

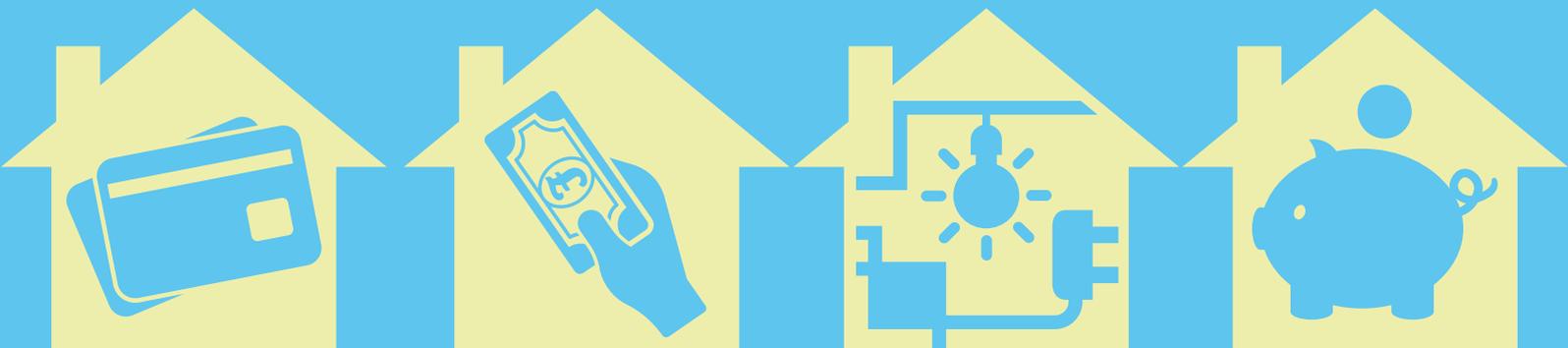
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South Lanarkshire
Partnership
Stronger together

South Lanarkshire's

Local Child Poverty Action Report



South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership's
progress over 2018/19 and our plans for 2019/20

Giving **every child**
in South Lanarkshire
every chance

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Foreword

South Lanarkshire Partnership's Community Plan is our key partnership plan for South Lanarkshire and in 2018 the Partnership Board agreed that the plan would have a single overarching objective – Tackling poverty, deprivation and inequality.

This highlights the high level of commitment to this agenda across the Partnership and also within individual organisational plans and this provides a sound platform from which to develop our Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR) and associated improvement work.

Although the local reporting duty to produce our LCPAR was specifically placed on the local authority and NHS Lanarkshire, we are delighted that our Community Planning partners have agreed to a wider partnership approach and commitment to the development and delivery of this plan.

We share the Scottish Government's aspiration that **'Every child deserves every chance'** (Scottish Government Child Poverty Delivery Plan) and we will work with local and national partners and in particular our communities to do everything in our power to realise this and help reduce child poverty in South Lanarkshire.

This report builds on current actions and good practice and reflects a stepping up of efforts to meet the unprecedented challenges facing families. Whilst we aspire to making a contribution to the national targets of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 to reduce child poverty levels, we recognise that in the current financial climate this will be a significant challenge and that our influence at a local level to deliver significant change is limited. We will however proceed with optimism knowing that our local actions can and will make a difference to families with children and in particular those who are struggling to make ends meet.

In our positions as Leader of South Lanarkshire Council and Chair of NHS Lanarkshire Board we will ensure that the resources required to deliver this and subsequent plans are in place and that we are making the best use of these resources. We will also seek to ensure that all the Community Planning partners play their part in tackling Child Poverty in South Lanarkshire. Families with a lived experience of poverty know more than any of us what will make a difference and we will ensure their voices are heard and acted on as we go forward.



John Ross
Leader of South Lanarkshire Council



Neena Mahal
Chair of NHS Lanarkshire



1 Introduction

In November 2017, the Scottish Parliament passed the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 which set in law targets to reduce child poverty in Scotland by 2030:

- less than 10% should be living in relative poverty (how many families are on low incomes compared with middle income households)
- less than 5% should be living in absolute poverty (how many low income families are not seeing their living standards improving over time)
- less than 5% should be living with combined low income and material deprivation (how many lower income families cannot afford basic necessities); and
- less than 5% should be living in persistent poverty (how many families live on low incomes three years out of four)

It also included a duty on the Scottish Government to produce three national Child Poverty Delivery Plans over the period and placed a statutory duty on local authorities and NHS Boards to report annually on step change and improvement activity that will reduce child poverty in their local area. This is the first Local Child Poverty Action Report for South Lanarkshire, and follows a decision taken by the Community Planning Partnership Board at its 6 June 2018 meeting to produce a joint report reflecting a Community Planning Partnership approach to tackling child poverty. This is in recognition of the critical contribution other local partners are and can make to reducing child poverty locally.

The report, in addition to providing a profile of how poverty impacts on children and families in the area, outlines progress made over the year (2018/19) in relation to the key poverty drivers; and how we intend to build on this progress in 2019/20, highlighting key improvement areas.

A wide range of Community Planning partners including South Lanarkshire Council; NHS Lanarkshire; South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership; Skills Development Scotland and various voluntary sector partners have worked together to produce this plan in consultation with the wider Community Planning Partnership.

Partnership working between the statutory and third sectors is key and has a positive impact on community engagement, in particular with the most vulnerable and disengaged families. Wrap around services can have a major impact on the children where their families are reluctant to engage with public services e.g. from fear, embarrassment, or lack of knowledge.



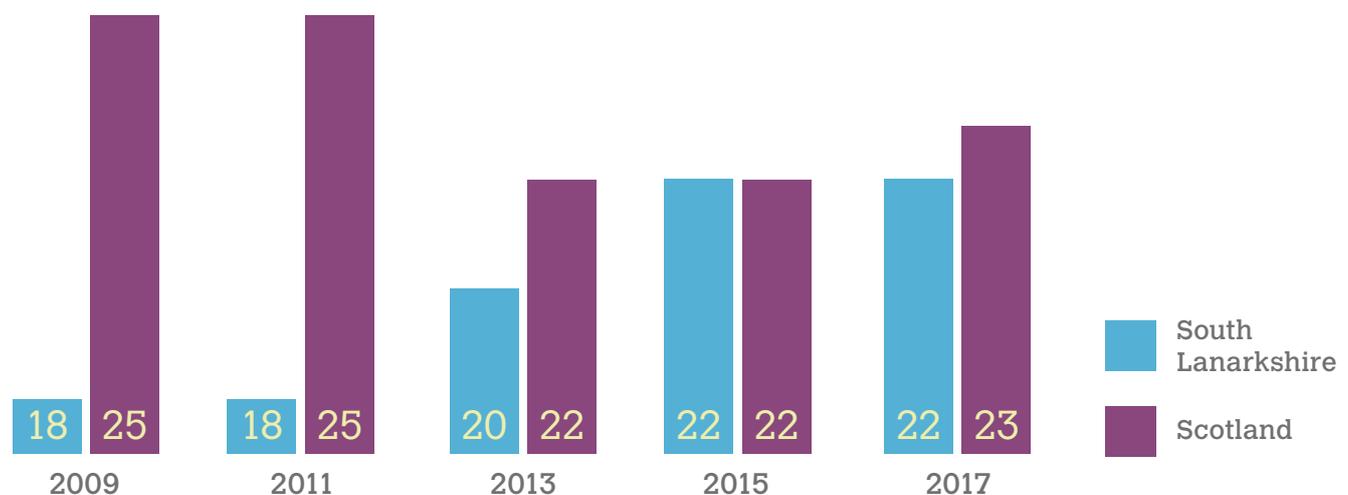
Local and national data and information has been used to determine the needs of families and communities at risk of or affected by poverty and identify actions that are most likely to have a positive impact. This has included looking at good practice already in place in South Lanarkshire as well as looking beyond using documents such as the "What Works Scotland Evidence Review on Tackling Child Poverty".

Although some of the actions in the plan have been informed by the experiences and expectations of families, the Community Planning Partnership is very clear that this report will form the basis of a commitment to deeper engagement with families to ensure that the future priorities and actions reflect the needs of those with lived experience of poverty. It was not possible to do this effectively in the timescales available to produce this initial report however the second and subsequent reports will reflect the outcomes of this and future engagement process.

2 The scale of the challenge nationally and locally

There are varying views on how we should measure child poverty and one of the most commonly used indicators is relative poverty. A family is considered to be living in relative poverty if their household income is below 60% of the average UK household income (currently £28,400). This means that just under 14,000 children in South Lanarkshire (22%) are living in families struggling every day to make ends meet.

South Lanarkshire: % of children (0-19 years) in relative poverty
(Child Poverty Action Group report)



The above graph shows that relative poverty amongst children (aged 0-19) in families has been increasing in South Lanarkshire over the last decade, and there is no suggestion that this trend is set to reverse.



Figure 2: shows how poverty levels vary across South Lanarkshire between and within our four localities.

Hamilton and Blantyre

24.3%

Most deprived ward 29.0%

Least deprived ward 14.9%

Clydesdale

21.7%

Most deprived ward 25.2%

Least deprived ward 19.4%

Cambuslang and Rutherglen

23.6%

Most deprived ward 28.3%

Least deprived ward 20.7%

East Kilbride

17.7%

Most deprived ward 24.6%

Least deprived ward 7.3%

In work poverty, measured through indicators such as children in families on working family's tax credit, suggests that around two thirds (65%) of children in South Lanarkshire, live in families that are in employment and in receipt of a Tax Credit (DWP/HMRC, Aug 2015). These families might not be in relative poverty, however they will be on a low income making them more at risk of poverty than other families on higher incomes.

Where families live, or their specific circumstances can have a bearing on how susceptible they are to poverty. Therefore it is important to understand which families are more likely to be affected by, or be at risk of poverty. It is known that families displaying the following characteristics are more likely to be affected by poverty and will require particular consideration when developing plans and services.

Priority group	% in relative poverty (Scotland)
Lone parents	36%
Children in households where someone is disabled	30%
Families with 3+ children	30%
Minority ethnic families	37%
Youngest Child aged under 1 year	32%
Mothers aged under 25	44%

More detail on available poverty related data is contained in the South Lanarkshire Child Poverty Data Profile within the Links in Appendix 1.

Section 5 provides examples on how we have used data to help produce this report.

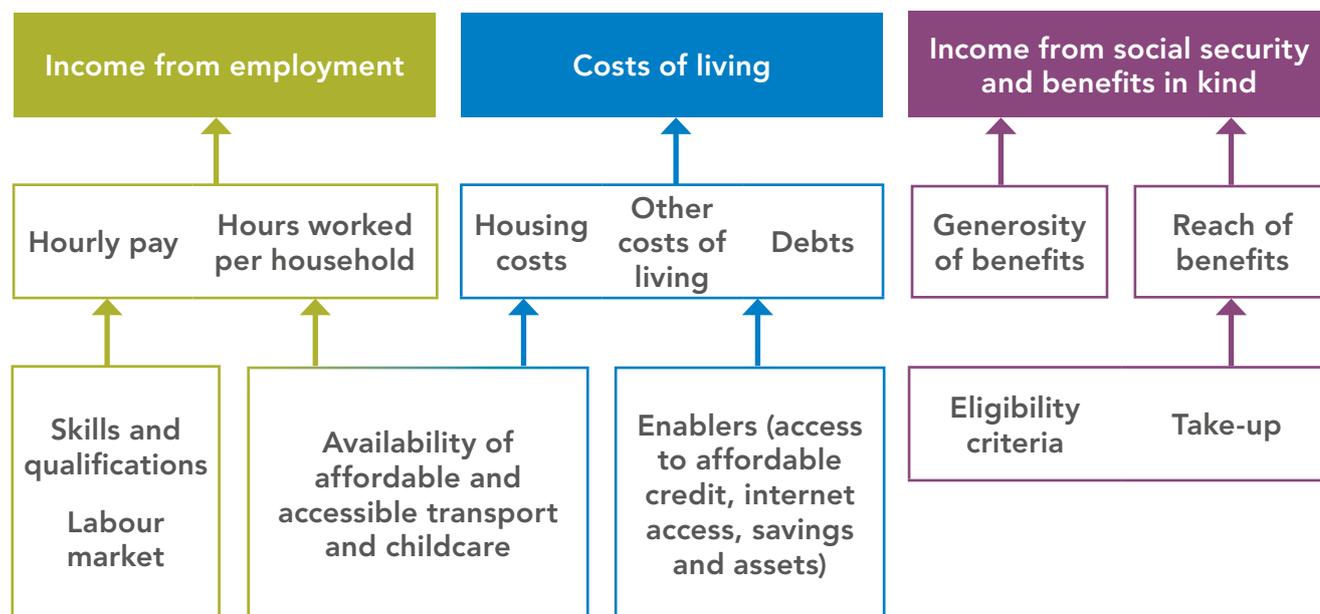


3 Scope of the plan and links to others

The Scottish Government, working with a range of national bodies has provided direction and guidance to ensure that both the National Delivery Plan and Local Child Poverty Action Reports are suitably focussed on policies and activity that evidence shows are most likely to reduce the number of children living in poverty.

This report therefore will focus on what are widely recognised as the three key drivers of child poverty, shown in Figure 3. In simple terms what we need to do to put or keep more money in the pockets of low income families struggling to make ends meet.

Figure 3: Drivers of Child Poverty



It is important to note that tackling child poverty is not a new priority for the South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership Board and Partnership Improvement Plans have included actions to tackle the causes and impacts of poverty for many years.

In 2018, the Board decided that Tackling Poverty and Inequalities would become its single overarching objective within the new Community Plan (Local Outcome Improvement Plan) for South Lanarkshire 2017- 2027, in line with the Community Empowerment Act 2015. This coincided with the aforementioned new statutory duty on local authorities and local NHS boards contained in the Child Poverty Scotland Act 2017 to produce Local Child Poverty Action Reports.

While this plan will focus on the three key drivers above, our Community Plan, Children’s Services Plan, Health and Social Care Commissioning Plan and other partnership plans all contain a wider set of priorities and actions to prevent and mitigate the impacts of poverty on children and families.

Links to these documents are provided in Section 9.



These actions, including early intervention activity, often from pregnancy and the early years of a child's life, in the years to come, will lessen their chances of experiencing poverty. Working with families to support early child development and enable all our children and young people to achieve their full potential in and beyond school and within their adult lives is central to this prevention and early support philosophy.

The Fairer Scotland Duty (part 1 of the Equality Act 2010), came into force in April 2018 and places a legal responsibility on public bodies to pay due regard to (or actively consider) how they can reduce inequalities of outcome, caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions. The work outlined within this report will be an integral part of South Lanarkshire Council and NHS Lanarkshire's contribution to achieving an equality of outcomes for our residents

4 Governance and reporting arrangements

The governance structure shown in Figure 4 shows how the South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership will be accountable for this report, providing strategic leadership and overseeing the delivery of the improvement actions. A Local Child Poverty Lead Officer Group has been established with representation from all key partners who have produced the plan. The group has worked closely with the relevant community planning partnership thematic boards.

All delivery partners will use the IMPROVE performance management system to report progress on a six monthly basis, however more regular monitoring will take place at the Local Child Poverty Lead Officer Group. The focus will be on identifying areas that have not progressed as planned.

Six monthly progress reports at Quarters 2 and 4 will be presented to the Getting it right for South Lanarkshire's Children's Partnership Board and an annual progress report to the Community Planning Partnership Board at Quarter 2.

Figure 4: Governance structure around tackling child poverty



5 Using local data to shape our plans

Key data, linked to our progress and actions is highlighted within the Action Plan section of this report. A more comprehensive data profile for South Lanarkshire has been produced and used by those developing the actions within this report (see link in Section 9).

Since the early days of the Scottish Government led Quality Improvement Collaborative (currently the Children and Young Peoples Improvement Collaborative), South Lanarkshire partners have embraced the use of the three step improvement framework for Scotland's public services and in particular making better use of data to shape effective policies, plans and services. Partnership progress can be evidenced through a range of Quality Improvement Awards received.

Even so, it is recognised that work still needs to be done to make sure that all partners involved in the development and delivery of this report and related actions have the skills and understanding and information systems in place to enable them to ensure that data and evidence is informing our thinking, planning and subsequently designing of future interventions.

It is clear that there is generally a lack of data available at a level that enables us to understand the specific needs or service gaps relating to smaller geographic communities or the target groups that we know are most impacted by poverty and referred to within section two.

For most of the themes we refer to later in the report, some of the efforts for the year ahead focus on improving our data collection, analysis and application to gain a better understanding of the needs of the target groups which will then inform more specific and targeted improvement actions to be reported in our next Local Child Poverty Action Report.

6 Workforce development

The Independent Advisor on Poverty and Inequality to the Scottish Government recommends that

“public service delivery should be respectful, person-centred and preserve 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.”

South Lanarkshire Partnership's Overarching Objective to tackle poverty, deprivation and inequality includes a commitment to ensuring our services meet this recommendation and our intention is to build on very positive workforce development activity already in place.



Over the last four years during Challenge Poverty Week, and aligned to the Poverty Alliance's "Stick Your Labels" campaign we have raised staff awareness of poverty through daily emails extending across all council departments and various partner organisations and will continue this approach each year given the positive feedback.

In addition to raising awareness across the workforce, we have promoted the Poverty Alliance's "Stick Your Labels" campaign to local partners and 32 have since signed the three pledges:

Poverty is not inevitable:

It is a problem of political choices. It is neither natural nor acceptable.

We all have a role to play in addressing poverty:

We will set out our contribution to tackling poverty in Scotland.

Attitudes matter:

How we talk about poverty and how we portray it can stigmatise and harm people:

We will never use language that might stigmatise people experiencing poverty.

Actions change attitudes:

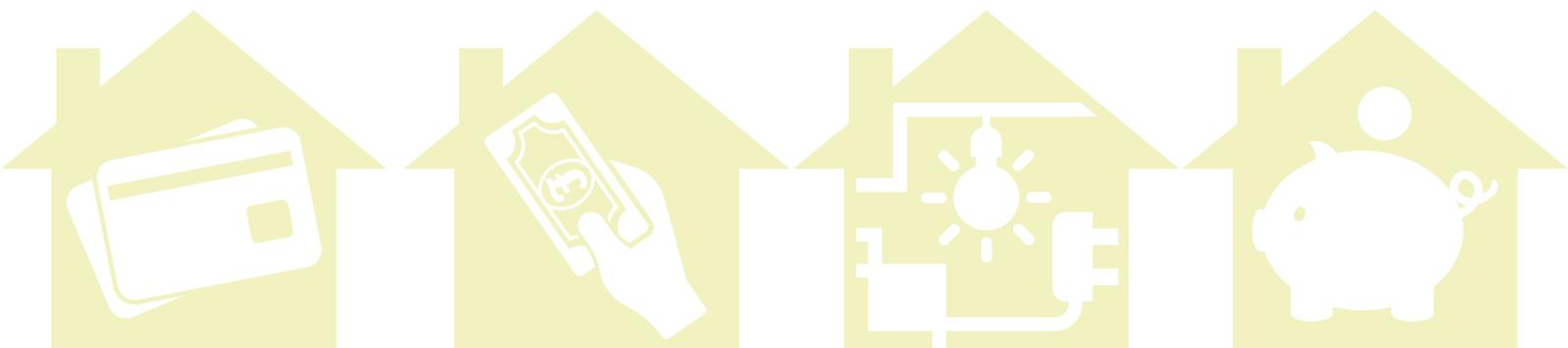
To change beliefs about poverty requires action across our whole society:

We will develop actions that help address negative attitudes towards people experiencing poverty.

An online Poverty Awareness and Tackling Stigma training course has also been developed by a partnership "Stick Your Labels" group to help further build understanding and commitment.

Poverty Awareness training with locality health and social work teams working with families has taken place over the last year with a focus on building staff confidence to raise the issue of financial wellbeing with families and utilise active referral pathways to appropriate advice and support colleagues and partners.

We will continue to develop this work further as well as progress other key workforce development activity including building skills and knowledge to support improvement work in particular around data capture and analysis.



7 Area based approaches/ neighbourhood planning

As referred to in section two, there are communities in South Lanarkshire where the levels of poverty are significantly higher than others.

In response to the new requirement through the Community Empowerment Act to develop locality plans for areas where outcomes are poorest, our Partnership agreed to establish a new Neighbourhood Planning approach 'Our Place Our Plan' late in 2017 which is currently being tested in three areas -

- Whitlawburn and Springhall in the Cambuslang/Rutherglen Area
- Hillhouse Udston and Burnbank in Hamilton; and
- Strutherhill and Birkenshaw in Larkhall.

We have worked with communities from the outset to design and implement the 'Our Place Our Plan' process and the communities have recently launched their plans for the year ahead, focussing on key community priorities. More and better facilities and activities for children and young people came out as the top priority in all three areas, including the need to consider the cost of activities.

We will be testing new approaches to service delivery in these areas, particularly to tackle income and employment deprivation, which will include a specific focus on low income families with children.

The local "Our Place Our Plan" approach, driven by local communities will help us to engage with families who have a lived experience of poverty, which will add great value to our Child Poverty planning processes.

In addition, communities across South Lanarkshire are being supported by a range of partners to develop local place plans and it is likely that these community led processes will lead to changes and improvements at a local level that will add value to our LCPAR.



South Lanarkshire Council and a number of voluntary sector partners have invested significant resources in building the capacity building support available to communities.



8 Our Local Child Poverty Progress Report 2018/19 and Action Plan for 2019/20

Chapter 1

Taking action to increase income from benefits and entitlements

Why is it important?

Maximising the income coming into households with children is key to tackling child poverty. Given the rising levels of in-work poverty, both families in and out of work require welfare benefits to provide an adequate standard of living. There is however a gap between those entitled to welfare support and the uptake levels, requiring action to raise awareness of entitlements and increase uptake. Welfare Reform has had a negative impact for many families in South Lanarkshire with significant numbers seeing a reduction in welfare support through the benefit cap, benefit freezes and other changes. In October 2017, the fully digitised Universal Credit system was rolled out across South Lanarkshire, bringing a new range of challenges to low income families. Local food banks are seeing more and more families requiring support and many cite benefit issues (delays; decision making) as a key factor in needing crisis support. The same is true of applicants to our Scottish Welfare Fund (Crisis Loans). Given we are very limited at a local level in how we can influence welfare benefits, **our focus has and will be on maximising low income families awareness and uptake of welfare benefits and entitlements.**

Where are we now?

(2018/19 key actions/impacts)

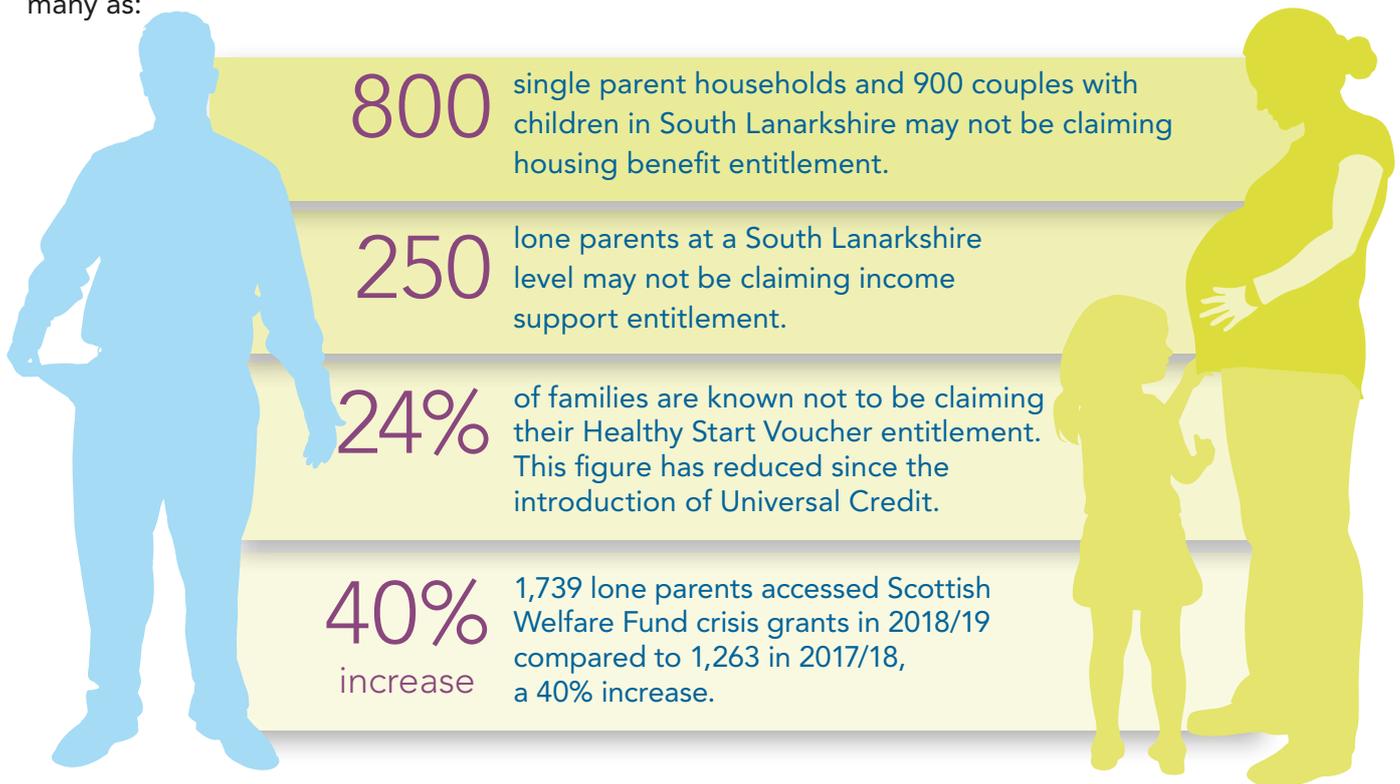
Welfare benefits are in place to support low income families whether in, or out of work. However too many families are still not claiming what they are due. Research by Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS) suggests that around half a million Scots are not claiming all the support they are entitled to.



South Lanarkshire case study

A mum of 40, pregnant with her second child was working and was made redundant leaving her with no income. She was referred to the Money Matters Telephone Advice Line and was supported to claim for Maternity allowance and child benefit (having never applied for her first child), and is now better off by £179/week plus a one off payment of £248 for backdated benefits.

Local data is limited on the uptake of welfare benefits however based on national estimates as many as:



Case studies from Money Matters and the South Lanarkshire CABs like the one above, show that many families are unaware of their entitlements. Universal Credit (UC) full service has been live in South Lanarkshire since October 2017. UC is meant to make navigating and understanding the benefits system easier but many struggle to make and sustain claims and this is further complicated by the fact that new style Employment Support Allowance and Job Seekers Allowance still exist separately from UC.

Many families require help. At a recent CAB pilot energy switching event in a primary school in one of our Neighbourhood Planning areas, all families who engaged were unable to progress switching as they had significant outstanding benefits and money issues that required to be tackled first. The positive side of this is that through engagement with schools we were able to reach these families who are now receiving the necessary support.

Early intervention is key and one of the key target groups for maximising income from benefits activity has been pregnant women and families with babies and young children. We have achieved significant success in developing and establishing a financial wellbeing pathway within midwifery and health visiting services, working towards a goal of all pregnant mums and families with young children being offered financial wellbeing advice (including welfare benefits advice) at key assessment contacts with health visitors and midwives.



In 2018/19 key impacts include

- All health visiting and midwifery teams received poverty awareness training and are aware of the referral pathway.
- 841 families were referred to the Money Matters Telephone Advice line of which 79% engaged. Performance data shows the service is engaging the key child poverty target groups in particular lone parent families (44% of advice line engagements) In a sample of 20 families, the collective financial gain was £95,995 ranging from £995 to £13,000.

This effective partnership between NHS Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire Councils Money Matters team now features in an NHS Health Scotland video, promoting good practice to other areas across Scotland and the improvement team leading and delivering the work were finalists at the national Children and Young Peoples Improvement Collaborative Awards.

The council's Money Matters service has shifted resources within the service to help meet the growing demands resulting from the Increasing referrals from NHS staff. Low income families have become a priority for the service and as the referrals from NHS teams grow, the service is adapting to family's needs. Although the initial engagement with families is via a Telephone Advice Line, a triage approach allows for those who need face to face support to receive this, including in the community where required.

The other key area of work being progressed is the introduction of the new Financial Health Checks, which includes families as a target group. It is early days for this new service and the South Lanarkshire CABs who are delivering this in association with Citizen Advice Scotland, have to date supported 122 families through a financial health check.

At a recent Welfare Reform event, the need for co-location of advice and support services and more community hubs was identified. South Lanarkshire CABs are already delivering over 30 outreach clinics in community hubs/facilities including some schools and health facilities and although only a few have a family focus, there is scope to build this.

In 2018 the existing Council Welfare Reform Monitoring Group was reformed to include key local partners including NHS Lanarkshire, the new Scottish Social Security Agency and the DWP recognising the need to work in partnership to mitigate the challenges associated with Welfare Reform including the roll out of Universal Credit. South Lanarkshire CABs have been represented on this group from early 2019. This has been a very worthwhile development and the group will have a strong focus on child poverty and in particular the Income from Benefits and Entitlements driver and further opportunities to achieve a necessary step change.



Key areas for improvement

Once the financial wellbeing referral pathway referred to above is operating at full scale, it is estimated that the demand for advice may increase by 50-100%. We are currently considering how we ensure adequate staff resources within Money Matters including the use of new funding linked to the national Child Poverty Delivery Plan aligned to NHS Boards and possible use of European Poverty and Inequalities funding. A challenge here is to ensure we are not compromising the quality and effectiveness of the service to meet funders' criteria and reporting processes.

The multi-agency working group which oversees this work will begin to shift its focus from expanding the service to identifying improvement areas linked to maximising the financial and wider impacts of the advice on families. An evaluation process is in place to allow reporting on financial gain and recent work on the information management system will allow us to segment the data by the Child Poverty Priority Groups outlined in section 2 and identify potential gaps. We are however confident that the service is reaching lone parents - with 44% of the total number of families supported being lone parent families.

In terms of the delivery of the financial health checks via our four CABs as referred to above, it is too early to identify improvement areas, however analysis of performance data will take place in 2019/20.

We want to broaden the financial wellbeing pathway work we have been doing to consider the advice needs of families with school aged or older children. A review of service data available from Money Matters and South Lanarkshire CABs will start this process and help to identify potential gaps and specific areas for improvement, possibly linked to key target groups. We know for instance that there is a very high demand for appeals representation work which local advice services can struggle to cope with.

Across our advice services - given the unprecedented demand for welfare benefits advice and support relating in particular to welfare reform - waiting times for advice can be an issue and one that all partners continue to tackle. It is hoped that the work outlined above and below will minimise waiting times for families who are struggling and we will monitor this collectively.

Table 1 (overleaf) highlights actions being taken forward that we believe will contribute to increasing income from benefits and entitlements for families.



Table 1: Increasing income from benefits and entitlements for families Action Plan for 2019/20

Change Required	Action to achieve change and who is responsible (Partner/Resource)	Resources allocated	Measure (for 2019/20)	Target groups
<p>1.1 Increase low income families awareness and uptake of welfare benefits and entitlements.</p>	<p>Deliver the Scottish Government Funded Financial Health check to families via Citizen advice Scotland National Helpline and South Lanarkshire CABs.</p>	<p>£13k per CAB (£52k) (funding beyond Sept 19 yet to be confirmed)</p>	<p>Number of financial health checks delivered to end March 2020</p>	<p>All families however strong focus on low income families including all Child Poverty target groups)</p>
	<p>Analyse user data to determine if further targeting required to ensure families most at risk of poverty are engaging. South Lanarkshire CABs</p>		<p>Number of families receiving case work support and profile data</p>	
			<p>Number of families receiving support from National Helpline and profile data.</p>	
	<p>Final scale up of the new Routine Enquiry on financial wellbeing undertaken at key midwifery and Health Visiting contacts. All referrals made via to the SLC Money Matters Telephone Family Advice Line with face (to face service where required)</p>	<p>£78k SLC Money Matters £13.3k Scottish Government Child Poverty Funding allocation to NHS Lanarkshire.</p>	<p>Number of routine enquiries</p>	<p>Pregnant mums and families with preschool age children (with a particular focus on low income families)</p>
	<p>Identification of additional funding to enable SLC Money Matters to meet the additional demands coming from scale up (SLC Money Matters Service; NHS Lanarkshire)</p>		<p>Number of advice line referrals</p>	
			<p>% and number engaging with TAL</p>	
		<p>Total benefits awarded.</p>		



Change Required	Action to achieve change and who is responsible (Partner/Resource)	Resources allocated	Measure (for 2019/20)	Target groups
	<p>Explore the advice needs of low income families with school age children to assess the need for service development and improvement – potential for advice hub pilot in neighbourhood planning area (Welfare Reform Group)</p>	<p>Existing resources</p>	<p>Number of Low income families engaged in consultation and service design process. Additional service/s developed.</p>	<p>Low income families with school age children, focus on schools serving communities with higher levels of deprivation, Neighbourhood Planning areas</p>
	<p>Work with financial inclusion partners to develop and deliver health and welfare advice services in hospital and community health settings(Health and Social Care Partnership ; South Lanarkshire CABs)</p>	<p>Integrated care fund and health improvement funding £115k</p>	<p>Number of referrals to CAB Health and Wellbeing Hubs</p> <p>Total benefits awarded</p>	<p>Low income families, families affected by ill health and disability</p>
<p>1.2 Improve communications to ensure families and partner awareness of key messages and support available relating to Welfare Benefits / Welfare Reform and new Scottish Social Security benefits and associated processes.</p>	<p>Establish a Welfare Reform Partnership Communications Group and associated action plan. (SLC Finance and Corporate Resources) Develop links with Registrars and other key partners to maximise uptake of Best Start Grants.</p>	<p>Resources will be made available to produce appropriate communication materials</p>	<p>Number of training and awareness raising sessions delivered</p> <p>%/ number of new Best Start Grants and other relevant devolved benefits live in 2019/20</p>	<p>All low income families</p>



Chapter 2

Taking action to reduce the cost of living

Why is it important?

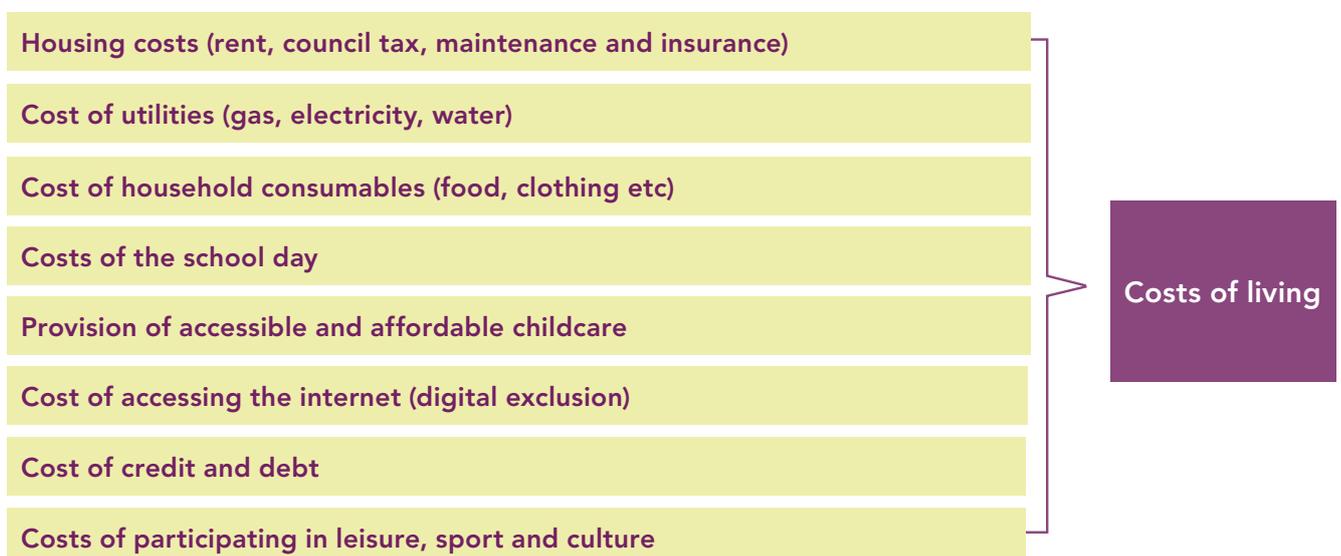
Rising living costs pose a very significant challenge to many of our families. We know from our front line staff and volunteers that some families are having to make hard choices about how to make very limited household income stretch to cover all the costs of running a home and feeding and clothing their children. Food banks refer to families requiring emergency food aid but who can't afford the fuel bills to cook the food.

Families can very quickly move into poverty, or severe financial hardship through a change of circumstance, unexpected costs or issues relating to benefits, or income. Getting support as early as possible is key to minimising the financial and wider impacts for families. The Scottish Welfare Fund is a key source of support for families in these circumstances.

Figure 5 shows the essential goods and services that families need to participate in society. Action at a local level can help to reduce these costs e.g. helping a family to switch energy provider, or how we set our local social housing rent levels.



Figure 5: Cost of living factors impacting on families with children



Where are we now? (2018/19 key actions/impacts)

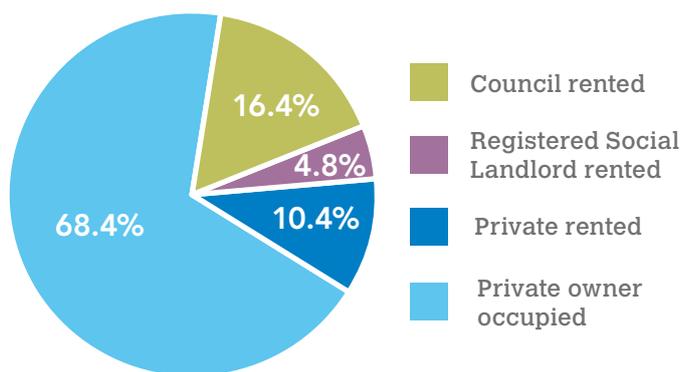
Housing

Housing is an unavoidable expense that has a clear impact on a household's disposable income.



Figure 6 below shows the breakdown of households by Housing Tenure in South Lanarkshire

South Lanarkshire Council is the third largest local authority landlord in Scotland and is one of the most affordable for tenants with the seventh lowest average weekly rent. Over the past year approximately 1,800 council homes have been made available for let (not including sheltered housing). Of these around 35% were allocated to family households providing good quality, warm, energy efficient and affordable homes for over 1,000 children and young people each year.

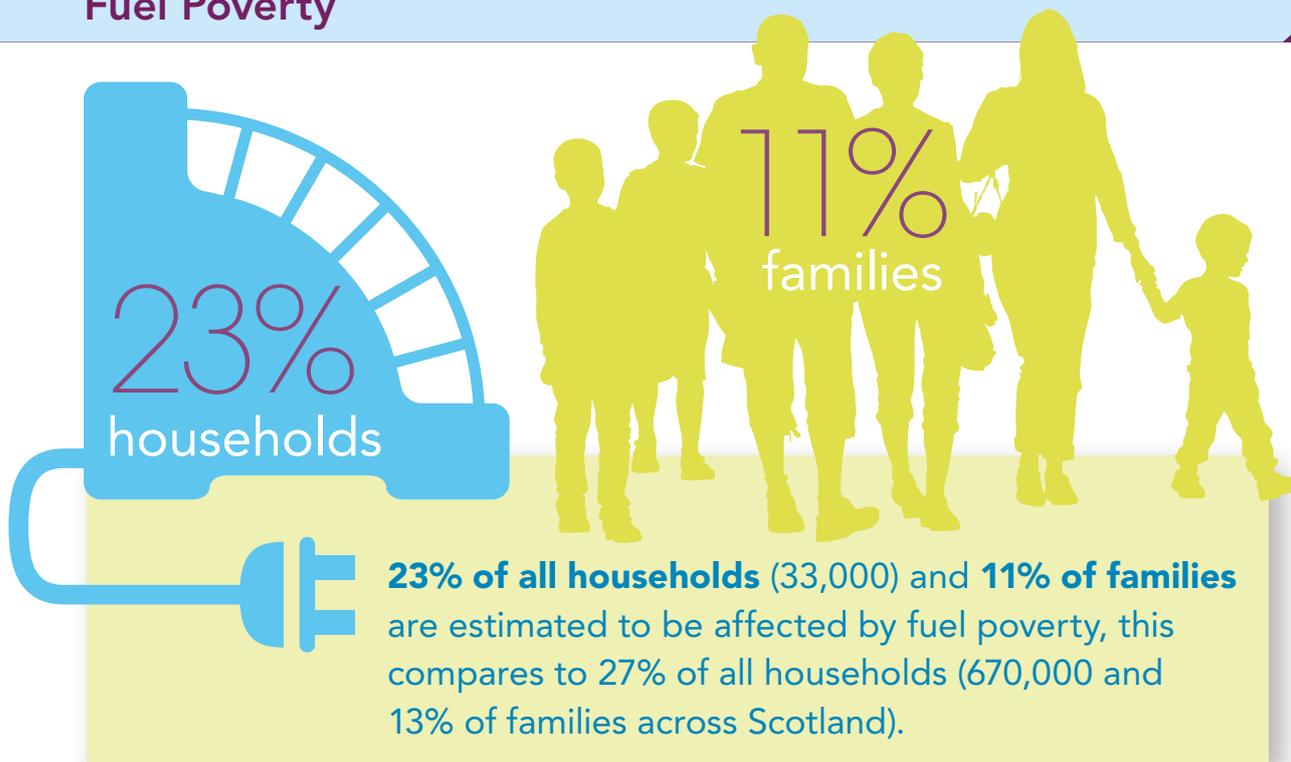


The South Lanarkshire 'Affordable Homes, Sustainable Places' Local Housing Strategy (LHS) for 2017-22 includes actions that are responding to the particular needs of children, young people and families and reducing the costs associated with housing. These include:

- Investment to increase new affordable housing supply – over 300 homes in 2018/19
- Ensuring households affected by homelessness are supported to move to suitable settled homes as quickly as possible
- Maintaining lower than average rents.



Fuel Poverty



South Lanarkshire has a good track record in terms of investment and partnership actions to tackle and reduce fuel poverty and has a significantly lower rate compared to Scotland.

Lone parents and low income families including families living in rural South Lanarkshire are however more likely to be affected, often relying on higher tariff methods for paying for gas and electricity such as pre-payment meters or more expensive energy options e.g. no access to gas.

Partnership work is ongoing to maximise families' uptake of energy advice (including fuel debt support and help to switch energy providers). In 2018/19 Home Energy Scotland telephone advisors have engaged with 4,232 South Lanarkshire households of which 552 had children under 16 years. Our local support (South Lanarkshire CABs and Money Matters) also provide face to face support to compliment this service and we are collectively looking at how we maximise the numbers of families and in particular low income families accessing advice. We refer in Chapter 1 to pilot activity to help families switch energy suppliers which highlighted that with financial challenges, this is not a straightforward process for all and can require intensive support.



Food poverty

Local evidence indicates that there is an increasing number of households with children that are unable to sustain normal patterns of food shopping and eating, and are seeking charitable food aid to help them do so.

Food banks have reported that they are struggling to meet demands and have recently benefited from Community Benefit funding linked to two SLC procurement contracts to help bridge the gap.

A Food Development Officer has been recruited by South Lanarkshire Council and is establishing a partnership group to develop a food strategy for South Lanarkshire. Tackling food poverty will be a key focus of the strategy and initial mapping of data and current provision will help us to determine further actions relating to families and children.



20,000
food parcels

Food banks in South Lanarkshire have provided approximately 20,000 food parcels in 2018. One food bank reported that one third of their parcels were distributed to households with children.



Key developments this year include testing holiday lunch clubs, targeting children in families living in our more deprived communities, including our Neighbourhood Planning areas. This activity was offered during all the key holiday periods and 567 children benefitted. This has been complimented by

an extension of breakfast clubs to 84 out of 124 primary schools providing children with access to free and nutritional breakfasts alongside activities. Both holiday and breakfast provision are delivered by the third sector and South Lanarkshire Council resulting in around 68% of schools now having free breakfast club provision in place.

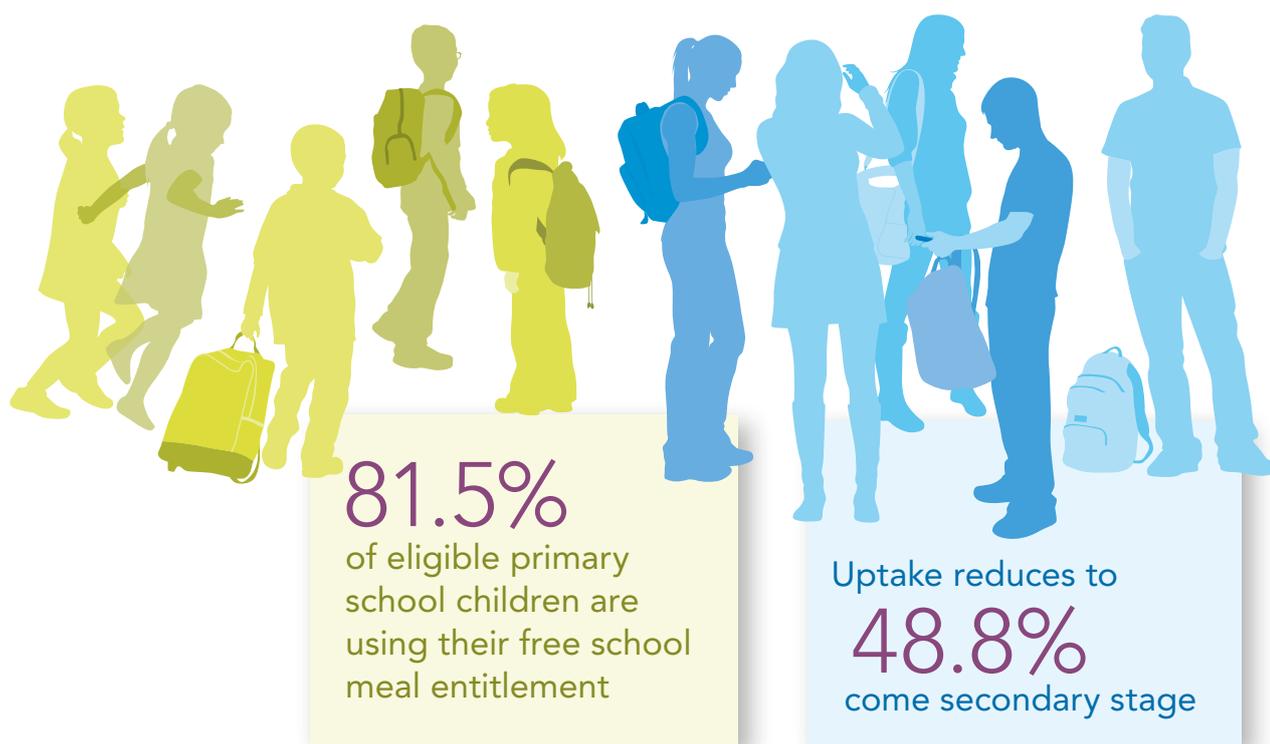
South Lanarkshire Council nurseries are now providing free lunches to children attending over lunchtime and snacks morning and afternoon. This is ahead of the Scottish Government target date of 2020.



There are **84 primary schools** with breakfast clubs which equates to around **68%** benefitting **2800** children and young people.



Costs of the school day



Insufficient household income can mean that some children and young people don't have the resources needed for school and can't easily afford to take part in school activities which cost money.

There is already a wide range of activity taking place in schools focussed on tackling child poverty and removing financial barriers to education however we want to learn from good practice locally and more widely. We are engaged in the Schools and Poverty Network supported by NHS Health Scotland and are committed to using the Cost of the School day toolkit developed by the Child Poverty Action Group. An audit is underway across all schools to conclude in June 2019.

Two of the biggest costs that families face at school are buying school uniform and paying for school meals and we are committed to maximising the uptake of free school meals (FSM) and clothing grants(CG). Currently 81.5% of eligible primary school children are using their entitlement, however come secondary school stage uptake reduces to 48.8%. We have introduced automated enrolment of these entitlements this year. The process involves FSM/CG awards being awarded automatically based on information held in the Benefits system. For those not on benefits, but on a low income, there is an online application form. This year to date 11,818 clothing grants and 8,416 free school meals have been awarded. This compares with 9,865 clothing grants and 6,935 free school meals for the whole of 2017/18

We have also introduced a new initiative to reduce the costs of school transport for pupils entitled to free school meals. Privileged places are now offered to pupils in receipt of Free School Meal entitlement where places are available. This is a particularly significant given the rural nature of much of South Lanarkshire and the lack of consistent public transport options in many communities. To date 17 pupils have benefitted from this opportunity.



Provision of accessible and affordable childcare

For the purpose of this report we want to focus on a number of developments where there is the greatest potential to impact on child poverty i.e. helping low income families towards, into and within work through the provision of affordable and accessible childcare.

One aspect of this is the provision of **up to 600 additional hours (rising to 1,140 by 2020) of free early learning and childcare for eligible two year olds** (i.e. Care Experienced, or have a parent/guardian on qualifying benefit and in need, or vulnerable) **with all families accessing the same from age three.**

The latest early learning and child care data (2018) demonstrates that 333 two year olds are currently taking up their places (10% of all two year olds). This is in line with the Scottish figure of 10%.

One of our challenges is, not knowing who is eligible for the provision. i.e. the details of parents on benefit and therefore not being able to target our promotion as effectively as we would like. Recently we have completed a scoping exercise to identify partnership actions to increase the uptake of two year old places in our three Neighbourhood Planning areas.

Across South Lanarkshire the cost of an average non funded 25 hour childcare week is £77.50 in council nursery establishments. However Education Resources offer two forms of exemption to this cost based on families in low income households.

Consultation with families is ongoing as is the analysis of data on child care uptake to help childcare providers better understand the barriers and service gaps/ improvements.

333

two year olds are currently taking up nursery places – 10% of all 2 year olds. (Scotland – 10%)

nursery

The average costs of part time (25 hours) childcare in Scotland is around **£109 per week**. Across South Lanarkshire the cost is **£77.50** in council nursery establishments.



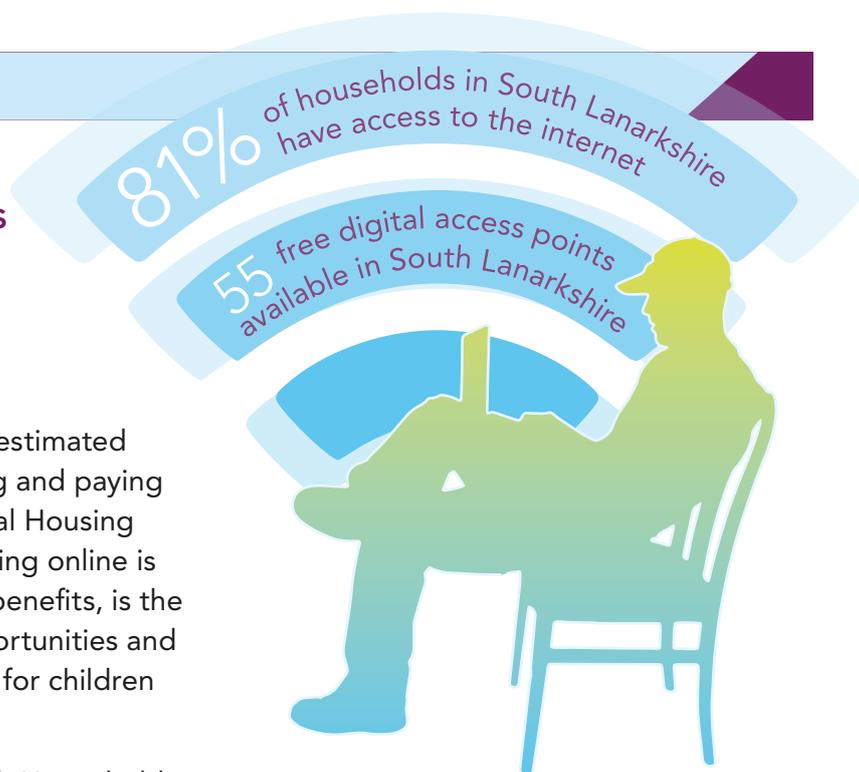
Digital inclusion

Being digitally connected can bring a range of benefits to a family including making savings on a range of goods and services.

Offline households are missing out on estimated savings of £560 per year from shopping and paying bills online. (Source: ONS 2015, National Housing Federation, the Tinder Foundation). Being online is also key to accessing and maintaining benefits, is the main access route to employment opportunities and is a necessity for educational purposes for children and parents.

The most recent data available (Scottish Household Survey 2017) suggests that 81 per cent of households in South Lanarkshire have access to the internet compared to 85 per cent across Scotland. The figure varies from area to area and we know that in communities with higher levels of poverty, fewer households have internet access. This is particularly relevant in some rural areas.

Through a Digital Inclusion Partnership Group we have increased the number of free digital access points and support available to residents. There are currently 55 free access points (21 in Hamilton/Blantyre/Larkhall, 13 in Clydesdale, 13 in Cambuslang/Rutherglen and eight in East Kilbride) which are provided by a range of public and third sector partners including all libraries. Printed maps are available in most public buildings to promote these.



South Lanarkshire case study

Working with a key charity in Larkhall, we are measuring the impacts for a family struggling to get by financially of having a laptop, free home internet access and help to use both from a family support worker. “Although in its early stages, the family is now able to access better utility deals, communicate with the job centre and complete forms for Universal Credit. The children are using the technology for homework and badge work for the Army Cadets. The family are also more aware now of local services and opportunities”.

We are also undertaking a wider piece of research into the digital inclusion needs of residents, which will include the needs of low income families. These areas of work will inform future action in relation to digital inclusion and low income families. We refer later in the plan to work which will support parents and in particular lone parents towards and within employment and addressing barriers to digital inclusion will be a key aspect of this.



Cost of borrowing

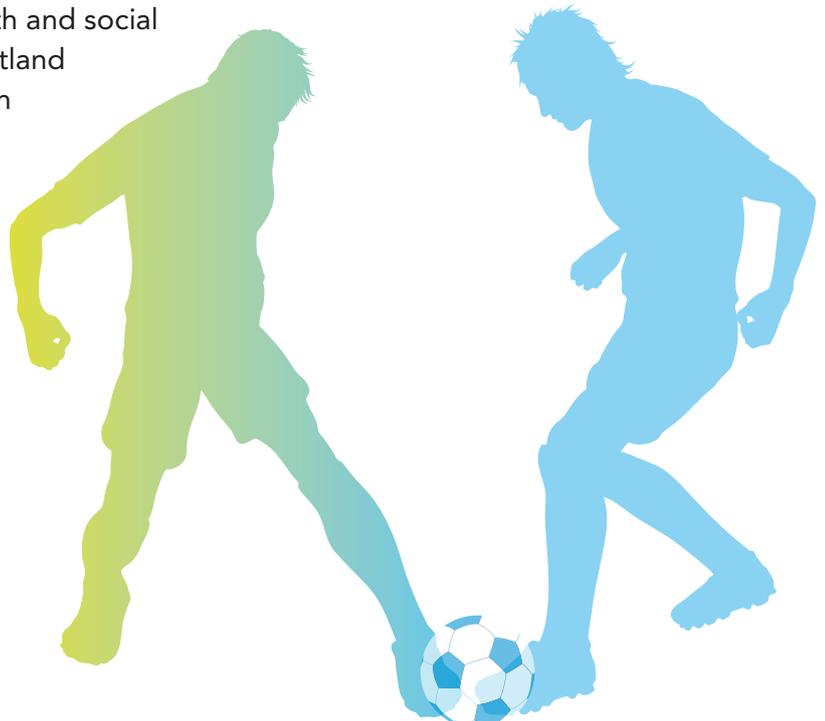
The current credit union membership level in South Lanarkshire is 34,586 adult members with a further 11,367 junior members mainly engaged via school based credit union activity. Several credit unions are actively promoting their services to local employers and in particular payroll deductions to encourage and support saving and affordable credit. The Credit unions also engage directly with a wide range of partners to promote their services to target groups such as young people and adults on employability programmes. Youth membership of Credit unions has increased by 16% since 2017-18 with 11,318 junior members and much of the activity that promotes and supports youth membership is school based. All five Credit unions support school based Credit union activity across a total of 121 educational establishments, an increase of 15% since 2017-18. The bulk of activity is at the primary school level, but activity in secondary schools has doubled from four to eight since 2017-18.



We have referred in Chapter 1 to the introduction of financial health checks for families delivered by the four South Lanarkshire CABs already reaching 122 families. These health checks include support across a range of financial /welfare themes including budgeting and debt management.

Costs of leisure and culture

South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture (SLLC) has increased its focus on addressing child poverty. Development staff are now based within localities and through developing strong partnerships with local community groups, education, health and social care staff and working closely with Sports Scotland they are developing a more targeted approach to maximise the engagement of families and communities most in need. SLLC have a wide range of community facilities and assets, from which they deliver health intervention programmes giving access to physical activity as well as many other services and leisure /cultural opportunities.



SOUTH LANARKSHIRE
Leisure & Culture



Key areas for improvement

For each of the cost areas referred to above we have used the data available to identify improvement areas. There is a lack of data to enable us to confidently report on the specific challenges that the various child poverty target groups are experiencing, however this is itself an area for improvement referred to in this plan in the section on **Workforce Development** (Section 6, page 13)

The key improvement actions are reported in Table 2 of the action plan opposite. To summarise we are focussing in on the actions that are most likely to reduce costs for families including the following significant changes.

We know that the provision of quality free childcare is key and our nursery provision for two year old children (low income) will be the subject of improvement work designed to increase awareness and uptake.

One of the most significant actions we are taking, is to increase the school clothing grant to £130 per child, **an increase of £60** on what families received this year. This will be £30 more than the new minimum grant set nationally and one of the largest grants in Scotland. More than 12,000 pupils will benefit from this additional investment of **£360k**.

We want to work with communities, including those in our Neighbourhood Planning areas to enable families and others to make the best use of our community facilities, both those run by SLLC and by community organisations through tackling barriers such as cost and also through extending the scope of activities and support available.

More than **12,000** pupils
will benefit from **£360k**
investment



school clothing
grant **increase**
£130
per child



Table 2: Reducing the Cost of Living for Families with Children Action Plan 2019/20

Change required	Action to achieve change and who is responsible (Partner/Resource)	Resources allocated	Measure (19/20)	Target Groups
<p>2.1 Increase the provision and uptake of funded and early learning and childcare entitlement for two and three year olds</p>	<p>Work with professionals and services who will have contact with eligible families and will promote free Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) for two year olds including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • early years staff • children and families social workers • primary staff for those with older children • play initiative staff • local DWP offices <p>(South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources)</p>	<p>Existing resources</p>	<p>Percentage uptake of funded two year places (of estimated figures).</p>	<p>Low income families</p>
	<p>Health visitors provide information about free places to parents at the earliest opportunity and especially across the 'additional category' caseload and at the 13-15 month and 27-30 month child health review. (NHS Lanarkshire)</p>	<p>Within existing resources – staff time.</p>		



Change required	Action to achieve change and who is responsible (Partner/Resource)	Resources allocated	Measure (19/20)	Target Groups
<p>2.2 Reduce financial barriers to education for school age children.</p>	<p>Develop a short term action plan for Education establishments in relation to implementing the CPAG Cost of the School Day Guidance and toolkit. (South Lanarkshire Council, Education Resources)</p>	<p>Core budgets, Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC)/Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) monies and 0.66 FTE development post to lead workplan (£42k).</p>	<p>% of schools with completed audits. Evidence of how costs have been reduced.</p>	<p>Low income families.</p>
	<p>Reduce transport costs to school through offering targeted Privileged School Transport Places for pupils entitled to Free School Meals (South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources)</p>	<p>Within existing resources</p>	<p>No of children accessing privileged places by pupils entitled to Free School Meals not entitled to automatic school transport access.</p>	<p>Low income families (meeting eligibility criteria)</p>
	<p>Increase the uptake of Free School Meals through automated enrolment and additional activity to promote and encourage uptake with a focus on uptake in secondary schools, (South Lanarkshire Council, Finance and Education Resources)</p>	<p>Within existing resources, Promotional activity.</p>	<p>%Free school meals uptake primary schools. %Free school meals uptake – secondary schools.</p>	<p>Low income families (meeting eligibility criteria)</p>
	<p>Increase the level of School Clothing Grant to £130 per child and increase uptake through automated enrolment and additional activity to promote encourage uptake. (South Lanarkshire Council, Education Resources and Finance Resources)</p>	<p>An additional investment of £0.360m /annum from South Lanarkshire Council</p>	<p>Number/% of pupils claiming school clothing grant</p>	<p>Low income families(meeting eligibility criteria)</p>



Change required	Action to achieve change and who is responsible (Partner/ Resource)	Resources allocated	Measure (19/20)	Target Groups
<p>2.3 Reduce the costs of housing for families.</p>	<p>Maintain affordable rents for council homes benchmarked against Scottish average (South Lanarkshire Council, Housing and Technical Resources)</p>	<p>Delivered via approval of the Housing Revenue and Capital Account Budget 2019/20 (£105.171m)</p>	<p>Average rents for all council homes and for larger-size family homes</p>	<p>Lower income families with children and young people, including single parents and families with disabled people</p>
	<p>Invest and deliver 300 new affordable housing, built to Housing for Varying Needs (HfVN) standards and meeting higher energy efficiency standards that minimise fuel costs, and ensure this includes allocations to families with children and young people (Housing and Technical Resources; Registered Social Landlords)</p>	<p>Affordable Housing Supply Programme (approximately £30million) grant funding with additional capital investment funded through prudential borrowing</p>	<p>number of new affordable homes delivered, including larger, family-sized houses</p>	
	<p>Deliver regeneration projects to improve housing and built environment in priority areas.</p>		<p>Milestone in progress of area –based regeneration projects – measure to be confirmed</p>	<p>Low income households renting, including families with children and young people living in SIMD priority areas</p>
<p>2.4 Reduce families' energy costs.</p>	<p>Target housing investment to improve fuel and thermal efficiency of larger homes and reduce energy costs (SLC Housing and Technical Resources and social landlords)</p>	<p>Housing investment programme - £23.6m</p>	<p>Proportion of housing meeting energy efficiency standards.</p>	<p>Households living in less energy efficient homes</p>
	<p>Provide and promote energy advice and support to low income families via community hubs; outreach via schools and as part of the financial wellbeing /welfare advice provision targeting families. (Fuel Poverty group and advice providers)</p>	<p>Financial Inclusion Development Fund, £5k. External Funding Existing resources</p>	<p>Number of households with children engaging via Home Energy Scotland Advice Line.</p> <p>No of families provided with face to face support via local providers (CABs; Money Matters; Care and Repair)</p>	<p>Low income households renting, including families with children and young people</p>



Change required	Action to achieve change and who is responsible (Partner/Resource)	Resources allocated	Measure (19/20)	Target Groups
2.6 Increase the financial wellbeing of families	Promote saving and access to affordable borrowing through credit unions (South Lanarkshire Credit Unions)	Existing resources Promotional activity	Number of Credit union adult and youth memberships including savings and loan balances. Number of employers signed up for payroll deductions	Children, young people and families
	Introduce Resilient Family Programme in rural South Lanarkshire (Healthy Valleys)	£73,943 (over 20 months) LEADER Programme funds	Number of families supported % of families with financial gains % of families reporting improved financial wellbeing	Low income families living in rural South Lanarkshire
	Improve internet broadband and mobile phone coverage by reviewing current digital infrastructure barriers and opportunities for improvements.	£150k (proposed) SLC	The number of people in South Lanarkshire with access to the internet	Low income families at risk of digital exclusion
2.7 Improve digital inclusion amongst families in the most deprived areas	Provide and promote free digital access and support to low income families to enable job search, benefits and other money related services. Undertake research to better understand needs and barriers. (Digital Inclusion Group)	Existing resources	No of free public internet access points No. of digital hubs and numbers of parents/families accessing. action research report produced	Low income families at risk of digital exclusion
	Ensure digital connectivity and access incorporated within East Whitlawburn regeneration masterplan delivery of new homes. (SLC Housing and Technical Resources)	Prioritised in the Regeneration Masterplan. Multi-phase development with multi-year grant funding (£13.63m) identified in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2019-24: £1.25m (2019/20) £7.60m (2020/21) £3.18m (2021/22) £1.60m (2022/23)	Digital connectivity will be incorporated within residential development in 100% of properties.	Low income families at risk of digital exclusion.



Change required	Action to achieve change and who is responsible (Partner/Resource)	Resources allocated	Measure (19/20)	Target Groups
<p>2.5 Prevent and reduce homelessness for households, including families with children and young people</p>	<p>Prioritise allocation of available housing for those in need, including homeless households and those with urgent medical needs and disabled people. (South Lanarkshire Council, Housing and Technical Resources; Registered Social Landlord (RSL) providers)</p>	<p>Integrated Housing Options Team Homelessness Services Registered Social Landlord (RSL) providers £1.38M</p>	<p>number (count) of homeless households with children Reduce the average time (days) spent as homelessness for households with children</p>	<p>Lone Parents and families with children and young people</p>
	<p>Improve and increase the provision of housing support for households to live independently within communities through programmes such as Breaking the Cycle and Shelter Families Project. (SLC Housing and Technical Resources; Y-People; Shelter; Health and Social Care)</p>	<p>Breaking the Cycle - £110,000 SLC Shelter families project - £148,770</p>	<p>No of families supported.</p>	<p>Lone Parents and families with children and young people</p>
	<p>Continue to implement joint-working through care protocol to prevent and reduce homelessness for care experienced young people (SLC Housing and Technical Resources; Social Work Resources)</p>	<p>included in Integrated Housing Options Team costs above.</p>	<p>No care experienced young people supported to plan for and move to independent living in the community</p>	<p>Looked after and care experienced young people</p>



Change required	Action to achieve change and who is responsible (Partner/Resource)	Resources allocated	Measure (19/20)	Target Groups
<p>2.8 Reduce food poverty amongst families</p>	<p>Extend the delivery of Breakfast Clubs. (SLC Education/Vol sector partners)</p> <p>Expansion of the programme of lunch clubs during school holiday periods. (SLC/SLLC/Vol sector partners)</p>	<p>£0.175m for further expansion</p> <p>£0.225 million for further expansion</p>	<p>numbers attending 2019/20</p> <p>numbers attending 2019 programmes</p>	<p>Children in the most deprived data zones -enabling families to meet the cost of living</p> <p>Children and young people in the most deprived data zones.</p>
<p>2.9 Improving support pathways to families in financial crisis through the reduction in the proportion of refused applications for SWF support from families with children an increased engagement with the financial wellbeing service</p>	<p>Development of a Food Strategy for South Lanarkshire including partnership actions to tackle food poverty. New Food Policy Officer post established (Food Strategy Group)</p> <p>Awareness raising with referral partners and public on the SWF criteria and process.</p> <p>Review of current Information Management system (Northgate) to provide better data to support improvement work linked to SWF and other crisis support processes.</p> <p>Increasing uptake of financial wellbeing advice and support by families accessing SWF (SLC Finance and Corporate Resources, Money Matters)</p>	<p>1 FTE Development post SLC</p> <p>Scottish Government £2,083,452 SLC £145,548</p>	<p>Food Strategy produced.</p> <p>% of families with children refused SWF awards.</p> <p>SWF referrals and no/% engaging with Money Matters/South Lanarkshire CABs (families with children)</p>	<p>Low income families.</p> <p>All 8 child poverty priority groups.</p>



Change required	Action to achieve change and who is responsible (Partner/Resource)	Resources allocated	Measure (19/20)	Target Groups
2.10 Reduce the costs of participation in Leisure and Culture experiences.	Targeted delivery of active schools programme (SLLC)	18 FTE Active Schools coordinators (funded by Sports Scotland, Education and SLLC) £789,528	No. and proportion of children and young people participating.	Children and young people in targeted communities.
2.11 Remove financial barriers to accessing sanitary protection.	Increase the uptake of the SLLC concession scheme through increased promotion and awareness. (SLLC)	SLLC marketing budget	Uptake of concessions.	Low income families.
	Distribute free emergency sanitary products within toilets across a wide range of public/community buildings, schools and facilities in all localities of South Lanarkshire. Establish distribution points for free packaged sanitary products in a wide range of community settings. (South Lanarkshire Council / Community Planning Partnership.)	Scottish Government £0.188m	No of distribution points for free emergency provision. No of distribution points for free packaged provision. Take-up of provision.	All residents. The packaged provision will be targeted at all low income groups including low income families.



Chapter 3

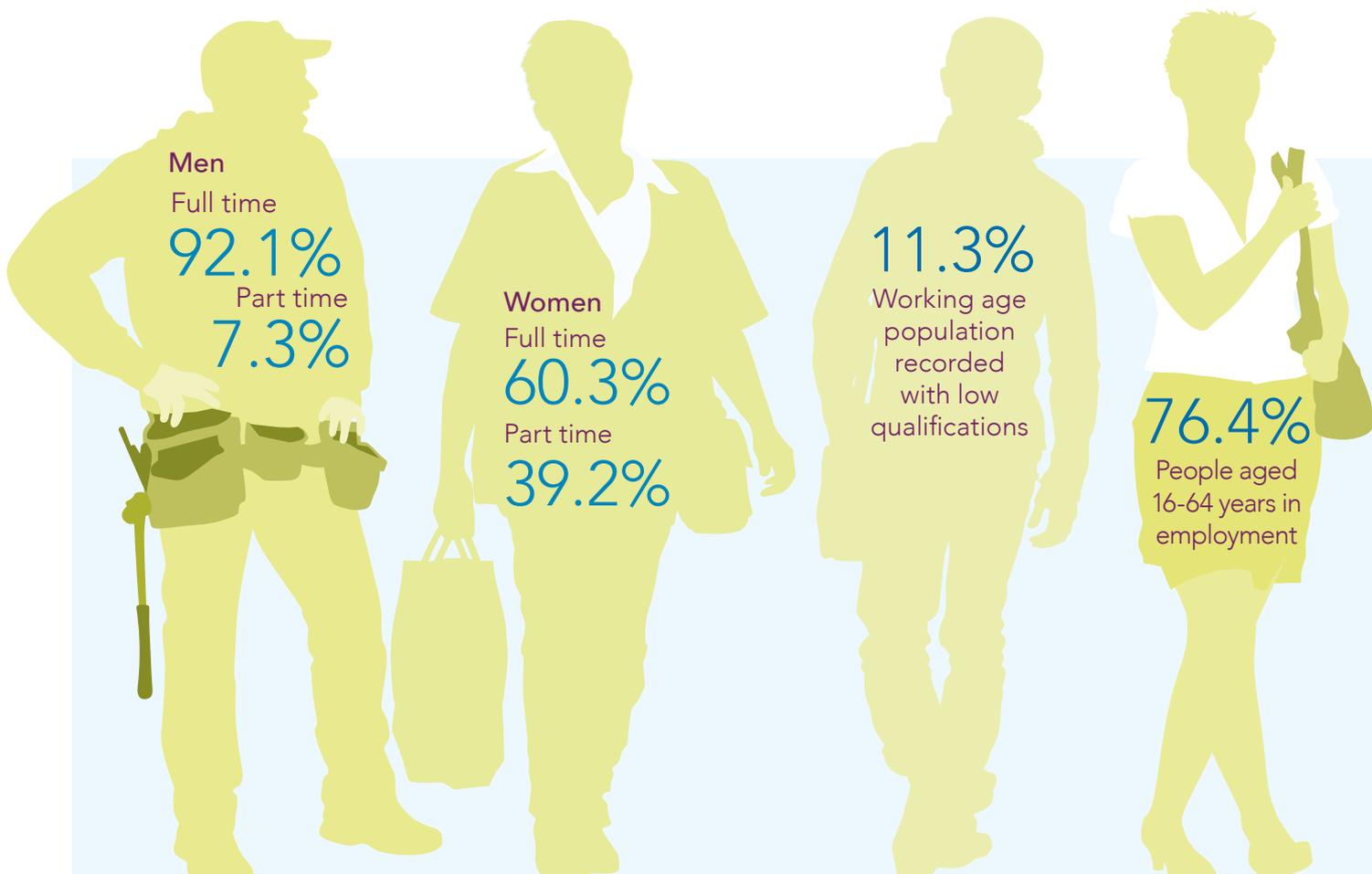
Increasing income from employment

Why is it important?

Increasing income from employment is key to tackling child poverty. Employment is good for health, however, in some areas, there are not enough jobs.

Personal circumstances, such as caring responsibilities and health, are barriers to finding work, as are individual factors such as lack of qualifications and work experience. Some groups of people face additional barriers to employment, such as, lone parents, some ethnic minority groups, those with a disability or long term condition, and those with complex needs such as addiction and homelessness.

Being in employment does not guarantee a route out of poverty. Some jobs do not provide sufficient pay or hours to provide enough income for families. Many jobs are insecure (such as those with zero-hour contracts) and offer limited workplace progression. Fair work practices and economic growth which benefits everyone is important. Parents need to be able to access high quality jobs with a decent rate of pay and with enough hours to meet their family's needs. Jobs should offer opportunities to progress, through training and support, with flexible work practices to ensure parents are able to balance work and the needs of their family.



Where are we now?

(2018/19 key actions/impacts)

South Lanarkshire's **Sustainable Economic Growth Board** is one of our four community planning thematic boards. The Board is currently progressing three priority outcomes all of which are contributing to increasing income for families and reducing child poverty levels

- A supportive business environment exists in South Lanarkshire.
- Employment and further education opportunities are maximised for South Lanarkshire's young people and
- Residents at greatest risk of poverty, whether in out of work receive the support they need to progress into work that pays and provides opportunities for progression.

Adult Employability Support

The employment rate stands at **76.4%**, one of the highest rates of employment recorded in South Lanarkshire.

Many parents are able to progress towards, into and within work with ease and with minimal support from agencies. However despite a high employment rate there are key challenges that remain.

The Local Employment Partnership (LEP) provides employability support to help those

in receipt of welfare benefits progress towards, into and within work. The majority of those supported receive help to address health, housing, financial and other barriers before employability issues can be addressed. This year, the Local Employment Partnership had engaged over **3,000 workless** people by December 2018.

We are currently improving our data capture and reporting procedures which will enable analysis of to what extent low income parents are engaging with support services however

23%

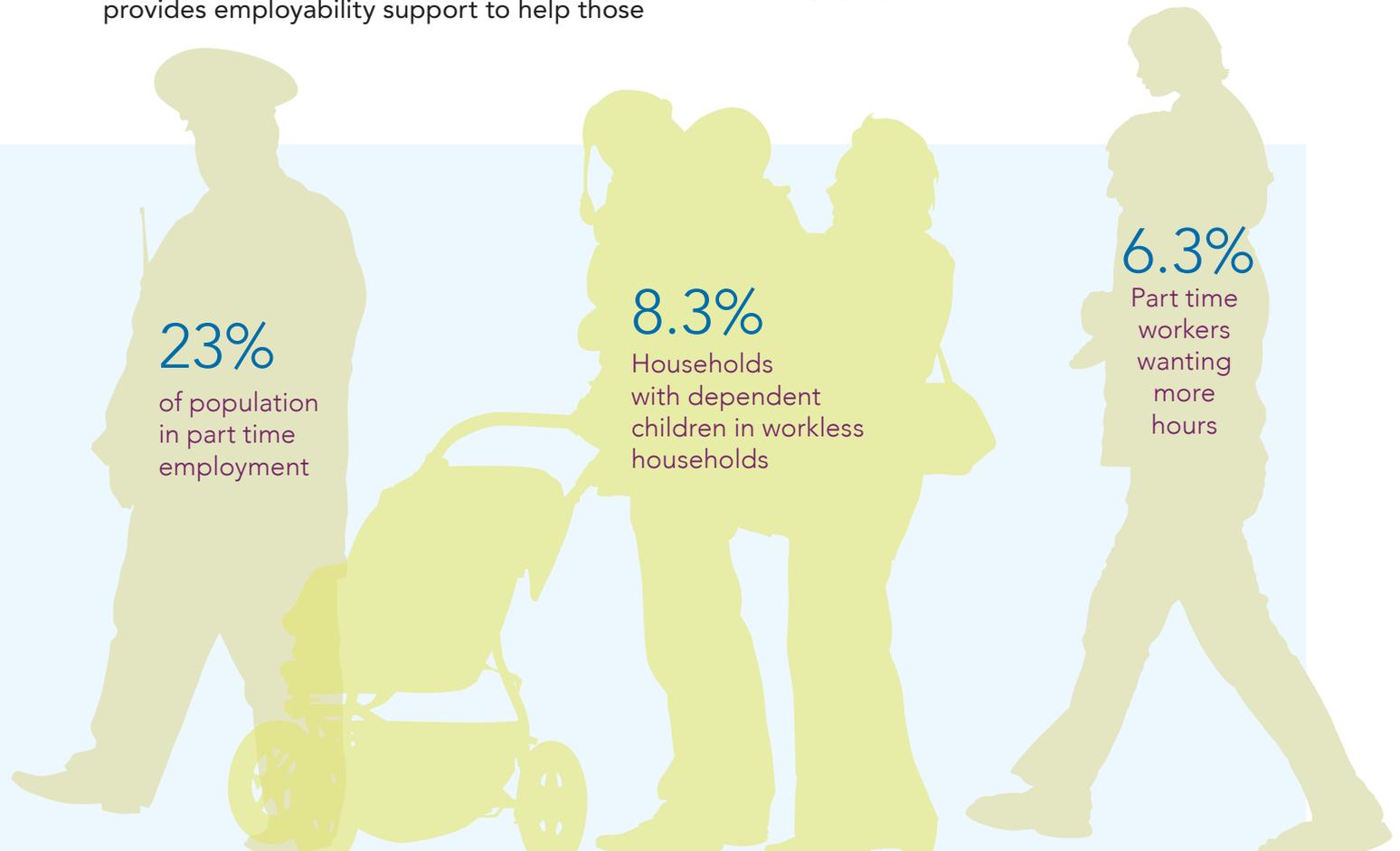
of population in part time employment

8.3%

Households with dependent children in workless households

6.3%

Part time workers wanting more hours



we know that many parents we work with come with a wide range of barriers and there is scope to do more to support them into secure and fairly paid work. We have been supporting some low paid working parents via upskilling programmes and have well documented cases where barriers to increasing pay can be even greater for those with family responsibilities. Caring for children can often limit the number of hours people can work and the distance you can travel for work. Key data to date suggest that those in work who transfer to Universal Credit are often finding themselves worse-off.

Youth Employability Support

As well as supporting parents into work, how we support our young people, in particular those more at risk of poverty is a key element of our LCPAR. South Lanarkshire delivers successful youth employability programmes, with additional support available for young people who need more support to reach and sustain a positive destination.

Over the past four years we have realigned and targeted resources to achieve and maintain the strong progress made. With the creation up of the Youth Employability Service within Education Resources we now have 35 staff allocated to supporting these improved outcomes for young people with an annual budget of approx. £2.2million. (Made of Council and Government funds and additional funds from European Social Fund)

In 2016/17 95.8% of school leavers were in a positive destination (above the national average of 93.7% and up from 94.1% in 2015/16). At six month follow up, 94.3% of young people were in a positive destination, higher than the national average.

The Annual Participation Measure shows that in 2018 92.5% of South Lanarkshire's 16-19 year olds were participating in learning, training or employment. This is higher than the national average of 91.8% which illustrates the progress made in South Lanarkshire.

The Aspire Youth Employability Service ensures young people who are most vulnerable are

supported to achieve and sustain a positive destination by creating a 'one stop shop' of employability programmes, tracking and monitoring. Aspire support young people who are six months from their official leaving date and who need additional support to achieve and sustain a smooth transition to a positive destination (either S4 summer leavers or S5 winter leavers). In addition to this any young person in S5/6 who are assessed as needing additional support to achieve and sustain a positive destination can also be referred.

This year Aspire has supported 582 young people each one via a bespoke programme which may include, work experience, vocational tasters, employability skills, volunteering or health and wellbeing interventions.

Through the Community Plan (LOIP) the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) it has highlighted the need for all services to target resources towards tackling poverty and reducing inequalities and to strive to close the gap in outcomes for children and families from the 20% most deprived areas. This target is also at the heart of the Children's Service Plan and we have set ourselves some key targets to achieve a reduction in the gap between school leavers from the most deprived localities compared to their peers in the 20% least deprived areas. Youth Employability provision has been targeted to young people from the 20% most deprived areas over the last three years and we are starting to see some strong progress. In 2017-2018, the South Lanarkshire figure of positive destinations achieved by the young people in the 20% most deprived areas was 93.2%. This is the highest figure recorded since figures became available and it is above the national average of 90.4%, for the 20% most deprived areas.

In addition to this the Care Experienced Employability Focus Group made up of key partners takes place every 6 weeks where partners meet to identify trends and needs, to look at what supports could be offered and to close the gap between Care Experienced young people and their peers. This has a dedicated monitoring and tracking system in place for every young person who is Care Experienced within South Lanarkshire.



Tackling In Work Poverty

South Lanarkshire's Living Wage Campaign Group has had a number of key successes to celebrate this year. NHS Lanarkshire became the first Living Wage Accredited geographic Health Board in Scotland and South Lanarkshire Council received the Living Wage Champion Award at the Scottish Living Wage Awards. The proportion of residents (2017) earning below the living wage had reduced to 18% (from 20.1%, 2010) sitting below the Scottish level (18.4%) and the number of local employers that have achieved Living Wage Accreditation has increased to 68, the second highest level in Scotland outside the two major city areas.

Our partnership campaign has included changes to procurement processes; staff awareness raising activity of in work poverty and the Living Wage; direct promotion to employers at local business events and via local promotional materials; and ongoing PR activity to maintain awareness, interest and commitment. Disappointingly the most recent data (2018) suggests the proportion of South Lanarkshire employees earning below the Living Wage has now increased to 20.3%, the highest figure recorded for six years and the first time that South Lanarkshire has recorded a higher rate than the national average.

The Glasgow City Region City Deal funds major infrastructure projects with a range of benefits to the Region. Within South Lanarkshire, as one of the eight participating local authorities we are delivering 3 key roads infrastructure projects and four community growth areas. Through these developments and other key capital projects/regeneration programmes including Clyde Gateway, we are creating new jobs, assisting people back to work, improving public transport and connectivity and driving business innovation and growth.

South Lanarkshire Council is also the lead for the Skills and Employment Portfolio Group for the Glasgow City Region work stream. The group has developed and consulted on a city region-wide Skills Investment Plan that will provide useful labour market intelligence to inform employability delivery going forward.

NHS Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire Council are the largest employers in South Lanarkshire. They are committed to the national Fair Work Framework and are Living Wage Accredited employers. A range of policies exist to support this, including, flexible working, and health safety and wellbeing, and employee assistance and recognition schemes.

Both NHS Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire Council consider corporate and social responsibility factors when evaluating tenders and procuring services, in order to recognise employers who pay the real living wage, employ local people through apprenticeship schemes, or are involved with local charities. In 2017/18, 21% of trade spend by NHS Lanarkshire was with suppliers based within the Lanarkshire area (target 25%) and £2.47m of £213m core trade spend (1.16%) was with Living Wage accredited employers (this does not include suppliers where aggregate annual spend was less than £1,000 or spend via national procurement mechanisms). It should also be noted that a proportion of trade spend will be with suppliers who pay the Living Wage but are not yet accredited.

Within NHS Lanarkshire, supported employment opportunities are provided through Modern Apprenticeships and Project Search, which offers employment to around 24 individuals per year who have an additional support need. NHS Lanarkshire also offers pre-employment programmes, through New College Lanarkshire and the Princes Trust to those who may be further from employment due to life circumstances. Similarly South Lanarkshire Council provides Modern Apprenticeships, supported employment and employment opportunities. In 2018/19, South Lanarkshire Council increased its apprenticeship programme to 130 with an extra 50 places in Early Years and 35 in Social Care. Effective partnerships with internal council resources have been established to better link council vacancies and unemployed people participating in local employability programmes.



Key areas for improvement

Work has commenced on the development of a new Economic Strategy for South Lanarkshire which will focus on achieving inclusive growth through all three of the strategies themes of Business, People and Place.

The Sustainable Economic Growth Board has committed to maximising the impact of the strategy and associated action plan on local child poverty levels. In particular, the strategy will seek to:

- **Reduce the income and employment gap between the most and least economically deprived residents and communities.** It will do this through improving our employability support towards, into and within work for low income families. The time is ripe for this as partners at a local and national level work to implement “No One Left Behind: Next Steps for the Integration and Alignment of Employability Support in Scotland’ (Scottish Government, 2018). This plan recognises that the current service offer is fragmented and is confusing and hard to navigate for those requiring help. Instead what is proposed will be a less cluttered and more effective and joined-up employability support offer in South Lanarkshire with a focus on person-centred employability support.
- This will include a new **Working with Families** model that will focus on a “whole system” approach to tackling inequality and poverty for low income parents. A designated key worker approach has proven to work well along with a case management model that will take a holistic approach to helping parents back into the labour market. Every parent will work with their case worker to design their own pathway to sustainable employment.

The model will encompass connections with Health, Criminal Justice, Housing and Education and will include a training needs assessment on developing a training plan that will help parents attain qualifications and attain key employability skills to enter and sustain employment. The employability services may vary in duration dependent on individual need and will include an accredited motivational programme to empower parents to take control of their futures. A discretionary fund will operate that will provide a dynamic flexible purchasing of provision to cater for every need. Our support to parents will continue beyond moving into employment where required. We will work with the employers as well as parents to enable career progression and increased earning potential.
- **Further develop our youth employability support** to ensure that all young people (regardless of their circumstances) have the opportunity to achieve and sustain a positive destination.
- **Build on our Living Wage Campaign,** including doing more through procurement and grant making processes.
- **Maximise the contribution to reducing child poverty levels of major economic development/inclusive growth approaches** such as City Region and Clyde Gateway.
- **Maximising our contribution to increasing income.** As the largest employers in South Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire Council and NHS Lanarkshire will maintain their commitment to the Fair Work Framework and explore how best to reduce levels of underemployment amongst key staff groups. South Lanarkshire Council will build on its targeted recruitment roadshows to encourage new recruits into council employment opportunities working in partnership to widen participation from underrepresented groups to take up employment within the council including low parents from all the child poverty target groups.

Working in partnership, both employers will ensure that their role as Corporate Parents are maximised and that care experienced young people are offered suitable work placements and employment opportunities, where these are suitable to a young person’s needs and aspirations.



Table 3: Increasing income from Employment Action Plan 2019/20

Change required	Action to achieve change and who is responsible (Partner/Resource)	Resources allocated	Measure (for 19/20)	Target groups
<p>3.1 Enhance employment support for parents on low incomes utilising a case management approach</p>	<p>Develop and deliver a Working with Families model that focuses on a whole system approach to tackling inequality and poverty for parents who are in receipt of low income (SLC in partnership with local service providers tbc)</p>	<p>Expected proportional allocation of £12m national budget outlined in the Scottish Government Child Poverty Delivery Plan.</p>	<p>Number of parents engaged. Number of parents gaining access to quality employment opportunities. Further measures to be defined following Scottish Government guidance/criteria.</p>	<p>Low income families with a focus on the child poverty priority groups.</p>
	<p>Support parents from deprived areas to become registered childminders (SLC in partnership with Scottish Childminders Association)</p>	<p>Expected proportional allocation of £12m national budget outlined in the Scottish Government Child Poverty Delivery Plan.</p>	<p>No. Childminding Business start-ups in lowest 15% SIMD areas.</p>	<p>Families in most deprived areas.</p>
	<p>Support and up-skill parents in low skilled/income jobs to enhance their career opportunities. (SLC and partners)</p>	<p>Estimated £55,000</p>	<p>No parents with increased skills. No. of parents reporting improved career opportunities. No. of parents with increased income.</p>	<p>Low income families in most deprived areas.</p>

Change required	Action to achieve change and who is responsible (Partner/Resource)	Resources allocated	Measure (for 19/20)	Target groups
<p>3.2 Reduce the outcome gap in positive destinations between young people from the most and least deprived areas</p>	<p>Continue to work to close the gap in outcomes for young people in the most deprived data zones and their peers in the least deprived data zones</p>	<p>Core Council Funding, Scottish Government Funding, European Social Funding/ Skills Development Scotland Funding</p> <p>Circ £2.2 m</p>	<p>Percentage reduction in the gap of positive destination outcomes for young people in the most deprived data zones and their peers in the least deprived data zones</p>	<p>Young people in the most deprived communities</p>
	<p>Continue to ensure that the multi-agency tracking group supports care experienced young people with post school destinations.</p>		<p>Percentage reduction in the gap for destination outcomes for care experienced young people (linked to the national average)</p>	<p>Care experienced young people</p>
	<p>Work to streamline the referral pathway and ensure bespoke packages of employability support is available for all care experienced young people.</p>		<p>Number of young people from South Lanarkshire offered work placements/employment opportunities in NHS Lanarkshire.</p>	<p>Care experienced young people</p>
<p>3.3 Maximise the contribution to reducing child poverty from the City Region approach.</p>	<p>NHS Lanarkshire will establish a process in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council, to ensure care experienced young people are offered appropriate work placements and employment opportunities within the organisation.</p> <p>To work collaboratively with the 8 local authorities to identify specific actions. This will include the use of the new benefits system to report, manage and assess community benefits linked to capital projects, with potential roll out to council contracts outwith City Region. (SLC and City Region LAs).</p>	<p>£2,400 (benefits licence)</p> <p>Further resource detail will follow the identification of specific actions.</p>	<p>City Region Child Poverty Actions agreed/implemented</p>	<p>Low income families</p>



Change required	Action to achieve change and who is responsible (Partner/Resource)	Resources allocated	Measure (for 19/20)	Target groups
<p>3.4 Increase the proportion of South Lanarkshire employees being paid the Living Wage.</p>	<p>Broaden scope of Living Wage promotion activity to a Lanarkshire wide campaign. Target medium/large employers within low paying sectors including Living Wage Accreditation discount scheme. (Lanarkshire Living Wage Campaign group)</p>	<p>Promotional Budget of £3k (including Living Wage Discount Scheme costs), (SLC Financial Inclusion Development budget)</p>	<p>Proportion of South Lanarkshire employees earning below the Living Wage. No of Lanarkshire Accredited employers.</p>	<p>Low income families</p>
<p>3.5 NHS Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire Council will exploit their potential as large employing organisations and procurers of services to maximise income through employment for low income families.</p>	<p>NHS Lanarkshire and SLC will continue to monitor (and where possible increase) the proportion of trade spend to Living Wage/ Living Wage accredited employers and will explore an increase in trade spend to Supported Business Where opportunities arise, South Lanarkshire Council and NHS Lanarkshire will be proactive in reducing levels of underemployment amongst key staff groups South Lanarkshire Council will build on its targeted recruitment roadshows to encourage low income parents, into council employment opportunities, working in partnership to widen participation from underrepresented groups – (South Lanarkshire Council)</p>	<p>Within existing resources.</p> <p>Within existing resources.</p>	<p>Proportion of trade spend to Living Wage accredited suppliers. Proportion of trade spend to Lanarkshire based suppliers. Proportion of trade spend to Supported Businesses. Number of staff supported to increase contracted hours. Numbers of low income parents engaged via roadshows. Numbers of applications for employment resulting from engagement. Nos successful in accessing employment.</p>	<p>Low income/ disabled/ex-offenders</p> <p>Low income families</p> <p>Low income families, with a focus on single parents and others with barriers to employment.</p>



9 Links to associated plans and policies

Please copy the link into your web browser to access document



Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017

www.healthscotland.scot/media/2184/child-poverty-act-overview-oct2018.pdf

Scottish Government Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2018-22

www.gov.scot/Publications/2018/03/4093/0

Scottish Government Child Poverty Delivery Plan Guidance

<http://bit.ly/2LvmSsi>

Fairer Scotland Action Plan

<https://www2.gov.scot/fairerscotland>

South Lanarkshire Child Poverty Profile (May 2019)

<http://bit.ly/2DVmu03>

South Lanarkshire's Community Plan 2017-27

<http://bit.ly/2JoGtHP>

South Lanarkshire Children's Services Plan

www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/childrens_services_plan

South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Commissioning Plan

<http://bit.ly/2vMP7YC>

South Lanarkshire's Economic Strategy

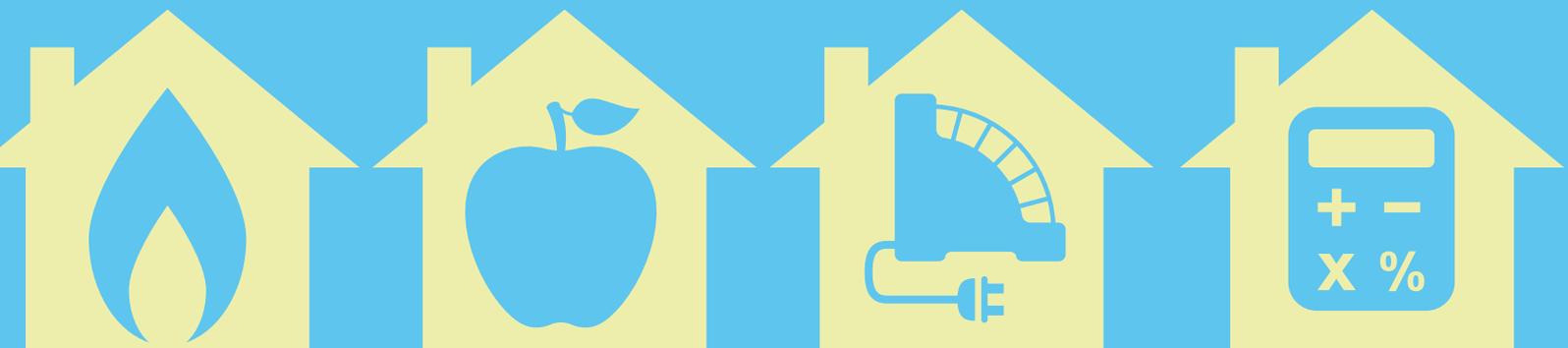
<http://bit.ly/2H6De59>

South Lanarkshire Local Housing Strategy

www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/local_housing_strategy



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please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.
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