% in 2017-20), in households with three or more children (32% in 2017-20), and in households where there is a disabled adult or child (38% in 2017-20).³⁰
- Many disabled people face additional living costs. In 2017-20, as in previous years, the poverty rate was higher for individuals in households with a disabled person, when disability-related benefits are not included in the household income. After housing costs, the poverty rate was 29% (640,000 people each year) for people living with a disabled household member compared to 16% (500,000 people) for those living in households where no-one is disabled.³¹
- Many key benefits are largely claimed by women, who make up 89% of applicants for Scottish Child Payment³² and 69% of recipients of Carer's Allowance.³³ Younger people and those living in the most deprived areas also disproportionately claim benefits.³⁴
- Mothers under 20 are more reliant on state benefits and tax credits than older mothers, making them disproportionately impacted by cuts or changes to eligibility criteria in benefits or support services.³⁵

What are we doing to address this?

The level of funding allocated to Social Security shows the strength of the Scottish Government's commitment towards building a new system for the people of Scotland with dignity, fairness, and respect at its heart. By 2026-27, social security assistance and benefit payments are projected to reach £6.5 billion, providing support to over one million people per year. Social Security Scotland will administer benefit payments during this period. This funding will help low-income households, unpaid carers, disabled children and adults or those with a long-term health condition with their living costs including energy bills. This is an investment in the people of Scotland and is key to our national mission to tackle child poverty. We are using devolved social security powers to deliver real and substantial difference to the incomes of people in our communities who need it most.

Our second Benefit Take-up Strategy published in October 2021³⁶ sets out how we are working to ensure people can access the financial support they are entitled to, supporting delivery of our national mission to tackle child poverty.

Significant commitments include delivering the "game-changing" Scottish Child Payment (SCP) to support eligible children under six years. We doubled the payment from £10 to £20 per week in April 2022, and we will increase it to £25 per week by end of 2022, when the benefit will also be extended to under 16s. Social Security Scotland takes a range of actions to promote the uptake of SCP including major communications and further marketing activity is planned around SCP in the year ahead.

Other measures include, starting in winter 2022-23, the new Low Income Winter Heating Assistance will provide around 400,000 low-income households, currently eligible for Cold Weather Payments, a stable £50 payment every year towards energy costs. We will also continue funding for unpaid carers through Carer's Allowance and Carer's Allowance Supplement.

We also provide significant investment in Adult Disability Payment which was introduced on 21 March 2022 in three pilot areas and will be rolled out across the summer to further areas and nationally in August 2022. Our new person-centred decision-making process will ensure that everyone is treated with dignity, fairness, and respect. In addition, we are introducing indefinite awards which will avoid unnecessary reviews for severely disabled people with needs that are highly unlikely to change. Scottish disability benefits use a new definition of terminal illness that removes arbitrary time limits around life expectancy, and instead relies upon the clinical judgement of the clinician involved in an individual's care. Entitlement to Child Disability Payment has been extended to age 18 for any young person entitled to the benefit before age 16 if they so choose and awards will not be reviewed during this time. This means young people have a choice of not needing to apply for Adult Disability Payment at a time of transition.

Social Security Scotland will create a range of Adult Disability Payment stakeholder resources, and content in accessible formats. These will be proactively supplied to relevant stakeholder organisations through the National Stakeholder Engagement Team, for organisations to distribute to people in local communities. The languages we translate

materials into were selected through stakeholder consultation; being: British Sign Language, Farsi, Mandarin, Cantonese, Urdu, Gaelic, Polish, Arabic, braille, and easy-read formats. This will enable those, for whom English is not a first language, to be able to access information about their benefit entitlement.

Finally, the Scottish Government also funds support via local authorities and other bodies, such as for Discretionary Housing Payments and for the Scottish Welfare Fund for the provision of Crisis and Community Care Grants.

There are no tax policies set out in the RSR. The Scottish Government will continue to use our powers over taxation and revenue raising in a fair and progressive manner, aiming to protect those on low incomes and raise revenue to fund high-quality public services for all. Tax policy will be set as part of the Scottish Budget process, with the equality impacts assessed in the accompanying Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement.

Opportunity/Challenge 3: Ensure that inequalities in physical and mental health are tackled through the effective delivery of health and social care services as well as broader public health interventions

What does the evidence tell us?

- People experiencing socio-economic disadvantage have poorer physical and mental health, a shorter life expectancy, lower life satisfaction, and are more likely to experience feelings of loneliness.³⁷ Age-standardised death rates for COVID-19 have been over twice as high for people living in the most-deprived areas compared to the least deprived areas.^{38,39}
- People living in the most deprived areas were 18 times as likely to have a drug-related death as those in the least deprived areas. That ratio has almost doubled in 20 years, from around 10 times in the early 2000s.⁴⁰
- Younger people have poorer mental health than older people, particularly young women who are more likely to report mental health problems than other age and sex groupings.^{41,42}
- Older people face disproportionate health, frailty, and multi-morbidity effects. Increasing proportions of those aged 75 and above are living with long-term conditions in comparison to younger age groups.^{43,44,45}
- Many disabled people have higher than average needs for health and social care services.⁴⁶ The COVID-19 mortality risk for disabled people remains high⁴⁷ and they are more likely to have comorbidities, suffer greater negative outcomes from Covid, particularly when admitted to hospital.⁴⁸
- There is continued evidence of increased risk of COVID-19 hospitalisations and severe outcomes in most minority ethnic groups relative to the White group.⁴⁹ Compared to people identifying as White Scottish, deaths among people with Pakistani ethnicity were 3.7 times as likely to involve COVID-19.⁵⁰
- Prevalence of some health conditions is higher among certain ethnic groups. For example, type 2 diabetes is up to six times more likely in people of South Asian descent and is up to three times more likely in African and Afro Caribbean people.⁵¹
- Women are experiencing significant mental health impacts from the pandemic and women in the UK continue to be lonelier than men.⁵²
- In every year since 1985, 70% of all people dying from suicide have been men. Younger men are particularly affected. In 2020, suicide rates were highest for men between the ages of 35-39 who accounted for 12% of all suicide deaths.⁵³
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and people of other sexual orientations are more likely to report poor mental health. A 2021-22 survey by LGBT Youth Scotland found that 88% of those who responded to their LGBTI young people survey had experienced at least one mental health condition or related behaviour.⁵⁴
- Around 60% of Scotland's carers are women, who have therefore been disproportionately affected emotionally, financially, and physically due to their caring role particularly during the pandemic. Around 47% of carers in the most deprived areas care for 35 hours per week or more – almost double the level in least deprived areas.⁵⁵

What are we doing to address this?

In the period ahead, the focus will be to build on the response of our health and social care sector to the COVID-19 pandemic, reforming services, prioritising population health, and tackling underlying health and wellbeing inequalities. This will include implementation of the NHS Recovery Plan⁵⁶, work to tackle health inequalities through the Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027, the delivery of more effective social care, and the establishment of the National Care Service.⁵⁷ We are developing a new strategy for older people's health and social care in Scotland, to be published later in 2022.

Investment in our health and social care services is central to Scotland's recovery from COVID-19 - and to ensuring we properly recognise and reward the hardworking staff and carers who have gone over and above to make sure we are all cared for when we need it most. It is essential that we drive up standards and quality in social care support. We previously confirmed our support for this agenda in the 2022-23 Budget with more than £1.6 billion of investment for social care and health integration. We will take forward establishment of the National Care Service, bringing social care into parity of esteem with healthcare and transforming the provision of this essential service. This will be backed by a 25% increase in social care investment – equivalent to more than £840 million.

We are committed to establishing the National Care Service by the end of the current Parliamentary term to ensure consistent, fair, high quality social care and support for everyone who needs it in Scotland regardless of where they live. The National Care Service is to fundamentally reimagine social care in Scotland and presents an opportunity to change the way support and services are designed and delivered, placing human rights at the centre of our decision making. We will shift our emphasis to prevention; empowering people to engage positively with their own care; embedding fair work and ethical commissioning; and strengthening the commitment to integrating social care with community healthcare.

We have invested an additional £20.4 million for local carer support in 2022-23, bringing our total investment in the Carers Act to £88.4 million per year. We have consulted on legislation to establish a right to breaks from caring and are working on legislative proposals in the light of this feedback. We are acting now to expand short breaks support, ahead of any legislation. We have allocated an extra £5 million for short breaks in the 2022-23 budget, on top of the annual £3 million voluntary sector Short Breaks Fund.

To help reduce inequality associated with problem drug use we are investing an additional £250 million over the life of the current parliament. This funding underpins our National Mission on drugs – to save and improve lives. As well as funding for local alcohol and drugs services in our most deprived communities, this resource also provides direct grant funding to local community groups and third sector partners operating at grass-roots level to provide community support in areas of deprivation. Although the main aims of the mission are to get more people into the protective treatment and recovery that is right for them, and at the right time for them, the National Mission also includes initiatives to protect the families and children of those impacted by drugs. The National Mission is also closely linked to services for mental health, primary care, and homelessness.

We are developing a population health response to the issues affecting the mental health and wellbeing of children, young people, and their families. Our direct programme budget for mental health will be used to develop and enhance services and support for children and young people. This includes providing up to £40 million for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), £5 million to implement the recommendations of the Eating Disorders Review, £3 million for distress and crisis services with a focus on support for under-16s. We will also provide at least £15 million for community mental health services for children and young people in 2022-23. We will continue to build on our response through the period of the spending review.

Our £15 million Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for adults will promote wellbeing, mitigate and protect against the impact of distress and help tackle the impacts of social isolation, loneliness, and mental health inequalities on adults in 2022-23. Among the groups that could benefit are women, older people from a minority ethnic background, people facing socio-economic disadvantage, people with a long term health condition or disability, people disadvantaged by geographical location (particularly remote and rural areas) and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) communities.

We are developing a self-harm strategy and action plan, involving stakeholders and people with lived experience from different groups and we will ensure transgender people are actively engaged, involved and considered as part of this work. A key element of developing our strategy will be filling gaps in data and gaining a deeper understanding of how self-harm affects different groups, including the transgender community, so that we can design the most effective pathways and types of support that meets their needs.

The Scottish Government has committed to three years of funding to improve access to, and delivery of, NHS gender identity services and in December 2021 published a NHS gender identity services: strategic action framework⁵⁸. This set out work which will be progressed to improve these clinical services from 2022 until the end of 2024. £2 million has been allocated to support this work in 2022-23.

As set out in the Scottish Government's 2021 Race Equality Immediate Priorities Plan⁵⁹, we are developing plans to reinvigorate efforts on culturally competent health promotion and disease prevention of diabetes for people from minority ethnic communities. Work is also underway across Government, and with a range of key partners, to ensure we improve the collection and use of ethnicity data to evidence and address inequities in health access and outcomes. For example, we are improving the collection and recording of ethnicity information at the time of GP registration, and as part of our vaccination programme. We will continue to prioritise funding to deliver a world-class public health system; strengthen our investment in primary and community health care services; continue to support the social care sector; improve population health through tackling obesity, increasing physical activity, and reducing the harmful use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco; and improve the mental health and wellbeing of the population.

Opportunity/Challenge 4: Build digital services that are responsive to individuals and address inequality of access to digital participation

What does the evidence tell us?

- There are two aspects to inequality in digital access: inequality of digital skills and confidence, and inequality of digital resources.⁶⁰
- Households with lower incomes and households in Scotland's most deprived areas are less likely to have home internet access than higher income households and those in less deprived areas, although the gap has narrowed over time. Lack of internet access could impact on social, educational, and labour market outcomes for these groups.
- Rural households, particularly in remote areas, are less likely to have access to faster "superfast" broadband, which offers a wide range of benefits.
- Older adults and disabled adults (i.e., those with a limiting long-term physical or mental health condition or illness) are less likely to use the internet than younger adults and non-disabled adults.⁶¹
- Older adults are less likely to be confident in their ability to tell what websites to trust and to control their privacy settings online.⁶²
- Adults who use the internet for personal use are more likely to take online security measures if they are younger, or if they live in a less deprived area.⁶³

What are we doing to address this?

Access to digital connectivity opens up a range of potential benefits for all of society, including marginalised groups, with increased access to education, skills training, and financial benefits linked to savings accessible online. Through continuing the digital connectivity programme families will be provided with digital access linking them to a wide range of services essential to reducing household costs, increasing earnings, and improving wellbeing.

As set out in the RSR, the 2021 Digital Strategy for Scotland ("A Changing Nation: How Scotland Will Thrive In A Digital World") sets out the actions the Scottish Government will take on digital inclusion and connectivity, developing a strong digital economy, and enhancing the approach to delivering public services through investment in digital transformation.⁶⁴

As part of that, the Connecting Scotland programme is considering the sustainability of future phases together with a more in-depth study of the impact on equality. The Connecting Scotland programme will bring up to 300,000 households online over the parliamentary term. Initial findings note that people who have received devices and connectivity have felt less marginalised and more able to participate fully in a digital society. The evaluation phase is still being conducted on the Connecting Scotland programme: preliminary findings show that it has a positive impact on reducing digital exclusion.

There will continue to be investment in connectivity infrastructure and digital adoption across the economy, including continued investment in improved broadband and mobile coverage for residential and business premises.

In relation to digital infrastructure, we will continue to:

- Accelerate access to future-proofed broadband networks by building on the Reaching 100% (R100) programme contracts and the R100 Scottish Broadband Voucher Scheme . This provides access in remote, rural areas which disproportionately feature older and lower income households.
- Deploy future-proofed infrastructure to improve rural 4G mobile coverage, putting the right conditions in place to facilitate widespread deployment of 5G, and supporting the development and adoption of 5G use cases.
- Deliver the Scottish Government's Green Datacentres and Digital Connectivity Vision and Action Plan, stimulating new economic growth through attracting investment in international subsea fibre connections and sustainable Scottish data hosting facilities whilst building Scotland's profile as a competitive location for green, sustainable datacentres.
- Through our Full Fibre Charter and regular engagement, work with telecoms operators and key stakeholders to proactively investigate barriers to telecoms deployment.

We have launched a CivTech® Challenge to develop world-leading processes and tools to ensure everyone in Scotland can understand and have a say about how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is used to deliver public services. This will include a public register of trusted algorithms used in the Scottish public sector. We will also commission the design of an innovative mechanism to ensure civil society's full participation in the delivery of our AI strategy.

Opportunity/Challenge 5: Deliver greater progress towards meeting statutory child poverty targets

What does the evidence tell us?

- Poverty affects a wide range of families with a variety of protected characteristics. Almost 90% of all children in poverty in Scotland live within the six priority family types: lone parent households, minority ethnic households, households with a disabled member, households with a child under one, households with a young mother (<25), and larger households (3+ children).⁶⁵
- Families with experience of multiple disadvantage are often among those deepest in poverty and experience most barriers and challenges to get out of poverty. Most of these families are also likely to fall into at least one of our priority groups, and often belong to more than one priority group. For example, among children in relative poverty: 40% of children in lone parent households also have a disabled person at home; over half (54%) of children in a household with a younger mother are also in a lone parent household; half (50%) of children in a household with three or more children are also in a household in which someone is disabled.
- A balanced approach to tackling poverty is needed, with action required across the three drivers of poverty reduction (income from employment, costs of living, income from social security and benefits in kind) To achieve this, a combination of various policies is needed that support families most in need, recognising that there is no single way to experience poverty, but a wide range of unique experiences.⁶⁶
- Although paid work can be an effective way out of poverty, having paid work is not always enough to lift families out of poverty. The majority (67%) of children in poverty in Scotland already live in working households. In-work poverty is more common in minority ethnic households (76% of those in poverty are in paid work), households with three or more children (67%), or households with a baby (65%).
- Evidence suggests that there are two main drivers of in-work poverty. The first driver, the flexibility and quality of jobs; the second, the current low pay in many sectors⁶⁷
- There is a significant degree of intersectional impact for these groups, and for example, among children in relative poverty.⁶⁸
- Major events like EU Exit, COVID-19, and the current cost of living crisis have had significant impacts on the lives and experiences of children and families across Scotland. For example, those who were already most disadvantaged including lower income households, minority ethnic communities, and disabled people have tended to suffer disproportionately because of COVID-19.
- Child poverty and gender are inextricably linked. Women earn less than men and are more likely to be in insecure, low-paid work, and are overrepresented in sectors that have historically low pay, low progresss, and are often undervalued.⁶⁹

What are we doing to address this?

Our statutory targets require that, on an after housing costs (AHC) basis:

- Fewer than 18% of children live in relative poverty in 2023-24, reducing to fewer than 10% by 2030.
- Fewer than 14% of children live in absolute poverty in 2023-24, reducing to fewer than 5% by 2030.
- Fewer than 8% of children live in combined low income and material deprivation in 2023-24, reducing to fewer than 5% by 2030.
- Fewer than 8% of children live in persistent poverty in 2023-24, reducing to fewer than 5% by 2030.

Tackling child poverty is one of the core priorities in the RSR. As the spending review sets out, the [Best Start, Bright Futures: Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-2026](#) outlines wide ranging action to tackle child poverty and drive progress toward the ambitious targets set for 2030.

Support is balanced across the three drivers of poverty reduction: enhancing the immediate support families need through social security; enabling them to move out of poverty through employment; and reducing household costs. These steps are complemented by a focus on building the services that will improve family wellbeing and outcomes and supporting children and young people to reach their full potential.

Specific actions supported by the RSR include:

- More than doubling the value of the Scottish Child Payment (SCP) to £25 per week per child and rolling out the SCP in full to children under 16, by the end of 2022.
- Increasing the value of eight Scottish social security benefits by 6%, including Best Start Grants and Carer's Allowance Supplement, to keep pace with rising costs.
- Investment of up to £10 million each year to mitigate the Benefit Cap as fully as we can within the scope of devolved powers, with 97% of households impacted having dependent children.
- Enhancing access to advice and support, in places where families already go, investing up to £10 million to increase access to holistic advice services in the current parliamentary term, including expanding access to advice in health and education settings.
- Developing and implementing an enhanced employability offer for parents that provides holistic, person-centred support, financed by up to £81 million in 2022-23.

The Equality Impact Assessment⁷⁰ and Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment⁷¹ accompanying Best Start, Bright Futures, indicates that the potential impact of policy aimed at delivering greater progress towards meeting statutory child poverty targets is expected to be largely positive across protected characteristics (there is stronger evidence for sex, disability and race/ethnicity, with no evidence of negative impact for other characteristics) and positive for those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.^{72,73}

Opportunity/Challenge 6: Deliver greater progress towards closing the attainment gap

What does the evidence tell us?

- Poverty impacts children and young people's ability to both access and engage with education.
- Prior to the pandemic, progress was being made in reducing the poverty-related attainment gap for primary school pupils, but the pandemic has contributed to a widening of the gap because pupils in the most deprived areas experienced a bigger drop in attainment. In 2020-21, the attainment gap in literacy among primary school pupils was 24.7 percentage points and the attainment gap for numeracy was 21.4 percentage points.⁷⁴
- For school leavers, the poverty related attainment gap narrowed in 2020-21 for one or more pass at SCQF level 5 or better, and also at level 6 or better, potentially in part due to the alternative approaches taken to determine grades in 2020 and 2021 following the cancellation of exams. In 2020-21, the attainment gap for one or more pass at SCQF level 5 or better was 18.2 percentage points, a reduction from 33.3 percentage points in 2009-10. At SCQF Level 6 or better the attainment gap in 2021-22 was 34.4 percentage points, a reduction from 45.6 percentage points in 2009-10.⁷⁵
- Pupils recorded as Asian-Chinese continue to have high levels of attainment compared to other groups, with 94.7% achieving one pass or more at SCQF Level 6 or better, compared to 64.9% of White Scottish pupils.⁷⁶
- Pupils with a recorded Additional Support Need (ASN) have poorer attainment than pupils without an ASN. In 2020-21, the gap between pupils with a recorded ASN and pupils without an ASN for one or more pass at SCQF levels 5 or better was 19.5 percentage points. At SCQF Level 6 or better the gap between pupils with a recorded ASN and those without was 29.9 percentage points in 2020-21.⁷⁷
- The gap between pupils from the most and least deprived areas in positive destinations has been decreasing over time. Between 2019-20 and 2020-21 the proportion of school leavers in a positive initial destination increased by more among leavers from the most deprived areas than it has among those from the least deprived areas. This has led to a decrease in the deprivation gap, from 6.3 percentage points in 2019-20 to 4.8 percentage points in 2020-21 – the smallest gap on record.⁷⁸
- Females continue to be more likely to enter positive destinations than males: 96.2% of females and 94.7% of males entered a positive destination in 2020-21. This result is consistent with previous years.⁷⁹

What are we doing to address this?

A key policy approach to mitigating the potential impact of poverty on educational outcomes is the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the changes to that programme for 2022-23 through to 2025-26, which have been designed to increase the pace of progress in tackling the poverty related attainment gap.

The refreshed £1 billion Scottish Attainment Challenge creates an opportunity to better recognise the importance of health and wellbeing and wider experiences in ensuring

children and young people can attain academically and progress to and sustain positive destinations, including further or higher education or well-paid work.

From 2022-23 the Scottish Attainment Challenge programme sees:

- A broader recognition of children and young people’s achievements and attainment – set out in its wider mission to use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty, with a focus on tackling the poverty related attainment gap.
- Continued empowerment of school leaders through £520 million of Pupil Equity Funding over the next four years.
- A clearer and funded strategic role for all local authorities – a change from targeting local authority investment towards just nine “Challenge Authorities”, recognising that poverty impacts children and young people across all of Scotland.
- Continued, funded, support for care experienced children and young people.
- A clear framework to support recovery and accelerate progress, led by Education Scotland but with clear responsibilities for all parts of the education system – including for local authorities to set clear, ambitious, and transparent aims for progress. This will enable a clearer line of sight right through the system on the impact of local approaches.

It is clear that collaboration between schools and local authorities, and between education services and wider children’s and other services will be vital to success. The allocation of £1 billion to support the Scottish Attainment Challenge is a significant investment, but does not come alone. It is targeted, additional funding to support those children and young people who most need. Further, it comes alongside a range of policy initiatives and investments which are complementary, including:

- A commitment to fund 3,500 extra teachers and 500 support staff over this Parliamentary term.
- Continued commitment to the Promise (made to care experienced children, young people, adults, and their families)
- Commitment to widening access to higher education.
- Mitigating the cost of the school day by scrapping curriculum charges and increasing the school clothing grant.
- Provision of digital devices to children and young people; and
- Expansion of free school meals.

Opportunity/Challenge 7: Improve the availability and affordability of public transport services, to ensure those more reliant on public transport can better access it

What does the evidence tell us?

- Women, older people, younger people, and those on lower incomes are more likely to use public transport and with greater frequency.
- Access to private vehicles is patterned by household income; data from 2019⁸⁰ shows that 40% of households with an annual income up to £10,000 had access to one or more cars, compared to 97% of households with an annual income of more than £50,000.⁸¹
- Disabled adults are more likely to use the bus than non-disabled adults (11% of journeys vs 7%), less likely to drive (42% vs 54%), and more likely to be a car-passenger (18% vs 12%). Disabled people are less likely to have a driving licence (51% vs 75%) and access to a car (52% vs 77%).⁸² Disabled people also face barriers to owning or accessing a bicycle, and greater proportions of women than men (16% women compared to 8% men) are concerned about their personal safety when cycling.⁸³
- The 9-5 pattern for public transport and the radial approach (from urban centre to suburb) is not sufficiently designed based on women's needs, as they are more likely to need a range of orbital transport routes which cross towns and cities and timetables which fit with unpaid care work, part-time employment, and shift work.⁸⁴
- The issue of accessibility is greater in rural and island communities given longer commuting distances, higher fuel prices, and general cost of public transportation methods from the islands in particular. Across the wider population, multiple and competing costs experienced by those on low incomes impact on accessibility.⁸⁵
- Disabled people were slightly less positive about their recent experiences of using buses and trains than people who are not disabled. Disabled people experience greater challenges in terms of connecting between different forms of public transport during journeys.⁸⁶

What are we doing to address this?

The National Transport Strategy (NTS2) has as its vision that “we will have a sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system, helping to deliver a healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland, for communities, businesses and visitors”.⁸⁷ Tackling inequality is a key priority for NTS2.

Recognising cost as a significant factor in using transport for a number of different groups, the Resource Spending Review sets out a number of steps to tackle the cost of living crisis which are articulated elsewhere in this document, and which will help to mitigate the cost of using transport.

We are also investing to reduce costs for public transport. We have brought ScotRail into public ownership and the range of reduced fares available for those on lower incomes will continue. We are continuing to support bus users by providing free bus travel for people over 60 and with disabilities and for young people under the age of 22; more than two million people are now eligible for this. Additionally, we are continuing to subsidise bus

services through grant funding that contributes towards the costs of operating them, helping keep fares down and networks more extensive than would otherwise be the case, and the new Community Bus Fund will support local transport authorities to improve services for their communities. We are also undertaking our Fair Fares Review to ensure a sustainable and integrated approach to public transport fares as we recover from the pandemic. It will look at the range of discounts and concessionary schemes which are available on all modes including bus, rail and ferry. It will also take into account the cost and availability of services and will consider options taking cognisance of the relative changes to the overall cost of travel.

Low income households in island communities will benefit from the continuation of reduced ferry travel costs through national and local concessionary schemes. We have reduced ferry fares for islanders on Northern Isles services to receive a 30% discount and, in January 2020, we implemented a three year freeze on fares and 20% reduction on cabin fares for specific routes. We continue to support Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) fares on all Clyde and Hebrides ferry services which brings significantly lower fares for passengers, cars, small commercial vehicles, and coaches. RET helps to reduce the cost disadvantage faced by island communities by setting fares on the basis of travelling an equivalent distance by road. We continue to fund the Air Discount Scheme and the Public Service Obligation air services to Barra, Campbeltown, and Tiree to maintain connectivity and address the impacts of rurality for our remote communities.

We will invest over £150 million across the spending review period on active travel. This funding will support capital expenditure across the period and enable the active travel funding to reach a combined annual budget of £320 million by 2024-25. This will continue to deliver on commitments to roll out the free bikes for school age children who cannot afford them based on the outcome of the pilots. The Scotland Cycle Repair Scheme helps get old bikes out of storage and back onto our roads, as well as keeping well-used bikes pedalling smoothly and safely. The subsidy towards bike maintenance will support parents and carers with any necessary maintenance and repair of any bike including an adaptive bike or manual wheelchair. Funding is also provided for the purchase of e-bikes through the Energy Savings Trust (EST), which is available for adults to purchase non-standard cycles. A direct resource fund is provided to local authorities to support the delivery of active travel infrastructure capital projects on local roads through the Cycling and Walking Safer Routes programme. The Sustrans 'Places for Everyone' programme is supported by a behavioural change programme to create safe, attractive, healthier places by increasing the number of trips made by walking, cycling, and wheeling for everyday journeys.

Opportunity/Challenge 8: Ensure that policies, action and spend necessary to mitigate and adapt to the global impacts of climate change deliver a just transition for people in Scotland

What does the evidence tell us?

- The disruptive impact of climate change and associated extreme weather is likely to disproportionately impact protected characteristic groups and those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage by exacerbating existing health conditions and reducing access to health care.
- An increase in the cost of agricultural output and household food and reduced access to water because of climate change could disproportionately negatively impact groups who are more likely to face relative poverty and issues of access.
- Children and older people are more vulnerable to the impact of traffic-related noise, air pollution and injury from collisions.⁸⁸
- Prevalence of some health conditions is known to be higher among certain ethnic groups, such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease, which can be exacerbated by exposure to air pollution.⁸⁹
- Transport has been the largest net source of emissions in Scotland since 2016. Women in Scotland travel less frequently than men, undertake shorter journeys, are less likely to drive to work, and are less likely to hold a driving license. There is no gender difference in the overall frequency of taking flights, although women are less likely to take flights for work or business purposes.^{90,91}
- Women are more likely than men to consider climate change as a problem, a difference that is particularly pronounced among younger people and those living in the least deprived areas.⁹²
- Globally, children, older people, disabled people, and pregnant women are known to be more vulnerable to air pollution, with pregnant women facing an increased risk of miscarriage as well premature births and low birth weights as a result.^{93,94}
- Increased levels of flooding are likely to have an impact on lower income groups who may live in more vulnerable areas and have less access to resources to deal with the impacts of flooding.

What are we doing to address this?

Climate change is identified as a key priority within the RSR. We have produced a Climate Change Plan to run to 2032, containing over 100 new policies as well as increasing the ambition of over 40 existing policies from the 2018 Climate Change Plan. The spending review sets out several headline commitments in this area.

One of the most significant commitments is investment in the delivery of the Heat in Buildings Strategy.⁹⁵ The scaling up of resource spend of up to £75 million per year to support delivery of the strategy, directly supporting £1.8 billion (including capital and financial transactions) of overall public investment across this Parliament towards decarbonisation of over a million homes and 50,000 non-domestic buildings by 2030. Funding will be targeted to support the most vulnerable and to strike the right balance to ensure fairness, particularly between those who make the transition early (and so

potentially face higher lifetime costs) and those who transition much later (e.g., because infrastructure is not available). We will ensure that our delivery programmes do not have a detrimental effect on fuel poverty and will build in additional support where required to ensure people can continue to enjoy warm homes that are affordable to heat. The Heat in Buildings Strategy recognises the twin challenges of decarbonising and tackling fuel poverty as we design, assess, and target interventions, throughout the year. We have committed to identify and support disengaged and vulnerable groups, and through the Community And Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES) Equalities Charter, we will work to better support these groups.

We are developing Just Transition Plans for sectors, regions and sites, ensuring our transition to net zero is a fair and managed transition. In line with the 2019 Climate Change Act that requires all forthcoming Climate Change Plans and policies to address the challenges faced by sectors, regions and communities in Scotland, we will align our Just Transition Plans with the next Climate Change Plan.

The approach to planning is guided by our world-first National Just Transition Planning Framework⁹⁶, which sets out how we will be working with others on the economic and social impacts of transition. It has co-design at its heart, meaning that we will ensure that those who stand to be most impacted by the transition to net zero are given a voice in determining their future.

We will produce a transport sector Just Transition Plan. This will be developed in collaboration with stakeholders and work will be undertaken to fully define the transport and just transition challenges and opportunities as we transition to net zero. The transport system can play a key role in tackling some of the health inequalities set out earlier, through investment in active travel and reducing car usage. The RSR sets out our plans in this area, which are covered under Challenge 8.

The first of our sectoral Just Transition Plans will be the Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan, to be published in 2022. The development of this plan aims to amplify the voices of those most impacted by the transition and set out how changes in the energy sector in the decade ahead will be made fair for all. The Plan will establish a shared vision for Scotland's energy system and identify concrete steps to manage the economic and social impacts of the transition fairly.

Other steps highlighted in the RSR include accelerating the current annual peatland restoration rate; providing £95 million of further investment across the spending review period to support the scaling up of activity to meet our woodland creation targets; continuing investment to support a transformative approach to protecting and restoring Scotland's biodiversity, supporting nature and harnessing the positive impact on climate change such as rainforest restoration and ancient woodland; and supporting the improvement of Scotland's system of land ownership, use, rights and responsibilities, so that our land contributes to a fair and just society while balancing public and private interests.

Opportunity/Challenge 9: Better realise the right to an adequate home that is affordable, accessible, of good quality, and meets individual need whilst ensuring that progress on tackling current inequality of housing outcome is addressed

What does the evidence tell us?

- There are a range of inequalities in relation to property ownership, with younger people, households with disabled members, minority ethnic people, and households headed by women all experiencing significantly lower rates of ownership.⁹⁷ This creates inequality because housing is a key repository of wealth for many households.
- There are marked differences in relation to housing tenure. Looking at social rented households in 2019, 59% had a disabled member, and 47% were in the most deprived areas.⁹⁸ Gypsy/Travellers are twice as likely to be (predominantly social) renters and more likely to live in overcrowded accommodation.⁹⁹
- Minority ethnic households are more likely to live in the private rented sector and on the whole are less likely to live in the social rented sector or in owner occupation than White Scottish/British households.¹⁰⁰
- There is inequality in terms of the adequacy of housing, private rented (52%) and Local Authority social housing (47%) both had quality (SHQS) failure rates above the national average of 43% in 2019 (according to the Scottish House Condition Survey)¹⁰¹. In 2019, around 22% of households with a disabled member do not live in a home that meets their needs.¹⁰²
- Public provision of Gypsy/Traveller configured accommodation has reduced in recent years (14% reduction in pitches from 2008-2018¹⁰³). Gypsy/Travellers are also more likely to have a limiting long-term health problem or disability (28% compared to 20%) despite a much younger age profile.¹⁰⁴
- Being in poverty increases the risk of homelessness, and single men, lone mothers, visible minority ethnic groups, Muslim adults, young people, and disabled adults are all at greater risk. Experience of domestic abuse is the most common reason why women present as being homeless, and women's inequality generally increases their risk factors.
- Young people are overrepresented in homelessness statistics, and homeless households are more likely to be single male. 49% of households assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness in 2020-21 were single males, while 21% were single female households. Male single parents were 5% of the applications while female single parents accounted for 16% of applicant households.¹⁰⁵

What are we doing to address this?

As set out in Housing to 2040, we are progressing work to ensure the realisation of the right to adequate housing, including work in support of the Human Rights Bill.¹⁰⁶

This frames the New Deal for Tenants and underpinning rented sector strategy which aims to improve fairness, quality and affordability across social and private rented homes.¹⁰⁷ We are committed to delivering 110,000 affordable homes by 2032 of which at least 70% will be available for social rent and 10% will be in our remote, rural and island communities. Many

of these homes will be delivered to the updated Housing for Varying Needs Standards, with the current review also feeding into the considerations for new Building Standards from 2025-26 – developing a Scottish Accessible Homes Standard which all new homes, regardless of tenure, must achieve. Investment of £12 million capital for 2023-24 provides support to Registered Social Landlords to provide adaptations for their older and disabled tenants to help them live independently in a home that meets their needs. In 2022-23, £2.75 million investment to kick start delivery of our Shared Policy Programme¹⁰⁸ agreements for a new deal for tenants and Rented Sector Reform will, following consultation, offer measures to improve the quality, affordability and fairness on which homes are rented.

In 2022-23, we will provide over £120 million for the Scottish Welfare Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments to mitigate the UK Government's bedroom tax, among other welfare cuts, and help over 90,000 tenants sustain their tenancies. We are also investing up to £10 million to mitigate the benefit cap as much as we can within devolved powers which will support a further 4,000 families with approximately 13,000 children to sustain their tenancies.

Continued investment from the second tranche of £50 million transformation funding in our Ending Homelessness Together Fund¹⁰⁹ will continue to support delivery of Rapid Rehousing, Housing First and other actions in our Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan which is expected to deliver a range of positive equality and human rights outcomes. To guide our policy and associated investment, we recently appointed someone with expertise on the housing and homelessness concerns of people from minority ethnic communities to the Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group¹¹⁰.

We know the best way to end homelessness is to prevent it from happening in the first place and we are committed to developing and implementing pathways to prevent homelessness for those at high risk. The Scottish Government are now progressing actions to implement the recommendations from an expert working group to improve housing outcomes for women and children experiencing domestic abuse in the social rented sector. Some of the recommendations relate to how Ending Homelessness Together funding (or Equally Safe funding) should be directed to meet the specific needs of women and children experiencing domestic abuse, which includes financial support to leave a perpetrator and access to legal advice. Also, the 'Improving Care Leavers Housing Pathways' report was published on 12 November 2019 and sets out next steps to ensure corporate parents act on their legal and moral duties to prevent care leavers experiencing homelessness by fully implementing existing policy and legislative frameworks. The Youth Homelessness Prevention Pathway was published on 22 March 2021. The pathway recognises that youth homelessness is more than just a housing issue and calls for change across youth, welfare, health, justice, housing, homelessness, and the children and families' sectors and departments at both a national and local level. Both pathways recognise that younger people are more likely to make a homeless application than other groups of the population and are much more likely to have support needs relating to basic housing management and independent living.

The £20 million Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Fund (2021-2026) is part of our shared commitment with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) to more and better Gypsy/Traveller accommodation. It will be focused, initially, on the development of demonstration projects to establish model sites, built to an Interim Site Design Guide, developed with Gypsy/Traveller input. We are working in partnership with members of Gypsy/Traveller communities and local authorities to develop a design guide for modern, accessible sites, to meet the needs of growing families, older and disabled people, including building to relevant standards in Housing for Varying Needs. The fund will support more Gypsy/Travellers to realise their right to an adequate home, in keeping with their cultural traditions.

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