

IT TAKES **ALL OF US** TO BUILD A FAIRER SCOTLAND

I pledge...

I pledge...

I will...

I will...

I pledge...

I will...

FAIRER SCOTLAND
ACTION PLAN



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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FAIRER SCOTLAND ACTION PLAN

FAIRER FOR ALL

ENDING CHILD POVERTY

YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIFE CHANCES

FAIRER WORKING LIVES

THRIVING THIRD AGE

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MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

It takes all of us to build a fairer Scotland. Government can't do it on its own, nor would we want to. We want to work together with the people of Scotland, particularly those living in poverty, with communities, with business and industry, and with all public and third sector organisations. This will not be an easy or simple task, but if we all pull together and do our utmost, we can and we will succeed. And the prize is a precious one – by 2030, a fair, smart, inclusive Scotland, where everyone can feel at home, where fair work helps businesses to thrive and create jobs, where poverty rates are amongst the lowest in Europe, and where there is genuinely equal opportunity for all.

The challenge is huge, we will face barriers we can see, and new ones as yet unknown. We may even face cynicism and a lack of interest from some quarters. But this government is up to that challenge and will work with anyone and everyone who wants to make Scotland a fairer and more prosperous place.

We are aware we do so in the face of continuing UK Government welfare cuts and attempts to take Scotland out of Europe which has brought us further economic uncertainty, but we are committed to taking every action possible. This will be through the positive actions outlined in this document, and also through protecting people against the worst effects of welfare cuts through our investment of £100 million every year. For every pound spent on mitigation measures, there is a pound less that can be spent on boosting the economy, encouraging job creation and lifting people out of poverty. But while UK Government policies are making matters worse for people on low incomes, we will take action to support them.

What we really want to do is change deep seated, multi-generational, deprivation, poverty and inequalities. One of the key ways we will do this is through eradicating child poverty. We have set out long-term targets to reduce and ultimately end child poverty. Again, we know we are being ambitious and it will take time, but this is an area we must address if we are to ensure there is true equality of opportunity. In addition, whilst we are only getting 15% of the benefit budget, we will ensure our new social security system will have dignity and fairness at its heart. A clear action people have highlighted to us that they want.

■ ■ What we really want to do is change deep seated, multi-generational, deprivation, poverty and inequalities. One of the key ways we will do this, is through eradicating child poverty.”

We will also ensure we consider the evidence of what is working, alongside what people are telling us makes a difference, to make sure our actions are having the positive impact we want. This may mean we have to take tough decisions or shift priorities, look at how we deliver services in a new or different way, but that will be part of the challenge we face. This government wants to know that the actions we all take, the funding we invest, is having a positive impact.

We started this process through our Fairer Scotland conversations in 2015 and we now publish this Fairer Scotland Action Plan. Built on the strong foundations of what we heard from people during those conversations, actions included here are ambitious, affordable and achievable. It's not an exhaustive list covering all of government and it doesn't cover actions we'd like to take but can't because the power to do so lies with the UK Government. But these actions will create a fairer society, with a focus on tackling poverty.

This publication is not the beginning or end of the process. It makes clear our actions in this parliamentary term, and we will report on our progress during that time, but it is also a clear commitment to the people of Scotland that we are taking long term action to change our society and make it a fairer and more equal place to live and we will continue to do so. We don't expect to 'fix' things within the five years of a parliamentary term; we are not looking for quick wins, but genuine cultural and societal change. That will take years and we are making clear this will take time, and it may be 2030 before we see changes for those areas that have been in poverty for too long.

“ Our ambition is to build the fairer Scotland that all of us want to see. Your help will make it stronger still.”

This plan is also an important part of our commitment to create ‘inclusive growth’, a fairness priority set out in Scotland’s Economic Strategy and built upon in our recent Labour Market Strategy. Inclusive Growth underpins our dual ambition to tackle inequality and boost competitiveness and shows we have a vision of an economy where everyone can contribute and where the benefits of growth and are shared by all.

Inclusive growth cuts right across the Scottish Government’s priority areas. It is built into how we invest and how we operate – from early years, childcare and education and skills training, to providing affordable housing, improving wages and working conditions and boosting productivity. Shared growth will help the most disadvantaged people and places in Scotland to prosper. This kind of ‘inclusive’ economy will improve outcomes for people and is vital for strong economic performance and a prosperous Scotland over the long-term.

As the First Minister said in her Priorities Speech following the election, ‘Greater equality of opportunity will make a real difference to the lives of those who suffer disadvantage; but it will do so much more than that. It will boost our economy and enhance the quality of life of all of us. It will help to create not just a fairer nation, but one that is wealthier, healthier and happier’.

I said at the start that it takes all of us to build a fairer Scotland. That's why the plan also features fairness 'pledges' from the Poverty Truth Commission, Lloyds TSB Foundation, and Joseph Rowntree Foundation amongst others. And that's also why the first thing you'll see after these introductory remarks is a specially commissioned Foreword from two people who took part in the Fairer Scotland conversation – Marie-Therese Martin and Susan McMahon, both Poverty Truth Commissioners.

We're keen to know what you can do too. If you can make a pledge of your own – whether you're an individual or a family who wants to help, or you're an employer, a community group, a third sector body, or part of the public sector – please tell us about it using the contact details at the back.

I'd like to thank everyone who has made a pledge or who took part in the conversations or who helped us bring this plan together. Our ambition is to build the fairer Scotland that all of us want to see. Your help will make it stronger still.



Angela Constance MSP
Cabinet Secretary For Communities,
Social Security And Equalities



FOREWORD BY MARIE-THERESE MARTIN AND SUSAN McMAHON

POVERTY TRUTH COMMISSIONERS

What does it take to build a fairer Scotland? How do we start to view each other as part of the solution, not part of the problem? Across the country, people have talked about what needs to change and are waiting to see what happens next.

Through the Poverty Truth Commission, we have been privileged to have been involved in a mutual mentoring programme with some of those involved in rolling out the Fairer Scotland conversation. We have seen the conversation grow up from papers on desks and begin to blossom in communities.

We recognised many of the stories we heard, as they are stories we live with too. We know what it means to live with poverty. Previously we never thought to question our situation – to look at it, to talk about it, to ask why and what could make it better. It was like we were always waiting for the government or someone else to make a change. But we want to know what we can do now. It's our Scotland and we want to make it fairer. That's why we got involved. We don't want to feel ashamed anymore. We want to be part of the change that is needed.

■ ■ “It's our Scotland and we want to make it fairer.”

“ Through conversation, we are no longer them and us. No longer unaccountable. No longer strangers. Learning together about dignity, respect and value.”

Fairer Scotland has been about going to people where they are and talking together. We know that conversations and relationships change the way we treat each other. Through conversation, we are no longer them and us. No longer unaccountable. No longer strangers. Learning together about dignity, respect and value.

We hope that this report inspires all of us in Scotland to work for a fairer society. A Scotland we can be proud of, where we value each other, instil hope in each other and re-root dignity. And we hope that the conversation we have begun continues. Continues in our living rooms, in our communities and in the places of power – because a fairer Scotland for all of us will not come about without it.

Susan McMahon
Poverty Truth Commissioner

Marie-Therese Martin
Poverty Truth Commissioner



INTRODUCTION

THIS FAIRER SCOTLAND ACTION PLAN IS A FIRST GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE FAIRER SCOTLAND CONVERSATION. IT IS BASED ON **FIVE AMBITIONS FOR 2030** AND **50 SELECTED ACTIONS** OVER THIS PARLIAMENTARY TERM. THE PLAN WILL HELP BUILD A BETTER COUNTRY – ONE WITH LOW LEVELS OF POVERTY AND INEQUALITY, GENUINE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY, STRONGER LIFE CHANCES, AND SUPPORT FOR ALL THOSE WHO NEED IT. **THAT'S WHAT WE MEAN BY A FAIRER SCOTLAND.**

THE FAIRER SCOTLAND CONVERSATION

Fairer Scotland was built on the public debates about independence in 2013 and 2014. In those discussions, social justice was often at the very centre of people's concerns. Yes voters and No voters discussed – openly and passionately – the possibilities and the challenges for a more socially just and open society. These conversations were some of the most engaged of the entire Referendum period and both sides offered valuable insights into how Scotland should move forward.

The Fairer Scotland conversation was launched to build on this. It started with a simple question: what matters to you about fairness and social justice in Scotland? We had a fantastic response. Seven thousand people took part in public events and local discussions. Even more engaged online, with around 17,500 visitors to the Fairer Scotland social media platforms. People of all ages came along to events from Dumfries to Stornoway. We heard from people with experience of poverty and people who had suffered homelessness. We heard from minority ethnic communities, from disabled people, from women's groups, from Gypsy Travellers, from faith groups, from lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) organisations, and from young offenders. And we held events in some of the most deprived communities in Scotland.

In March 2016, the ideas from the conversations were summarised in an interim report.¹ This came up with these five initial themes that people had been talking about and which, wherever possible, are addressed in this Fairer Scotland Action Plan.

1. Work and living standards – Addressing poverty was seen as key to creating a fairer Scotland, with general agreement that society should do everything it could to end poverty in all its forms. The 'poverty premium' was discussed as part of this – how people living in poverty could be further disadvantaged through, for example, higher utility bills and no access to affordable credit. Poverty is a key theme in the Fairer Scotland Action Plan.

Fair work was seen as important for helping people escape poverty. Again, there was general agreement that everyone needs access to a job that pays a fair wage and treats people fairly. Improvements in working conditions were also discussed, with suggestions that employers should give more consideration to individual employee circumstances and build job flexibility around the employee. Equal pay between women and men and between people of different ages if they are doing the same job was seen to be key. We heard that the problem is not simply having fair access to work but also being able to progress over a working lifetime. Fair work is another recurrent theme across the Action Plan.

¹ www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00497495.pdf

2. Homes and communities – Affordability and access to housing were major issues, for example in relation to increasing housing supply, taking action on private sector rent levels and helping lower income households to buy their own home. A variety of ideas were suggested on how to improve the standard of housing in both the private rented sector and in social housing, including tougher penalties for landlords providing sub-standard housing. Housing features as one sub-section of this plan.

3. Early years, education and health – Childcare was another key issue in the discussion, with many suggesting that childcare flexibility and choice were as important as availability, particularly for parents who work outside of nursery or school hours. There was also much discussion about the costs of childcare and a view that more affordable childcare would help parents who wanted to move into work.

There was a view that vocational learning should have the same value and resources as academic learning. A number of suggestions were made about how to encourage young people to follow vocational career pathways.

Nutrition and access to healthy food were seen as key health issues, particularly for children. Mental health was another important focus, with a strong argument for mental health services to have the same priority as physical health services, both in terms of quality and access. Support for carers was raised, with calls for greater availability of respite for carers, and for Carer's Allowance to be raised.

These issues are addressed in this Action Plan.

4. Community participation and public services – Public involvement in democracy was one of the most talked about issues in the conversation. There was a call for greater opportunities for local people to play a part in decisions that affect them and their communities.

The role of public services was another standout issue to come out of the discussion. The key point raised was that service providers should listen to and involve service users at the design stage so that any new service 'fits' the needs of people as best it can. This point was made in particular about integrated health services, education and transport.

Access to services was raised in relation to rural communities, arguing that more resources were needed to improve access. Improving broadband access and speed to provide better access to online services was one example given.

These issues are covered in the Action Plan.

5. Respect and dignity – Respect and dignity emerged as strong themes in terms of how people are treated by public services and, in particular, the social security system. Many people felt that the UK welfare service should be fairer, more helpful, provide security and treat everyone with respect. On specific social security benefits, restoring lifetime awards for people with permanent or deteriorating conditions was one suggestion. There was also a view that people should be made fully aware of the benefits they were entitled to by right and that help should be offered to complete the necessary forms to make a claim.

There were also a number of discussions about ending discrimination and advancing equality. For example, there were suggestions about greater representation of minority ethnic communities in senior positions and in key decision making roles. Greater representation of women across society was raised, including that there should be a 50/50 gender split in company boardrooms and in senior positions. Reducing the gender pay gap was another key issue. Promotion of LGBTI issues across society was proposed in order to generate greater awareness, with transgender issues a particular focus.

The issue of care for older people was also discussed as was the issue of loneliness and the need to address social isolation among older people.

Again, these are key issues addressed in the Action Plan and across our work in government.

These are short summary descriptions of a nine-month conversation across Scotland. We can't do justice here to what were rich and wide-ranging discussions – so if you want to know more about the conversation, please read the full interim report.²

² www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00497495.pdf

THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

The Fairer Scotland conversation has already informed the Scottish Government's thinking in many ways. It helped develop our ideas ahead of the election and was reflected in the first Programme for Government published in September. New economic and fairness priorities have already been set out for the new government:

- the First Minister has said that 'the Scottish Government has a plan... to build a more prosperous nation with a dynamic, sustainable and inclusive economy, with public services that put people's needs first, and where every individual has true equality of opportunity';
- a consultation on the first Scottish Social Security Bill, which will make a big difference to how social security is delivered in Scotland, was launched in July; and,
- in August, we launched a consultation on a Child Poverty Bill, which contains proposals for ambitious income targets for eradicating child poverty by 2030.

While the Fairer Scotland conversations have had the strongest influence on this plan, other sources have also been very useful. The commitments in the plan reflect: our ambitions set out in our Economic and Labour Market strategies to develop a more dynamic, sustainable and inclusive economy; the thinking of the independent Fair Work Convention and its framework; 'Shifting the Curve' (January 2016)³, the report by the Independent Advisor on Poverty and Inequality; and 'Dignity: Ending Hunger Together in Scotland'⁴, the report of the Independent Working Group on Food Poverty. We will respond to the Group's recommendations following the publication of this report. We said that we would implement the Independent Advisor's report in full and we will do so: our response to all the advisor's recommendations is set out in detail in Annex B.

In proposing 50 actions for a fairer Scotland, the Scottish Government is working to meet its wider equality, human rights and sustainable development goal obligations. Bold, positive measures are needed to achieve equality for all and we have outlined some of the specific actions we are taking here. The Action Plan also responds to the Equality and Human Rights Commission report 'Is Scotland Fairer' (February 2016), which sets out a number of key challenges for Scotland to address.

Finally, we have looked to the Poverty and Fairness Commissions that have been set up by local authorities – and have read their reports with great interest. Some of the pledges included in the plan build on the work of these commissions.

All these inputs – and more – have helped shape thinking for this report.

³ www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/01/1984/0

⁴ <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00502395.pdf>

A FAIRER SCOTLAND – FIVE AMBITIONS AND FIFTY ACTIONS



FIVE AMBITIONS BY 2030

The Fairer Scotland Action Plan is built on FIVE HIGH-LEVEL AMBITIONS that we will focus on in the period to 2030.

1

A FAIRER
SCOTLAND
FOR ALL

2

ENDING
CHILD
POVERTY



3

A STRONG
START FOR ALL
YOUNG PEOPLE

4

FAIRER
WORKING
LIVES

5

A THRIVING
THIRD AGE



50 FAIRNESS ACTIONS FOR THIS PARLIAMENTARY TERM

At the heart of the Plan are 50 FAIRNESS ACTIONS FOR THIS PARLIAMENTARY TERM that will help us meet these ambitions, ranging across the responsibilities of government.

The plan also includes key strategies being taken forward to deliver a fairer Scotland and additional actions on new research and analysis.

How will we know that the plan is really delivering? We will issue a **PROGRESS REPORT** by the end of 2019, setting out what we've achieved and how the plan has helped us make progress on our ambitions, and in line with our legal obligations to integrate equality in our work. We will look at what's working well and less well, why and for whom.

This Action Plan is the start of a long-term commitment to help shape a fairer Scotland. We will see these actions through for this parliamentary term, but we'll also commit to new actions for the next one. So we will hold a **CITIZEN'S FORUM** in the second half of this parliament, inviting many of those who took part in the previous conversations to help us identify new areas of focus. The Citizen's Forum will help us set out **NEW FAIRNESS ACTIONS FOR THE NEXT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT.**

“ This Action Plan is the start of a long-term commitment to help shape a fairer Scotland.”

CAN YOU HELP?

Creating a fairer Scotland will require all of us – Government, communities of all kinds; people with experience of poverty; business and industry; the public and the third sector – to work together to achieve change. Government cannot deliver change on its own, nor would we want to. We will continue to work with anyone and everyone to make these actions a reality.

That's why the Action Plan features commitments from a range of organisations from across the UK who want to help us build a fairer Scotland. Thanks to the following organisations who have made a pledge:

**CARNEGIE UK TRUST
DUNDEE FAIRNESS PARTNERSHIP
INCLUSION SCOTLAND
JOSEPH ROWNTREE FOUNDATION
LLOYDS TSB FOUNDATION SCOTLAND
NHS HEALTH SCOTLAND
THE POVERTY TRUTH COMMISSION
THE PRINCE'S TRUST SCOTLAND
TIMEWISE & FAMILY FRIENDLY WORKING SCOTLAND
VIRGIN MONEY
WORKING FAMILIES
YOUNG SCOT
YOUTHLINK**

We'd like to hear what you can do too. What are you doing to help make Scotland a fairer place? Please tell us, using the contact details at the back of this plan.

50 FAIRNESS ACTIONS FOR THIS PARLIAMENTARY TERM





A FAIRER SCOTLAND FOR ALL

The Fairer Scotland conversations told us that a socially just country would have very low levels of poverty. As our economy prospered, the proceeds of growth would be shared widely and fairly. Decent affordable housing would be in place for everyone who wanted it. All our communities would feel empowered to take action on the priorities that matter most to them. The welfare system would be available to anyone who needed it and that safety net would be valued by all of us. **Our public services would be of the highest quality, always treating people with dignity and respect.** We would have narrowed health, justice and educational inequalities significantly. Digital technologies would be being used actively by everyone, with scarce resources being focused where they were most needed. And we would, through our collective action, have progressed equality for all and protected and enhanced human rights.

Here is a set of key actions that the Scottish Government will take to help achieve this vision.



£ POVERTY AND LOW INCOME

Poverty was central to the Fairer Scotland discussion, with a strong sense that society should be doing everything it can to reduce and ultimately end poverty in all its forms, whether that's child poverty; food poverty; or fuel poverty. Poverty is an issue that is addressed across the whole of this Action Plan.

01

In 2017, we will introduce a new socio-economic duty on public bodies. The public sector is key to delivering a fairer Scotland and this new duty will help make sure that the sector takes full account of poverty and disadvantage when key decisions are being made. We will also look to make the most of the connection between this duty and those on equality and human rights, and a similar duty on education authorities.



02

We will provide £100,000 new funding so that, across Scotland, people with experience of living in poverty can speak out, tackle stigma and push for change to public services. People with experience of poverty are increasingly influential in the public debate on tackling the causes and consequences of poverty. We currently part-fund The Poverty Truth Commission, based in Glasgow, which has been very successful in getting the voices of people who have experienced poverty into the national debate. We will provide start-up funding for three different communities who want to work in a similar way across Scotland. The Poverty Truth Commission has agreed to advise us on how to make this a success. And we have already agreed to provide the Dundee Partnership with funding to help this happen in Dundee.

03

Building on the work of local Fairness and Poverty Commissions, we will establish a national Poverty and Inequality Commission in 2017/18. Right at the heart of the commission will be the voices and experiences of people with experience of poverty. The full details of what the commission will do are still being firmed up, with tackling child poverty expected to be a major task. The commission will also be asked to look at how government can help advance the prospects of those communities who feel left behind because of changing economic circumstances, low pay, and deprivation.

04

We will launch a new £29 million programme, including £12.5 million from the European Social Fund, to tackle poverty in Scotland. Across the country, communities and the third sector play a vital role in helping people to overcome poverty, disadvantage and discrimination. Over the next two years, the programme will enable communities and third sector organisations to design, test and deliver innovative approaches to combat poverty and improve people's lives. For example, the programme will help to provide additional childcare, create new jobs, and support local community-led priorities including community food initiatives, and making best use of buildings and other assets.



▀▀ The Poverty Truth Commission (PTC) pledges to work to ensure that people experiencing poverty are at the heart of work to overcome it. From experience we know that when people living in poverty are included, change happens – and we want to continue and grow this work. So we will launch a 4th round of The PTC in January 2017, bringing together people experiencing poverty and key decision makers in Scottish society for an 18 month period. We will aim in this process to listen to the voices of some of the poorest in our society, not just the easiest to reach.



As a specific commitment for this plan, we pledge to offer advice to the Scottish Government on how new community groups, which follow the PTC model, can be best set up in three local areas of Scotland.”

Elaine Downie,
Poverty Truth Commission



05

We will take action to tackle the poverty premium.

The ‘poverty premium’ is shorthand for the fact that lower income households often have to pay higher prices for basic necessities like gas, electricity and banking than better-off families. The poverty premium was a major concern in the Fairer Scotland conversations.

- This autumn, the Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities will convene a summit with energy companies to help low income consumers get a better deal on their fuel bills. Energy companies are among our key partners in delivering a fairer Scotland, making sure this aspect of the poverty premium is properly tackled. This important summit is one of a range of actions we are taking to help tackle fuel poverty, allocating over £500 million in this area since 2009 and more than £113 million this year.
- Making affordable credit more easily available will be one part of cross-government action on financial inclusion in 2017. This will follow up on proposals from the Carnegie Foundation on affordable credit and responds to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, which has said that ‘a stronger focus on financial inclusion is needed in Scotland’.⁵ Our approach will make sure that low-income consumers have access to the goods and services that enable them to avoid the poverty premium, such as affordable internet access and the digital skills and confidence to transact online to facilitate switching. To do this, we will need to work with the banking and finance sector, as well as the third sector and other local organisations such as Housing Associations to make the most of the leverage we have.
- We will also develop a Financial Health Check service for people on low incomes to help them make the most of their money and to secure the best energy tariffs and access to bank accounts. And we will work with our partners to ensure that Scotland’s advice sector provides high quality, accessible advice that helps make people’s lives better.

⁵ www.jrf.org.uk/report/scotland-without-poverty

06

We will deliver 100% superfast broadband access by 2021, helping low income households reduce costs. Digital connectivity for all is vital to a strong, inclusive society. The Scottish Government and our partners are already investing £410 million through the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband programme to extend fibre broadband access to at least 95% of premises across Scotland. But we now intend to go beyond this and ensure 100% superfast broadband access by 2021. This commitment will benefit the whole of Scotland, particularly those in rural and remote areas with limited or no access to broadband. This commitment could also mean major savings for people on low incomes: we know that households can save between £500 and £750 a year by being online and we have already funded a number of affordable broadband pilots in social housing settings. We will continue to work with the sector to develop affordable, sustainable internet access and to ensure tenants get training and support to develop basic digital skills.



■ On behalf of Virgin Money, I pledge to do my best to make banking fairer and more accessible for the people of Scotland. We are building a bank that aims to treat our customers fairly. That's why we recently launched our basic bank account, the Essential Current Account, a fair and simple product that can help those who are finding it difficult to get a bank account. We are currently working with Scotcash to make basic bank accounts more readily available to people in the Glasgow area."



Jayne-Anne Gadhia,
CEO Virgin Money Plc

Read the full pledge on p87

▀▀ The Carnegie UK Trust pledges to help improve access to affordable credit in Scotland. Thousands of people borrow money from high cost lenders to meet everyday needs. Offering attractive and affordable alternatives could save people in our poorest communities thousands of pounds every year. We want to help Scotland's not-for-profit affordable credit providers to grow and to reach many more people. And we will commit resources and work in partnership with the Scottish Government, local authorities, affordable credit providers, housing associations, banks and charities to achieve this goal."



Angus Hogg,
Chair Of The Carnegie UK Trust



Read the full pledge on p80



PARTICIPATION, DIGNITY AND RESPECT

Participation, dignity and respect were key to the Fairer Scotland conversations. On public services, there was a strong argument that people should be involved and listened to at the service design stage so that they better fit the needs of local people; and that dignity, politeness and respect should be at the heart of every public service. Many people also wanted to be helped to have their say – and play their part – in what was happening in their local communities.

07

We will do more to help people to have a say in their local areas.

- We will set a target for Councils to have at least 1% of their budget subject to participatory budgeting which will be supported by the £2 million Community Choices Fund. The fund gives communities the chance to vote on how public money is spent in their area. Targeted particularly at deprived areas for the first time, community groups as well as public authorities are able to apply for funding to organise their own Community Choices events. With over a hundred applications received, this will lead to new participatory budgeting events across the country and will give more communities the chance to make decisions on how and where money is spent in their area.
- Where they need it, we will help communities to start talking to public bodies about local issues and local services – on their terms. ‘Participation requests’ are a new process set out in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Where a community organisation believes it could help in any specific area, it will be able to ask a public body to take part in a process to improve that outcome. Community bodies can use the Act to discuss with service providers how they could better meet the needs of users, to offer volunteers to support a service or even propose to take over the delivery of the service themselves. We are currently working on the necessary secondary legislation and statutory guidance and expect this part of the Act to come into force before the end of 2016. This promises to be important in helping communities get things done locally on their own terms.
- We will empower our communities to tackle poverty and inequality on their own terms through the Empowering Communities Fund. The fund supports community-led activity that allows local people to deliver the priorities that matter most to them. Community organisations are well placed to bring about change and we will continue to support them to deliver a range of activities including tackling environmental issues, promoting local economies, supporting vulnerable people, promoting good health, helping young people and delivering arts and cultural activity. People in communities know themselves what will make a difference and we will support them in delivering their priorities.

08

We will take action to make democratic institutions more representative of the communities they serve. We will work with disability groups to remove the barriers to participation which prevent some people from standing for selection/election. This will include an Access to Elected Office Fund, which will meet the additional costs of disabled people standing for selection/election in the 2017 local government elections.



09

We will reform public services to deliver the highest quality service to users, with dignity and respect at their core. The Fairer Scotland conversation and the community engagement led by the Star Project for the Renfrewshire Tackling Poverty Commission heard that dignity, politeness and respect for users were crucial to successful public services. We recognise how important public services are in the lives of people across Scotland. For many people, the quality of the relationships they have with their doctor, their teacher, their care worker or one of the many other dedicated people who work in public service makes a real difference in their lives. The principles set out by the Christie Commission – to build services with the care of people at their core – continue to guide our approach to public service delivery.

We've already committed to setting dignity and respect at the heart of the new Scottish Social Security system and employability programmes. We want to see a Scotland where people have the power and ability to take control, participate and engage in the planning and delivery of the services that matter to them. We will take a range of action to achieve this. For example, by September 2017, NHS Health Scotland will have begun to deliver training in partnership with the Poverty Alliance and others to raise awareness of poverty and its impact on health and wellbeing amongst public services staff. And through Self-Directed Support, we are embedding a new approach to social care which gives adults, children and carers more choice and control over how their support is delivered.

EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

A wide range of equality issues were raised in the Fairer Scotland conversation. We will continue to do whatever we can to advance equality and progress economic and social rights. We also want to emphasise that, following the outcome of the European referendum, we will make sure that the human rights of people in Scotland, as enshrined in European law, are protected.

10

We will establish an Advisory Council on Women and Girls. This will inform our action to tackle workplace inequality, occupational segregation and other issues relating to gender equality. This is an exciting opportunity to bring new, strong and challenging voices to the range of issues impacting on women and girls, throughout the course of their lives. The Advisory Council will highlight advances that have been made, such as the positive progress around women's representation in public life.

11

We will make sure that refugee families who settle here under Family Reunion rules can access crisis grants quickly and efficiently. Organisations supporting refugees report that there can be significant delays in receiving benefit payments when refugees arrive in Scotland to join family members already settled here. Grants are required to make sure that the new arrivals have everything they need to begin their new lives, for example so that everyone has a bed. We will invest to make sure whatever is needed can be available from the day refugees arrive, so they are able to settle in and integrate into Scottish society with the minimum of disruption to their lives.

RESEARCH ACTION – A GENDER INDEX FOR SCOTLAND

In spring 2017, we will publish a Gender Index for Scotland. Following a 2015 review on 'the role and contribution of women in the Scottish economy', Professor Lesley Sawers recommended the development of 'a Gender Equalities Index' to track progress of indicators relevant to economic growth and across national and local areas. We will take action to produce such an Index. This is likely to be similar to the Norwegian 'indicators for gender equality in municipalities', published annually. The purpose of the Norwegian indicators is to highlight differences in gender equality between regions. The Scottish Index should enable us to draw out differences in gender equality and barriers to women's economic progress across local areas in Scotland. This will provide insight on where specific problems or barriers may need to be addressed in order to accelerate progress on gender equality and the reduction of the gender pay gap.

12

We will take forward the implementation of the Race Equality Framework. An early priority will be to focus on employment, not least because while minority ethnic groups do well in schools and higher education, they tend to do less well in the labour market. We will also focus on increasing the opportunities for minority ethnic communities to participate, as people from ethnic minorities are politically under-represented both at national and local levels across Scotland. Our Race Equality Framework Advisor will bring focussed expertise and experience to add rigour and challenge to our approach.

A NEW DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

By the end of 2016, we will publish a comprehensive Disability Action Plan. This will set out how we will work across the Scottish Government to remove the barriers which prevent disabled people from maximising their potential. And it will explain how we will ensure disabled people can make their full contribution to daily and public life in Scotland. The plan will make clear the support which disabled people and their families can expect at every stage of their lives. We will be clear about the specific steps we will take to ensure they are not disadvantaged at home, school, work or in their local community.

Before the end of 2016, we will publish Scotland's first **ACCESSIBLE TRAVEL FRAMEWORK** to help disabled people enjoy the same travel rights as everyone else.



A FIRST BSL NATIONAL PLAN

We will improve opportunities and outcomes for people whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language (BSL). Our first BSL National Plan, which we will publish in October 2017, will make firm commitments to improve access to key information and services in BSL, to ensure that our Deaf and deafblind citizens who use BSL have access to the same opportunities as their hearing peers.

RESEARCH ACTION – EQUALITY EVIDENCE STRATEGY

In early 2017, we will publish an Equality Evidence Strategy for the period of this parliament.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission's review 'Is Scotland Fairer?' recommended that a more comprehensive evidence base be developed to enable Scotland to assess how fair we are as a society and take action to improve fairness where needed.⁶ This will also include intersectional analysis where possible – i.e. where two or more equality characteristics combine, presenting particular issues and challenges.

To achieve this, we will publish an Equality Evidence Strategy, based on consultation with equality groups and other stakeholders, setting out how we are going to improve equality evidence and analysis in Scotland. We have already produced the most far-reaching equality analysis of any Census ever, in the UK. But we still need to do more and this strategy will help us do better.

13

We will review and reform gender recognition law so it is in line with international best practice for people who are Transgender or Intersex.

This is a complex area of policy, so we will first undertake a full and wide ranging consultation on reforming the Gender Recognition Act. This consultation will be launched by summer 2017. It will cover establishing new arrangements for dealing with applications for legal gender recognition and the minimum age at which applications for gender recognition could be made. We aim to take action in response to the consultation shortly afterwards, with arrangements in place by 2020.

⁶ www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/britain-fairer/scotland-fairer-introduction/scotland-fairer-report



HOUSING

Housing access and affordability and homelessness were key issues in the Fairer Scotland discussion. Housing costs are, for most of us, a major part of household spending. The Scottish Government wants to do everything it can to make sure housing is affordable and warm. That means delivering more high quality homes and supporting sectors under pressure – including helping those in private rent.

14

We will deliver more warm and affordable homes in this parliament.

During the last parliament, we surpassed our 30,000 target, delivering 33,490 affordable homes, of which 22,523 were for social rent. We will now invest over £3 billion over the next five years for at least 50,000 affordable homes, of which 35,000 will be for social rent. Housing for social rent already has to meet our accessibility standards, but funding is also available for specialist housing – for example, helping disabled people with

more complex needs live independently in their own homes; and older people to stay in their own homes for longer. There will be other improvements too. Wherever possible, homes delivered under this programme will include ducting to help future-proof people's access to internet and broadband services.

SUPPORT FOR RURAL AREAS

We will invite Scottish Rural Action to participate in the delivery of the Fairer Scotland Action Plan to help align the fairer outputs identified at the 2016 Scottish Rural Parliament event.



15

We will deliver improved services for tenants in the private rented sector (PRS) in 2018. The PRS has doubled in size over recent years and more families with children are moving into PRS homes. We have addressed some of these pressures through legislation to increase the repairing standard in PRS homes, provide new discretionary powers to local authorities to enforce landlord registration, and enable local authorities to support vulnerable tenants, by giving them the power to report breaches of the repairs standard directly to the Private Rented Housing Panel. We will now give households living in the sector a better deal through:

- A new no-fee Housing Tribunal to resolve disputes between tenants and landlords.
- The Private Residential Tenancy – this new tenancy will continue indefinitely unless the tenant wants to leave or the landlord has specific grounds for eviction (as set out in legislation). This will make people feel more secure in their rented homes. These tenants will also have a guarantee that rents can rise only once every twelve months and the landlord will need to give three months' notice of any increase. This should make budgeting over time easier.
- Letting agent regulation – this will improve the quality of service that letting agents provide.

These new arrangements will be in place at the beginning of 2018. We will launch a publicity and education campaign to ensure that tenants and landlords understand their rights and responsibilities, and we will explore options for funding partner organisations to support individuals to enforce their rights.

16

We will build on Scotland's world-leading homelessness rights.

We will improve the provision of temporary accommodation, including for young people, by:

- working with local government to develop a new approach in the face of UK welfare reforms;
- developing minimum standards, based on the equivalent standards for permanent social housing;
- introducing a cap of one week for families with children and pregnant women living in B&B accommodation, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

With local government, we will improve the prevention of homelessness by launching a Housing Options toolkit.

And we will strengthen links between homelessness services and health services, including mental health and primary care services, so that the effects of homelessness on health are better understood and addressed and so that those facing homelessness combined with multiple exclusion get joined up support.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND CRISIS SUPPORT

Scotland's new social security responsibilities are a major shift in how disabled people and those on low incomes are supported. The Fairer Scotland conversations were clear that social security in Scotland and the wider UK should be significantly improved.

17

We will make social security fairer where we can. For example, we have already spent £125 million of Scottish Government funding to mitigate the bedroom tax in full and we are now committed to abolishing it: around 72,000 households are affected by the bedroom tax in Scotland and an estimated 80% of households affected by the bedroom tax contain a disabled adult.⁷ On disability benefits, we will introduce longer-term awards where people have a long-term condition. And we will make Universal Credit (UC) fairer by ensuring that all eligible claimants can have the rent element of their UC paid direct to their landlord if they wish; claimants will also have a choice of receiving their UC payments twice monthly. We are also considering whether split payments could be offered as a choice and will continue to explore with stakeholders how we might use this power.

18

We will do more to help carers as soon as we have the ability.

Support for carers was a key theme in the Fairer Scotland discussions. A survey by Carers UK (2016) shows why. It found that over four in ten carers were struggling to make ends meet; of those, nearly half were cutting back on essentials like food and heating; and 1 in 6 were falling into arrears with housing and utility bills.⁸

We have already committed to increase Carer's Allowance to the rate of Jobseeker's Allowance – currently £73.10 per week. This will give carers an additional £600 per year. We have also made a commitment to increase Carer's Allowance for people who care for more than one disabled child. In addition, we are considering introducing a Young Carer's Allowance for those with significant caring responsibilities – something we have already begun to explore.

⁷ www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/06/6390/3
Analysis using the Family Resources Survey suggests that around 80% of households affected in Scotland contain an adult with a 'Disability Discrimination Act' recognised disability.

⁸ www.carersuk.org/news-and-campaigns/state-of-caring-survey-2016

19

We will work with a range of partners to help people claim the benefits they are entitled to. If people claimed all the benefits they were entitled to, they would be better off and poverty rates would be lower. So we will work with advice and support services and other stakeholders to understand better the barriers that prevent people from claiming benefits. We will then address these by raising awareness, supporting people to take up their full benefit entitlement.

20

Over the term of this parliament, we will work to make Scotland a Good Food Nation by enabling more people to have access to affordable, healthy, nutritious food, in a dignified way. As a first step we will offer a range of alternatives to emergency food aid through our recently established £1 million a year Fair Food Fund which supports projects that offer a dignified response to food poverty. These projects will provide new opportunities for people on low incomes to access fresh and healthy food, share a meal and develop new skills.





HEALTH

The Fairer Scotland conversation covered a range of health issues including mental health, access to services, and diet and nutrition. Other health-related issues (support for carers and on emergency food aid) are covered elsewhere in this Plan.

21

Scotland's most deprived communities need additional support on health, so we will recruit at least 250 Community Links Workers to work with GP surgeries to connect people with local services and support. We are currently piloting 10 Links Workers in Glasgow and Dundee and evaluating their impact. By 2018, we will have at least 40 Links Workers working in practices serving some of our most deprived communities.

22

Within the next two years, we will extend home visiting services for families with young children. Because of an increase in the number of Health Visitors, additional visits and child health reviews will be available shortly and the Family Nurse Partnership programme will be offered to all eligible teenage mothers. By reaching more families, more of the time, we can further reduce health and wider inequalities. Improved child health and wellbeing is a key outcome for this investment. Our work will help health visitors to respond to vulnerable families, support them to develop their parenting capacity and guide them to access the range of services and support available.



23

From 1st April 2017 coverage of the ‘Childsmile’ national oral health improvement programme will be extended to reach even more comparatively deprived communities. A key component of the Childsmile Programme – targeted fluoride varnish application in nurseries and schools – has a proven track record in improving oral health amongst children, and helping to mitigate long-standing oral health inequalities. This will particularly benefit children in areas such as Greater Glasgow and Lanarkshire.

NEW MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY

Mental health problems are more common in deprived communities and were a central part of the Fairer Scotland conversation.

We will provide £150 million over five years for mental health services. This will tip the balance of care towards prevention and early intervention, prioritising the needs of children, young people and families and giving mental health the same importance as physical health. Our new Mental Health Strategy will be published before the end of 2016.

NEW ALCOHOL FRAMEWORK

NEW STRATEGY ON DIET AND OBESITY

MATERNAL AND INFANT NUTRITION FRAMEWORK

We will tackle health inequalities with a new alcohol framework and a new strategy on poor diet and obesity. We will also continue to make progress towards our target of Scotland being smoke-free⁹ by 2034. Scotland still has huge inequality between its most and least deprived communities. People in Scotland’s most advantaged communities can expect to live more than 20 years longer in good health than people in our most disadvantaged communities. Much of that is preventable and is due to the harms of tobacco, alcohol and poor diet falling hardest in our most disadvantaged communities. That’s why we will continue to prioritise public health measures that reduce health inequalities.

We will also make changes to the priorities in the Maternal and Infant Nutrition Framework (2011). This is to help us focus on helping women with nutrition and diet before and during pregnancy and in the first years of life over the next five years. Over the next twelve months, we will concentrate on improving women’s health before pregnancy and on promoting, sustaining and protecting breastfeeding and improving toddlers’ diets. We will also look at how we can communicate better to reduce the problems of ill-health that begin in the early days of children’s development.

⁹ ‘Smoke-free’ means that fewer than one in twenty of the adult population will be regular smokers in 2034.

On behalf of NHS Health Scotland, I pledge to help the Scottish Government in its ambition to end child poverty in Scotland. We will take a number of key actions that will help, including:

* By September 2017, develop and deliver training resources and events (in partnership) to raise awareness of child poverty and its impact on health and wellbeing amongst public services staff.

* By March 2018, work in partnership with NHS Boards to develop national referral pathways between NHS services and local advice services to maximise the incomes of patients.

* By March 2018, promote the importance and adoption of routine enquiry about money worries by NHS staff to help patients maximise their incomes and referral to advice services where necessary.”

Gerald McLaughlin,
Chief Executive, NHS Health Scotland





JUSTICE

A fair justice system is vital to improving life chances rather than worsening inequalities. We will be refreshing our Justice Strategy to deliver a person-centred approach to justice and safer communities, focusing on prevention and protection and delivering better outcomes for people and communities. We have focused here on two key actions.

24

We will make better use of community-based interventions to reduce re-offending further and to help people move on from offending. Evidence shows that community-based interventions are more effective than short-term imprisonment at reducing rates of re-offending and helping people to maintain housing, employment and family contacts. From April 2017, a new national body, Community Justice Scotland, will work with local community and justice partners to help improve access to community interventions and implement a national strategy for community justice and reducing re-offending. Alongside continuing investment in mentoring services, new models will be implemented to better support women who offend to overcome issues with alcohol, drugs, mental health and domestic abuse trauma, which are often drivers of offending.



25

In the first year of the current parliament, we will introduce a Bill to establish domestic abuse as a specific offence. The Bill will be introduced at a time when our commitment to tackling violence against women and girls has never been stronger and is backed by record levels of investment. The Bill will form part of wider delivery plans for Equally Safe (our strategy to prevent and eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls) which will be brought forward by the end of the year. We will focus on tackling hate crime, using the findings of the Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime, Prejudice and Community Cohesion to inform a robust and far reaching programme of action in this area.



■ Scotland should be a country where, no matter where you live, everyone has the chance of a decent and secure life. JRF's strategy to solve poverty sets a vision for 2030, in common with the Fairer Scotland Action Plan. To move towards this vision in Scotland, we pledge a range of action including:

- Support for Glasgow Together, a Community Interest Company that creates full-time, Living Wage jobs for ex-offenders in construction, as well as meaningful work experience for current offenders in prison environment. JRF in alliance with other trusts and foundations raised £2 million to fund the setup of Glasgow Together.¹⁰

- Partnership with Big Society Capital to raise £20 million to invest in organisations which tackle the poverty premium in key goods and services – like Fair For You, a not-for-profit company enabling households to buy white goods and furniture more affordably than costly rent-to-buy providers:
<https://www.fairforyou.co.uk/>



Jim McCormick,
Associate Director Scotland
Joseph Rowntree Foundation



¹⁰ www.glasgowtogether.co.uk/purpose

Read the full pledge on p82



ENDING CHILD POVERTY

The Fairer Scotland conversations made it clear: **no child should have to grow up in poverty** in a country as wealthy as Scotland. We have an ambition to eradicate child poverty which will mean reducing the number of people in poverty across all ages. Ultimately, this ambition will make Scotland stronger, healthier, smarter and fairer.

Here are a range of actions the Scottish Government will take to make progress.



ⓧ AN AMBITION TO END CHILD POVERTY

To end child poverty, we will strengthen our approach, which focuses on maximising family incomes, boosting life chances and helping build sustainable communities in which to grow up.

26

In early 2017, we will introduce a new Child Poverty Bill.

We have already published a consultation on proposals to introduce child poverty income targets for 2030. We have proposed that these should be still more ambitious than the child poverty targets originally set by the UK Labour Government in 2010 and scrapped by the UK Conservative Government. A Delivery Plan will be developed with all our partners – and crucially, with people with experience of poverty – focusing on how we can deliver and advance equality for all. We will also learn from the valuable work many local authorities are already doing to tackle poverty and inequality. We will listen to any ideas proposed and consider all options, to make sure we meet this commitment.



Other actions in this Plan will help with our ambition to eradicate child poverty. We will introduce a new socio-economic duty on public authorities (Action 1), set up a new poverty and inequality commission (Action 3), and make sure that people with experience of living in poverty have greater opportunities to influence national and local policy going forward (a range of actions in the plan).

MAXIMISING FAMILY INCOMES

Our focus on income targets reflects the fact that providing low income families with a range of financial support is crucial for children's long term prospects. We will put more money into these families' pockets by the end of this parliament, providing parents with basic necessities, financial support, and affordable childcare.

27

As part of our support for families with children in the early years, we will introduce a Scottish Baby Box in 2017 to help reduce the costs of providing for a child in the early days and weeks of life that some families may find challenging. The Box will be a universal entitlement, and will contain essential items such as bedding, clothing and books. We hope that the Box will come to be seen as an iconic celebration of childhood, sending a signal about the importance of parenting.

28

We will create a new Best Start Grant (BSG) to bring together the system for Healthy Start food vouchers and the UK Sure Start Maternity Grant (SSMG) when powers transfer to Scottish Ministers, as part of our focus on reducing inequalities in early years, and subject to the outcome of the consultation on the Future of Social Security in Scotland. This will simplify and improve the service for parents and carers by streamlining the application process, providing more joined up support. It will also make it clearer what families are entitled to from pregnancy through to children starting school, ensuring we

minimise the impact of UK Government welfare cuts on children's health and wellbeing. The Best Start Grant will pay £600 on the birth of a first child, £300 for second and subsequent children and will make additional payments of £250 around the time that children start nursery and school, providing greater support for families through early years. Healthy Start will help families access affordable, nutritious food. We will promote this scheme for parents and carers to improve the current take up of the grants, meaning that more families receive the support they are entitled to and children are given the best start in life.

On behalf of the Dundee Partnership, I pledge that all the recommendations of the Dundee Fairness Commission will be taken forward. This will include funding for a new organisation for the city, modelled on the Poverty Truth Commission, to make sure that the voices and experiences of people struggling against poverty in Dundee continue to be heard. Jointly funded with the Scottish Government, this new organisation will inform future efforts to tackle and reduce the causes and impact of poverty in the city.

We will also commission joint work with the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) Scotland to facilitate a Cost of the School Day initiative during the 2016/17 school year. CPAG will work with pupils, parents and teachers to identify and remove key cost barriers so that all children and young people from low income households can fully engage in their education.”



Cllr Jimmy Black,
Chair of the Dundee
Fairness Commission



29

By 2020, entitlement to free early learning and childcare (ELC) will almost double for all 3 and 4 year olds, as well as those 2 year olds that stand to benefit most, to 1140 hours per year (from current levels of 600 hours per year).

This transformational change in ELC provision – with substantial infrastructure investment and the creation of up to 20,000 new employment opportunities – will give our children the highest quality start to their learning journey. ELC is critical to our inclusive growth ambition, as not only is it important for improving children's outcomes, it will support a more inclusive workforce by reducing the burden parents face in paying for childcare, in particular enabling greater female participation in the workforce. We will also develop new and innovative models of delivery:

- From January 2017, a programme of trials, supported by £1 million of Scottish Government investment, will be taken forward to help inform the development of new delivery models. The trials will allow us to test what works, where and why, and to assist in the dissemination of best practice across ELC providers.
- In 2017-18, we will pilot approaches, in locations throughout Scotland, to reducing upfront childcare costs. We are concerned that these upfront costs – such as initial deposits, administration fees, or paying the first month's fee in advance – may be a real barrier for some parents or carers in low income households who want to start or return to work, or increase their hours, after a period of caring for young children. As part of the pilots we will focus on the initial deposit that often has to be paid to secure a childcare place. One potential approach that will be explored is a deposit guarantee scheme.

30

We will take action to reduce the costs of school for low income parents. The Scottish Government already provides money to local authorities to help low income parents afford basic costs associated with school. We want to support schools in their efforts to identify and remove any barriers to children having the same opportunities regardless of their background. Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) have been working with schools, parents and children in Glasgow to do this and we now want to explore how we can spread the learning from it across Scotland.



31

From April 2017, our proposed reforms will make the current Council Tax system fairer for low income families. Subject to parliamentary approval, there will be a 25% increase of child allowance within the Council Tax Reduction Scheme which will provide additional support to families on low incomes across all council tax bands. This will benefit up to 77,000 low income families by an average of £173 per year, supporting up to 140,000 children. The additional £500 million revenue generated over the next parliamentary term from all reforms to council tax will be invested in schools to improve education locally.



HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

We will ensure high quality prospects for all, with a particular focus on children in deprived areas from when they first start nursery. We will tackle the educational attainment gap – our top priority in government. And we will take further action to tackle bullying.

32

By 2018, we will ensure that every nursery in our most deprived areas has an additional qualified teacher or childcare graduate. International evidence tells us that increasing the amount of time that children from disadvantaged backgrounds spend with graduate practitioners can help narrow the attainment gap and improve outcomes.



33

We are committed to making real progress in closing the attainment gap during the lifetime of this Parliament and to eliminate it, as far as we can, over the next decade.

Closing the attainment gap requires the full efforts of all those involved in education and a focus on early intervention – from supporting children and parents, to early learning, through school and in our colleges, universities and beyond.

We will test innovative models of third sector involvement in raising attainment through a share of a £2 million Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention project fund. However, our efforts must go beyond the classroom and across our communities, third sector and wider public service if we are to succeed in our ambition. To support this, we will increase investment in the Scottish Attainment Fund to £750 million over the course of this parliament with more money allocated directly to headteachers.

Over 300 schools across Scotland – with high concentrations of children living in poverty – are currently benefitting from the Attainment Scotland Fund. However, we recognise that children are living in poverty beyond these specified areas and so will allocate £100 million per annum to schools based on the numbers of children eligible for Free School Meals, to provide support to these children wherever they live.



34

We will do more to address bullying in schools – including homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying.

- We will launch a refreshed National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People. This review ties into broader work to foster good relationships and positive behaviour within the learning environment, which underpins Curriculum for Excellence.
- We already provide funding to support third sector initiatives against bullying. For example: We fully fund respectme, Scotland's anti-bullying service.
- We have provided funding to LGBT Youth Scotland and respectme to produce resources and deliver training to improve the knowledge, confidence and skills of teachers and other staff in dealing with HBT bullying.
- We support Childline, which offers confidential advice and information to children and young people affected by bullying and any other issues.
- We will provide additional funding, where needed, to make sure that all promoted teachers – and eventually all teachers – undertake training on equality, so they are confident in addressing prejudice-based bullying – for example, because of perceived sexual orientation or gender identity issues.
- In addition, in 2014 we published guidance that clearly states how important it is that Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood education addresses diversity and reflects issues relating to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex young people or children with LGBTI parents, such as same sex marriage and hate-crime reporting.
- We expect these actions together to have a powerful impact on bullying, but we will monitor the situation across Scotland so we can take further action as needed.

35

We will tackle poverty directly for some of our most vulnerable children by delivering parity of child allowances between kinship and foster carers. We will continue to implement the deal between Scottish Government and COSLA agreed in October 2015. This provides additional funding of £10.1 million a year to improve allowances paid to kinship carers to ensure each child receives comparable financial support to a child in foster care. We will also end the variation between local areas by introducing a single national scheme of allowances.



A STRONG START FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE

As many young people told us during the Fairer Scotland conversations, today's generation faces enormous challenges. A range of social security support has been withdrawn over recent years. Young people are not covered by key improvements to the National Minimum Wage. And a lack of social mobility remains a major problem. We are already **investing heavily to support young people** – for example, enhancing the Educational Maintenance Allowance and protecting the right to free university tuition. But we heard you loud and clear: we must do more, and we will do more.

Here are a range of key actions that the Scottish Government will take over this parliamentary term.





SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

The right skills and experiences in training and the workplace are key to a strong start. We will invest in supporting young people to build high quality careers, focusing on both the vocational and the higher education routes.

36

We will take action to reduce youth unemployment by 40% by 2021. This is the headline target of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), our 7 year reform programme and we are already making progress – youth unemployment has decreased by 9,000 from our baseline figure of 52,000 in January to March 2014. To keep on track, we will increase the provision and uptake of vocational qualifications, a DYW priority which will help deliver work-based options in the senior phase. Key to our success is encouraging secondary schools and colleges to develop high quality and productive partnerships with employers, delivering a connected and labour market relevant offer for young people. We will also do more to promote the uptake of new opportunities so that more young people can benefit from the increased range of options on offer in the senior phase.

37

We will significantly increase the numbers of young people getting industry experience while still at school to help them kick-start a successful career in their chosen field.

An important strand of the DYW programme sees Skills Development Scotland (SDS) working with partners to deliver Foundation Apprenticeships (FA), work-based learning opportunities for pupils in S4 and S5. The qualification takes two years to complete and is linked to one of six key sectors of the Scottish economy. Young people gain an

industry-recognised qualification, work on real projects and broaden their career options for when they leave school. Employers get the opportunity to attract highly motivated and committed young people who are right for their business, ensuring they have the skills they need. Seventy-two pupils enrolled in Foundation Apprenticeships in 2014/15. In 2015/16, this increased to over 300 pupils and in 2016/17 there will be over 1,000 pupils recruited across all local authority areas in Scotland. We will increase this further in future years.

- YouthLink Scotland pledge to support the Scottish Government's aims of ensuring 'A Fairer Scotland for All' and 'A Strong Start for All Young People'. We will do this by continuing to support the significant contribution that youth work makes to equality and the realisation of young people's human rights. More specifically, in the coming year we will:
- Work in partnership with Education Scotland, to provide training to the youth work sector on the use of the 'Recognising and Realising Children's Rights Toolkit'. The toolkit supports the development of human rights based policy and practice.
 - Provide support to the newly established Scottish Equalities in Youth Work Steering Group in their role to highlight and develop the contribution of youth work to equality, diversity and human rights
 - Work in partnership with Zero Tolerance to roll out the 'Under Pressure' (Preventing Teen Abuse) training programme to the youth sector.
 - Work in collaboration with the youth work sector and young people from across Scotland to research and promote the contribution of youth work to gender equality.



Jim Sweeney,
Youth Link Scotland



RESEARCH ACTION

We will carry out a comprehensive review of life chances of older children and young adults, with particular emphasis on young people from poorer backgrounds. This was one of the key recommendations of the Independent Advisor on Poverty and Inequality. While huge progress has been made on understanding the needs of very young children, the evidence base on the needs of adolescents and young adults needs further development as does a clear sense of which interventions are most effective for this group. A review of evidence will be essential to shape future policy on this critical stage of transition from childhood to adulthood.

38

We will take action to widen access to university: our ambition is that any child born today should have an equal chance of entering university, no matter what their socio-economic background is. To achieve this, we are committed to implementing in full the recommendations from the Commission on Widening Access.¹¹ These include implementing national and institutional targets, introducing a full bursary for young people who have grown up in care, and appointing a Commissioner for Fair Access to take the lead on these issues and make sure we deliver. And we will, of course, keep university tuition free.

¹¹ www.commissiononwideningaccess.co.uk

■ The Prince's Trust Scotland pledges to expand Mosaic, our new mentoring programme for BME young people who are growing up in the most deprived communities. Working with schools, we will link young people up with inspirational mentors who will act as role models. This will support young people to boost their confidence, aspirations and long-term employability skills."



Prince's Trust Scotland

Read the full pledge on p86





FINANCIAL HELP AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR THOSE WHO NEED IT

In addition to supporting young people with training and skills, we will provide a range of financial help for young people.

39

We will introduce a Job Grant for young people aged 16-24 who have been out of work for six months or more.

The grant is worth £250 for those with children and £100 for those without. We plan to supplement this cash payment with free bus travel for a three month period. In addition, we will provide free bus travel for modern apprentices under 21.

40

We will ensure that support for housing costs is not taken away from young people aged 18-21. Having a sound, secure and affordable place to live is fundamental to enabling young people to realise their potential. The UK Government has said that automatic entitlement to housing benefit will be removed from 18-21 year olds as part of the £12 billion reduction in welfare spending over the period of this UK Parliament. Once the UK policy is announced, our response will ensure that the interests of young people aged 18-21 are protected.

41

Transport Scotland is working with Young Scot to make the National Entitlement Card smart ready for 11-25 year olds. This in turn should help with equity of access to public services such as transport.



■ ■ We pledge to use the Young Scot National Entitlement Card and its built-in smart-technology to connect young people to services and opportunities. There are already over 650,000 Young Scot cardholders in Scotland. We know that when we empower young people and give them access to opportunities – in transport, leisure, libraries, training or employability – great things happen. The smart-tech card will help Young Scot tackle inequality directly, making sure that no-one is stigmatised in the process, and supporting those young people in the greatest need.”



**Ryan McDonagh,
Finlay Taylor,
Shannon Goundry,**
Young Scot
(From left to right)





FAIRER WORKING LIVES

Fair work was a strong focus in the Fairer Scotland conversations. A decent standard of living – **having a job that treated people fairly and paid a living wage** – was a key theme. Support for flexible jobs and flexible working was also seen as vital, as was an end to discrimination – for example, on the grounds of disability or pregnancy and maternity – and active support for people who need help to get back into the labour market or to boost their work prospects and progress. **We need to make the most of the talent and energy of all Scotland's people to create a stronger, more inclusive economy for the benefit of everyone.**

In August, we published a Labour Market Strategy (see page 64), with a range of actions the Scottish Government will take to help make working lives fairer, including our continued support for the Fair Work Convention. Below we focus on actions around the Living Wage, promoting good flexible working, employability and tackling discrimination in employment.





DECENT PAY

In-work poverty is an increasing concern. In 2014-15, two thirds of children in poverty were living in families where someone was working. The UK National Living Wage is welcome, but is set at a lower rate than the real Living Wage and doesn't cover all employees, with those under 25 not protected.

42

We will do more to promote the Living Wage. Decent wages for all are vital if we are to tackle in-work poverty and, as a reflection of that, all public bodies in Scotland now pay the Living Wage. To move forward across the labour market, we have set a new target of 1,000 Accredited Living Wage employers by autumn 2017 and have increased funding for the Scottish Living Wage Accreditation Initiative to £300,000 to achieve this. We are also now targeting larger employers to maximise the value of our investment.



NEW LABOUR MARKET STRATEGY

In August, the Scottish Government published a Labour Market Strategy, which sets out how we will boost economic growth in a way that shares the benefits of our economic success. Our focus is on jobs – more jobs; better quality jobs; jobs that work for every business in terms of innovation, competitiveness, productivity and sustainable growth; and jobs that work for every individual in terms of skills, pay, security, and prospects.

Our workforce is one of Scotland's strongest assets but it is not simply a commodity to be deployed, it's an asset to be invested in, developed and supported. We will work with businesses to address the challenges of the vote in the EU Referendum, and demographic and technological change. We will support businesses to grow and to help their workforces share in their success.

■ Inclusion Scotland pledges to seize every opportunity to ensure that disabled people are fully included in the delivery and future development of all aspects of the Fairer Scotland Action Plan. We will work to promote disabled people's human rights, access to independent living and equal citizenship. Through our Access to Elected Office Fund for Scotland and Access to Politics project we will help to address the under-representation of disabled people in politics and public life."



Dr Sally Witcher OBE,
Chief Executive Officer
Inclusion Scotland

Read the full pledge on p81



FLEXIBLE WORKING

Flexibility in employment needs to benefit employees as well as employers – parents and carers often want to work part-time or to job share but can find it difficult to find working arrangements that suit them. Good flexible working arrangements can benefit employers – and all of us as employees in our working lives.

43

We will do more to help people in Scotland work flexibly.

- We will ensure that the Scottish Government's own approach to flexible working in recruitment, promotion and 'managed moves' is a model for the rest of the public sector. We will also encourage the wider take-up of the 'Happy to Talk' strapline on job adverts, moving to an assumption of 'flexible by default' and asking managers to justify advertising a role non-flexibly.
- By the end of 2016, we will commission a Flexible Jobs Index for Scotland to determine the availability of genuinely flexible jobs that meet the needs of people who want to work flexibly. Evidence suggests that many parents (and others) who want to return to work, work more hours, and progress their careers are looking for flexible jobs but that these are hard to find. Evidence also suggests that a focus on flexible job design is vital for tackling the gender pay gap. However, the landscape in Scotland and the wider UK requires significant development to maximise these benefits, particularly for staff on low incomes. A Flexible Jobs Index would be a first step and we will fund Timewise, a social enterprise, to deliver this. The Index will analyse the current ratio of quality jobs advertised as open to flexibility by city/region, by role, type and sector and by salary band. The Index will also identify the level of demand for flexibility in Scotland and the proportion of people who need to work flexibly, and who could raise their living standards by doing so. We will use the Index as a key step to promoting flexi-recruitment and other good working practices in the private sector.
- In 2017, we will pilot mentoring on flexi-recruitment issues for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), building on existing support services. The recently published Small Business Survey¹² suggests that there is considerable scope for improvements in the flexible working offer SMEs make to their employees: over 40% of firms offered none of the key flexible working arrangements to their staff. We will also further develop our network of Family Friendly Working Champions and explore how advice on developing flexi working could be made available via the Mygov.scot webpages relevant to businesses.

¹² www.gov.scot/Topics/Economy/ASBS/Report2015

Timewise and Family Friendly Working Scotland, a partnership including the Scottish Government, will work together to maximise the potential for flexible working in Scotland. Timewise will produce the first ever Flexible Jobs Index for Scotland – to analyse the current ratio of quality jobs advertised as open to flexible or part time working at the point of hire, and identify the proportion of people who need to work flexibly, and who could raise their living standards by doing so.

We will use the findings from the index to build a case for change to support both the Scottish Government and employers to design and advertise quality jobs as ‘open to flexible working options’ at the point of hire.

Family Friendly Working Scotland will also encourage and support employers across Scotland to use the Happy to Talk Flexible Working strapline in job adverts.”



Emma Stewart,
CEO of Timewise

Nikki Slowey,
Programme Director,
Family Friendly Working Scotland

Read the full pledge on p87



Working Families is proud to be a partner in the Family Friendly Working Scotland programme. We pledge to help the Scottish Government build a fairer Scotland by sharing our experience of working with and supporting SMEs to introduce flexible working.

We will advise on mentoring which we have carried out in Wales, and share the toolkit and guidance on job design and flexible hiring which we are developing with Welsh SMEs. We will also make available to SMEs in Scotland the Working Families SME online benchmark, so that owner-managers can assess the culture and practice of their own businesses and understand the changes they can make for more effective and fairer employment.”



Sarah Jackson OBE,
CEO Working Families





EMPLOYABILITY AND DISCRIMINATION

We will also look to our new employability programmes to ensure greater opportunity for all in the labour market, and we will tackle discrimination wherever we find it. The Fairer Scotland conversations included calls for further inclusion of disabled people across all areas of society, particularly with respect to finding employment and in skills attainment across education.

44

We will improve employment services for disabled people.

Using new and existing powers to provide more effective and joined up support for disabled people in the labour market is a key priority for the Government. As part of the new Scottish employment service from 2018, there will be a distinct offer for disabled people, including tailored and personalised provision for those for whom work is a reasonable objective. In addition, we will sharpen the focus of our current programmes such as Scotland's Employer Recruitment Incentive and Community Jobs Scotland to support more young disabled people. We will also use the Scottish Business Pledge and other employer networks to raise awareness of the skills and capacity of the disabled workforce and their positive impact on company productivity and profitability.

45

By the end of 2016, we will launch a pilot 'Returners' project to help bring experienced women back into the workplace after a career break. Evidence suggests that many women struggle to return to work due to a lack of access to flexible working that enables them support for care commitments. As a result they can find their job choices limited and can experience pay inequality, underemployment, job insecurity, a lack of opportunities for development and career progression, and both implicit and explicit age discrimination. They can also feel a loss of confidence and relevant skills after being out of the workforce, especially in sectors where technology has moved on at a rapid pace. The Scottish Government will work with employers across the country to pilot a 'Returners' project which will help women update skills and knowledge and smooth the transition back into the workplace for both women and employers.

46

We will tackle discrimination on pregnancy and maternity leave in the workplace. Up to 54,000 women across Great Britain experience some form of pregnancy and maternity discrimination every year. Many women report having been dismissed or made compulsorily redundant where others in their workplaces were not, or treated so poorly they felt they had to leave their jobs. We will take a range of action to address this in Scotland as follows:

First, a new working group, chaired by the Minister for Training and Skills, will create guidance to encourage best employment practice and to help with effective monitoring and reporting on employment-related pregnancy and maternity issues. The group will be supported by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and will meet quarterly.

Second, we will include best practice in managing pregnancy and maternity issues appropriately within the Scottish Business Pledge.

Third, we will abolish fees for employment tribunals, once we are clear on how the transfer of powers and responsibilities will work. The Scottish Government strongly opposed the introduction of employment tribunal fees on the basis that it restricts access to justice and creates a financial barrier for legitimate claims. Since fees were introduced we have seen a dramatic decrease in the number of cases being taken forward. Ministry of Justice statistics released in September 2016 show a two thirds reduction in single claims in the first half of 2016 compared to the same period in 2013. We will remove this barrier and ensure those who have been unfairly treated due to their pregnancy or maternity – and all those who have received wider discrimination or unfair treatment – can seek redress.



■ Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland pledges to help the Scottish Government support innovative approaches to tackling poverty and deprivation. As well as continuing to be a thoughtful grant-maker, we will work differently to reach the communities that historically have accessed very little charitable funding. We will enable a shift in the balance of power so that people are in the driving seat, taking decisions and having more control of their own lives, with the Foundation and our partners listening, supporting and enabling changes that may seem small, but which collectively will help build lasting social change.”



Fiona Duncan,
Chief Executive,
Lloyds TSB Foundation Scotland –
At the heart of funding Scotland's charities



Read the full pledge on p83



A THRIVING THIRD AGE

We are committed to ensuring that, wherever possible, older people can enjoy a thriving 'third age'. This means supporting people who want to keep on working. And it means **maximising incomes and reducing costs** where possible. In 2014/15, despite improvements over time, **120,000 people of pensionable age were still living in poverty** in Scotland: this is particularly important because older people can find it harder than those of working age to increase their incomes. There is a lot we can do to address these issues.

We will take a number of actions to maximise older people's incomes to ensure they can enjoy a decent and fulfilling 'third age'.



47

We will help those older people who want to keep working after they have reached state pension age. The number of workers over state pension age has increased consistently over the past decade, particularly since the 2011 legislation to abolish the default retirement age. As part of our commitment to a thriving third age, we want to make sure that older workers are supported to keep developing and improving their skills. But we are concerned that some older people, women in particular, may feel they have to work because of low pension incomes and/or that they

end up working in lower skilled jobs to balance work and caring responsibilities. We will therefore ensure that older workers' needs are considered in the development of new employment services, some of which will be devolved to Scotland from April 2017. Particular support requirements might include retraining and confidence building, as well as increased support for flexible working. All programmes will be fully person-centred, with support plans being tailored to individual needs.

RESEARCH ACTION – OLDER PEOPLE AND EMPLOYMENT

In June 2016, we published initial research on older people and employment, which looked at the drivers behind the substantial increase in the numbers working past state pension age over the past decade.¹³ As this showed, more can be done to support those older people who are already working or who want to work but find it difficult to do so. To help us move forward, a second stage of research will be undertaken with older people themselves. This will explore the key issues and concerns of older people who work or actively seek employment, aiming to identify interventions to help reduce the barriers they face.



¹³ www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/06/8819

48

We will help older people claim the financial support they are entitled to. If every person eligible for Pension Credit and Council Tax Reduction received these entitlements, poverty levels amongst older people would be lower. So we will fund a Financial Health Check service with an older people strand: the health check will offer a personalised service to maximise incomes for older people in retirement this will help those already in receipt of the State Pension, but also those approaching pension age in Scotland. We will also seek advice from the devolved government in Northern Ireland, which has had some success in boosting Pension Credit uptake, and from our partners across Scotland about the best way to maximise benefit take up for older people.



NEW SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS APPROACH

In 2017, we will develop a new approach to social isolation and loneliness. These issues can affect people of all ages but, as the Fairer Scotland conversations noted, can be particularly challenging for older people. A report from the Scottish Parliament's Equal Opportunities Committee identified a range of concerns that we are determined to address. The Scottish Government and its partners have many programmes and funding streams which are in place to address social isolation and loneliness. But these all need to be coordinated better, and we will take action, informed by the best available evidence, via a new strategic approach.

49

Our planned reforms to council tax will protect older people on low incomes. While three quarters of Scottish households that live in bands A to D will be unaffected by planned reforms to council tax band system, those in bands E to H will pay more. However, up to 54,000 households living in bands E to H on low incomes will be entitled to an exemption from the changes through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme – more than one third of these are pensioner households.

REFRESHED AGE, HOME AND COMMUNITY STRATEGY

We will refresh our Age, Home and Community Strategy to take account of changing need, demographics and help address issues of isolation as well as improving access to suitable housing for older people. We will ensure there is flexibility in the housing grant subsidy arrangements within the Affordable Housing Supply Programme, so that social landlords are supported to build specialist housing in accordance with need.

50

We will improve the current system of Funeral Payments, so it helps more people, is more predictable and provides help more quickly. Funeral costs, which are currently rising above inflation, are a key concern for many older people on low incomes, as well as for those younger people who are responsible for paying for a funeral. Funeral Payments help those on qualifying low income benefits pay for a funeral and reduce the need to borrow money using credit cards, high cost loans or other more informal routes.

Improving the system of Funeral Payments will help reassure the many older people who worry about the cost of funerals. We are also taking forward a range of other activity to help people plan ahead and address rising costs, including publishing a Funeral Costs Plan. To inform this, we will be hosting round-table events and a national conference on funeral poverty. In the longer term, we will consider plans for a Funeral Bond to help people plan ahead for their funeral.

**IT TAKES ALL OF
US TO BUILD A
FAIRER SCOTLAND.
CAN YOU HELP?**

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR
PLEDGE, USING THESE
CONTACT DETAILS:**

 **fairer.scot**

 **@scotgovfairer**

 **fairer.scot**

 **fairer@gov.scot**





ANNEX A

Fairer Scotland Pledges In Full



CARNEGIE UK TRUST

The Carnegie UK Trust pledges to help improve access to affordable credit in Scotland. Thousands of people in Scotland currently borrow money from high cost lenders to meet their everyday needs. Reducing the cost of credit by offering people viable, attractive, more affordable alternatives has the potential to save thousands of pounds every year for individuals in Scotland's poorest communities. We want to help Scotland's not-for-profit affordable credit providers to grow, to reach many more people, building financial capability and improving wellbeing. We will commit resources and work in partnership with the Scottish Government, local authorities, affordable credit providers, housing associations, banks and charities to achieve this goal. Our vision is that everyone in Scotland, wherever they live, should have access to more affordable credit which reduces the cost of borrowing, supports financial inclusion and promotes equality and fairness.

Angus Hogg,
Chair of the Carnegie UK Trust

DUNDEE PARTNERSHIP

'When the Dundee Fairness Commission published its recommendations earlier in 2016, we hoped that they would be taken seriously. We were delighted when the Dundee Partnership immediately approved all of them and promised to produce a costed, comprehensive and ambitious action plan before the end of this year. It will contain a range of positive measures including both of the major pledges.'

Cllr Jimmy Black,
Chair of the Dundee Fairness Commission

The voices and experiences of people struggling against poverty in Dundee were a powerful influence on the work of the Dundee Fairness Commission. To enable this important conversation to continue and to raise awareness of the real challenges faced by people on the lowest incomes, the Dundee Partnership will establish a new organisation for the city, modelled on the Poverty Truth Commission. Jointly funded with the Scottish Government, this new body will make sure that the voices and experiences of people struggling against poverty in Dundee continue to be heard to inform future efforts to tackle and reduce the causes and impact of poverty in the city.

While Dundee City Council has recently raised the value of school uniform grants by up to 80%, parents and children can still face hidden, additional costs associated with attending school. These may well be unintentional but they can often be unaffordable and stigmatizing. The Dundee Partnership will commission the Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland to facilitate a Cost of the School Day initiative during the 2016/17 school year. This will work with pupils, parents and teachers to identify and remove cost barriers and take action to reduce or remove stigma, exclusion or disadvantage so that all children and young people from low income households can fully engage in their education.

INCLUSION SCOTLAND

Disabled people are among the very poorest people in Scotland. We have borne the brunt of welfare cuts with over half of all those made by the last Government falling on disabled people and their families. Many of us do not get anything like the social care support we need. According to the latest research, almost a half of all those living in poverty live with disabled people or are disabled people themselves. Families with disabled children are particularly likely to experience child poverty. Our employment rate is persistently around about a half that experienced by non-disabled people. Young disabled people are more likely than their non-disabled peers not to be in education, employment or training. Although disabled people make up 11.6% of all 16-24 year olds, in 2015/16 only 3.9% of Modern Apprenticeships went to disabled people – and that's an improvement on the shockingly low 0.4% of places in 2014/15. Disabled people too often experience discrimination, social isolation and negative attitudes, including hate crime. Such experiences may be particularly acute for certain groups, such as disabled people with other protected characteristics or those in segregated settings. Meanwhile, disabled people are significantly under-represented in politics and public life. We make up one in five of Scotland's population, yet only one of the new intake of 129 MSPs has identified as a disabled person.

In short, every single one of the 50 actions identified in the Fairer Scotland Action Plan touches on the lives of disabled people. While the forthcoming Disability Action Plan is expected to set out specific initiatives for disabled people, it is vital that disabled people's views and interests are mainstreamed throughout all action to promote equality and inclusion if that action itself is to be equally inclusive. Disabled people have much to contribute to their communities and the economy. Yet, we are prevented by barriers like negative attitudes, and inaccessible premises, communication methods, transport, services, housing, events, employment practices and so on. Inclusion Scotland will work to remove – and support others to remove – such barriers to disabled people's equality and inclusion. Only then can action to create a fairer Scotland be equally inclusive. And only then can the goal of a more equal and inclusive fairer Scotland hope to be achieved.

Dr Sally Witcher OBE,
Chief Executive Officer
Inclusion Scotland

JOSEPH ROWNTREE FOUNDATION

Scotland should be a country where, no matter where you live, everyone has the chance of a decent and secure life. Instead, the shameful reality sees almost a million Scots – mostly in working families – struggling to meet their needs. Poverty is real: it is costly, risky and wasteful but not inevitable. JRF's strategy to solve poverty sets a vision for 2030, in common with the Fairer Scotland Action Plan.

The causes of poverty in modern Scotland are many and, just as the Fairer Scotland Action Plan envisages, the contribution of many will be needed: the Scottish Government, as well as the UK Government and local authorities, employers in all sectors, housing providers, public and voluntary services, market providers of key goods, citizens and communities. We believe action to solve poverty must seek to:

- Boost incomes and reduce costs
- Deliver an effective system of social security and employment support
- Improve education and raise skills
- Strengthen families and communities; and
- Promote long-term inclusive growth

Many actions will involve changes in culture, addressing stigma and a shift in spending over time to deal more robustly with the causes of poverty. JRF has committed £15m to social investment, to support projects across the UK that address the root causes of poverty. In addition to our ongoing research programme, we are supporting:

- Glasgow Together, a Community Interest Company (CIC) that creates full-time, Living Wage jobs for ex-offenders in construction, as well as meaningful work experience for current offenders in prison environment. JRF in alliance with other trusts and foundations raised £2m to fund the setup of Glasgow Together. <http://glasgowtogether.co.uk/purpose>
- Partnership with Big Society Capital to raise £20m to invest in organisations which tackle the poverty premium in key goods and services – like Fair For You, a not-for-profit company enabling households to buy white goods and furniture more affordably than costly rent-to-buy providers: <https://www.fairforyou.co.uk/>
- Existing and new organisations based on the Poverty Truth Commission model, a commitment we share with the Fairer Scotland Action Plan and will pursue with the Scottish Government where we can. This will enable people with experience of poverty to share their ideas with civic leaders, in order to develop better solutions to poverty.
- The next phase of the Building Connections demonstration project in North and East Glasgow, in partnership with Glasgow Centre for Population Health and What Works Scotland. It takes a co-location approach to advice on housing, childcare and debt delivered in GP surgeries and Job Centres, to reduce people being passed from pillar to post.
- A three-year Place-Based philanthropy programme of Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland, taking a local assets-based approach in areas including East Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire.

Jim McCormick,
Associate Director Scotland

LLOYDS TSB FOUNDATION SCOTLAND

Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland (the Foundation) pledges to help the Scottish Government support innovative approaches to tackling poverty and deprivation.

We know that there are areas of Scotland where people face multiple, complex challenges; many have borne the brunt of welfare reforms and increasing pressure on public expenditure. Through our work, we see the everyday impact of a whole range of issues including poverty, drug and alcohol misuse and social isolation. These undermine people's opportunities, aspirations and hope and rob our society of their potential contribution.

As well as continuing to be a thoughtful grant-maker, we will work differently to reach the communities that historically have accessed very little charitable funding. We will listen to people, support them to come together to share ideas about how their community could be a better place in which to live or work, enabling them to make changes that may seem small, but which collectively will help to build lasting social change.

Making a difference will take much more than simply redirecting cash; it will rely on a shift in the balance of power so that the people of Scotland are in the driving seat, taking decisions and having more control of their own lives.

Fiona Duncan,
Chief Executive
Lloyds TSB Foundation Scotland –
At the heart of funding Scotland's charities

NHS HEALTH SCOTLAND

I pledge to help the Scottish Government in its ambition to end child poverty in Scotland.

The challenge is significant as more than 1 in 5 children in Scotland are living in poverty and two-thirds of children in poverty also live in families where someone is working. As a national health board, NHS Health Scotland, have a clear public health role in improving health outcomes for families and children living in poverty. We will work with public, private and third sectors to reduce health inequalities and improve health and pledge to make ending child poverty one of our priorities.

We will work to ensure that evidence of what works is used quickly and consistently to help reduce and mitigate the impact of poverty on health. We will provide practical evaluation support and staff development programmes.

We will provide advice to the Ministerial Advisory Group on Child Poverty and specifically we will:

- By September 2017, develop and deliver training resources and events in partnership with the Poverty Alliance and others to raise awareness of poverty and its impact on health and wellbeing amongst public services staff.
- By March 2017, produce an e-learning module on child poverty, health and wellbeing for undergraduate and continuing professional development programmes and agree development of further training and education for other factors causing adversity in childhood.

- By March 2018, work in partnership with NHS Boards to develop national referral pathways between NHS services and local advice services to maximise the incomes of patients.
- By March 2018, promote the importance and adoption of routine enquiry about money worries (and referral to advice services) by NHS staff to help patients maximise their incomes.

We will also work with the Scottish Government to explore how we can develop, via their commissioning and funding criteria of advice in Scotland, the co-location of advice services in NHS settings i.e. in places and services that people already use.

Given the significant challenge of child poverty in Scotland we will lead on developing partnerships, particularly with the NHS, to help shift the focus to interventions that can have the most impact on reducing child poverty.

Gerald McLaughlin,
Chief Executive, NHS Health Scotland.

THE POVERTY TRUTH COMMISSION

The Poverty Truth Commission (PTC) pledges to work to ensure that people experiencing poverty are at the heart of work to overcome it. From experience we know that when people living in poverty are included, change happens – and we want to continue and grow this work. So we will launch a 4th round of the PTC in January 2017, bringing together people experiencing poverty and key decision makers in Scottish society for an 18 month period. We will aim in this process to listen to the voices of some of the poorest in our society, not just the easiest to reach.

As a specific commitment for this plan, we pledge to offer advice to the Scottish Government on how new community groups, which follow the PTC model, can be best set up in three local areas of Scotland.

We will run a 3rd Mutual Mentoring Scheme in autumn 2016 between civil servants and people living with poverty – sharing expertise with each other and breaking down any perceived barriers between the two groups.

We will continue to engage with other organisations who are looking to work in a more participative way and trying to involve people experiencing poverty directly in their work.

We will explore further with our Commissioners and others what our motto ‘Nothing about us, without us, is for us’ can really mean in practice.

Elaine Downie,
Poverty Truth Commission

THE PRINCE'S TRUST SCOTLAND

The Prince's Trust Scotland pledges to support 150,000 vulnerable young people by 2030 to overcome significant barriers and have increased access to education, training and employment opportunities. Our key programmes include the following.

- We will roll out the delivery of our new Mosaic mentoring programme creating opportunities for young people from black and ethnic minorities who are growing up in our most deprived communities. Our vision is for all young people to be supported to realise their potential. With the help of 38 volunteer mentors acting as role models through our structured programmes, we aim to bridge the aspirations-attainment gap. By linking young people with inspirational role models in this way, we will boost their confidence, self-efficacy and long-term employability. In 2016, we will work across four high schools in Glasgow, with an aim of supporting 120 young people.

We will launch two programmes this year:

- Group mentoring for secondary school pupils, with enhanced World of Work visits and presentations by inspirational speakers.
- Enterprise Challenge, a national school competition to promote entrepreneurship.

- We are committed boosting the life aspirations of young people and closing the growing attainment gap. We will do this delivering our new education programme, Achieve. Aimed at those disengaged in school, it will equip young people with the confidence, skills and a qualification to re-engage in education, training or employment.
- In 2016, the Achieve programme will work in partnership with 150 schools, and we plan to expand into over 50% of all secondary schools across Scotland by 2018. It will also be delivered in Prince's Trust Centres reaching those no longer in formal education.
- Our research highlights that nearly half young people from poorer backgrounds receive no support when looking for jobs and rarely get help with their homework. We are committed to being that alternative support network for those young people who do not have the right support at home or in school.
- We will develop new digital learning tools to ensure young people who can't access our services, such as young carers, those based in remote locations, or have poor access to public transport, can access our help to boost their training and employability skills.

TIMEWISE & FAMILY FRIENDLY WORKING SCOTLAND

Timewise and Family Friendly Working Scotland, a partnership including the Scottish Government, will work together to maximise the potential for flexible working in Scotland. Timewise will produce the first ever Flexible Jobs Index for Scotland – to analyse the current ratio of quality jobs advertised as open to flexible or part time working at the point of hire, and identify the proportion of people who need to work flexibly, and who could raise their living standards by doing so.

We will use the findings from the Index to build a case for change to support both the Scottish Government and employers to design and advertise quality jobs as ‘open to flexible working options’ at the point of hire.

Family Friendly Working Scotland will also encourage and support employers across Scotland to use the Happy to Talk Flexible Working strapline in job adverts.

Emma Stewart,
CEO Timewise

Nikki Slowey,
Programme Director,
Family Friendly Working Scotland

VIRGIN MONEY

The publication of the Scottish Government’s ‘Fairer Scotland Action Plan’ is a timely challenge to us all to do our bit to make Scotland a fairer place in which to live and work. I firmly believe that businesses as well as individuals have a key role to play in this movement.

For our part, at Virgin Money we are building a bank that aims to treat our customers and employees fairly. This includes people who may not have had easy access to the banking system or have struggled to get a job or a promotion at work, perhaps because of their background or gender.

I am committed to make banking fairer and more accessible. That’s why we recently launched our basic bank account, the Essential Current Account, a fair and simple product that can help those who are finding it difficult to get a bank account. We are currently working with Scotcash to make basic bank accounts more readily available to people in the Glasgow area.

It’s also why I was pleased to lead the UK Government-backed ‘Women in Finance Review’ earlier this year and make a pledge to promote gender diversity. We have made some challenging recommendations to the industry that I hope will make it easier for women to achieve their full potential in the financial sector and overcome some of the barriers that can hold them back. There is much more to do, but I fully support the Scottish Government for taking this positive step forward.

Jayne-Anne Gadhia,
CEO Virgin Money plc

WORKING FAMILIES

Working Families is proud to be a partner in the Family Friendly Working Scotland programme. We pledge to help the Scottish Government build a fairer Scotland by sharing our experience of working with and supporting SMEs to introduce flexible working. We will advise on mentoring which we have carried out in Wales, and share the toolkit and guidance on job design and flexible hiring which we are developing with Welsh SMEs. We will also make available to SMEs in Scotland the Working Families SME online benchmark, so that owner-managers can assess the culture and practice of their own businesses and understand the changes they can make for more effective and fairer employment.

Sarah Jackson OBE,
CEO Working Families

YOUNG SCOT

Young Scot is collaborating with cross-sector partners to support and empower young people to build a fairer Scotland. Our pledge is that we will use the Young Scot National Entitlement Card (NEC) and its embedded smart-technology to tackle inequalities through removing barriers and providing information to activate and connect young people to services and opportunities locally, nationally and globally.

Smart-tech is all-too-often considered to be only for those who can afford it. However, using the technology and existing digital public services infrastructure which the Young Scot NEC is part of, and working with partners across public services and the third sector, we know it is possible to focus support to those young people in greatest need or facing significant barriers to services and opportunities. In offering the Young Scot smartcard to all young people aged 11+, regardless of socio-economic circumstances, we can make a powerful and transformative contribution to mitigating inequalities in a non-stigmatising way, as well as contributing to a range of outcomes to support young people to be happy, healthy and able to fulfil their potential as active and informed citizens.

There are over 650,000 Young Scot smart-tech cardholders in Scotland and we know that by empowering young people and enabling access to opportunities – whether that be transport, leisure, libraries, training or employability – great things can happen. At Young Scot we believe that young people are not only Scotland's future, they are making powerful and positive contributions to our communities now – and could do even more. Working together with young people we can coproduce a fairer Scotland together.

YOUTHLINK

YouthLink Scotland pledge to support the Scottish Government's aims of ensuring 'A Fairer Scotland for All' and 'A Strong Start for All Young People'. We will do this by continuing to support the significant contribution that youth work makes to equality and the realisation of young people's human rights. More specifically, in the coming year we will:

- Work in partnership with Education Scotland, to provide training to the youth work sector on the use of the 'Recognising and Realising Children's Rights Toolkit'. The toolkit supports the development of human rights based policy and practice.
- Provide support to the newly established Scottish Equalities in Youth Work Steering Group in their role to highlight and develop the contribution of youth work to equality, diversity and human rights
- Work in partnership with Zero Tolerance to roll out the 'Under Pressure' (Preventing Teen Abuse) training programme to the youth sector.
- Work in collaboration with the youth work sector and young people from across Scotland to research and promote the contribution of youth work to gender equality.



ANNEX B

Summary Of Progress Against Independent Advisor Recommendations

The Scottish Government said earlier this year that the Fairer Scotland Action Plan would form part of our response to 'Shifting the Curve', the report by Naomi Eisenstadt, the Independent Advisor on Poverty and Inequality. The full set of 15 recommendations is set out here, with progress to date on meeting them. Many responses to these recommendations form part of the Plan.



RECOMMENDATION

ACTION TAKEN/ PROPOSED

1. Build on Living Wage Accreditation – a focus on larger employers, and on incentives, would be useful

We will do more to promote the Living Wage. Decent wages for all are vital if we are to tackle in-work poverty. To move forward, we have set a new target of 1,000 accredited Living Wage employers by Autumn 2017. We have increased funding for the Scottish Living Wage Accreditation Initiative to £300,000 to achieve this. We are also now targeting larger employers to maximise the value of our investment.

2. Encourage pay ratio disclosure as a way of tackling pay inequality

We are already taking action to encourage pay ratio disclosure as one way of tackling pay inequality. There are enhanced fair pay reporting requirements for annual accounts (via the UK-wide Financial Reporting Manual) and an expectation that public bodies will comply with these for their 2015/16 annual accounts. Public authorities with more than 20 employees now publish their gender pay gap every two years and provide equal pay statements every four.

We will extend this legal duty to include disability and race pay gap reporting – from April 2017. We are now exploring how to require further disclosures relating to gender. The Fair Work Framework advocated pay transparency and defensibility as a core organisational objective, working with the Fair Work Convention to look at broad issues around pay, including real wages, pay ratios, and gain-sharing approaches.

3. Ensure childcare commitments focus on quality to improve outcomes, and consider providing a limited number of free hours of childcare for primary school aged children

We will shortly publish a policy blueprint setting out our vision and principles for the delivery of our early learning and childcare commitment by 2020.

We have committed to ensuring all nurseries in our most deprived areas will benefit from an additional qualified teacher or childcare graduate by 2018.

We will commence a programme of early learning and childcare trials from January 2017, supported by £1 million of Scottish Government investment, to test different delivery models for delivering the expansion to 1140 hours.

By summer 2017, we will publish good practice design guidance for the building work required for the early learning and childcare expansion.

In autumn 2017, we will publish a new induction and professional learning framework for child-minders to deliver best practice in the profession.

RECOMMENDATION

ACTION TAKEN/ PROPOSED

4. Make family flexible working more explicit within the Business Pledge, and consider whether approaches such as the Timewise programme could promote flexible working in Scotland

In May 2016, information on family friendly and flexible working (and in particular the Family Friendly Working Scotland partnership) was added to the 'Workforce Engagement' and 'Balanced Workforce' sections of the Business Pledge.

A 'Scottish Business Pledge: One Year On' event was held on 2 June 2016, hosted by the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work and the Minister for Business, Innovation and Energy. It featured a company which made a commitment to the Business Pledge in June 2015 and won the Small Employer Category of the Scottish Top Employers for Working Families Awards 2016.

A joint Scottish Business Pledge/Family Friendly Working Scotland event is planned for National Work Life Week in October 2016.

5. Do more to ensure that people claim the benefits they are entitled to

We will work with a range of partners to undertake targeted benefit uptake work to help people claim the benefits they are entitled to. If people claimed all the benefits they were entitled to, they would be better off and poverty rates would be lower. We will therefore work with a range of advice and support services and other stakeholders to better understand the barriers that prevent people from claiming benefits and to address these by raising awareness and better supporting people to take up their full benefit entitlement.

6. Make effective use of new social security powers but proceed with caution

The Scottish Government has already set out a range of steps, policy and delivery, that will put dignity and respect back at the heart of our social security system. E.g. increasing Carer's Allowance to Job Seeker's Allowance level, abolishing 84 day rule and introducing a new Best Start Grant to replace the Sure Start Maternity Grant.

We have also said we will establish a new social security agency to deliver our new devolved benefits.

In July 2016, we published a consultation on a Social Security Bill, which will be the foundation for how we use our new powers.

7. Build more social housing

We will deliver more affordable homes in this parliament. During the last parliament, we surpassed our 30,000 target, delivering 33,490 affordable homes, of which 22,523 were for social rent. We have now committed investment of over £3 billion over the next five years to deliver at least 50,000 affordable homes, of which 35,000 will be for social rent. Housing for social rent already has to meet our accessibility standards, but funding is also available for specialist housing – for example, helping disabled people with more complex needs live independently in their own homes.

RECOMMENDATION

ACTION TAKEN/ PROPOSED

8. Ensure fuel poverty programmes are focused to support those on low incomes, and do more to tackle the poverty premium in home energy costs

We are investing to tackle fuel poverty and increase energy efficiency. The Scottish Government has allocated over half a billion pounds in this area since 2009 and this year more than £113 million has been made available. This money will help install energy efficiency measures in thousands of homes across Scotland, and build on the more than one million measures already delivered to almost one million Scottish households since 2008. This record investment is reflected in the big improvements in the energy efficiency of Scotland's housing. Two out of five homes are now in the top three ratings for energy efficiency, an increase of 71% since 2010 and 11% in the last year alone. The Scottish Government remains committed to continuing its efforts in this area and previously established the Rural Fuel Poverty Task Force and the Fuel Poverty Strategic Working Group to provide recommendations on, respectively, tackling fuel poverty in remote and off gas grid households, and a new strategy for tackling fuel poverty. Both groups are due to report later this year.

9. Be bold on local tax reform

From April 2017, council tax will be fairer. From then, the rates paid by those in the four highest council tax bands (E, F, G and H) will be adjusted, with the average band E household paying around £2 per week more and the average household in the highest band around £10 a week more. The 75 per cent of Scottish households that live in bands A to D will be unaffected by this change to the council tax band system and up to 54,000 households living in bands E to H on low incomes – more than one third of which are pensioner households – will be entitled to an exemption from the changes through the council tax reduction scheme. The reforms will also provide additional support to families on low incomes across all council tax bands by extending the relief available to households with children. This will benefit up to 77,000 low income families by an average of £173 per year, supporting up to 140,000 children. The additional £100 million revenue generated each year from these changes will be invested in schools to support closing the educational attainment gap.

10. Carry out a comprehensive review of the policies and services relevant to the life chances of older children and young adults, with particular emphasis on young people from poorer backgrounds

Founded on the views of children and young people, and engaging with senior policy makers, a young people's symposium was held in April 2016 and formulated a number of recommendations aimed at securing better outcomes for young people; these are being considered by Ministers and officials. The symposium is feeding into a review of evidence, which is now being undertaken in-house to meet this recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

ACTION TAKEN/ PROPOSED

11. Reduce the number of government-supported employment programmes targeting this group of young people [aged 16-24] and simplify the landscape, to provide a clearer, sharper focus

We will look to streamline young people's employment programmes. The Independent Advisor recommended that government-supported employment programmes for young people should be streamlined to provide a clearer, sharper focus. Since then, we have narrowed the eligibility criteria of two programmes so that they have become more focused on helping those who face the greatest barriers to employment and extended the duration of the support available in line with Developing The Young Workforce's recommendations: Community Jobs Scotland and Scotland's Employer Recruitment Incentive. This more focused approach on helping those furthest from the labour market goes some way towards meeting this recommendation, but we recognise there is more still to do on simplifying the landscape and will consider how we progress this in the next Spending Review.

12. Ensure that the new approach to employer engagement in education is having an impact on improving skills for work of young people

Employer-led Developing Young Workforce (DYW) Regional Groups have been established in Glasgow; North East; Fife; Ayrshire; North Highland; the West Region; Edinburgh, Midlothian and East Lothian; Dumfries and Galloway; Dundee and Angus; West Lothian; Inverness and Central Highland; West Highland; Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire; Forth Valley; and Moray, with the remaining due to be established by the end of March 2017. The Regional Groups will encourage and support employers to engage directly with schools and colleges; and challenge and support employers to recruit more young people into their workforce; and will deliver a fundamental change in the relationship between employers and education which will open up opportunities for employers to supplement the careers information offered to young people and support the delivery and design of the curriculum. This will support teachers to widen and enhance the options available to young people in education and remove some of the barriers to employing young people. The creation and development of the Groups will ensure that all of Scotland's young people are supported into employment and that they have access to the information that they need to make informed choices.

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) is working with partners to deliver Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) pathfinders, increasing the number on offer for academic year 16-17. We are also working to develop the Graduate Level Apprenticeships. These apprenticeships will support the in- work development of graduates with initial activity focused on Engineering, Civil Engineering and Digital sectors.

RECOMMENDATION

ACTION TAKEN/ PROPOSED

13. Do more to tackle occupational segregation

The Fairer Scotland Action Plan sets out relevant commitments. For example, we are committed to establishing an advisory council for women and girls. We are also developing a women returners project which we expect will encourage women to re-enter STEM type careers and close the gap in the science sector.

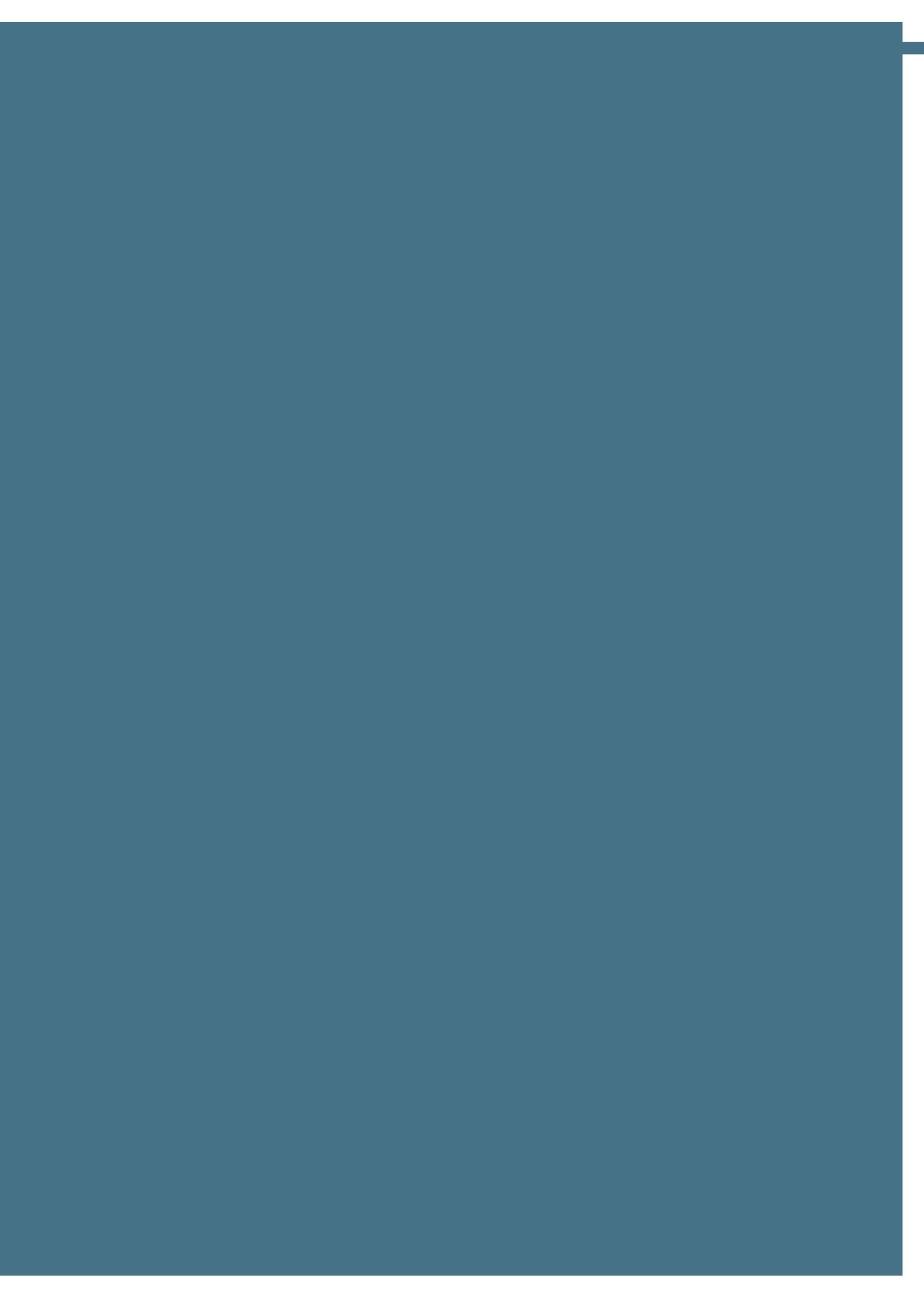
The Modern Apprenticeship Equalities Plan was published in December 2015 and is starting to deliver improvements.

14. Ensure that public service delivery is respectful, person-centred and preserves the dignity of people in poverty: pre-employment and in-service training should include the importance of avoiding stigma and developing understanding of the challenges of living on a very low income

We announced principles which will underpin the use of new social security powers. These are based on dignity and respect and a shared understanding that social security is for everyone.

15. Commence the socio-economic duty in the Equality Act 2010, when powers are available to do so

We will introduce a new socio-economic duty on public authorities in 2017. This will help ensure that organisations in the public sector take account of socio-economic disadvantage when they're making strategic decisions. We will monitor how the duty operates in practice and, if it is not delivering, we will introduce further legislation in future years to strengthen it. We will ensure, via this duty, that the public sector is all working towards the same goal.





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