



A Scotland Where Everyone Matters



**CHURCH ACTION
ON POVERTY**

***A report on CAP's Scottish
Poverty Indicators Project***

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Contents

Introduction: ‘A Scotland where everyone matters’	3
Local Groups: Dispatches from the Frontline	3
Regional Meetings	4
National Meeting	4
Acknowledgements	4
Section One: Poverty Indicators Group Responses	5
Why participation often doesn’t work?	5
Introduction	5
Methodology	5
Glasgow Braendam Link	6
Drumchapel One-Up Family Centre	12
All Party Parliamentary Group on Poverty: Poverty Indicators	13
Section Two: Regional Meetings	
Responses from Glasgow, Edinburgh, Inverness and Castle Douglas	14
Local Poverty concerns	15
Regional Meetings	17
Hopeful signs	17
Gaps - what’s missing	19
Proposals for change	21
Issues for Churches	23
Section Three: Scottish Meeting	24
Conclusion	26
Appendix 1: Social Justice Strategy	27
Appendix 2: People involved in the project	28

Introduction: ‘A Scotland where everyone matters’

‘People don’t choose to be poor or to live in poverty. In most cases it is through a series of circumstances; illness, death, unemployment or disability. So people should not feel stigmatised – yet they very often are.’

These are the words of someone speaking from experience. It’s because of her experience, and the experience of thousands of people like her that the Church Action on Poverty Participation and Poverty Indicators project came into existence. In the struggle to bring about a Scotland where truly everyone matters, in which everyone is included, a country of social justice, there is an important place for the voice of experience as well as the voice of theory and analysis; and perhaps the voice of experience can do some of its own analysis, without necessarily reaching the same conclusions.

We recognise this generally in our society- quangos and committees are set up including the great and the good because they are considered to have expertise and skills in a particular area, whether that be brain surgery or public relations, town planning or the arms trade. We aren’t always so good at recognising the expertise that comes from years of experiencing what it’s like to live below the poverty line, or the skills that are developed in trying to make the weekly giro stretch to cover every eventuality, from school trips to unexpected illness and deaths, from the weekly shopping to the cooker that refuses to work a day longer.

I heard one government minister at Westminster claim that consulting such experts couldn’t be done because the people involved wouldn’t be representative. Perhaps he meant that they hadn’t been elected – though I have never heard that quango members generally have to submit to election! He surely couldn’t have meant that there weren’t plenty of people who shared the same experience!

But with the advent of the new Parliament, the people of Scotland have been invited to do things differently. Openness, listening, consultation and the invitation to partnership and dialogue were to be the marks of the new order, and many people from all parts of Scotland and on a whole range of issues have already taken part in this democratic process. On issues of poverty and social inclusion too, many groups and organisations have been consulted and heard. This is a process that takes time, and careful planning as to what the best way of involving people is. It’s to be hoped that

the time this takes and some of the challenges this presents don’t mean that such consultation gradually slips down or even off the agenda because it’s not efficient or cost-effective.

Local Groups: Dispatches from the Frontline

But it was with this invitation to dialogue and partnership in mind that Church Action on Poverty planned the process outlined in this report. It happened in three stages. The first involved several months of work by two local Glasgow groups, one in Govan with members of Glasgow Braendam Link and one in Drumchapel with users of the One-Up Family Centre there. These groups explored in considerable detail, recorded here, what they think it means to live in poverty in Scotland today-what that feels like, what the consequences of that are, what the difficulties are, and how they would like their lives to be. It should be noted that these records are not really research; they are accounts, you might call them dispatches, from the front line.

All of the people involved had strong views and remarkably informed opinions, based on years of experience, and mostly their experiences were not the kind that we would choose to have. Constant worry and anxiety, going without the smallest luxuries, poor housing and environmental conditions, insecurity in every aspect of life, debt, feeling continually judged, often being dependent on other people’s assessment of you who may have very little knowledge of your circumstances, all amounting to what one person described as ‘being forced to live in a situation of planned uncertainty.’ Being refused an ordinary bank account because ‘you’re unemployed, you don’t need one’, having people organise meetings about you at three days notice without asking you whether the date is suitable because what could **you** have to do that matters, are routine experiences for a lot of people. It’s really easy to forget that fact.

The Dundee Anti-Poverty Forum has just produced ‘Poverty in Dundee’, an account of people’s views and experiences, which starts from the same basic premise. It spoke to 100 people in Dundee, in work that is ongoing. The responses are remarkably in line with those of the Glasgow groups; they are speaking the same language.

This part of the process ended with some of the group members attending a meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Poverty at Westminster on the issue of poverty indicators, and contributing their own input to the discussion there. At that meeting, the then Minister for Work and Pensions, Alistair Darling MP announced a national consultation on child poverty indicators, and group members from Glasgow also took part in helping to formulate the APPG's own response to the consultation.

Regional Meetings

'Social justice is at the heart of the work of the Scottish Executive' states the Social Justice Annual Report for 2001. It has set ambitious goals in an approach based on preventing poverty happening in the first place and promoting social inclusion.

Many churches in Scotland have in-depth knowledge and experience of both urban and rural poverty, and have initiated or become involved in action to address the problems and consequences of poverty and social exclusion. Churches are working together in a range of projects to combat poverty and social exclusion, and numerous individual Christians are working with great commitment in local voluntary and statutory initiatives. To look at how the Executive's strategy is working, the next stage involved a number of regional meetings, in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Inverness and Castle Douglas, with three main objectives:

- ✿ To share experience, information and hopes for promoting social justice and overcoming poverty
- ✿ To allow the voices of those with direct experience to be heard
- ✿ To draw on people's experience and knowledge to make a constructive critique of the Social Justice Strategy

The regional meetings were variously shaped by local experience and concerns. In this process, CAP sought to respond to the invitation to partnership made in the Social Justice Report, in contributing to the connection of national and local priorities. In planning these meetings, we were building on the already existing commitment of churches and other community groups to overcoming poverty and social exclusion and to making an informed contribution to social policy.

The responses from the regional meetings have no statistic significance. They are simply the sharing of experience, by people who live in poverty and by people who, mostly voluntarily, work in support and user-groups. Often these are the same people. About 110 people took part in these events.

National Meeting

This meeting was the final event in the process, bringing together some of the participants from each stage, along with others. At the start of the process, the then Social Justice Minister, Iain Gray MSP, had agreed to respond at the Scottish meeting. However, a Scottish government reshuffle, combined with some spectacular bureaucratic incompetence, left us without our keynote respondent a week before the event..with no ministerial alternative suggested, nor indeed, any alternative.

We were therefore extremely grateful to Johann Lamont MSP, the Convener of the cross-party Social Justice Committee of the Scottish Parliament, for agreeing to be the respondent at very short notice. Though of course unable to speak for the Executive, she brought a very informed perspective and commitment within this area of concern, and was able to involve people in a positive way in looking at the political process in Scotland, especially people whose experience of being let down by politicians inclines them to cynicism and suspicion. We also appreciated the presence of a senior civil servant from the Social Justice Department, who, while unable to speak formally, was nevertheless encouraging of future dialogue.

Acknowledgements

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Kathy Galloway, September 2002

Section One:

Poverty Indicators Group Responses

Introduction

The first meeting of the group laid out the stages of the programme. It was the follow-up to initial meetings held with Glasgow Braendram Link and the One-Up Family Centre to lay out the intentions of the CAP Poverty and Participation programme, and to identify a group of people who would be interested in taking part.

1. Introductions, groundrules (respect, listening, confidentiality, 'holy ground'-the belief that when people share in this way, they are offering something significant of themselves, and it should be honoured)
2. Starting where we are: sharing our experience, telling our stories
3. Sharing feelings about our experiences
4. Analysing our experience
5. Sharing our vision: what we'd like to see happen
6. Practical proposals
7. Looking at the government's Social Justice Strategy: how does it measure up?
8. Meeting with other groups
9. Meeting with policy-makers.

The indicators group had an additional review time built in at the end of each meeting to comment and reflect on the process and methodology of each meeting.

Why participation often doesn't work?

After agreeing the programme, the group spent some time thinking about why people don't participate in existing mechanisms for consultations. These include

- ✿ People are just looking for a support group/club
- ✿ People are not ready to speak
- ✿ People are 'sitting on the outside'
- ✿ People lack confidence
- ✿ People think 'what's the point?'
- ✿ Powerlessness
- ✿ People need 'a carrot, not a stick'

The meeting ended with a commitment to enter the process.

Methodology

Each meeting began with a short conversation around an image or picture relating to the subject, to open up the discussion and catch people's imagination. This allowed people to lead into their own experience and the feelings evoked by it in a natural way. Throughout all the group meetings, the process always followed the same progress of questions:

Objective:

the data. That could be the experience, the event, what happened, etc. The given, concrete reality. In these sessions, it applied first to the image or picture used – and then to people's own experience.

Reflective:

how people felt about it, the emotions, sense impressions, feelings it evoked in them.

Interpretive:

how the data related to their own experience, what it meant to them, its significance, how they understood or interpreted it.

Active:

what they would choose to do about it; their response, the action needed.

Glasgow Braendam Link

An opening conversation on three images by the Glasgow poet Tom Leonard, - 'for those of us who have to live outside the narrative' - led on to the question:

'What does the word 'poverty' mean to you?'

- ☀ 'without having', eg, without health, welfare, nourishment
- ☀ powerless
- ☀ isolated
- ☀ degraded
- ☀ angry –it's totally fixable
- ☀ it's a desired condition, not an accident; it's in someone's interest that people are poor
- ☀ there's profit in other people's poverty
- ☀ lack of control of your life
- ☀ you're a scapegoat when there's no war or external

enemy

- ☀ scrutinised and judged
- ☀ being looked down on
- ☀ it dehumanises people
- ☀ making people anti-social
- ☀ hopelessness and helplessness
- ☀ not just about money
- ☀ capitalism makes poverty
- ☀ survival
- ☀ not able to live as human beings
- ☀ people take over your life (council, etc)
- ☀ in poverty, people are not needed
- ☀ existence
- ☀ strain on family life

From this list, the group then identified what they saw as key poverty indicators for them.

GLASGOW BRAENDAM LINK: INDICATORS OF POVERTY

1) Inadequate Income - 'not enough money'

- ☀ Slum housing
- ☀ Living on 20% (benefit levels, down from 30% national average wage in 1970s)
- ☀ Single parents penalised
- ☀ Consumer pressures
- ☀ Debt/easy credit
- ☀ Extortionate interest rates, penalising poor people
- ☀ Can't afford to use local amenities
- ☀ Low wages

2) Work/Welfare

- ☀ Long-term unemployment
- ☀ Welfare state dependency
- ☀ Inadequate benefit/subsistence
- ☀ Youth unemployment

3) Expectations

- ☀ Studying is penalised
- ☀ Social pressure into early sexual activity
- ☀ Children robbed of childhood

4) Health

- ☀ Depression/health effects
- ☀ Crap supermarkets, low quality food
- ☀ No fuel allowance for single-parent families
- ☀ Vulnerable to drug dealers
- ☀ Media glorification of alcohol
- ☀ Worse health treatment

5) Standards

- ☀ Double standards
- ☀ Disrespectful services
- ☀ Information is held on you

Each of the categories was then examined in depth.

GROUP ONE: INADEQUATE INCOME

- ✿ Slum housing
- ✿ Living on 20% (benefit levels are about 20% of the national average wage, down from 30% in the 1970s)
- ✿ Single parents penalised
- ✿ Consumer pressures
- ✿ Debt/easy credit
- ✿ Extortionate interest rates, penalising poor people
- ✿ Can't afford to use local amenities
- ✿ Low wages

The role of money in people's lives

- Thinking about it constantly
- Making it last
- Wondering who to tap
- Waking up one morning without any
- Going without it
- Worrying about it
- Being angry about being on Income Support because of circumstances beyond my control
- Never being able to afford decent stuff
- Always being in debt, or behind
- Not having it
- The rich, talking about how poor people use their money
- Rich people have a choice of credit
- Worrying about power, gas, etc
- Good for shareholders – power cards cost more
- Money brings power
- Making the rich richer
- Exploited
- Unprotected, in low wages
- No claims
- Low wages/slave labour
- Poor need to be kept poor
- Media stereotypes of poverty
- Issues about the media-how people are shown-should it always be the worst, to shock society into awareness, or does this reinforce stereotypes?

- Not being independent
- No chance to save money – penalised

What is enough? Enough for what?

- A change of shoes for the kids
- Enough for kids' equipment for school PE, etc
- Better clothing grants?
- Enough for a wee bit to put away
- Give you the money to buy, not rent
- Equivalent to average wage
- Having some choices
 - o About housing
 - o About schooling
 - o About where to shop-decent, fresh food
- The downside of capitalism

What changes would you like to see?

- A fairer distribution of income/wealth through taxation
- Recognising the value of caring – for kids, elderly, sick people
- Support for carers – holidays, etc
- Training, investing in your future
- Getting groups of people together to get the best out of the system
- LETS/Skillbanks/Credit Unions
- Black economy-positive/negative, vulnerable to exploitation, hard to get out of
- Problems of illegal drugs culture
- Putting money back into communities it came from
- Revamping the Social Fund
- Getting rid of the moneylenders
- Checks on easy credit
- Able to earn a bit more without losing benefit
- Able to earn a bit more, but tax it higher

Skills acquired in dealing with money

- ✿ Budgeting
- ✿ Learning to manage
- ✿ Being resourceful
- ✿ Being organised
- ✿ Learning to cook

GROUP TWO: WORK/WELFARE

Long-term unemployment
Welfare state dependency
Inadequate benefit/subsistence
Youth unemployment

What role does paid work play in your life?

- Want to go to work
- Have to juggle things
- Have to take steps before going to work
- confidence building
- uncertainty; could I manage
- what would happen to the kids
- into the unknown; scary
- dealing with the stress and pressure
- childcare, making meal arrangements, etc
- if it didn't work out, back to square one

Positive things about paid work

- Managing
- Feeling good
- Feeling that you're putting something back in
- Something to look forward to
- The end of the week – pay check, enjoying the weekend
- Able to eat healthier
- Different kinds of worry
- Buy new, not second-hand

Negative things about paid work

- Low pay
- Childcare-not affordable (£140 a week!)
- Is the job secure?
- Pressures of work
- Obligations to other people

Barriers to work

- Money – low wages
- Inexperience
- Lack of skills

- Lack of training opportunities (apprenticeships, etc)
- Your age (too old or too young!)
- Child care
- Lack of confidence
- Travelling costs (time and money)

Long-term unemployed

- Age
- Inexperience
- Skills no longer needed
- Gaps in your CV
- Bad training experiences (1 local person out of 45 got a job-IMAX)
- Done training but no job – makes you downhearted
- Changing attitudes about gender
- Retraining several times but no job

Youth unemployment

- Not willing to work for a pittance-want proper wages
- Getting exploited-laid off after a year
- Casualisation of work, therefore no benefits
- Companies profiting from training schemes
- Empire-building by government schemes
- Jobs not there for them, only schemes
- (keeps you permanently dependent, unable to join adult world)
- 16-year olds being exploited

Single parents

- Childcare
- Wanting to be with your children
- Employers assuming you'll be unreliable

Changes we'd like to see

- Give people the childcare money to look after their own kids
- Valuing looking after children at all stages
- Better support for parents and parenting
- Effects on political system, voting etc (people, esp. young, are disillusioned)

- Apprenticeships
- Training that leads to proper jobs
- Some way of rewarding people who do training
- Payments for people going back into work is a good thing
- An end to punishment of responsible parents
- Commitment to safe jobs – several years
- Knowing your kids are ok
- A way of overcoming CV gaps –some kind of retainer scheme?
- More power for local people
- More use of local labour-not privatised
- Part-time jobs should be 16 hours, to qualify for Family Credit, not 14 hours
- More understanding from the government

GROUP THREE: EXPECTATIONS

- ☀ Studying is penalised
- ☀ Social pressure into early sexual activity
- ☀ Children robbed of childhood

Expectations that today's children and youth have of their parents

- Different awareness between primary and secondary school –age
- Expectations depend on the parent's lifestyle
- Parents are supposed to have the answer to everything
- Parents are supposed to have enough money
- Young children don't understand the value of things
- Parents are expected to be like their (children's) pals' parents
- Protecting children or explaining things?
- Kids wonder about why they don't have certain things
- Pressures of advertising
- Different expectations of different generations
- Is poverty today the same as it used to be?
- High expectations of material possessions
- Too much pressure in the schools

Expectations that we had

- Never had any expectations
- Expected to be independent
- Just getting through from day to day
- Women – marriage, kids, house
- Men –breadwinner (changed through unemployment)
- Clear expectations of roles
- Expecting our children to succeed
- Worrying about how we fail
- Resentment
- Generational expectations very powerful
- More family oriented
- What you haven't learned, you can't teach
- Sunday dinner
- School – where you go to give your mum a break
- 'don't try –you'll fail'

Positive expectations we'd like for our children

- You can do anything!
- Stick in at school
- Happiness – finding a place to belong
- Being at peace with yourself
- Confidence in yourself
- Respect for others, especially for difference
- To aim high, get what you want in life
- Self-respect
- Openness and knowledge and education about sexuality

Challenges

- Streets not safe – traffic, strangers, not knowing the neighbours
- Single-parent families – kids having to grow up too soon
- Peer-group pressure
- Consumerism – money-driven

Helpful messages

- We are not immortal – we are flesh and blood
- Looking to the future in a positive way things can change

- looking forward – seeing your family grow up
- learning from mistakes: lifelong learning
- learning from your children

GROUP FOUR: HEALTH

- ☀ Depression/health effects
- ☀ Crap supermarkets, low quality food
- ☀ No fuel allowance for single-parent families
- ☀ Vulnerable to drug dealers
- ☀ Media glorification of alcohol
- ☀ Worse health treatment

‘The picture of health’

- fit
- well
- looking happy
- football players, athletes
- active
- good medical care
- good, healthy diets
- people who take care of themselves

Barriers to good health

- Diet best during the war
- Kids won’t eat traditional healthy food if they don’t get it at school
- Parents not able to feed their kids properly
- Mental health problems
- Blocking things out
- Mixed messages on alcohol
- Glamorising drunks
- Money in alcohol, tobacco, drugs, ‘luxury foods’
- Chips, chips and more chips

Solutions

- Better housing
 - Dry
 - Properly heated
 - Decent plumbing
 - Repairs carried out

- More local hospitals
- Good diet in schools for kids
- Physical activity
- ‘a living wage’
- Breakfast clubs
- Education about health and about
- Helping people to reach their potential
- Developing potential
- Being treated as human beings looking for the best, not settling for the worst
- Bring back apprenticeships
- Improve lifestyles

GROUP FIVE: STANDARDS

- ☀ Double standards
- ☀ Disrespectful services
- ☀ Information is held on you

Our experience of **Double Standards**

- People are judged by appearances, clothes, accents, addresses/postcodes, carrier bags! occupation, etc, regardless of actual facts, so:
 - One person gets a loan, another doesn’t
 - Made to feel inadequate in certain shops – ‘not a typical M&S customer’
 - Stigma – where delivery vans, taxis, etc, won’t go
 - It puts you off asking!
 - Troublemakers are not dealt with, so a whole area is stigmatised
 - Different standards for Govan and Bearsden
 - Double standards on signing the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
 - Double standards on Child Support Agency
 - Double standards on whether you are a working tenant or a benefits tenant, council or private
 - Double standards on single parents – ‘feckless’, ‘can’t be trusted’
 - Made to feel like a child-not treated as an adult
 - Supported = childlike
 - ‘It’s not fair’ – mitigating circumstances not taken into account
 - Middle-class complaints more likely to be taken seriously than those of poor people

Our experience of Disrespectful Services

- Expectations have changed over the last century (upstairs/downstairs) but attitudes have not necessarily changed
- Assumptions about undeserving, so ok to treat people disrespectfully
- Police, housing department, social work, doctors
- To them we're 'social problems'

Our experience of Information held on you

- Medical notes, chemists
- Postcodes
- Private companies
- Police
- Electoral register
- Finance companies

All hold information which can be used in damaging and prejudicial ways

- No access to it

- No control over it
- Dependent on other people's assessment of you, often with little knowledge
- Confidences are abused
- Privacy and sense of self violated

Improvements/solutions

- Professional confidentiality should be properly observed and accountable
- Better training for people in public services
- A public service ethos
- Education about respect for everyone
- Education about helping other people
- Citizenship education-depending on what's taught
- Pressure on media to make them more respectful of poor people –no more 'sink' estates
- People given more support to make choices and be responsible, eg with benefits and budgeting
- Recognition of the financial discrimination and injustice people in poverty suffer – eg, higher interest, higher charges for services, etc

“We’ve identified five key themes that describe poverty as we experience it. These are: inadequate income; work and welfare; health; expectations and standards and services.”

Drumchapel One-Up Family Centre

What does the word 'poverty' mean for you?

- No money
- No lifestyle
- Not caring
- Lack of funds
- Down-and-out
- Abused children
- Drugs and alcohol problems
- Poor housing
- Low self-esteem
- Deprived
- Low income
- Homeless
- Lack of choices

What would you see as the negative aspects/worst things about poverty?

- Not having people to talk to
- Being abusive/being abused
- Being stressed-out
- Bad debts
- Addictions-drugs, alcohol
- It's like a whirlwind!
- Robbing Peter to pay Paul
- 'Provvies', catalogues, paying extra for credit
- Terrible housing (dampness, dry rot, no repairs, 'they're coming down in 2 years, so no repairs')
- City Council think Drumchapel people are the scum of the earth and don't deserve anything better
- Embarrassed by the state of your house!
- Apathy- people lower their expectations
- Health affected
- Bad neighbours
- Feeling unsafe

What do you think should change?

People should be able to get work and training

- More training courses
- Better incentives to work (jobs are low-waged and you end up worse off)
- Very long working hours

- No benefits when you get a job
- Benefit rates – too low
- Being able to afford decent stuff sometimes
- Childcare, especially for single parents

More facilities for people with children

- More nursery places
- More available information about childcare, etc
- Seeing childcare and childraising as important

What needs to change for communities?

More family centres, etc

- Give people a chance to meet each other
- Life can be lonely
- People keep themselves to themselves because of fear of drugs, alcohol, bad neighbours, crime, etc

More police on the beat

- Not safe at night
- Police not active enough
- Not even safe in your own street or close
- Police are sometimes scared
- Lack of concern and respect for area among police
- Lack of respect among youth for police
- Not enough for kids to do
- Schools not able to cope with kids –attitude!

Housing Issues

- 3 years to get a roof fixed
- only 1 housing point for dampness
- tenements all damp
- metal frame windows
- mushrooms in corners
- wiping walls down with vinegar
- dampness, overcrowding
- not enough bigger houses
- £150 dampness payout not enough
- forms for dampness claims are intimidating

All Party Parliamentary Group on Poverty: Poverty Indicators

This first part of the process ended with some of the group members attending a meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Poverty at Westminster on the issue of poverty indicators, and contributing their own input to the discussion there.

At that meeting, the then Minister for Work and Pensions, Alistair Darling MP announced a national consultation on child poverty indicators, and group members from Glasgow also took part in helping to formulate the APPG's own response to the consultation.

The group's statement to the All Party Group meeting

With Church Action on Poverty in Scotland, we've been working on the question of poverty indicators for almost a year. We are all people living on very low incomes and raising children. We've looked very closely at the Social Justice Strategy of the Scottish Executive, and also at the economic policies that fall within the remit of Westminster. And we've also thought carefully about our own experience of being poor. We've identified five key themes that describe poverty as we experience it. These are: inadequate income; work and welfare; health; expectations and standards and services.

We appreciate the fact that this government has put poverty back on the agenda, and that many of its policies are designed to assist us to overcome poverty and have a better life.

Our own experience has been that there's a big gap between theory and practice, and we often feel we are being penalised for being poor. We have had the experience of being too poor to get a loan from the Social Fund. We have had the experience of not being able to afford the childcare for getting back to work. We've had the experience of being

offered 15 hours of work, not 16, so that employers don't have to have the bother of administering Working Families Tax Credit. We struggle a lot with fuel costs, because benefit levels don't take account of fuel prices. In particular, we think that the emphasis on work and welfare at every stage in life doesn't deal with the reality of our lives and situations. And we think that there are big gaps in the indicators the government seems to use for poverty.

The worst thing about living in poverty is the way it gives others permission to treat you – as if you don't matter, as if your opinions don't count, as if you have nothing to contribute. We realise that this doesn't show up in the statistics, but there is a stigma attached to living in poverty. If you make policy about us and not with us, then you reinforce that stigma. We are not ashamed of being poor, and we think we have a lot of expertise that would be valuable in describing what it really means to be poor in this country.

We would like to ask whether and how you involve people living in poverty themselves in setting poverty indicators and targets.

“The worst thing about living in poverty is the way it gives others permission to treat you – as if you don't matter, as if your opinions don't count, as if you have nothing to contribute.”

Section Two:

Regional Meetings

Responses from Glasgow, Edinburgh, Inverness and Castle Douglas

These meetings were planned with local contacts, and reflected some local concerns. They took place in the spring of 2002, and each lasted a day, following the same format., with an introductory video or dramatic presentation highlighting poverty issues, small group work and plenary feedback sessions.

Morning groupwork questions:

1. Introductions – who we are, where we're from
2. What are your main poverty concerns from your own situation? (List)
3. What are the hopeful or encouraging signs you see in your situation? (List)

Afternoon groupwork questions:

1. Where do you see the main gaps or difficulties? (List)
2. What would you like to see being done to address these-
 - at a local level, in communities
 - at a regional level, eg, by the council
 - at a national level, by Scottish & UK government
3. How do you think the churches can best assist in overcoming poverty?

All responses were recorded, and a full report of each regional meeting sent to participants

“We are not ashamed of being poor, and we think we have a lot of expertise that would be valuable in describing what it really means to be poor in this country.”

Local Poverty concerns

Conditions of poverty

I. Housing

Glasgow

- Homelessness
- Bad housing conditions
- Inadequate repairs
- Poor environment – drugs, waste, rubbish, etc

Edinburgh

- Homelessness - its hiddenness in otherwise rich places
- Lack of available information on homelessness
- Inadequate provision
- High cost of rented accommodation in Edinburgh

Inverness

- Homelessness
- Housing benefit problems
- Homelessness related poverty-few real opportunities for restarting

Castle Douglas

- Loss of housing stock for long-term residents
- No equivalent to crofting legislation
- Holiday houses

2. Income

Glasgow

- Inadequate income
- Indebtedness

Edinburgh

- access to basic incomes
- indebtedness – how to break the debt cycle and challenge the debt culture

Inverness

- Benefit system-complex, inadequate for basics, inconsistent, hard to secure
- Ignorance of benefit entitlement
- Cut-off/passporting
- Water Rate (£7-50 at least) – no benefit or transitional help
- Regressive Council tax
- Level of indebtedness in the Highlands

- Irresponsible lending
- Loan sharks, including 'legalised', – why no maximum interest rate?
- Consumer pressures, especially Christmas

Castle Douglas

- Fears for Stranraer if the ferries move to Troon
- Worries about the Wigtown economy
- Loss of local jobs, eg, farms have gone from five jobs to one
- People get caught in the poverty trap
- Profitability criteria affect service provision, esp. in small isolated areas
- Fishing – a short-term career
 - 'in the family'
 - 'no safety nets'

3. Vulnerable Groups

Glasgow

- Situation of asylum seekers and refugees

Edinburgh

- Youth
 - o dysfunctional families
 - o addictions
 - o young people in care, and support for those coming out of care
 - o cost of youth culture

Inverness

- Prisoners and ex-prisoners-reducing poverty would reduce crime
- People with disability
- Pensioners, especially in relation to fuel poverty

Castle Douglas

- Pensioners
- Youth -Full stop at age 20! Youth drain!

4. Services

Glasgow

- Closing of small, local concerns and services – shops, schools, libraries, swimming baths, hospitals, etc

Inverness

- Difficulty accessing NHS dental care in Inverness

- Privatisation of services

Castle Douglas

- Closure of schools, post offices, banks, churches, etc
- Transport
 - o State of roads – A75 & A77
 - o Lack of buses – type of transport and timetabling
 - o Cars seen as a bogey!

5. Support and advice

Inverness

- Unidentified people who need help and support
- Promotion of social skills
- Lack of sign-posting, resources
- Lack of trust with people
- Old safety nets missing (tradition of self-reliance, family strength, community, steady employment)
- Sectionalisation of agencies, and helpers needing help to give 'holistic' help
- Intervention comes too late – only at point of crisis
- Social exclusion & isolation

Castle Douglas

- Lack of access to advice in difficult times
- Benefits bus in town centre lacks anonymity and privacy-important in small communities where everyone knows everyone
- Tradition of self-sufficiency makes people reluctant to claim benefit entitlements
- Lack of appropriate living standards

6. Funding

Glasgow

- Funding for everything!!!

Edinburgh

- Having to reapply all the time

Consequences of Poverty

I. Practical

Glasgow

- Lack of mobility
- Poor health
- Children's lives-lacking structure

- Work-value-income-social contact

Edinburgh

- mental health issues
- link between poverty and ill-health
- lack of self-esteem – Scottish maleness

Inverness

- Poor health
- Hunger-poor nutrition
- Stress
- Break-up of community
- Drugs and alcohol and gambling causing poverty
- Break-up of relationships

2. Spiritual

Glasgow

- Isolation, low morale
- Isolation of poverty
- Low self-esteem and labelling
- Stigma
- Devaluation
- No sense of belonging
- Lack of purpose
- Fear and threat
- Disempowerment
 - o Lack of participation
 - o Who determines the needs of the community?
 - o Lack of choice and power

Edinburgh

- discussions on poverty don't include those who have the power and money to make changes
- loss of community and sense of belonging

Inverness

- Lack of self-esteem
- Lack of security

Castle Douglas

- People have been emotionally scarred for life by foot-and-mouth
- People feel apprehensive and disempowered
- A two-tier society!
- People feel rural communities are not valued by the country as a whole; this can lead to a lack of valuing of diversity, and of rural skills
- Lowered expectations

Regional Meetings:

Hopeful signs

Hopeful signs - what's working

1. Provision

Glasgow

- Better nursery-school provision
- Langside College with a campus in Castlemilk
- New school=new dignity

Edinburgh

- Falling unemployment
- Better provision for families
 - Reversing increase in child poverty
 - More recognition of need for childcare
 - Improved nursery provision
 - Working families tax credit
 - Support to allow women to re-enter 'life'

Inverness

- More childcare/nursery places
- Sure Start
- Grants for central heating for over-60s
- Directory of services available for homeless people
- New community school with social emphasis

Castle Douglas

- Free internet access in Dumfries and Galloway
- Isle Futures – Isle of Whithorn developing
- IT and water sports
- Southern Machars Playcare
- Newton Stewart cinema
- Sure Start

2. Policy

Edinburgh

- In Scotland you can no longer have your possessions confiscated for non-payment of a fine
- Free School Meals Bill
- Abolition of university tuition fees
- Bristol University implementing admissions

procedures which take account of the context of school achievements

Inverness

- Postcode targetting for employment training
- Tax Credits-good idea, but needs to be pushed to implementation
- Minimum wage- but not always paid, must ensure compliance & press for increase
- Homelessness strategy
- New rehabilitation and drugs programmes for ex-prisoners, (eg, Sacro)-but big questions about private finance

3. Parliament

Glasgow

- Good having a Scottish Parliament
- Good to have POVERTY on the Parliamentary agenda - but things seem to stay the same despite money being given to it

Edinburgh

- Change of government and policy
- Devolution and its mechanics
- Donald Dewar's commitment to social justice
- Consultation and subsequent legislation and White Papers
- A Scottish Parliament which is willing to listen – but will bypassing local government cause problems?

4. Participation and community action

Glasgow

- There are still strong communities which can identify their needs and act on them –refugee action, community strike
- Large firms holding social audits
- People power in Castlemilk
- Community spirit
- Participation

- Elderly Forum
- Local projects and initiatives
- Credit unions
- Food co-ops
- Strong tradition of volunteering now almost an industry
- Wee community projects which help locally

Edinburgh

- Unrest at Dungavel!
- More acceptance of asylum seekers?
- So many small local groups tackling these issues
- The Big Issue
- Credit Unions
- Housing NGOs, such as Rock Trust, Bethany, The Ark, etc
- Scottish Ecumenical Assembly

Inverness

- New Start
- Credit Union – moral/ethical approach
- Highland Senior Citizens Network
- The Wellbeing Alliance
- Citizens Advice Bureau at Raigmore Hospital
- Increase in community self-help groups, support networks, co-operatives
- St Vincent de Paul – food vouchers for new arrivals, ex-prisoners, etc, holiday caravan – but too many long-term clients
- Appointment of church Youth Inclusion Officer
- Ecumenical initiatives

Castle Douglas

- Wigtown as Book Town – mini honeypot
- Greater diversification – but is there enough support for these, and can they provide jobs?
- Community takeover of Port Patrick Harbour
- Southern Rinns community initiative

5. Changing attitudes and practice

Glasgow

- Partnership
 - Churches working with asylum seekers in Castlemilk, the Gorbals and elsewhere
 - Merging – budget services/credit unions, giving increased opportunity for debtors
 - Church/community partnerships
 - Inter-church dialogue
 - Churches working together
 - Iona/Braendam Link
- Persistence
 - We are here!
 - People able to change their own situation, and this encourages others
 - Courage to make hard decisions
 - Despite bureaucracy, government guidelines, people still keep going
 - Good things are happening-but how do we find out more about them?

Inverness

- Voluntary organisations communicating & co-operating
- Better understanding of and compassion for people's needs (eg, homelessness, addictions)

Castle Douglas

- Some opportunities from foot-and-mouth crisis
 - New working practices
 - Catalyst for change

Regional Meetings

Gaps - what's missing

1. The Equality Gap

Glasgow

- Growing gap between rich and poor
- Gaps between haves and have-nots is growing, despite education, etc, and this needs to be addressed
- People fall through the net; isolated pockets of intractable poverty in schemes
- Territorial problems – poor areas end up in competition
- Glasgow concerned with image not people
- All the football hype brings nothing to poorest areas

Edinburgh

- Lack of understanding and experience of the gap between the haves and have-nots in our society
- Raising awareness of poverty among the affluent

2. Income Poverty

Glasgow

- Low wage/inadequate income/not enough money
- Low wage work/benefits – not enough incentive
- Debt-benefit book misuse
- People fall through the net; isolated pockets of intractable poverty in schemes

Edinburgh

- Debt culture – debt has become acceptable – it drives consumerism, which drives the economy!
- Money management
- Unscrupulous advertising
- Lack of information on 'ethical' financial help
- Redistribution of wealth in Edinburgh

Inverness

- Minimum income (not just minimum wage)
- Complex benefit system
- More awareness of need for flexibility, (eg. effect of

hospital admissions on benefits)

- Benefit consistency (need for tapering)
- Water rates relief
- Indebtedness
 - o No maximum APR on lending
 - o Pressure selling
 - Fuel Poverty
 - o Fuel Standing Charges
 - o Unit fuel charge
 - o (advance payment is higher than account payment)

3. Policy gaps

a. Housing

Glasgow

- Not enough decent affordable houses

Edinburgh

- Homelessness – getting local authorities to recognise the problem

Inverness

- Difficulty of securing private rented accommodation
- Lack of help for new tenants
- Housing standards
- House prices (rural second homes)

b. Land economy

Castle Douglas

- Planning legislation to control the use of property changing hands
- If farmers move out, what happens to the land?
- Changes of land use also affect tourism
- The right to roam
- Government wants to deal with big farmers – agribusiness- so the units needed are bigger, but this changes the nature of communities

c. Service provision

Edinburgh

- Inadequate funding and understanding of community development as a means of promoting health
- Youth
 - Benefit for 16-18 year olds
 - Statutory provision
 - Employment/education

Inverness

- Lack of NHS dental provision
- Fresh affordable foodstuffs
- Affordable childcare
- Transport-cost, frequency, provision

Castle Douglas

- More and better care for the elderly and infirm – especially more local care facilities and provision, otherwise elderly people are uprooted from their communities, families and friends
- Better access to services generally, and recognition of the additional costs involved in rural areas
- Crime- not enough done to deal with contract theft committed by people from elsewhere

d. Taxation and financial

Glasgow

- Increase on taxes may be needed, but not to be spent on nuclear weapons
- Benefits can never be used creatively, but tax payers are encouraged to be creative in tax relief
- Scrap Social Fund
- Measuring success – how is this done?
- Funding
 - Projects ending because funding stops, fighting for ever smaller pot of money
 - What is the financial basis for the city – good areas hived off
 - Government broke up Strathclyde and ‘the poorest city is left to be funded by the poorest people.’
 - More clarity about funding criteria
 - Longer-term funding (staff security)

Edinburgh

- Inflexibility of SIPS; poverty in non-SIPS areas is ignored

- Gap between policy-makers and those experiencing poverty

Inverness

- Lack of financial, budgeting education

e. Advice and information

Glasgow

- Not enough help for people just beginning work
- Not enough early intervention

Inverness

- Fragmented advisory body
- Repetitive information submission

4. Participation gap

Glasgow

- Not listening to local people
- Not involving local people in decision-making
- Low expectations among some communities
- Scottish Parliament still has capacity to be different but needs to believe in itself and in the Scottish people to carry it out
- People feel devalued
- Need to overcome church/state suspicion

Edinburgh

- Lack of knowledge and understanding-important to get people at all levels aware and involved from grassroots upwards
- Subsidiarity-decision making should be nearer-if not at- grassroots level
- ‘democratic deficit’
- Empowering the ‘voiceless’
- Understanding how long the process of empowerment can take and that this is not simply measurable by SMART
- Bypassing local authorities, and general cynicism about politics

Castle Douglas

- Legislation is passed without consultation, or with insufficient time allowed for consultation, given the particular difficulties this presents in rural communities (distance, transport, etc)
- Change of mindset among decision-makers and media to respect rural perspectives

Regional Meetings: Proposals for change

1. Bridging the Gaps

Glasgow

- Some criteria for national media in their treatment of poverty issues

Edinburgh

- Civil servants back to the floor!
- More offices to areas of social deprivation
- Increase taxes and redistribution of wealth >reduce child poverty

Castle Douglas

- A good PR initiative for rural communities and the countryside, so that people value and understand the countryside better (Borders example)
- Schools – education is important for self-esteem, and valuing different ways of life
- Understanding needs to be built into school curriculum-political correctness doesn't yet extend to the countryside
- Greater recognition that rural life is not private, but it offers community
- Rural placements in training
- Rural training for MPs and MSPs

2. Overcoming Income Poverty

Glasgow

- Restore benefits for 16-18s
- Abolish refugee voucher system
- Greater freedom for refugees to work

Edinburgh

- Indebtedness
 - Credit Unions – carefully managed
 - Ceiling on interest rates
 - LETS (Local Exchange and Trading Schemes)

Inverness

- UK Parliament to introduce minimum income standard
- New legislation to create a benefit system more flexible and responsive to needs (UKP)

- Benefits paid individually, & to each partner
- Water rates benefit (SP)
- Indebtedness
 - UKP and EP to legislate for maximum APR
 - End to pressure selling
 - Tougher credit regulation
 - Extend credit unions, Xmas clubs

Castle Douglas

- Helping and encouraging people to greater self-sufficiency

3. Policy proposals

a. Housing

Glasgow

- More money for building new affordable houses
- Greater support for 'key' funds in housing, etc

Inverness

- More deposit guarantee schemes
- 1st week rent-free, services ON when tenancy starts
- Minimum standards of repair and maintenance (SP)
- Council tax on second homes (SP,HC)

b. Representation

Edinburgh

At local level

- Proportional representation means politicians have to work together, and people feel their votes count
- Better communication-we don't know who the Council are
- Local development committees are good!
- Use resources and experience, eg, strengthen community councils

Castle Douglas

- Local authorities much more consultative and in touch than national, but need to be less reactive and more proactive

c. Service Provision

Glasgow

- Tax breaks and subsidies on good quality food

Inverness

- Salaried dentists paid for by Health Board (SP)
- Co-op and food co-ops into estates and rural villages (local action, HC, Social Justice Comm support)
- Expand state childcare (SP)

d. Financial

Glasgow

- Make funding criteria clear, accessible and available (Council SIPS, Lottery, charities, Europe)
- Recognition that research jobs into community projects and the actual workers therein should have pay parity – consultants paid much more than workers
- Governments need to core fund and projects can get additional money elsewhere
- Support for small community businesses, eg, local shops, rather than large enterprises which take money out of communities
- Cutting budgets every year, applying for funding every year, so energy dissipated on the wrong things – money should be spent and used to employ local people
- Prioritising money to local providers
- Needs do not go away at the end of a specified time, yet group funding is stopped
- Financial services need overhauling
- Voluntary organisations/statutory bodies-funding network

Inverness

- Financial education - citizenship/life skills approach to money, from primary school on (SP, HC)

e. Advice and information

Glasgow

- More environmental information and education on waste, recycling, etc

Inverness

- One-stop shop
- Single shared assessment

f. Participation

Glasgow

Local/City

- Listen/ ask local people
- Community forum
- Giving the grassroots a voice
- Living Wage campaign
- Getting people together locally – ‘what’s it like for you?’
- LETS
- Credit Unions
- Time banks

National

- Help needs to be given to communities to identify their real needs
- Needs to be a continuing listening to what communities want

Inverness

- Fuel poverty - consumer pressure on companies

Castle Douglas

- More imaginative solutions and support from decision-makers

Regional Meetings: Issues for Churches

Concerns

- Churches-do they reflect community?
- redistributing a shrinking pool of resources
- understanding and sharing between rich and poor churches

Hopeful signs

- Churches working with asylum seekers in Castlemilk, the Gorbals and elsewhere
- Church/community partnerships
- Inter-church dialogue
- Churches working together
- Iona/Braendam Link
- New Start
- Ecumenical initiatives
- St Vincent de Paul –food vouchers for new arrivals, ex-prisoners, etc, holiday caravan – but too many long-term clients
- Appointment of church Youth Inclusion Officer
- Housing NGOs, such as Rock Trust, Bethany, The Ark, etc
- Scottish Ecumenical Assembly

Gaps

- Failing to put poverty and social inclusion at the heart of the gospel message
- Failing to harness the resources in congregations

Proposals

Practice

- Pooling of resources, ecumenically and denominationally
- Partnership with non-church orgs
- More things like 'Meet Your Neighbour' (including Inter-faith)
- Good Neighbour schemes/volunteer networks
- Greater acceptance and support of the difficult task of parenting
- Plugging gaps

- Greater awareness-raising
- Focus on justice and human rights and respect
- Change rather than charity
- Use of premises for drop-ins, cafes, etc
- Just befriending and offering community
- Churches – listening
- Together the churches have power
- Raise awareness of problems of poverty at parish and congregational level, and help for communication, action, participation
- Food co-ops
- Financial lobby – Highland Council, Holyrood, Westminster,
- Dissemination of information
- Make professional skills available to help
- 'childminding'
- Mutual support groups- may or may not be in church premises
- Politicisation, not party politics
- Publicise and give consistent support to local initiatives, eg. New Start/SVP/Credit Union and others
- Encourage congregations to invest in Credit Union
- Show film 'Living Against the Odds' in place of sermon
- ACTION!

Theology

- Non-judgemental attitudes:
 - o 'ours is a debt-based theology' so debt is not a sin!
 - o Lingering protestant work ethic which blames people for their poverty
- Accepting social responsibility and developing practical theology
- Developing the prophetic role
- CTBI Poverty and Prosperity programme, recognising that poverty only exists in relation to prosperity

Section Three: Scottish Meeting

This was held in Edinburgh in June 2002, with the title, 'A Scotland where everyone matters – poverty and social justice'

Programme

Welcome – Jean Urquhart, (*Chairperson, West of Scotland Church Action on Poverty*)

Dramatic presentation - 'A Scotland Where Everyone Matters'

Regional Meetings Responses – Kathy Galloway, Linkworker for Scotland, Church Action on Poverty

Working Together for Change

(in small groups, with three questions)

1. What energises you in trying to overcome poverty?
2. What support do you think you need?
3. What role do you think local and national politics could or should play in this?

Feedback from groups

Lunch

Response from Johann Lamont MSP, Convener, Social Justice Committee of the Scottish Parliament, plus questions and discussion

The Way Forward - suggestions for follow-up, action

Responses

What energises you in trying to overcome poverty?

- Personal experience
- Social justice
- Faith
- Belief in justice regarding poverty
- There's more help than there was years ago, but it's important that the help is shaped on what people need
- It's something we passionately believe in
- It's part of the human spirit to hope
- Because 'it's no fair'
- People and their stories
- Positive relationships
- Build confidence by small successes
- People who cope
- Sense of injustice because of financial inequality
- Sharing anger and frustration
- Telling how it is
- Motivation because of child poverty
- Given some choices, the potential and possibilities of people
- Anger & frustration at expectations not met by government
- Personal experience of poverty or of people's ignorance of poverty
- Spirituality of poverty

What support do you think you need?

- Other people
- Joint concerns
- To be listening to the voice of folk who tell it as it is
- Support than is more than words from the church
- Practical resources
- Better attitudes from public services
- Money
- Events like this
- Keeping in touch
- Acknowledge strengths of community
- Church as people not answers
- Learning from each other
- Need support to keep our energy going
- Need to work together to bring people and communities together
- Need to tap into people's energy in the community
- Sustainable funding
- A caring government, with independent voices
- Connect with other groups, units
- Use drama widely, nationally
- Media
- Local councillors
- Person-centred
- Group support
- Involvement in decision-making

What role do you think local and national politics could or should play in this?

Tackling inequalities

- Challenging powerful interests
- Standing alongside/participation
- Social inclusion-resources need to be more directly targeted- being able to see the difference
- Politicians who are prepared to keep the 'spotlight' on poverty
- Expose wealth
- An Obscene Politicians Act
- People have to co-operate and respect each other
- More consultation with local communities rather than party members
- Local communities being more involved in local politics
- Directing resources to local communities
- Decision-makers (local and national) need to speak TO and not ABOUT people living in poverty
- Increase opportunities for voices to be heard
- Building bridges
- Unrealistic promises leading to >non-delivery>cynicism>suspicion>hopelessness
- Honesty
- Increased representation in the decision-making-PR, as first past the post doesn't work

Conclusion

Reflecting on the responses at every level, local, regional and national, several points are clear.

There is a recognition of real advances that have been made; in the putting of poverty firmly on the political agenda; in major policymaking such as the minimum wage, Sure Start, Working Families Tax Credit, improved nursery provision; in the commitment and grassroots awareness of a diverse voluntary sector; and in the existence, accessibility and commitment to social justice of the Scottish Parliament. People are also hopeful about the possibilities for co-operation, and engaged in working in partnerships and alliances of many kinds.

But the gaps are still evident to everyone. First, **housing and homelessness** is still a major issue in many parts of Scotland, though that may manifest itself in different ways. Johann Lamont drew our attention to the intention of the Housing Bill to empower local communities; the jury is still out on housing stock transfers.

Second, the complexities and inadequacies of **the benefits system** still make the system a nightmare to navigate for people living in poverty, and one in which they feel considerably disempowered. Taxation and the welfare system falls within the remit of the UK government, and is therefore outwith the scope of the Executive's Social Justice Strategy; however, it is difficult to see how significant progress can be made in overcoming poverty and social exclusion without addressing the very real **income poverty** that still exists to such a degree in Scotland.

Third, in spite of government policy, it's very clear that just getting people into work isn't necessarily going to get them out of poverty. **Low wages**, the poverty trap that so many people talked about, are as much a factor in poverty as benefits. Though people appreciated, and depended on, the various tax credits available for those on low wages, the ingenuity of employers in getting round these schemes, and the sense that they are being used to subsidise a low wage economy, persist. Along with this is a real resentment that raising children is somehow not seen as 'work', and that parenting is not valued. Perhaps there is a gender equality issue here.

Fourth, there is a big issue about how **funding allocations** are determined. We ask local groups to tell us what they need, or make a project proposal. We then tell them they can't have the money unless x, y and z are changed. This can mean that they end up with a project that actually bears no relation to what they wanted to do in the first place, and has much more to do with the agenda of the funding bodies than the local groups.

Fifth, **indebtedness** is both a major consequence and a major cause of poverty. Scotland is now the most heavily indebted country in Europe, and in Britain we are indebted to 125% of household income. Irresponsible lending is deepening poverty, and yet at the same time, consumer credit is driving the economy. There is an underlying contradiction here that cannot be avoided for ever.

Sixth, during this whole process, people were adamant that the **inequalities** between the poorest in our country and everyone else continue to grow, and that this is a significant factor in social exclusion. There was a high degree of concern expressed about intractable poverty which every scheme, programme and strategy seems powerless to affect.

Part of the purpose of these meetings was to do with participation. Having a Scotland where everyone matters means that everyone's views, hopes and ideas matter too. In a democracy, people have a right not just to be represented, but to participate as well. That's also often seen as a responsibility. In a recent major speech about poverty the Prime Minister spoke repeatedly of rights and responsibilities. But actually, it wasn't really about rights, it was all about responsibilities; one the one hand, the responsibility of the government to give people living in poverty the opportunity to get a job, and on the other, the responsibility of people living in poverty to help themselves, and to save for their old age. It's hard to avoid concluding that the implication was that people in poverty, including lone parents, the sick and the disabled, are still not doing enough to help themselves. The gap between the reality and the rhetoric remains.

When social inclusion nowadays depends on the economic – we are what we spend, and if you can't spend, you're excluded – it is vital that people are not also excluded politically and culturally. Perhaps the starkest statements of exclusion came in the consistent experience of people living in poverty that being poor results in being regarded and treated with disrespect. Stigma, patronage, even criminalization are commonplace for people living in poverty. Along with that goes isolation. Poverty is an isolating experience wherever a person is, and being poor in a poor community doesn't necessarily guarantee solidarity.

People take care of what they value. If you want to know what someone really values, look at what they take care of. And people also assess their own value and worth by the care they see being taken with and about them. This applies across a whole range of social policy. A Scotland where everyone matters is really about who we value, and how that shows up.

Appendix I: Social Justice Strategy

‘A Scotland where everyone matters’

Goals

- ✿ The elimination of child poverty in a generation
- ✿ Enabling all our young people to contribute and develop life-skills
- ✿ Full employment by providing opportunities for all those who can work
- ✿ Securing dignity in old age
- ✿ Building strong, inclusive communities

Children

- 1) Reducing the proportion of our children living in workless households
- 2) Reducing the proportion of our children living in low-income households
- 3) Increasing the proportion of our children who attain the appropriate levels in reading, writing and maths by the end of Primary 2 and Primary 7
- 4) All our children will have access to quality care and early learning before entering school
- 5) Improving the well-being of young children through reductions in the proportion of women smoking during pregnancy, the percentage of low birth-weight babies, dental decay among 5 year olds, and by increasing the proportion of women breastfeeding
- 6) Reducing the number of households with children living in temporary accommodation

Young people

- 7) Halving the proportion of 16-19 year olds who are not in education, training or employment
- 8) All our young people leaving local authority care will have achieved at least English and Maths Standard Grades and have access to appropriate housing options
- 9) Bringing the poorest-performing 20% of pupils, in terms of Standard Grade achievement, closer to the standard of all pupils.
- 10) Reducing by a third the days lost every year through exclusion from school and truancy
- 11) Improving the health of young people through reductions in smoking by 12-15 years old, teenage pregnancies among 13-15 year olds and the rate of suicides among young people
- 12) No one has to sleep rough

Families and working age people

- 13) Reducing the proportion of unemployed working age people
- 14) Reducing the proportion of working age people with low incomes
- 15) Increasing the employment rates of groups, such as lone parents and ethnic minorities, that are relatively disadvantaged in the labour market
- 16) Increasing the proportion of students from under-represented, disadvantaged groups and areas in higher education compared with the overall student population in higher education
- 17) Increasing the proportion of people with learning disabilities able to live at home or in a ‘homely’ environment
- 18) Improving the health of families by reducing smoking, alcohol misuse, poor diet and mortality rates from coronary heart disease

Older people

- 19) Reducing the proportion of older people with low incomes
- 20) Increasing the proportion of working age people contributing to a non-state pension
- 21) Increasing the proportion of older people able to live independently by doubling the proportion of older people receiving respite care at home and increasing home care opportunities
- 22) Increasing numbers of older people taking physical exercise and reducing the rates of mortality from coronary heart disease and the prevalence of respiratory disease
- 23) Reducing the fear of crime among older people

Communities

- 24) Reducing the gap in unemployment rates between the worst areas and the average rate for Scotland
- 25) Reducing the incidence of drugs misuse in general and of injections and sharing of needles in particular
- 26) Reducing crime rates in disadvantaged areas
- 27) Increasing the quality and variety of homes in our most disadvantaged communities
- 28) Increasing the number of people across communities taking part in voluntary activities
- 29) Accelerating the number of households in disadvantaged areas with access to the Internet

Appendix 2:

People involved in the project

People involved in the following organisations participated in 'A Scotland Where Everyone Matters'

- Church Action on Poverty
- West of Scotland Church Action on Poverty
- Glasgow Braendam Link
- Castlemilk Credit Union
- Unity Enterprise
- Debt on our Doorstep
- Church of Scotland Urban Priority Areas Committee
- Justice and Peace Scotland
- Working Together for Change
- Glasgow Rent Deposit Scheme
- Simon Community
- WCC Decade to Overcome Violence Scotland
- Church of Scotland Rural Committee
- Royal Scottish Agricultural Benevolent Institution
- Drumchapel Churches Partnership
- The Iona Community
- SACRO Inverness
- Inverness Credit Union
- Housing RSI Services, Inverness
- New Start Inverness
- Citizens Advice Inverness
- Raigmore Citizens Advice
- Social Work Dept Inverness
- Youth Inclusive
- Acorn Youth Project, Edinburgh
- Blast Drug Project
- Scottish Churches Industrial Mission
- Albyn Housing
- Highland Senior Citizens Network
- YWCA
- Society of Friends
- Northern Constabulary
- Church of Scotland Assembly Council
- Dundee Credit Unions
- NHSTayside
- Dundee City Council
- Dundee Anti-Poverty Alliance
- Mid-Craigie Parish Project
- as well as people from individual churches, dioceses and presbyteries

‘People don’t choose to be poor or to live in poverty. In most cases it is through a series of circumstances; illness, death, unemployment or disability. So people should not feel stigmatised – yet they very often are.’

These are the words of someone speaking from experience. It’s because of her experience, and the experience of thousands of people like her that Church Action on Poverty undertook a Scottish Poverty Indicators project. Over the past 18 months, Kathy Galloway has been working with local and regional groups

In the struggle to bring about a Scotland where truly everyone matters, in which everyone is included, a country of social justice, there is an important place for the voice of experience as well as the voice of theory and analysis; and perhaps the voice of experience can do some of its own analysis, without necessarily reaching the same conclusions.

Church Action on Poverty works with church and community groups across the United Kingdom to make poverty a priority. Our work involves: educating churches about poverty in the UK; enabling people in poverty to speak for themselves; working for policies to eradicate poverty in the UK; promoting reflection and action for social justice.



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