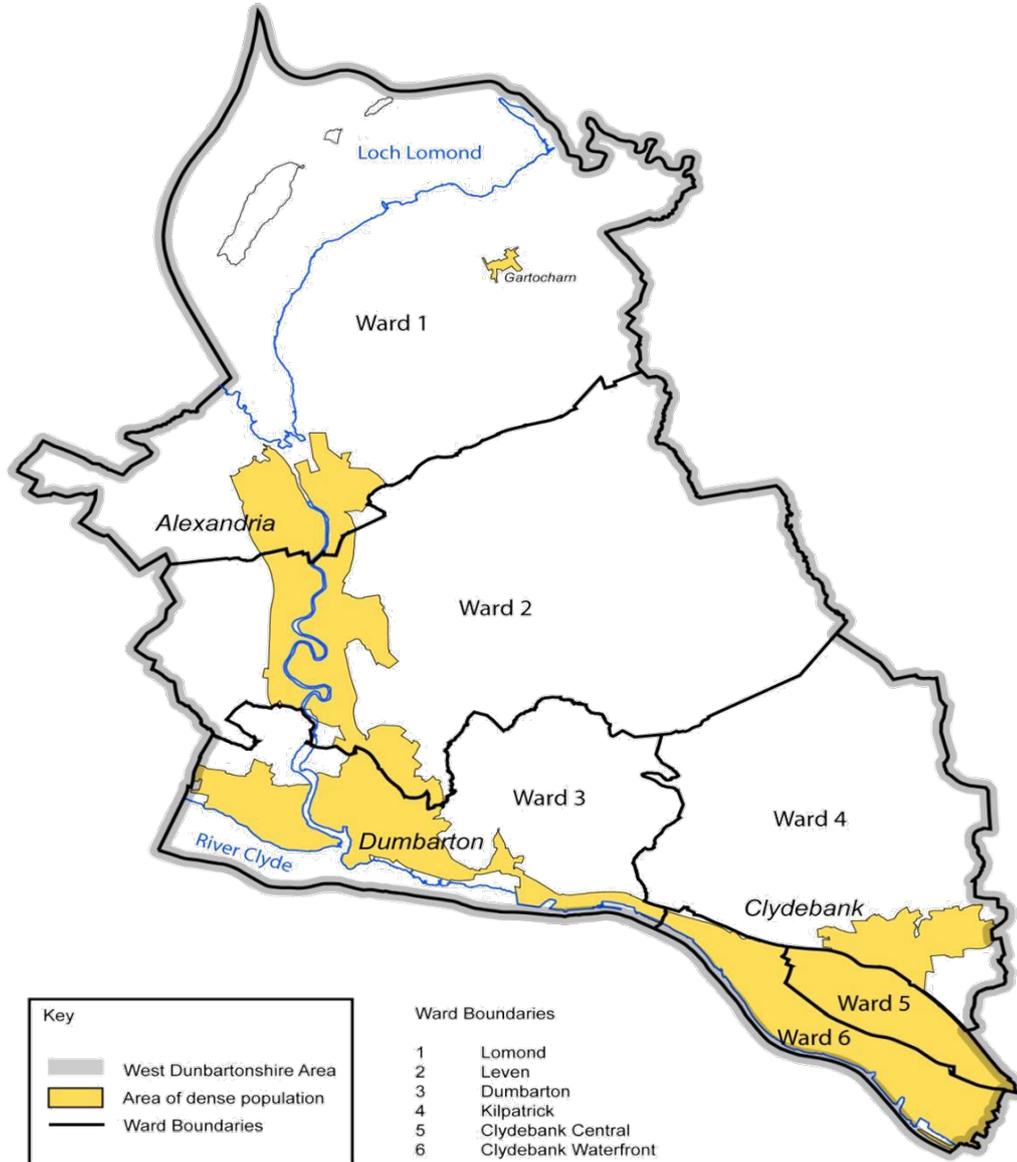


West Dunbartonshire: Local Child Poverty Action Report 2020 -2021.



West Dunbartonshire Multi Member Ward Map



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Foreword

There is no universally agreed upon definition of poverty but a good starting point is the definition that the campaigning 'Child Poverty Action Group', uses:

'Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack resources to obtain the type of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged and approved, in the societies in which they belong.'

People are poor if they are unable to live at the standard that most others would expect. Children may have housing and food, but remain poor if their parents can't afford to put the heating on at home. Families and children may have mobile phones, mobile devices and computers, but remain poor if there isn't sufficient connectivity to use the equipment for everyday activity that others take for granted. Children can have warm clothes and modern footwear for school, but remain poor if there isn't enough money for them to go on the same school trips as their classmates.

Unfortunately, child poverty is the reality of life for many children in West Dunbartonshire. A reality that is clearly illustrated in this report. Add to this the reality of the challenges we face as we recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; the uncertainty surrounding Brexit; and the impact of Government welfare reform and we are entering a very challenging and largely unknown future.

As we face these circumstances it is clear there will be significant challenges ahead that will have an impact on household incomes and living standards. The worst effects are likely to be felt most severely by those already most disadvantaged; children.

This fact alone drives our determination to take action and force positive change that is based on equality and human rights.

This report is not offered simply as a list of good intentions. It's has been developed as a working document for individuals and organisations seeking to improve the quality of life for families in West Dunbartonshire. The expectation is that by providing this as a key reference document we will raise awareness of available services and their aims and actions; making them more accessible.

I'd like to convey my thanks to the staff delivering services for their professionalism and commitment. I hope this document will help them to continue that work and extend the reach and accessibility of support services, increase the number of families benefitting from support and, as a result, improve the quality of life for children in our communities.

For that reason I am happy to commend this document and urge everyone to make use of this as a key resource for tackling child poverty in West Dunbartonshire.

Councillor Diane Docherty West Dunbartonshire Council.

Key Messages

Child poverty is spatially concentrated in urban and older industrial Scotland, though pockets can be found everywhere and almost one in four children in Scotland (24%, 240,000) were living in relative poverty in Scotland in 2017/18¹.

The UK Government: ‘*Local Child Poverty Indicators 2019/20 – ‘Estimates of Rates, after Housing Costs*’²’ states that that 4,189 children in West Dunbartonshire are living in poverty; This figure has grown by 504 children since 2014/15.

By this measure the trend of growth in child poverty in West Dunbartonshire was temporarily halted in 2018/19, but in 2019/2-20 it has crept closer to the 2017/18 high of 26.9%.

Child Poverty in West Dunbartonshire by this measure is lower than the UK average, but 2.6% above the Scottish average.

Child Poverty in West Dunbartonshire is around 3-4% above the average in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde area.

The risk of poverty is higher for children in: lone-parent families, in a household where someone is disabled, in families with three or more children, in minority ethnic families, families with a child under one year old and families where the mother is under 25 years of age.

More than eight out of 10 children in relative poverty in Scotland are in one of these groups. In West Dunbartonshire we are also placing emphasis on supporting children and young people with experience of care.

Risk of poverty is also high for children in households where no adults are in paid employment. However, two thirds of children in relative poverty in Scotland live in working families.

It is important that actions to tackle child poverty are reaching priority groups and meeting their needs, as well as achieving the right balance between actions to reduce in-work and out-of-work child poverty. In West Dunbartonshire we will focus on action that increases income from work, maximise benefit entitlement, reduces the cost of living and provides additional help for families.

West Dunbartonshire Council and Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS have responsibility for compiling the Local Child Poverty Report and Community Planning West Dunbartonshire (Nurtured Delivery Group) will co-ordinate the report and support an integrated approach to deal with child poverty.

This is our third Child Poverty Action Report and our aim is to contribute to:

‘Improved Life chances for all Children, Young People and Families’ in West Dunbartonshire.

¹ <http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/2607/child-poverty-scales-and-trends.pdf#:~:text=3.%20Nearly%20in%204%20children%20in%20Scotland,for%20at%20least%20three%20out%20of%20four%20years>

² UK Government: Local Child Poverty Indicators 2019/20 – Estimates of Rates, After Housing : <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics> (accessed June 2021)

Introduction

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 requires the Scottish Government to meet four income based child poverty targets by 2030 as well as set out and report on the actions they will take to meet those targets.

In addition the Act places a duty on Local Authorities and Health Boards to report each year on what they are doing to reduce child poverty.

Further details about the child poverty legislation can be found on the Scottish Government website at: <https://www.gov.scot/policies/poverty-and-social-justice/child-poverty/>

Child Poverty Defined

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 contains four headline income-based measures of poverty with two target milestones: the final target date of 2030, and an interim target date in 2023.

The headline measures of poverty are defined as:

1. **Relative Poverty** is the incidence of children living in households with an annual equivalised net income for the year that is less than 60% of median income.
2. **Absolute Poverty** is the incidence of children living in households whose equivalised net income is below 60% of income in a base year (2010/11). This is adjusted to take account of changes in the value of money since that financial year.
3. **Combined Low Income and Material Deprivation** is the incidence of children living in households whose equivalised annual, net income is less than 70% of median equivalised net household income and experiences material deprivation in the year. This includes families/parents that want, but can't afford specific goods or services for their children, for example, a holiday away from home once a year or bedrooms for every child aged 10+ years of a different gender.
4. **Persistent Poverty** is the incidence of children that have lived in absolute poverty for at least three years with a net annual income less than 60% of median equivalised net household income for three of the last four years.

The 2030 targets which take housing costs into account aim to ensure that:

- Fewer than 10% of children living in families in relative poverty.
- Fewer than 5% of children living in families in absolute poverty.
- Fewer than 5% of children living in families in combined low income and material deprivation.
- Fewer than 5% of children living in families in persistent poverty.

Income-based measures of poverty are 'equivalised'. That means they are adjusted to take into account household need (based on size and composition). From latest figures (2016-19)³ a family is considered to be in poverty if they are living on:

- Less than £373 a week or £19,400 a year for a single person with children aged 5 and 14 years;
- Less than £475 or £24,800 a year for a couple with children aged 5 and 14 years.

³ Child Poverty Action Group: <https://cpag.org.uk/scotland/child-poverty/facts>

The Drivers of Poverty

The evidence suggests that child poverty in Scotland is driven by structural or institutional factors. These factors include:

- **Income from social security** and benefits in kind, influenced by: -
 - design and generosity;
 - benefit sanctions and recovery of advance payments;
 - hardship payments and third-party debts;
 - barriers to accessing financial support (including child maintenance).
- **Income from employment**, influenced by the availability of jobs, hours and the level of earnings, and barriers to taking up that work, such as childcare responsibilities; plus qualifications and skills, which can influence both contemporary and future child poverty.
- **Costs of living**, including housing, food and fuel costs, the poverty premium, the costs of the school day, and the extra, unavoidable costs of disability or living in a rural area.

As such, the Local Child Poverty Action Report must set out a range of commitments to address these key drivers of poverty.

Who is Affected

In Scotland, the risk of poverty is higher for children in certain priority groups. The risk of relative poverty is highest for children living in families where the mother is under 25 years of age, in a minority ethnic household or in lone parent families.

Risk of combined low income and material deprivation is especially high for children in lone-parent households, larger families, households where someone is disabled and families where the mother is under 25 years of age.

The Scottish Government: Every Child Every Chance (2018) states that:

- 30% of disabled children live in relative poverty;
- 30% of children in larger families are living in relative poverty;
- 32% of children less than 1 year old are living in poverty;
- 36% of children in lone parent households are living in relative poverty;
- 37% of children in ethnic minority households are living in relative poverty;
- 45% of children whose mother is younger than 25 years is living in relative poverty.

Figures cited are three year average poverty rates (2013-14 – 2015-16), Source: Households Below Average Income, DWP.

Managing the Child Poverty Report

This is the third West Dunbartonshire Local Child Poverty Action Report. The previous Child Poverty Reports can be found on the West Dunbartonshire Council website at:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/the-child-poverty-scotland-act-2017/>

Child Poverty Report - Strategic Direction

Community Planning West Dunbartonshire and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde will provide strategic oversight and scrutiny of the West Dunbartonshire Local Child Poverty Action Report. This will ensure that the report not only complies with the statutory requirements within the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017, but will ensure that the aims of

child poverty legislation and associated actions are considered in the wider strategic and policy context.

Our aim is to ensure we are connected to and consistent with Community Planning West Dunbartonshire's vision:

‘To develop West Dunbartonshire as a place where people choose to live, work, explore, visit and invest’.

Child Poverty Action Report - Management and Activity Reporting

The Community Planning Partnership in West Dunbartonshire is based around five themes each with a ‘Delivery Improvement Group’ driving forward partnership activity. Each Delivery Improvement Group consists of representation from key strategic partners and has responsibility for specific policy and strategic areas.

The ‘Nurtured Delivery Improvement Group’ will play a lead role in the development, delivery and progress of actions within the Local Child Poverty Action Report. The Nurtured DIG is also lead group, among other strategic management responsibilities, for the ‘Integrated Children Services Plan’ and the ‘Community Learning and Development Plan’. As such the Nurtured DIG members will ensure that actions across these three policy areas are fully co-ordinated, integrating action where appropriate.

The Nurtured DIG will ensure that the report acts as resource to support service providers that, through their individual services, are addressing child poverty in West Dunbartonshire. The Community Planning West Dunbartonshire ‘Nurtured Delivery Improvement Group’s objective is to:

‘Improve Life Chances for All Children, Young People and Families’.

The responsibility for compiling the Local Child Poverty Action Report lies with West Dunbartonshire Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. Working 4 U staff members will take responsibility for compiling the annual report with support from staff at NHS GG&C and the NHS GG&C Poverty Leads Group. Members of the NHS GG&C Poverty Leads Group is available in **Appendix 2**.

Delivery

Each of the key partners within and beyond West Dunbartonshire Council and Health Services will contribute towards the child poverty objectives. The Key partners will also contribute towards activity that will address child poverty through the various local partnership structures/organisations.

These partnerships draw membership from public, private and third sector organisations and include, for example, the ‘Information and Advice Partnership’, ‘Employability Partnership’, ‘Community Alliance’, ‘Adult Learning’ and ‘Youth Alliance’ among others. Details of partnerships their remit and membership are outlined in **Appendix 3**.

Local Priorities

At a local level Community Planning West Dunbartonshire has emphasised the need to focus efforts on:

- Families and children with experience of the care system;
- Children with caring responsibilities; and
- Those living in areas of high material deprivation.

As such the focus of our attention when addressing child poverty will be placed on identifying, engaging with and supporting people from these families in addition to those identified within the child poverty legislation. This includes families with children:

- where the mother is under 25 years of age;
- larger families;
- minority ethnic households;
- lone parent families;
- families with children under 1 year old.

Our Approach

Perceived and real barriers to opportunity will have a substantial bearing on the potential for families moving from poverty. Barriers are often associated with personal circumstances and individual and external factors that may require customised support to overcome. Some of these challenges centre on:

Personal Circumstances

- Family composition (young, large, lone parent, equalities);
- Transport and accessibility;
- Childcare needs;
- Physical and mental health;
- Finance and debt;
- Understanding benefits

Individual Factors

- Personal attributes, for example confidence, self esteem;
- Skills assets, qualifications and work experience; and/or
- the ability and capability to use those attributes and assets.

External Factors

- The prevailing local labour market conditions;
- Wider economic drivers;
- Employers' recruitment procedures and their attitudes and expectations of employees;
- accessibility/availability of routes into further and higher education.

Addressing these factors in an attempt to maximise income, reduce costs or help families in other ways will feature highly in our activities and reporting.

Transitions

Life transitions are typically the most significant milestones in people's lives. As a result they often become our greatest undertakings/challenges and will have a direct impact on the quality of our lives. Our ability to cope with the impact of these transitions can be significant and will have a bearing on our well-being and prosperity.

Transitions include life stage transitions, such as having a child, a child starting primary or secondary school, or transitions to adulthood and work for young people. Other kinds of transitions in personal circumstances which are often less easy to predict, include: relationship break-down, losing a job, falling ill, having your tenancy ended unexpectedly or imprisonment or release.

Each of these transitions has an associated cost that, in combination with other factors such as life circumstances, can exacerbate difficulties, particularly among families with limited resources such as those in our priority groups. It is not sufficient to focus on particular groups without understanding circumstances, transitions and barriers that affect families and individuals on a daily basis.

Our approach to addressing poverty in West Dunbartonshire is based on delivering services and support that can mitigate the negative impact of transitions; address the barriers and influence, where possible, the structural drivers of poverty.

Living in West Dunbartonshire

West Dunbartonshire, an area of 98 square miles, is located west of Glasgow and shares borders with Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire and Stirlingshire, Renfrewshire and Glasgow. **Map 1** provides an indication of the location of West Dunbartonshire.



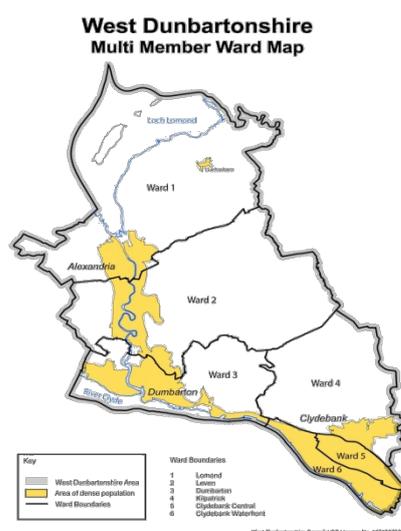
West Dunbartonshire includes the towns of Clydebank, Dumbarton and Alexandria and has a population estimate of 88,930 residents, 15,647 were in the 0-15 years age group⁴.

The area consists of a business community that stretches along the banks of the Clyde to the shores of Loch Lomond. West Dunbartonshire has a rich past that has been shaped by its world-famous shipyards. The area also boasts many attractions, ranging from the beauty of Dumbarton Rock to historic whisky warehouses.

West Dunbartonshire is not only an area of great diversity and natural beauty, it is also well connected. Just half an hour from the heart of Glasgow, with its opportunities for employment and learning within universities and colleges. In addition, it is conveniently located to Glasgow airport and Paisley and therefore a good location for business development.

The local authority area consists of 121 of Scotland's 6,978 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation data zones and 17 Community Council areas. These are set within six 'multi-member' wards, illustrated in **Map 2**:

1. Lomond;
2. Leven;
3. Dumbarton;
4. Kilpatrick;
5. Clydebank Central;
6. Clydebank Waterfront.



⁴ nrsscotland: Population Estimate: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/west-dunbartonshire-council-profile.html#:~:text=In%20terms%20of%20overall%20size,out%20of%20age%20groups>.

Children in West Dunbartonshire

In [2019](#) there were 15,647 children living in West Dunbartonshire:

- 7,157 pupils in the 32 primary schools in West Dunbartonshire.
- 5,155 pupils in the five secondary schools in West Dunbartonshire.
- 193 pupils in the three special need schools in West Dunbartonshire.

The number of children looked after in West Dunbartonshire increased from 363 in 2016 to 505 children in July 2019. As West Dunbartonshire has a higher incidence of children with care experience these children are included in our priority groups.

Child Poverty in West Dunbartonshire

The Scottish Government states on-line⁵ that the main poverty data source, the Family Resources Survey, provides information at national level only. Some alternative data sources for Local Authorities addressing child poverty are available. However, these are at best only partially comparable to the national-level statistics in the Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland annual publication. The other alternative sources are not directly comparable with the official poverty estimates.

As such we will provide an indication of the scale of child poverty in West Dunbartonshire by using alternative publications including:

- National Records of Scotland - The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation⁶; and
- UK Government: Local Child Poverty Indicators 2014/2020⁷

Despite its strengths, West Dunbartonshire is one of the areas in Scotland most affected by post-industrial decline. Its three town centres, Alexandria, Clydebank and Dumbarton have experienced steady decline in their comparative economic performance with some areas affected by wide ranging deep rooted poverty and deprivation.

There are 121 Datazones in West Dunbartonshire:

- **All multi-member wards in West Dunbartonshire have areas with comparatively high incidences of multiple deprivation.**
- **Approximately 35,000 (37%) of the resident population have first hand experience of multiple deprivation.**

The UK Government: *'Local Child Poverty Indicators 2019/20 – Estimates of Rates, after Housing Costs'*⁸ will act as the baseline and, for consistency, will be used in the forthcoming years to illustrate changes in the level of child poverty in West Dunbartonshire.

The Local Child Poverty Indicator figures are outlined below with comparative figures for NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, Scotland and the UK.

These figures are most closely aligned with the Scottish Government's 2030 target for families living in comparative poverty; which is set at 10%.

⁵ Scottish Government, Child Poverty Statistics: <https://www.gov.scot/collections/child-poverty-statistics/>

⁶ Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation: <https://simd.scot/#/simd2020/BTTTT/9/-4.0000/55.9000/>

⁷ UK Government: Local Child Poverty Indicators 2019/20 – Estimates of Rates, After Housing : <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics> (accessed June 2021)

⁸ UK Government: Local Child Poverty Indicators 2019/20 – Estimates of Rates, After Housing : <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics> (accessed June 2021)

Table 1: Child Poverty Indicators 2014/2020, NHS GG&C (Numbers)						
Estimates of Rates, after Housing Costs						
Local authority	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Glasgow City	26,223	28,785	29,230	30,643	31,027	32,480
West Dunbartonshire	3,685	3,836	3,968	4,246	4,122	4,189
North Lanarkshire	15,202	16,075	15,923	16,553	16,090	16,604
Inverclyde	2,757	2,980	2,852	2,957	2,934	3,003
Renfrewshire	5,768	6,099	6,413	6,848	6,589	6,997
South Lanarkshire	11,839	12,346	12,343	12,947	12,466	12,840
East Dunbartonshire	2,799	2,955	3,170	3,149	2,857	3,161
East Renfrewshire	2,713	2,860	2,904	2,931	2,811	3,064
NHS GG & Clyde Total	70,986	75,936	76,803	80,274	78,896	82,338
NHS GG & Clyde Average	8,873	9,492	9,600	10,034	9,862	10,292
Scotland (Millions)	0.20m	0.21m	0.21m	0.22m	0.21m	0.20m
UK (Millions)	3.37m	3.49m	3.64m	3.70m	3.74m	3.37m

Table 2: Child Poverty Indicators 2014/20, NHS GG&C (%)							
Estimates of Rates, after Housing Costs (%)							
Local authority	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	change (14-20)
Glasgow City	27.1%	29.5%	29.6%	30.9%	31.0%	32.2%	5.1%
West Dunbartonshire	23.4%	24.5%	25.1%	26.9%	26.3%	26.8%	3.3%
North Lanarkshire	23.9%	25.5%	25.2%	26.3%	25.5%	26.5%	2.6%
Inverclyde	20.9%	23.0%	22.1%	23.3%	23.3%	23.8%	2.9%
Renfrewshire	19.3%	20.4%	21.3%	22.8%	21.9%	23.1%	3.8%
South Lanarkshire	21.5%	22.4%	22.5%	23.5%	22.5%	23.1%	1.5%
East Dunbartonshire	15.2%	15.9%	16.9%	16.6%	14.8%	16.3%	1.0%
East Renfrewshire	15.0%	15.6%	15.5%	15.5%	14.6%	15.8%	0.8%
NHS GG & Clyde	21%	22%	22%	23%	22%	23%	2.6%
Scotland	22%	23%	23%	24%	23%	24%	3%
UK**	29%	29%	30%	29%	29%	31%	2%

- 4,189 children in West Dunbartonshire are living in poverty;
- This figure has grown by 504 children since 2014/15.
- The trend of growth in child poverty was temporarily halted in 2018/19, but in 2019/2020 has crept closer to the 2017/18 high of 26.9%;
- Child Poverty in West Dunbartonshire by this measure is lower than the UK average, but 2.6% above the Scottish average;
- Child Poverty in West Dunbartonshire is around 3-4% age points above the average in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

- Child poverty in West Dunbartonshire by this measurement has increased by 3.3%.

Getting closer to and below the Scottish and NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde average should be considered as a key step towards the 2030 targets.

Drivers of Poverty

The key drivers of poverty identified in the legislation include income levels and the cost of living. Income is determined, to an extent, by levels of economic activity and employment. While there are many sources of labour market information examples provided by NOMIS⁹ (Office for National Statistics) will provide sufficient illustration of West Dunbartonshire's comparative labour market profile to suggest the need for targeted support.

Employment and Economic Activity:

West Dunbartonshire has a comparatively higher rate of economic inactivity with 72.9% of the 16-64 years age group in employment. The comparative figure for Scotland is 73.5% and Great Britain's figure is 75.4%.¹⁰

Further analysis demonstrates that while the economic activity rate of 76.8% is the same as Scotland, the area has a higher level of unemployment: 5% as opposed to 4.3% in Scotland and 4.6% in the Great Britain.

At 23.1%, West Dunbartonshire has a higher incidence of workless households than both Scotland (17.7%) and Great Britain (13.9%). And of those in employment, there is a higher proportion in West Dunbartonshire reliant on part-time work (36.7%). This is higher than the figure for Scotland (33.7%) and Great Britain (32.2%).

A review of the NOMIS statistics reveals that the job density¹¹ in West Dunbartonshire is estimated at 0.64; this is much lower than the figure for Glasgow (1.04); Scotland (0.82) and Great Britain (0.87). In effect, although there are comparatively higher numbers of people out of work, there are also comparatively fewer opportunities available in West Dunbartonshire.

Addressing unemployment and underemployment is consistent with addressing the income drivers of poverty and will therefore feature extensively in our approach to addressing child poverty.

Benefits

The number of people in receipt of out of work benefits is a contributory factor to the level of child poverty. In West Dunbartonshire 7% of the population in the 16-64 years group is in receipt of out of work benefits. This is higher than the average in Scotland (5.2%) and Great Britain (6.7%) and represents 4,935 people.

When combined with other main benefits, such as Employment Support Allowance, there are 14.6% of households in receipt of the main benefits and this compares unfavourably with the figure for Scotland (10.2%) and Great Britain (8.4%)¹².

In effect, comparatively more people in West Dunbartonshire rely on benefits for their income. Maximising their entitlement will feature strongly in our approach to maximising income.

⁹ NOMIS West Dunbartonshire Labour Market Profile : <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157435/report.aspx#> (accessed June 2021)

¹⁰ NOMIS: West Dunbartonshire Labour Market Profile: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157435/report.aspx>

¹¹ Density figures represent the ratio of total jobs to population 16 – 64 years

¹² NOMIS: West Dunbartonshire Labour Market Profile: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157435/report.aspx>

Summary of Drivers

West Dunbartonshire has a comparatively high level of multiple deprivation. As a result the numbers of children living in poverty is higher than the average for both, the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde area and Scotland.

West Dunbartonshire also has a comparatively higher number of looked after children. As such the focus of interventions to address child poverty should include this group of families as well as those identified in the legislation most likely to be affected by poverty.

The statistics suggest that considerable progress has to be made if the area is to reach the targets for comparative poverty (10%) by 2030 set out by the Scottish Government. Moving closer to the Scottish and then NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde averages would be a step in the right direction.

West Dunbartonshire has a higher than average rate of economic inactivity and a higher than average proportion of families dependent on benefits. In light of this efforts should focus on maximising income from benefits and reducing the cost of living for this group where possible. This will include, for example, maximising access to passported benefits and reducing costs, such as the cost of the school day.

West Dunbartonshire has comparatively fewer local jobs and higher than average levels of families in receipt of out of work benefits. As such there is a clear need not only to support people into work, but there is also a need to support them to improve their circumstances in the labour market through efforts to stimulate in-work progression. This will contribute towards addressing in-work poverty.

Lived Experience in West Dunbartonshire

The statistics and data analysis presented in the previous section of this report: *'Living in West Dunbartonshire'* illustrate the prevalence and incidence of poverty and disadvantage in West Dunbartonshire. It also demonstrates trends and the prosperity gap between some people living in West Dunbartonshire and people living in other areas.

However, it doesn't provide any insight into people's lived experience. To redress this we have asked some families to tell us what its like to live with limited resources.

We have supported many people through various programmes and projects. Our focus here is on some of those that we have assisted through our 'Winter Hardship Fund' and our project designed to raise awareness of the negative impact of high interest rates and illegal money lending.

Family 1: We were approached by a service user for assistance from the Winter Hardship Fund to assist with furnishings for their home. In discussion with the family we discovered that their intention was to hire a van to transport a second-hand sofa to their house. Further discussion unveiled a number of needs including unpaid fuel bills and other debts. However, the van hire was viewed by our service user as the priority for any additional assistance they could obtain.

'When I moved into my house I had nothing but the clothes on my back to move in with. I got a voucher to furnish my new home but I had to use this to get the bare essentials to live, like my fridge, mattress, cutlery and some plates. I couldn't afford a sofa; I just had to buy what I needed to live at the time.

I didn't even have a freezer and I used socks as oven gloves for a while. I've slowly been able to build up the small amount of furniture I have over time but I've never been able to afford a sofa. Even though I don't smoke or drink or buy very much for myself it is so difficult saving up to buy anything when you don't have a lot coming in.

I've worked out that the storage heaters in my flat cost £4 a night to run and that takes up the bulk of my money but my flats have been due for an upgrade for years now and it still hasn't happened. Fuel is such a stress for me and I am constantly worried I don't have enough money for my key card and I am cut off. How could I charge my mobile? I even have nightmares about it because I've been close many times.

I spent nearly a year of lockdown sitting on my bed or sitting on two dining chairs I had in front of my TV. When I got the Winter Hardship Money I used this money to hire a man with a van to collect a second hand sofa I seen online. I'll never be in a position to afford that again. It seems daft but I felt more like a human again actually having a sofa after all those years of sitting on my sister's loaned dining chairs – my sister was happy to get her chairs back too.'

Family 2: A Single parent family where the father was bringing up his child alone because his partner had passed away some years previous. Finances were a challenge because the father worked in a low-paid job in a poorly paid sector (care). With limited resources the father could not refresh the very nursery/child-like bedroom décor. As a young adult of 16 years his daughter, 'embarrassed' by the 'state of the room', felt unable to invite friends to her home.

‘When my wife passed away our daughter was still at primary. Money has been tight since, because it’s only my income coming in to pay for the two of us, all the bills, the clothes for two of you, the food for two of you and all that. You don’t have any money left to save.

You’d think working since the day you turned 15 would mean you would have enough to cover the bare basics, but you don’t. You try to protect your kids from it because, what kid should be worried about paying bills? But we’ve had the lights go out on us sometimes, you get to the week before payday and sometimes you’re having a bowl of spaghetti before school because it’s all you’ve got left.

It makes you feel like a bad parent. It’s a struggle every month to pay all the bills I need to. The last time she got her room decorated was when her mum and I decorated it for starting primary. My daughter is 16 this year. She knows money is tight so doesn’t ask for much but I know she was getting embarrassed about bringing her friends over. She still had a child’s bed; it wasn’t even a full single. Her wardrobe didn’t even have doors on it, they fell off years ago. There was no way I could afford to redecorate it myself anytime soon.

The Winter Hardship Money meant I was able to get her a new bed, fresh paint and set of drawers. My daughter is happy and it will be a comfortable place for her to do her studying and have a safe place to hang out with her pals, it’s the least she deserves.’

Family 3: Family of four, mother, father, ten month old baby and seven year old. The mother reaching the end of maternity leave was compelled to return to work because her husband had lost his job during COVID. Not only were the family in difficult circumstances they also had difficulty in understanding requirements for securing free school meals. Missing out on school meals not only in term time, but also through the holidays. While the school were made aware of, and addressed, the situation, the family used a hardship grant to purchase some shopping from the supermarket. Our adviser received a ‘WhatsApp’ photo from the father of the family with a photograph of the family and shopping with the message: first big shop of the year’.

‘Both my wife and I have worked since we moved to the UK. I lost my job in March due to COVID and my wife had just had a baby in January. At first we had only had our wife’s maternity pay supporting myself, my wife and our two children. We were still waiting the 5 weeks for my UC to come through. We have never earned enough to save and did not have any savings to help us through this time. It was a bad time for our family; my wife and I were skipping meals to get things the baby and our son needed.

Living off UC and my wife’s maternity pay was very hard; we had to be very careful to keep our costs down. We were also getting deductions for things we couldn’t understand and every month the amount was different – some months we would get £600 as a family and others £900 for the whole month. There were times we were frightened to turn the heating on in case we could not afford heat until we got paid again. Usually we would put it on in the one room and we would stay in the one room together.

All our money went on electricity and food and nappies for the baby. My wife and I are used to it, but it is hard knowing the children are going through it too. My son is clever, he knows.

My son was entitled to free school meals when I lost my job but I did not know this. Our son's school had emailed us with the instructions. English is our second language and we struggled to understand what the emails meant. Everything is on a computer. which I am not very good with using. We do not have one in our house.

It was only when we spoke to Working4U we got help getting my son's free school meal allowance. We had went nearly a year not knowing about it. While the school sorted this out for us, we received the Winter Hardship Fund which allowed us to buy our first proper food shop since I lost my job. We were also able to stock up on things for our baby and buy our son new shoes. It was a great boost to my whole family and took so much stress away from me and my wife. I could not believe it - £350! It was like the angels had came.'

Although anecdotal, these examples of 'lived experience' add another dimension to understanding and demonstrating the impact of poverty on people's lives. This also strongly re-asserts the circumstances faced by families affected by poverty cannot be understood through statistics alone.

While limited in number, the testimony of those living experiencing disadvantage provide an indication of issues that policy makers and service providers should take into account when designing interventions:

- fuel poverty, consumer and housing debt, digital exclusion are the focus of support for policy makers; people experiencing the daily challenges may have other priorities which depend on their circumstances and trigger events;
- those seeking support will often emphasise their needs in terms that meet funder eligibility, rather than stating the real stress (no sofa, daughter no having decent furniture);
- a 'cash first' approach is often more preferable for people seeking support;
- mobile phones, decent furniture, furniture for a child's bedroom are generally accepted standards; not luxurious items that are unattainable for people living with limited resources.

Addressing Child Poverty – Summary

The Scottish Government has set four targets for reducing child poverty. By 2030, less than 10% of children will live in households that are in relative poverty; less than 5% will live in households that are in absolute poverty; less than 5% will live in households that experience combined and low income and material deprivation; and less than 5% will experience persistent poverty.

West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Vision

Our approach to addressing child poverty will be set in the context of West Dunbartonshire community planning's vision: To develop West Dunbartonshire as a place where people choose to live, work, explore, visit and invest'. West Dunbartonshire will be an area where all of our residents are: Flourishing, Independent, Nurtured, Empowered, Safe.

The majority of child poverty activity is set within the work of two Delivery Improvement Groups:

1. *Flourishing Delivery Improvement Group: A Flourishing West Dunbartonshire, where:*
 - Our economy is diverse and dynamic creating opportunities for everyone.
2. *Nurtured Delivery Improvement Group: A Nurtured West Dunbartonshire, where there are:*
 - Improved life chances for all children, young people and families.

West Dunbartonshire Child Poverty Objective

Our objective is to develop, deliver and manage strategic and operational activities that will focus on reducing the average levels of child poverty after housing in West Dunbartonshire¹³.

Our aspiration is to reduce the absolute number of children in poverty and strive towards and below the comparable figure for child poverty after housing in the NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde area.

This will be a key step towards the 2030 targets set by the Scottish Government in the child poverty legislation.

West Dunbartonshire Priority Target Groups

The target groups for planned actions to address child poverty in West Dunbartonshire include families with children most likely to experience disadvantage, including families:

- where the mother is under 25 years of age;
- larger families (2+ children);
- minority ethnic households;
- lone parent families;
- families with children under 1 year old;
- with experience of the care system;
- with caring responsibilities; and
- living in areas of high material deprivation.

¹³ UK Government: Local Child Poverty Indicators 2019/20 – Estimates of Rates, After Housing : <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2020>

We aim to do this by working in partnership and focus on activities that:

- **maximise income from work** – supporting family members to seek and secure employment;
- **maximise benefit entitlement** – ensuring families secure full benefit entitlement, including passported benefits;
- **reduce the cost of living for families** – supporting families to manage debt and secure financial support at trigger points in their lives; and
- **provide help in other ways** – providing access to opportunities and support that will help families to address the cause and effect of poverty- for example, dealing with transitions, food insecurity, period poverty, digital exclusion.

The Nurtured and Flourishing Delivery Improvement Group will ensure relevant partners, and associated sub-groups, will work together to:

- co-ordinate and integrate services that maximise the effectiveness of existing resources and avoid duplication of effort;
- use relevant quantitative and qualitative evidence to develop creative approaches for addressing child poverty;
- identify and, where appropriate, secure additional resources for addressing child poverty;
- support community-based resilience to address child poverty;
- gain insight into families' 'lived experience' and use this to design appropriate services.

Making Progress

We will make progress towards our objectives when families have access to appropriate services and parents in our target groups can say:

- I know how to find out about the information, advice and advocacy services for my family that are available in my community, and how to access these services;
- I can easily find, gain access to, and use the services our family need to improve or maintain our independence, wellbeing and resilience, both day to day and in times of crisis.
- I understand the factors affecting my families' circumstances and feel more confident about dealing with them and improving our quality of life as a result of the support we have received.
- The information we are provided with is relevant, easy-to-understand, consistent, accurate and up to date and we feel able to make informed decisions about the options available to me and my family.
- I know where we could go to speak to someone who could help us achieve the changes we require or want to make.

Each service, programme, project and activity will have its own specific key performance indicators which they will report on through the relevant channels. These key performance indicators will generally reflect on the number of service users and the effect services have on the quality of lives of those supported.

Measuring Success

The overarching aspiration and our success in addressing child poverty will be measured against prevailing comparative, average rates of poverty in the NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde area and Scotland.

We have set the figures for 2019 as the baseline. We will record the figures as they are published¹⁴, while they remain available and consistent, and we will compare these to the broadly similar Scottish Government targets for relative poverty.

Our aspiration is to reduce the absolute number of children in poverty from the 2019/20 baseline (4,189) and close the proportional gap between West Dunbartonshire and NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde. These will be key milestones in our aim to move towards the Scottish Government targets for 2030.

Table 3: Local: Child Poverty Indicators National Targets / Local Aims				
Local authority	2019/20		2023 Target	2030 Target
	n	%		
West Dunbartonshire	4,189	26.8%	Fewer than 4,189 Lower than 26.8%	National Average
NHS GG & Clyde	-	23%		National Average
Scotland	-	24%	17%	10%
UK	-	31%	-	-

¹⁴ UK Government: Local Child Poverty Indicators 2019/20 – Estimates of Rates, After Housing : <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2020>

COVID-19 – Respond, Re-Set, Recover

The COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of the lockdown of society and services represented an unprecedented challenge for the delivery of council services. Furthermore, evidence produced by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation¹⁵ strongly suggests that those in poverty are likely to be hardest hit by the impact of COVID-19. This being the case the challenges facing families with children in poverty in West Dunbartonshire are likely to intensify; along with the need for support.

Four Harms

The Community Planning Partnership in West Dunbartonshire set out a position statement that aimed to ‘suppress the virus, while protecting people, our society, and our economy, we will take coordinated action to tackle the four harms of COVID-19’

- Harm 1: Suppress the virus, protecting against the tragic harm to your health;
- Harm 2: Support broader health, protecting our health and social care services and your health and wellbeing – including actions to address violence against women and child protection;
- Harm 3: Mitigate social harms, protecting against broader harms to your way of life- with a focus on food insecurity (schools and within the community), rent arrears, homelessness, unemployment and the provision of crisis grants for vulnerable households/families;
- Harm 4: Support the economy, protecting against the devastating impact for business

In light of this in May 2021 West Dunbartonshire Council produced a review of additional action taken in response to the COVID-19; much of which was focussed on supporting families likely to be affected by poverty.

There were a number of areas where additional investment was made to mitigate the effect of COVID-19 and the four harms. The funds that had some focus on child poverty are outlined in the Table below:

Table 4: Funding for Families to Address COVID-19	
Funding	WDC
Free School Meals for period to 29 January 2021	£0.198m
Free School Meals for period to 26 February 2021	£0.164m
Free School Meals – Easter Holidays 2021	£0.120m
Early Years - Childcare providers Temporary Restrictions Fund	£0.05m
Education – Additional resourcing – intended for 2021/22	£0.493m
Education – Education Recovery further funding to take into 2021/22	£0.897m
Financial Insecurity Funding additional funding – (announced 16 February 2021)	£0.481m
COVID Spring Hardship Payments – children in receipt of free school meals	£0.391

¹⁵ <https://www.jrf.org.uk/society/coronavirus>

Table 4: Funding for Families to Address COVID-19	
(announced 16 February 2021)	
Support needs of children and young people for 2021/22 – announced 16 February 2021	£1.111m

This is not an exhaustive list of resources invested as a result of COVID-19. It does not, for example include business and other capital grants. However, it serves to illustrate the types and extent of activity being delivered to vulnerable families in response to COVID-19.

The 2021 Council Review focussed on a number of highlights. For example, Education Services reported on the development of remote learning. While they noted that any young person finding it challenging to engage could be considered vulnerable and may be supported in school. However, to facilitate remote learning the service had provided 2,090 ICT devices.

Education Services also reported on the distribution of free school meals and associated grants. All families with children in Primary.1 to Primary. 3's; and eligible families with children in Primary.4 to Secondary.6 had access to payments for food. Payments were £12.25 for school aged and £11.75 for Early Years children each week.

The Council Review also noted that to the end of January £15,255 was paid out daily for school meals to 6,277 families.

Education Services also reported on a Childcare Support Grant of £500 for childminders to help them to meet the demands of re-opening services during the pandemic. Six childminders took advantage of the grant.

The Review also highlights actions delivered by the Housing and Employability Service Teams. For example, Working 4 U Team set up the Crisis Support Team on behalf of West Dunbartonshire Council.

The Crisis Support Team developed an holistic checklist to explore emerging needs with people from families affected by COVID-19. This approach allowed the Council to provide direct and speedy access to welfare rights (benefit maximisation); debt management, employment support (furloughed/redundancy support); and emergency food supplies while exploring other emerging issues.

In the event this meant also providing support to secure mental health services, deal with domestic violence issues and provide support for individuals whose families lived outwith the area and were not able to travel to provide their own direct support.

The service also included practical support for delivering food, medicines and other support. The practical support was provided by the Communities Team, assisted by a team of volunteers.

Crisis Support Priorities

In addition to the practical support the Crisis Team and Housing Services and Homelessness Teams administered a series of hardship funds. With additional funding provided the Teams identified five specific cohorts for financial support in a time of crisis.

1. Supporting households who are experiencing rent arrears as a consequence of COVID-19 and associated restrictions.

This initiative supported households who have developed rent arrears caused or influenced by the pandemic, particularly those who have recently moved house and those in receipt of Universal Credit.

2. Supporting households who are experiencing additional cost as a consequence of moving home during COVID-19 and associated restrictions.

This initiative will support vulnerable households who live in inappropriate housing or are homeless, to move to a new home safely and affordably during COVID-19. It supported the costs of rent abatements where tenants are liable for rent on two properties for a short period. The initiative will also support the exceptional costs of white goods and soft furnishings which during COVID-19 are inaccessible or prohibitively expensive for the families.

3. Supporting households who are experiencing additional fuel poverty as a consequence of COVID-19 and associated restrictions.

This initiative will provide those in hardship with fuel vouchers for the purchase of power cards. Focussing on supporting those facing the highest tariffs for utilities. This was complemented by a grant award to Citizens Advice Bureau to distribute grants for those experiencing fuel poverty.

4. Addressing Digital Exclusion and support for access to digital service provision

This initiative will seek to support disadvantaged households who do not have broadband, or experiencing high costs for digital connectivity during the pandemic and lockdown periods.

This complemented the ‘Connecting Scotland’ programme where equipment was distributed to families; assisting them to overcome challenges in accessing vital services.

5. Addressing Food insecurity.

Supporting vulnerable households who cannot afford to eat properly during the pandemic. The funds are directed through our partner food bank organisations.

From its inception in April 2020 until June 2021 the Working 4 U, Crisis Support Team with support from Housing Teams and the Communities Team has dealt with 3,153 referrals.

Table 5: West Dunbartonshire COVID-19 Response - Crisis Support Team	
Crisis Support Interventions	Number (18/07/21)
Total Referrals	3,153
Repeat Referrals	993
Total Number of Individuals Supported	2,225
Shielded Residents	1,307
Test and Protect	200
Follow Up Calls	4,637
Active Ongoing Caseload (ongoing intensive support from Crisis Team)	14
Practical Support Provided (prescriptions, shopping)	861

Table 5: West Dunbartonshire COVID-19 Response - Crisis Support Team	
Grant Allocations	
Winter Hardship Grants	438
Remote Learning Grants	759
Total Grant Allocations (£350)	1,242
Food Insecurity	
Emergency Food Referrals	1,316
Referred to 'able to pay'	145
Scottish Government Care Box Support (additional)	545
Scottish Government supermarket support submissions	192

The support provided through various funds and the development of the crisis support intervention, Crisis Support Team and Practical Support Team has made a positive contribution to the West Dunbartonshire response to COVID-19. Going forward the teams will remain in place to ensure support is available for families that require assistance until the COVID-19 control measures are lifted.

Actions to Address the Drivers of Poverty

The approaches and actions below are set out to demonstrate some of the activity we have undertaken to address the drivers of poverty in West Dunbartonshire. This will include information about partnership working and practical approaches to addressing challenges associated with:

- maximising earning from work;
- maximising income from benefits;
- reducing costs; and
- providing help for families in other ways (circumstance and transitions).

Maximising Earnings from Work

Support to gain access to work and increase earnings is delivered through the provision of access to employability services. Employability encompasses all the things that enable people to increase their chances of getting a job, staying in a job, and progressing further in work.

'*No One Left Behind*' is the collective name given to the plans in West Dunbartonshire for the integration and alignment of employability support. The aim is to support people into fair, sustainable jobs and is central to priorities set out by Community Planning West Dunbartonshire

'*No One Left Behind*' will be supported by the alignment of a number of funds that will focus on local priorities in West Dunbartonshire.

In West Dunbartonshire the '*West Dunbartonshire Local Employability Partnership*' will take forward the '*No One Left Behind*' delivery plan and COVID -19 response actions to support parents from families vulnerable to poverty.

Our partnership approach is based on the principles that underpin the [partnership agreement](#) for employability agreed between the Scottish Government and local authorities.

The overall purpose of the West Dunbartonshire Local Employability Partnership is to:

- a) drive forward the shared ambitions and actions of a local employability service, No One Left Behind and the response to COVID -19 to ensure the right support is available in the right way at the right time.
- b) use the [Scottish Approach to Service Design](#) to co-produce an all-age employability support service that is person centred, more joined up, flexible and responsive to individual needs.
- c) improve opportunities for citizens to gain access to appropriate learning, education, volunteering, training and employment.
- d) identify priority geographical areas and generic issues and co-ordinate multi-agency initiatives to respond effectively.
- e) identify common themes, challenges and changes to the landscape of employability delivery and respond appropriately.
- f) coordinate information sharing and action between West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership, strategic partners, private and third sector employers.

The strategic Employability Group membership consists of representatives from:

West Dunbartonshire Local Child Poverty Action Report 2020/2021

- West Dunbartonshire Council Working 4 U and Education Services;
- Skills Development Scotland;
- DWP/JCP;
- West College Scotland;
- Work Connect, Specialist Supported Employment Service;
- Developing Scotland's Young Workforce (DSYW);
- West Dunbartonshire CVS;
- Scottish Qualifications Agency (SQA).
- West Dunbartonshire Service Provider Forum (Creative Design Group);
- Employers – NHS Golden Jubilee.

The Local Employability Partnership has set out its approach in the form of a 'One Page Plan' that outlines the Vision, Mission, Target Groups, Approach and Key Performance Indicators that will inform progress.

The Employability Plan is set out below.

West Dunbartonshire Vision: To develop West Dunbartonshire as a place where people choose to live, work, explore, visit and invest.

West Dunbartonshire Employability Service Partnership Mission is to support sustainable and equitable economic growth by encouraging residents to maximise their full potential. We will do this by engaging with West Dunbartonshire residents and providing them with good quality advice about employment and training options. We will help them to develop their skills and overcome barriers to opportunity. We will also support them to secure fair work and assist them to progress within the workplace.

Through our approach we aim to

(1) Establish Accountable Partnership Infrastructure and Processes... For joint working across services with resources (People), Delivery Methods (Process) and Effective Tools to achieve the objectives and report on our progress.

(2) To Facilitate Access to Employability Advice... Customised, case managed support and specialist employability, and learning advice and guidance across the employability pipeline. And address barriers to opportunity by integrating with specialist health and welfare services for Income maximisation; and reducing costs – digital exclusion; Debt management; Energy awareness; Period poverty; Food insecurity; and wellbeing.

And (3) provide practical support...

- Vocational and non vocational training;
- Basic and transferable skills and Learning activities;
- Work experience;
- Employment;
- Job matching; and In work support.

With Input from external funding agencies, strategic public sector, third sector and private sector partners.

- To understand the lived experience and develop appropriate services;
- To identify and secure additional funding resources;
- To Co-ordinate joint action and avoid duplication of effort;
- To develop creative approaches;
- To support community based resilience to address issues.

From Specific Target Groups linked to funding requirements...

- No One Left Behind – all age;
- Young Persons Guarantee 16 – 24 years;
- Parental Employability Support (Family groups vulnerable to poverty);
- PACE+ Newly redundant;
- Community Renewal Fund – all age;
- ESF all age with two barriers to opportunity.

Recording the Number of Local Residents Supported...

- Number of people supported;
- Number participating in vocational training;
- Number participating in formal volunteering;
- Number entering FE/HE/Training;
- Number securing an apprenticeship;
- Number securing employment.

Key Employability Projects (Maximise Earnings from Work)

We have set out a summary of the key employability support projects that are working in West Dunbartonshire to address child poverty.

Table 6: Key Employability Actions (Income from Work)	
Project	Lead Agency(ies)
Employability Pipeline	Working 4 U – with support from specialist training providers from the third and private sector.
Parental Employability Support	Working 4 U with support from Work Connect.
Oot Scoot and About	Working 4 U/ Education Service Senior Phase.
Apprenticeship Pathway	Working 4 U – support from employers including West Dunbartonshire Council; West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care; Golden Jubilee and Cameron House.
Young Persons Guarantee	Working 4 U with support from Education Services.
Young Persons Guarantee (DSYW)	Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce/Education Services Senior Phase.
Social Benefit	West Dunbartonshire Council.
Careers Guidance and National Training Programmes – Foundation and Modern Apprenticeships; Employability Fund.	Skills Development Scotland (SDS).
Kickstart/ Dynamic Purchasing	DWP/Jobcentre
NHSGGC Employability Programmes	NHS GGC

We have provided a brief description of these activities below.

Employability Pipeline

The employability support services are managed by Working 4 U and are delivered across the five stage employability pipeline; from unemployment to sustained employment.

The employability support services at each stage of the employability pipeline are designed to meet the needs of West Dunbartonshire parents who wish to progress towards and into employment and improve their position within the labour market.

- **At stages 1 and 2** of the pipeline we support parents who are furthest from the labour market and focus on barrier removal and provide an action plan. This will set an agreed approach to skills development and encourage progression from stages 1 and 2 into vocational activity and skills development and SQA accreditation.

- **Stages 3 and 4** includes job brokering, identifying appropriate opportunities for parents, employer engagement and job matching with employers who have identified a specific need or vacancy; and
- **At stage 5**, we provide in-work support and aftercare, which includes continued skills development to reinforce parents' position in the labour market.

Information about, and access to, Employability Pipeline services can be found at:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/jobs-and-training/working4u/get-in-touch/>

Parental Employability Support (Working 4 Parents)

The Parental Employability Fund investment has been developed in West Dunbartonshire to offer help by providing parents with access to an employability key worker who will help in two main areas:

- Person-centred help to address parents barriers to work, which might include health support, money advice or motivational support; and
- Help to meet the increasing challenge of in-work poverty, targeting in-work support to help parents already in jobs to remain in the workplace and gain progression through a rewarding career.

Our approach (Working 4 Parents) offers intensive, customised provision through a comprehensive needs assessment designed to support poverty reduction. This will determine the content of the tailored support and skill development that is required by parents to address their situation.

The case workers have also facilitated access to a range of activities beyond one-to-one work with individuals. This includes supporting generic skills development and providing access to employment related training.

In addition to employability support we will provide access to financial awareness; debt management, benefit maximisation, fuel and food poverty initiatives support from health and social services and housing support services.

Key to this is our partnership working with Education services in the Family Opportunity Hubs and outreach employability services delivered in partnership with the senior phase teams within Education Services.

We will also consolidate links with Education Services to provide access to opportunities for employment and progression in the workplace emerging as a result of the increased early year's childcare provision (Scottish Government 1,140 guaranteed hours to childcare).

Information about Parental Employability Support can be obtained at:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/jobs-and-training/working4u/get-in-touch/>

Oot Scoot and Aboot

'Oot Scoot and Aboot' aims to help young people to address barriers that prevent them from fully participating in community and social life. The approach centres on assisting personal and social development and is set within a learning agreement model that will encourage access to further learning, training and employment.

This very intensive programme is delivered in a partnership between Working 4 U staff and Education Service's Senior Phase Workers and targets support on young people who:

- are not in education, employment or training;
- have low self esteem and low aspirations;
- have poor mental health.

In addition the programme focusses on young people who have poverty related issues, lack skills and have very limited awareness of the opportunities / services / support that are available to them.

We have established a blended approach to support that includes face to face youth work support and access to volunteering. This is set alongside digital ('Zoom') sessions to provide young people with a sense of purpose and connection that they require.

The support will act as a gateway to 'Parental Employability Support'; 'No One Left Behind', mainstream employability and National Training Programmes.

As such we will develop and strengthen working links with staff from these teams to ensure there is a seamless transition from school to work and the provision of ongoing support to reinforce the gains made by young people from this group.

Information about 'Oot Scoot and Aboot' can be obtained at:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/jobs-and-training/working4u/get-in-touch/>

Apprenticeship Pathway

West Dunbartonshire Council has created a £1million fund as a commitment to the Apprenticeship Pathway. This funding will be used to support apprenticeship recruitment, primarily school leavers, over four years (2018-22). Our efforts will be placed on supporting young people into a range of opportunities within Council services and the Private sector.

The Apprenticeship Pathway will give young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who have not engaged with the school curriculum the opportunity to gain confidence and progress towards work.

This approach brings together a range of support services such as: Education Services Senior phase teams; Working 4 U Youth Learning Team; and the wider Youth Alliance.

The partners will link opportunities to activity in Pupil Equity Fund programmes, Senior Phase programmes, Foundation Apprenticeships, Employability Fund to ensure the right support is in place for each individual.

The investment is part of the Council's commitment to build a strong local economy with improved job opportunities. This is consistent with our goal of addressing the cause of poverty and improving the quality of life and resilience of West Dunbartonshire residents.

Information about the Apprenticeship Pathway can be obtained at:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/jobs-and-training/working4u/get-in-touch/>

Young Persons Guarantee

Working 4 U will support the delivery of the Young Person's Guarantee (YPG). This programme will be aligned to the principles of No-One Left Behind to ensure we are providing flexible, user-based employability support and training to young people aged 16-24 years. The Young Person Guarantee is intended to provide young people with an opportunity to pursue their career ambitions.

The Local Youth Alliance will conduct extensive outreach and in many cases will be the first point of contact for access to support services for young people in West Dunbartonshire communities.

West Dunbartonshire Council's Working 4 U team will work in partnership with local, regional and national service providers from the third and private sector to design and deliver specialist services that will help young people to secure work.

Services will centre on the provision of key worker support and case management; employer engagement and in work support; digital capacity skills training; and enhanced support through the provision of employer recruitment incentives; and 'Kickstart' wrap around.

This may therefore lead to support that will assist young people to: go to university or college; join an apprenticeship programme; undertake training; access fair employment including work experience; or participate in a formal volunteering programme. The provision also includes skills training and specialist support for young people with a disability and access to barrier free funding.

Information about the Young Persons Guarantee can be obtained at:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/jobs-and-training/working4u/work/young-persons-guarantee/young-persons-guarantee-programme/>

Education Senior Phase: Developing Scotland's Young Workforce

As part of Scotland's response to COVID-19 economic recovery, the Young Person's Guarantee was launched in November 2020. It aims to give all young people, aged 16-24 in Scotland, and the chance to succeed through the opportunity of a job, apprenticeship, education, training or volunteering. And for employers, it offers help to develop a future pipeline of skills and experience, with young people at the heart of the workforce. Young people bring organisations a wealth of talent, creativity, and enthusiasm, critical now and for future success.

DYW regional groups have been tasked by the Scottish Government to get employers of all sizes and across all sectors involved with the Young Person's Guarantee in up to 5 ways:

- Prepare young people for the world of work;
- Create opportunities for young people who face the greatest barriers to work;
- Invest in a skilled workforce through apprenticeships, training and upskilling opportunities;
- Create jobs and opportunities suitable for 16-24 year olds; and
- Ensure a work environment which supports all young people and provides fair work.

In addition, DYW West (the regional group for the area hosted by West College Scotland) receive additional monies that is transferred to the authority to fund DYW School coordinators. The Senior Phase DYW School Coordinators deliver the Schools Employability Skills Programme which is a targeted approach for pupils who are in their final year of school and would benefit from an employability experience which will support their transition into work, training or further/higher education. We can support all pupils with a particular focus on pupils who may have additional support needs, present at risk of becoming NEET and/or may be at risk of disengaging from education.

Focused predominantly on the senior phase, their role involves:

- Developing existing and establishing new employer school partnerships – to bring the curriculum to life and help young people understand more about the world of work
- Providing support to those school pupils that need it most
- Working closely with partners to promote & encourage opportunities such as apprenticeships, college, volunteering etc.

To find out more about DYW West visit www.dywwest.co.uk or contact us at info@dywwest.co.uk

Social Benefit (Inclusive Growth)

West Dunbartonshire Council is committed to maximising local social value from our procurement activity. This will be achieved through the inclusion of specific clauses within procurement contracts known as Social Benefit clauses. Social Benefit clauses go beyond the core purpose of a contract to deliver wider benefits to the local community. These clauses can be used to build a range of economic, social or environmental benefits into the delivery of Council contracts.

In 2019-2020 the Social Benefit Delivery Group was established. The group draws on expertise from: Working4U; Procurement, Education Services and Housing and Communities Teams. The aim is to maximise social benefits and specific emphasis is placed on supporting people who live in disadvantaged communities.

During 2020/2021 we have worked with a number of contractors including, for example:

- Employers attending careers and apprenticeship events; Apprenticeships and job opportunities; and Work experience placements;
- Employability skills development - Mock interviews, Site visits and tours
- Support from volunteers;
- Financial and equipment donations.

In 2021/2022 the team will continue to develop the Social Benefit project ensuring that we incorporate benefits for those people in families most likely to be affected by poverty and disadvantage. For example NHSGGC is working with a national 'Once for All' approach to procurement and community benefits clauses which covers poverty and child poverty.

Furthermore, NHSGGC achieved Living Wage Accreditation November 2020 and is encouraging partners to explore this issue more widely.

NHSGGC Community Benefits Clauses

To maximise relevant community benefits from NHSGGC's Procurement contracts in order to align this potential support with local needs.

This project has been led by the NHSGGC Procurement team and Community Benefits were considered in all contracts over the value of £50,000. In addition we have established processes which ensured real Living Wage is paid to contracted staff in future contracts as part of NHSGGC Living Wage accreditation which was achieved in Nov 2020

We have also begun development of local West Dunbartonshire pathway to enable appropriate Community Benefits requests aligned to local needs are added to the National Community Benefits Marketplace Portal.

In the forthcoming period we will:

- Finalise pathway to include local CBs into to National CB Marketplace Portal, with a focus on Child Poverty priority groups
- Community Benefits are considered in all contracts over the value of £50k
- Ensure a register is kept of all secured community benefits
- Identify areas within the Board to disseminate the Community Benefits to ensure these are secured.

Skills Development Scotland - National Training Programmes.

Skills Development Scotland provides Career Information, Advice and Guidance services to people of all ages with a particular focus on young people at risk of failing to progress into positive destinations. All services are equality assessed and poverty is considered in this process similarly to other protected characteristics.

SDS also manages a range of Scottish Government training and employability programmes including the Apprenticeship Family of Foundation, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships which provide high level on-the-job training and qualifications to the Scottish population.

In addition, SDS also delivers the Employability Fund, a national programme designed to deliver work experience opportunities combined with job related skills while also developing trainee's wider employability.

Opportunities are promoted widely and SDS Advisers, based in our public centres in the Clyde Shopping Centre and on Dumbarton High Street, work closely with young customers to support progression into relevant opportunities.

In 2021/22 SDS will continue to deliver a universal and targeted service in all local schools to develop pupil's Career Management Skills and support their career decision making.

In addition, the 'Next Steps' service will support the most vulnerable post school young people to overcome barriers to progression and will be delivered through a blended approach of face-to-face and remote approaches.

Further details of support provided by Skills Development Scotland can be found at:

<https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/local-national-work/west-dunbartonshire/>

Kickstart

The Kickstart Scheme provides funding to create new 6-month jobs for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit who are at risk of long term unemployment. Employers from across the private, public and not-for-profit sectors, have already committed to supporting young people and will receive:

- 100% of the National Minimum Wage (or the National Living Wage depending on the age of the participant) for 25 hours per week for a total of 6 months
- associated employer National Insurance contributions
- minimum automatic enrolment pension contributions
- a grant of £1,500 per job to cover setup costs and employability support

Working 4 U was successful in securing Kickstart gateway status placing the organisation in a pivotal position to maximise employment opportunities for local young people. Working 4 U has enhanced the programme through the use of Young Persons Guarantee resources and by linking Kickstart opportunities to our Apprenticeship Pathway. This successful development has to date brought 282 employment opportunities in West Dunbartonshire.

Further details about Kickstart can be obtained at:

<https://kickstart.campaign.gov.uk/>

Going Forward and Reporting Progress

Working with the Strategic Employability Partners we have devised a 'Progress Dashboard' to demonstrate and report on progress with the key employability programmes. While the indicators reflect on all participants, it is expected that a high proportion will be from within the child poverty target group. We will explore ways to focus specifically on families affected by poverty to direct our actions and report progress.

The Employability Partnership Progress Dashboard is reproduced in Appendix 1.

NHSGGC Employability Programme

The aim is to ensure the supply of a sustainable and skilled workforce now and for the future. NHSGGC has a long term strategy to promote NHS GGC as an employer of choice, and to widen access to NHS job opportunities for those experiencing actual, or perceived, barriers to employment.

We aim to think differently about how we support people to enter the NHS workforce in a competitive labour market including creating new pathways into employment for those facing barriers to employment and/or are under-represented within the workforce.

NHSGGC also recognises the impact of long term unemployment on the health and wellbeing of our patient population and the need to broaden access support to all those needing support to enter NHS employment.

Examples of groups to include in this strategy, although not an exhaustive list, are:

- long term unemployed;
- veterans;
- disabilities;
- 16 – 24 year olds;
- care experienced;
- black and minority ethnic;
- LGBTI; and
- people with experience of the criminal justice system.

Progress has been made in the implementation of the NHS GGC Widening Access to Employment (WATE) Strategy. Most notably in our modern apprenticeships, the academy model and careers and other employment opportunities .

- The NHSGGC Academy intakes in Oct - Nov 2020 (Renfrewshire and Glasgow) were adapted to align with COVID restrictions and was online rather than placements.
- Our NHSGGC Apprenticeship Programme was targeted at excluded and vulnerable groups including young parents and has employability outreach programmes to schools and colleges. (data due June 2021).
- Outreach to schools has utilised online options as placement activity paused.
- Continued implementation of NHSGGC family friendly and flexible working policies and procedures
- NHSGGC Employability team has led on continuation of NHSGGC learning and education programmes and bursary scheme to enhance career development; and
- Liaison with LCPAR local authority leads on the Parental Support Fund.

The WATE plan will continue in to 2021/22 through:

- ongoing recruitment of modern apprentices and support existing apprentice cohorts;
- delivery of sector based work academies and development of other pathways into employment;
- revised provision of careers awareness activity;
- consider feasibility of developing ‘Academy approach’ within HSCPs recruitment; and
- adoption of Young Person’s Guarantee and Kickstart

Income Maximisation (Benefits and Debt)

The West Dunbartonshire Information and Advice Partnership is set within the context of strategic planning within West Dunbartonshire. The partnership aims to deliver advice and information services in West Dunbartonshire where:

‘Anyone who wants to improve their life circumstances, wellbeing, independence and resilience is able to obtain the information and advice and support they need, when they need it and in the way they need it’.

The partnership in West Dunbartonshire consists of:

- West Dunbartonshire Council (Working 4 U);
- West Dunbartonshire Citizens Advice Bureau;
- Clydebank Independent Resource Centre; and
- Clydebank Asbestos Group.

The partnership draws on input from key agencies when required. This will include representation from DWP and the Scottish Social Security Agency.

All members and additional support providers will contribute to the partnership with the specific aim of:

- promoting social justice and the rights of the individual by delivering information, advice and support services that make a positive impact on the well being of individuals; and
- playing a full and productive part in tackling poverty in our communities through a responsive partnership approach that delivers free, high quality independent information, advice and advocacy services.

The services in West Dunbartonshire are designed to assist people to manage their expectations about the outcome of the service they receive and provide them with a better understanding of the options, rights and responsibilities and assistance they will receive and action required to resolve their issues.

There are three principal categories or types of intervention that the members of the West Dunbartonshire Advice and Information Partnership members will provide:

Type I – Active Information, Sign-posting and Explanation

This work refers to activities such as providing information or referring the user to other available resources or services and the explanation of technical terms or clarifying an official document.

Type II – Casework

This includes a diagnostic interview where the problem and all relevant issues are identified and making a judgement as to whether the individual has a case that can be pursued

Type III – Advocacy, Representation and Mediation at Tribunal

This work includes a range of further actions arising from the casework undertaken above and includes, for example: Advocacy and Representation and Mediation.

The partnership will demonstrate progress towards its vision by contributing to:

- reducing the proportion of children in West Dunbartonshire who are in poverty;

- increasing the numbers with sustained or increased resources through debt management and income maximisation;
- reducing the proportion of households who are in fuel poverty.

The main organisations providing access to debt and money advice with a view to maximising income are:

- West Dunbartonshire Council (Working 4 U);
- West Dunbartonshire Citizens Advice Bureau;
- Clydebank Independent Resource Centre; and
- Clydebank Asbestos Group.

These organisations recognise that there have been significant changes to the welfare benefit system, which have been implemented over recent years. The negative impact of welfare reform has been felt by many residents in West Dunbartonshire; including those with severe and enduring conditions and families facing poverty.

The partner organisations, depending on their own specific mission, provide access to all three types of advice (Active Information, Case Management and Advocacy). In addition the partners have played an instrumental role in developing a range of interventions to alleviate poverty including:

- the development of West Dunbartonshire COVID-19 Crisis Support Service;
- the development of fuel poverty project (led by West Dunbartonshire Citizens Advice Bureau);
- establishing approaches to food insecurity (Working 4 U and foodbanks);
- addressing Period Poverty (Working 4 U and Third Sector organisations); and
- Improving the Cancer Journey (Working 4 U/ Macmillan Cancer).

Further details of these interventions are provided within this report.

As with all our services, the partners will recognise success when there's evidence to demonstrate that people in West Dunbartonshire:

- know how to find out about information, advice and advocacy services that are available in West Dunbartonshire, and how to access these services;
- can easily find, gain access to, and use the information, advice and advocacy they need to improve or maintain their independence, wellbeing and resilience, both day to day and in times of crisis;
- The information provided is relevant, easy-to-understand, consistent, accurate and up to date and they feel able to make informed decisions about the options available to them;
- know where to go to speak to someone who could help them to achieve the changes they require or want to make;
- understand the factors affecting their circumstances and feel more confident about dealing with them and improving their quality of life as a result of the advice, information and advocacy support they receive.

Measuring and Reporting Progress

Using figures reported to the 'Improvement Service' (COSLA local authority support service) we can illustrate the levels of benefit maximised and debts managed through the use of funds provided by the local authority.

Table 7: Information and Advice Partnership Key Statistics	20/21
Funding invested by West Dunbartonshire Council for Welfare Rights Services Delivery	£1.286m
Total Number of Clients (ongoing and new)	7,513
Debt Managed	
*Type 1 –Debt – onward referral	795
*Type 2/3 – Debt – case management	192
Total Debt Managed	£3.6million
Income Maximisation (Benefit)	
**Type 1 Benefit	473
**Type 2/3 Benefits Casework/Advocacy Representation	6,486
Benefit Maximisation/Financial Gain	£11.98million
***Family Types (Child Poverty Groups)	
Single parent families	430
Families which include a disabled adult or child	418
Families with 3+ children	94
Minority ethnic families	34
Families with a child under one year old	49
Families where the mother is under 25 years of age	39

* Working 4 U and CAB statistics

** Working 4 U only statistics

***Working 4 U and IRC statistics

Contact with the Information and Advice Partnership can be made at: <https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/contact-us/other-council-services/welfare-rights-money-advice/>

Maximise Income from Benefits

Scottish Social Security in West Dunbartonshire

Social Security Scotland is responsible for administering a number of benefits that have been devolved to Scotland. Currently, Social Security Scotland administers eight benefits and is working in close partnership with organisations across West Dunbartonshire to maximise the uptake of these benefits.

The available benefits with a link to further information are:

- [Carer's Allowance Supplement](#) – an extra payment for people in Scotland who are in receipt of Carer's Allowance.
- [Best Start Grant - Pregnancy and Baby Payment](#) – a package of three payments that provide families with extra money during the early years of a child's life. Families can apply for the Pregnancy and Baby Payment from the 24th week of pregnancy and the grant will remain available up to the day your baby is 6 months old. This is increased to one year if the parent has care responsibility for a child, for example through adoption. Families receive £606 for their first child or £303 for any subsequent child.
- [Best Start Grant - Early Learning Payment](#) – Families can apply for the Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment when their child is aged between two years old and three years, six months old. If eligible, the family will receive £250 for each child.
- [Best Start Grant - School Age Payment](#) – a £250 payment made to eligible families around the time a child normally starts Primary One.
- [Best Start Foods](#) - a new payment for low income families in receipt of benefits or tax credits. This replaces UK Government's Healthy Start Vouchers in Scotland. Families can apply for Best Start Foods from pregnancy, or any time up to the third birthday.
- [Funeral Support Payment](#) - a payment available to people in Scotland, who are in receipt of specific benefits or tax credits, and require support to meet the costs of a funeral.
- [Young Carer Grant](#) - a new yearly payment of £308.15 for young carers aged 16 to 18 years who live in Scotland.
- [Job Start Payment](#) – is a one off payment of £252.50 available to young people in Scotland in receipt of specific benefits, and need help with the costs of starting a new job. If the household has children, the payment may increase to £404.

As the figure is increasing on a daily basis a summary of the number of benefit applications and payments made by Local Authority area can be found on the Scottish Government website:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/social-security-for-scotland-update-september-2020/>

Scottish Welfare Fund

The Scottish Welfare Fund managed by West Dunbartonshire Council replaced the discretionary Social Fund provided by the Department for Works and Pensions and offers access to two grants: Crisis Grants and Community Care Grants.

Crisis Grants

A grant may be available if residents need help with costs that have arisen as a result of a disaster or emergency or to keep their family safe from harm. This includes, for example: fire or flood; emergencies such as loss of money; or the need to visit a child in hospital.

Welfare Grants are not a regular source of income. As such additional checks are included as part of the application process to ensure applicants, where appropriate, can be considered for a DWP Hardship Payment, has an application pending for a Short Term Benefit Advance, or is eligible for a Universal Credit (UC) advance.

Community Care Grants

Community care grants may be available for residents if they:

- are about to leave care to live on their own in the community;
- face going into care because they don't have the things you need to continue living at home;
- are struggling to provide a safe and secure home for their family;
- need help to get essential household items like a cooker or washing machine

Welfare Grants can provide an immediate source of funding to support people with limited resources to overcome difficult circumstances at trigger points that challenge their resilience.

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/housing/council-housing/rent-arrears-benefits-and-debt-advice/>

Table 8: Scottish Welfare Fund Spend on White Goods in West Dunbartonshire			
Year	Budget	Spend	Proportion on White Goods
2018/19	£797,732	£814,825	22%
2019/20	£807,732	£829,519	22%
2020/2021	£1.38million	£1.35million	19%

Further details of the grants, eligibility and the application process can be found at:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/welfarefund>

Healthier Wealthier Children

Healthier Wealthier Children is a partnership programme between NHSGGC and Local Authorities that aims to support expectant mothers and families with children with advice and Income maximisation. The approach is based on interaction between health visitors as a vital contact with all families with children under the age of five years.

Activity centres on the provision of money advice services to ensure face to face services in Glasgow were changed to phone and online appointments systems with a communications plan accompanying this.

Information sources, including a Facebook page, have been developed for early year's staff. MS Teams training has been developed for midwifery and training has been provided to midwifery smoking cessation service and the Family Nurse Partnership.

Quarterly reporting of financial inclusion enquiry has been developed to aid quality improvement within Maternity and Health Visiting services. A review of the Badgernet and EMIS (Patient information management systems) Web money advice mailboxes that support these referrals took place.

For West Dunbartonshire residents, 68 referrals with an estimated gain of £282,000 April-Dec 2020. West Dunbartonshire had 5,495 Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods claims with a gain of £1,124,832. 1,285 Scottish Child Payment claims were made (up until 31st December 2020).

Going forward we will:

- Identify funding to maintain financial inclusion services.
- Improve the proportion of families referred to financial inclusion services from maternity and health visiting services via quality improvement work.
- Conduct exploratory work to assess how families with children with a disability can be better supported.

NHSGGC Staff Money and Fuel Cost Worries Clinics

The project provides money advice services to staff recognising the potential for financial problems, including in work poverty, across staff groups. The programme is primarily targeted to low paid workers.

In addition Home Energy and Money Worries support has been provided to all staff from December 2020. Initially the service was targeting low paid workers using a clinic model. This model was revised to telephone/email contact and widened due to the impact of COVID-19. Home Energy Scotland provides information on effective ways people can reduce energy bills, support individuals to check they have the best energy supplier, how to make savings and provide practical hints and tips on all aspects of energy saving.

Promotional materials in the form of posters, business cards sent to all of the main NHSGGC buildings through facilities. Advertised on Staff Net (NHS GGC Staff Intranet) and information available on A Healthier Place To Work webpages. Staff can telephone or email the service and are asked to use a code identifying themselves as NHSGGC workers (for monitoring purposes). There have been two evening online information sessions and finally staff can participate in a quiz.

Going forward it's anticipated the service will continue throughout the year, COVID 19 permitting using a targeted approach to support approximately 300 low paid workers.

More Information can be found at:

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/working-with-us/staff-health/>

Costs of Living

Housing and Support

The cost of housing has a significant bearing on levels of poverty as such activity around housing provision and management and associated services are important weapons for reducing poverty. The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) sets out how West Dunbartonshire Council and its partners plan to address the housing and housing related opportunities and challenges over the five year period from 2017/18 to 2021/2022.

The Local Housing Strategy not only represents West Dunbartonshire's approach to housing, homelessness; housing support services and fuel poverty, it also contains an action plan which outlines the projects/activities to be implemented to achieve the aims of the Local Housing Strategy for the period 2017 - 2022.

The Local Housing Strategy has a 10-point success plan. Some of which have a direct impact on the drivers of poverty. These include, for example:

- Maximise the delivery of new affordable housing through the 'More Homes Better Homes West Dunbartonshire' initiative;
- Reduce the impacts of climate change and fuel poverty by supporting energy efficiency measures across all housing sectors;
- Introduce a Housing Options approach to prevent homelessness;
- Work with partners to reduce repeat homelessness and increase tenancy sustainment in the social rented sector;
- Adopt a more holistic joined up approach to improving standards in the Private Rented Sector;
- Improve education, training and job opportunities for West Dunbartonshire residents by building on existing strong links through Working 4 U.

Within the context of promoting good quality housing, West Dunbartonshire has introduced a **Scheme of Assistance** to help home owners with information and advice and practical assistance about improving, repairing and maintaining their homes.

In addition, the Housing team has facilitated the feasibility assessment to develop district **heating schemes** in some or all of the 19 multi-storey blocks in West Dunbartonshire. The aim is to provide alternative heating options that will, among other outcomes, reduce heating costs for tenants and owners.

The Housing Team at West Dunbartonshire Council along with partners from the social rented housing sector have established a **Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan**.

Rapid Rehousing is about taking a housing led approach for people that have experienced homelessness, making sure they reach a settled housing option as quickly as possible rather than staying in temporary accommodation for too long. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, Rapid Rehousing means:

- A settled, mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible;
- Time spent in any form of temporary accommodation reduced to a minimum, with the fewer transitions the better; and
- When temporary accommodation is needed, the optimum type is mainstream, furnished and within a community.

The aim is to stabilise family life and circumstances at a particularly traumatic time. This will improve children's life chances in ways not about current income or reducing cost of living – potentially relevant to future child poverty and address the threat of persistent poverty.

This is part of the general approach to 'Housing Options' that will minimise homelessness through prevention and early intervention. The aims and objectives are clear and include proactive action to address local issues, including for example:

- Strengthen partnerships with West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership and employability services (maximise income from work);
- Mitigate the potential negative effect emerging from welfare reform (maximise benefit entitlement);
- Increase the number of people who use the housing deposit scheme in the private sector (reducing costs);
- Develop an education package that can be rolled out across the local authority (other help to prevent poverty in future years); and
- Work in partnership to ensure children are not adversely affected by homelessness (targeted interventions).

In addition West Dunbartonshire's Leaving Care Housing Protocol promotes the principle that care leavers will be provided with the securest form of tenancy available to them, including pilot Young Care Leavers Rental Exemption Scheme, and young people from this group will not routinely be provided with homeless accommodation.

This Young Care Rental Exemption Scheme supports those care leavers who wish to attend full time education by covering the rental payments of those eligible. This enables these students to fully focus on their studies and not have financial worries during this time. It also encourages more young Care Leavers to aim to further their education by undertaking further or higher studies at college or university.

Rent Abatement

West Dunbartonshire Council has established a process for rent abatement that aims to alleviate / prevent destitution by providing conditional short term relief from housing payments for families where tenancy sustainment is threatened. This approach is designed to encourage early engagement between tenant and landlord and develop short and longer term solutions.

As such the housing officer should be working with tenant to plan for the future to avoid similar situations happening again where possible. This will include a full investigation of the circumstances and only when any financial agreement to repay rent has been explored. Each circumstance will be judged on its own merit and the length of abatement determined by the circumstances.

In order to prevent re-occurrence, tenants should be signposted to support services such as Working 4 U and signposting to third sector agencies for financial health checks could be considered as part of the future planning.

It is recognised that having made every effort to prevent arrears and escalation, there will remain instances where a tenant falls into arrears far beyond their ability to repay in any reasonable period. Often this brings a risk of tenancy failure. In exceptional circumstances Housing services staff have the discretion to award small discretionary sums from a hardship fund to provide short term relief and avoid homelessness.

The rent abatement and hardship fund will both provide short term solutions for families in difficult circumstances. Longer term solutions will be sought through the provision of ongoing support to address the cause of these prevailing circumstances.

Going Forward

The Housing Team will continue to deliver the actions within the Local Housing Strategy. Specific emphasis will be placed on:

- Establishing the Rental Exemption Scheme as a permanent mainstream service provision and incorporated within the main protocol;
- Explore the possibility with Strategic Housing Partnership Forum partners for extending Rental Exemption Scheme to other social landlords in West Dunbartonshire. This would prevent Care Leavers being disadvantaged against other Care Leavers who may be in a council property and fully eligible for the rent exemption, where those in RSL properties are currently not.
- Explore the potential for extending the Rental Exemption Scheme and access to education opportunities to a broader range of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Fuel Poverty

The Local Energy Awareness Project (LEAP) was officially launched in January 2018, being joint funded by West Dunbartonshire CAB and West Dunbartonshire Council, the aim to provide advice and assistance to residents experiencing difficulty with paying their fuel bills, experiencing fuel poverty or having issues with energy suppliers. The Project also works to raise awareness of energy efficiency issues with the wider community.

In 2020/2021 the Project worked closely with Working4U teams, West Dunbartonshire Council Tenant Participation, tenants and residents associations, housing associations, local third sector organisations, Health Visitors and family support services to raise awareness of the project. Project staff attended local events to raise awareness directly within the community of the services available. Information regarding the Project is publicised by the use of social media and press releases.

In addition the Project engaged with a number of national organisations and campaigns to feed into policy consultations and reporting on the prevalence and effects of Fuel Poverty.

Casework

In the period April 2019 to March 2020 the project assisted residents with 4,978 fuel related issues with client financial gain in the region of £22,000.

The Project also provides assistance to households experiencing difficulty as a result of the miss-selling of Green Deal finance products.

Going forward WDCAB will focus on strengthening links with partner organisations. Funding will be sought to continue the work of the LEAP project.

WDCAB will continue to assist residents with issues such as, maintaining fuel supply, fuel debt and supplier disputes. There will be a campaign to raise awareness and empower residents with ways to cut costs and save money.

In light of the continuing COVID-19 restrictions, WDCAB has produced five information booklets for electronic distribution.

Further information about the Project can be found in the report published at:

<http://www.wdcab.co.uk/publications-news/>

Cost of the School Day

School costs can put pressure on low-income families and put children and young people at risk of missing out on opportunities and feeling different, ashamed and stigmatised. An evaluation led by NHS Health Scotland¹⁶ has found that action to reduce school-related costs is effective in helping more schools to be sensitive to poverty and more children to participate in school.

A short-life working group consisting of staff from West Dunbartonshire Education Services was established: to consult parents; conduct research; identify actions and develop resources to assist schools to understand and address issues related to the cost of the school day. Group membership is listed in **Appendix 3**.

The working party has produced guidance and support materials to increase staff knowledge and raise awareness of the challenges facing families and on-line resources have been developed to act as a conduit to support.

In addition, West Dunbartonshire Education Services has set out some of the key interventions available for pupils from families likely to be affected by disadvantage. These include:

- financial support is available to support families living more than two miles from the school;
- Free breakfast clubs have been established and Early Learning Centre's provide a free snack. In addition 'holiday hunger' actions are set within school holiday programmes that are delivered in partnership with the Youth Alliance.

Schools are working hard to further reduce costs for families by:

- Making washing products available in school;
- Providing access to sanitary products;
- Providing oral hygiene products; and
- Ensuring free school meals remain available to pupils when on exclusion.

The approach to reducing the cost of the school day encourages schools to:

- Ensure all children participate and assist those with barriers to participation;
- Provide access to free activities at lunchtime and afterschool;
- Provide PE kits where necessary;
- Encourage the development of sports academies; and
- Use Pupil Equity Funding to promote inclusion and participation.

In addition, children living in poverty are often unable to join in with popular culture and trends; they may not have access to the same resources as their peers, and therefore miss out on valuable bonding and social experiences. These children are at risk of isolation when they appear not to conform to peer group expectations, with a uniform not of the perceived required standard or, indeed no uniform at all.

¹⁶ <http://www.healthscotland.scot/publications/evaluation-of-the-cost-of-the-school-day-programme> (accessed 22/07/20)

To combat this, clear referral pathways and information about financial support have been established. This includes links to Citizens Advice, Child Poverty Action Line and Working 4 U debt and money advice support. The aim is to ensure that families are receiving all the support they are entitled to.

Psychological Services are set within education venues across West Dunbartonshire Council area and will increase the awareness of the principles of nurture. This will be reinforced by the aim to become a trauma informed staff to ensure social emotional development support underpins all activities.

Supporting activities include:

- Pupil Families Support;
- Care Connections;
- PPP – Parents, Pamper, Patter;
- FFF Food, Families, Future; and
- Support for addressing debt, benefits and employability.

Other actions being pursued by Education Services to mitigate the cost of the school day reduce costs and encourage access to opportunity include:

- Referring parents to Employability and Adult Learning Support Services;
- Promoting the Educational Support Allowance; and
- Working with the third sector to develop support services, such as Y Sort-It Young Carers Support.

Finally, schools have been encouraged to be aware of the cost of representing the school at sporting/music events, engaging in local authority or even national competitions, participating in school clubs and excursions to the local and wider area. This includes consideration of:

- Limiting the number of fundraising events during the year and provide sufficient notice where costumes are required;
- Establishing fund raising activities for trips (bag packing);
- Raise awareness of poverty issues among staff and parents using external resources such as Poverty Truth Commission films.

Early Learning and Childcare

Childcare costs are substantial and can add a substantial burden to family income. However, support is available. Children who are three years old are entitled to a place within an Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) setting.

From August 2020 the Scottish Government is increasing the number of funded hours available to families in early learning and childcare. The entitlement will increase from 600 hours to 1,140 hours.

As well as an increase in hours West Dunbartonshire Council will introduce an approach where the 'funding follows the child'. In effect this will mean families will be able to access the entitlement and use this within different types of setting and using different patterns of provision. This will include provision in local authority settings; partnership childcare settings and childminders.

Recruitment for expansion of 447 staff was complete by April; this included early learning and childcare workers, leaders of ELC, central staff, facilities and modern apprentices.

More flexibility can now be offered which will support longer days and different patterns of attendance. This will be available because of New Early Learning Childcare facilities opened at: Our Lady of Loretto, Braehead, Dalreoch and Carleith. Meanwhile we have re-furnished Early Learning Childcare at: Brucehill, Whitecrock, Ladyton, Auchnacraig, Kilbowie and Linnvale' All providing choice and flexibility for parents and carers.

Access to the additional service depends on the child's date of birth. Generally if their birthdate is between:

- 1st March and 31st August, they start in autumn term.
- 1st September and 31st December, they start in January for the spring term.
- 1st January and 28th February, they start in April for the summer term.

Nursery places for children younger than three are provided at full cost by private nurseries, unless the family is eligible for free early learning and childcare for two year olds. Eligible children are entitled to 600 hours free childcare when they become two years of age.

Families can access a funded early learning and childcare if their child has become two years old and the family is in receipt of these benefits:

- Income support (IS);
- Job Seeker's Allowance (income-based);
- Any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance;
- Incapacity or Severe Disablement Allowance;
- State Pension Credit;
- Child Tax Credit, but not Working Tax Credit and your income is £16,105 or less;
- Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and your income is £7,320 or less;
- Supported under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Universal Credit and your household take-home pay is £610 a month or less;

Funded early learning and childcare is also available if your child is two years or over and is or has been:

- looked after by a local council; and
- the subject of a kinship care order.

Local authority funded providers, funded private provider nurseries in partnership with West Dunbartonshire Council including Childminders all offer early learning and childcare for eligible two year olds. Admission is the month after your child is two years or from the term after parents receive the qualifying benefit.

Further information is available in the <https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/early-years/elc-places/> and

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/early-years/elc-expansion/entitlement-to-1140-hours/>

Education Maintenance Allowance Payments

An Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is a Scottish Government initiative aimed at helping young people stay on in education. The EMA is a weekly allowance of £30 payable to young people who have achieved 100% attendance each week at school. West Dunbartonshire Council will also increase the EMA by applying a £5 additional payment each week for every young person with 100% attendance. The cumulative bonus amounts being paid twice per year, usually in December and July.

To qualify, households with one dependent child who attends school in West Dunbartonshire for a minimum of 21 hours must be earning £24,421 per year or less. Households with more than one dependent child must be earning £26,884 or less, before tax.

West Dunbartonshire Council will continue to review the numbers in receipt of EMA's, ensuring it is accessible to all who require it. Our intention is to ensure that all pupils who are eligible receive the full entitlement.

Where appropriate we will ensure families who are in receipt of EMAs also have access to full benefit entitlement through support from our colleagues in the Working 4 U benefits and debt team.

More information about Education Maintenance Allowances in West Dunbartonshire can be found at: <https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-and-educational-grants/education-maintenance-allowance/>

Free School Meals and Clothing Grants

Free nursery/school meals and the footwear and clothing grant are available for parents on low income in West Dunbartonshire.

All children in Primary 1-3 are automatically entitled to free school meals and therefore do not have to apply for access.

Residents in West Dunbartonshire are eligible for free nursery/school meals and a school clothing grant if they are in receipt of one or some of a number of benefits, including:

- Income Support;
- Universal Credit with an annual income of £8,320 or less;
- Jobseekers Allowance (income based);
- Pension Credit;
- Employment and Support Allowance (income related);
- Working Tax Credit with income less than £9,830;
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999.

Residents are eligible for a school clothing grant only if they receive:

- Housing and/or Council Tax Benefit;
- Working Tax Credit with a gross annual income of £16,860.

Residents are eligible for free nursery/school meals if they are in receipt of Child Tax Credit only (but not Working Tax Credit) with income less than £17,500. In addition, free school meals are available to children who are:

- Looked after by the authority concerned or any local authority; or,

- The subject of a kinship care order or a child falling within section 71(3) (f) of the Act (referred to here as a child having a parent appointed guardian).

The School Clothing Grant is currently £100.00 per child. In 2019/2020 the total value of awards for clothing grants was £456,200 which equates to 4,562 awards.

Further Information about free school meals and clothing grants can be found at:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-and-educational-grants/free-school-meals-and-clothing-grant/>

Young Scot Card

Young Scot is the national youth information and citizenship charity providing young people aged 11-26 years with a mixture of information, ideas and incentives to help them become confident, informed and active citizens.

The Youth Scot National Entitlement Card (NEC) is one of the benefits offered and is accredited by the Proof of Age Standards Scheme (PASS). The National Entitlement Card provides access to discounts that are designed to help young people make the most of their money and increase awareness and use of local services.

As a partnership between 32 Local Authorities and the Scottish Government, managed by Young Scot, the NEC is a free smart card available to all young people aged 11–26 years. There are over 1,500 discounts available, including, for example:

- Discount on the ‘Euro 26’ network and therefore offering young people access to discounts across 42 countries;
- National concessionary travel scheme, in partnership with Transport Scotland. Young people aged 16-18 and full-time volunteers under 26 can receive discounted travel on buses, trains and ferries each year; and
- Retail discounts - National participants include the Co-operative Food and Scotmid, Topshop and BSM Driving.

The card is promoted by Education Services and youth support teams in order to ensure that we maximise the possible benefits for young people. In addition, the NEC is issued to all S1 pupils who are living in West Dunbartonshire at the beginning of each academic year.

Through negotiations with Young Scot, we have agreed that organisations in West Dunbartonshire can now create local rewards and provide entitlements for young people. Working4U Youth Learning, along with the West Dunbartonshire Youth Council, has recently worked with the Young Scot team to develop and implement a new Young Scot Action Plan.

The aim is to establish a more comprehensive and targeted approach locally and ensure young people receive the full programme of opportunities available through Young Scot. Further Information about the Young Scot card in West Dunbartonshire can be found here:

<https://young.scot/the-young-scot-card/west-dunbartonshire>

Ending Period Poverty in the Community

In order to tackle period poverty in the community, West Dunbartonshire Council developed a new project #EndPeriodPoverty. This effort has been aided by grant funding from the Scottish Government.

The aim of the project is to end period poverty and associated stigma by ensuring that those needing sanitary products can obtain them for free, without question at accessible locations. Information about the project can be found at:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/health-social-care/period-poverty/>

We are being supported in these efforts by 'Hey Girls', a well respected social enterprise. Hey Girls are not only providing a range of products that go beyond environmental regulations, for every box distributed, 'Hey Girls' is also donating the equivalent to community-based projects.

West Dunbartonshire Council continues to work in community and health service venues in West Dunbartonshire to maintain access points. We have also worked with four local food insecurity groups to ensure that those requiring emergency food supplies can also obtain products.

In addition, we have engaged with midwifery staff and a health visitor to raise awareness of the project and provide care packages for their mums, families and patients.

Distribution venues are currently closed or restricted because of COVID-19. However, in response to this we have worked with the supplier to establish a direct supply service to home addresses in West Dunbartonshire.

We will continue to work with public sector services and community-based organisations to maintain supply of products allowing them to distribute products to their service user.

In the forthcoming year we will continue to distribute products, with a budget of £58,000 set aside for this purpose. In addition, there will be a focus on education/awareness to eradicate the stigma of periods, and the impact of period poverty.

Food Insecurity in the Community

Food insecurity is a common experience throughout Scotland influenced by insufficient weekly income, low pay and unpredictable income. It is concentrated by higher costs of living, lack of family and food knowledge and access issues. In recognition of the prevalence of these circumstances and the growing use of local food banks among residents, West Dunbartonshire Council has taken wider action to address this situation in a number of ways, for example:

- Extending the provision of free school meals;
- Supporting programmes to address holiday hunger during school holidays;
- Addressing community-based food insecurity by providing financial support for the established foodbanks operating in West Dunbartonshire, (Community Foodshare and Food4 Thought).

As a direct response to community based risks of food insecurity risks emerging as a direct result of the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union (Brexit), a West Dunbartonshire food insecurity group was established. The food insecurity group aims to co-ordinate support and maximise access to additional resources being made available to address food insecurity.

The food insecurity group is attended by representatives West Dunbartonshire Council (Working 4 U and Communities Team) and established local food banks. The participating food banks are independent; have a long track record and experience of working in food

insecurity; a wide ranging network of volunteers and a comprehensive set of policies and procedures for gathering, safely storing and supplying foodstuffs.

Foodbanks have also played a key role in the response to the COVID-19 crisis, and the need to support shielded and vulnerable families. The two main foodbanks were provided with COVID-19 specific food funding to provide emergency food supplies to households supported by the West Dunbartonshire Council Crisis Support Team.

The food insecurity group has used the COVID-19 funding:

- To meet local needs by purchasing food to be distributed by the foodbanks.
- To meet some of the additional staff costs incurred by the foodbanks as a result of the significant increase in demand.

It is anticipated that, on the basis of the availability of the food insecurity fund, this additional support will remain in place until September 2021. The food insecurity group will ensure service users have access to Working 4 U services.

Further information about food insecurity can be obtained at:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/coronavirus/additional-support/>

In addition to local food insecurity support, NHSGGC Support and Information Services have partnerships in place to provide emergency food packages for people in need being discharged from hospital. This support also includes a money advice pilot for patients being discharged from Stobhill Mental Health inpatient Unit.

Helping Families in Other Ways (Circumstances and Transitions)

Care Connections

The **Care Connections** programme supports young people who are looked after at home, where there is a Compulsory Supervision order in place, and young carers specifically those young people who have disengaged from education.

The programme offers support that is customised to the needs of the individual and their families/carers and aims to close the poverty-related attainment gap by supporting young people to engage with and return to education.

The programme has been designed with the support of participants and is delivered by a partnership consisting of the Care Experienced Champions Board; Working 4 U; and Ysortit.

Activity focuses on three key school stages providing continuous support for targeted young people across their school life. The provision typically includes:

- **P1 to P3 (prior to and beyond if required)** - Out of School Hours Learning/ Homework Clubs;
- **P4 to S6 (and beyond up to age 18)** - Intandem Youth Mentoring;
- **S4 to S6** Access to the Apprenticeship Pathway.

A key element of the support being the provision of a designated Care Connect Worker supporting each young person to address any issues in their School, Community and Family life. At primary school this Care Connect worker role will be managed by Ysortit and at Secondary Working 4 U will manage the Care Connect worker

In addition the support may also include a range of interventions that are delivered either one to one or in group sessions. These support measures cover a number of general areas and are customised to suit the needs of individual children and families.

More information about 'Care Connectors' can be found at:

<https://padlet.com/working4u/youth>

Community Learning and Development

Community Learning and Development (CLD) plays a central part in ensuring individuals, families and communities across West Dunbartonshire reach their potential through lifelong learning, mutual self-help and community organisation - and that the available support and opportunities are community-led and built around people's aspirations.

The Community Learning and Development Teams, along with the Communities Team have developed comprehensive plans based around the development of skills for life and work and skills to empower communities by supporting them to develop resilience within communities throughout West Dunbartonshire.

CLD Activity

Many of the activities delivered by the Community Learning and Development Teams and Communities Team in West Dunbartonshire have been consistent with the specific aims of addressing child poverty. This includes action to maximise income, reduce costs and understand the lived experience of people living in disadvantaged communities.

Youth Alliance

- Secured funding to provide seasonal holiday programmes for young people.
- Worked with Education Services to provide access to emergency food supplies for families during lockdown.
- Developed a Youth Alliance Pupil Equity Fund pathway to provide schools with additional support and resources to assist them with their goal of raising attainment.
- Supported young people to develop their skills and provide them with structured opportunities.
- Established the link to apprenticeship opportunities and positive destinations for school leavers.

Adult Learning Partnership

- Made learning more accessible and developed on-line, blended courses to maintain contact with learners during lockdown.
- Supporting the development of 'Click and Connect' Centre in Balloch Library.
- Increased retention and attainment in community based vocational courses.
- Increased Learner Voice activity locally.
- Responded to need, in particular the challenges associated with Universal Credit full-service roll out.
- Supported the development and delivery of family opportunity hubs in school in response to issues of poverty and social exclusion.
- Provided travel tokens, to encourage uptake of services.
- Community Learners on partnership courses provided with West College Scotland matriculation cards, so they can access student discounts.
- Supported the Refugee Re-settlement Programme to obtain funding for crèche support.

Communities Team

- Worked with communities across the local authority area to develop WDC's first Community Empowerment Strategy and Action Plan.
- Increased up-take of the Improvement Fund grant aimed at delivering community-led improvements.
- Completed the 4th Phase of Community Budgeting (CB) which delivered the greatest levels of participation in a single WDC CB event to-date.
- Delivered a successful Domestic Abuse Conference aimed at promoting conversation and addressing the silence within communities on this issue.
- Delivered successful Community Alliance Conference with representation from across the local authority.
- Undertook a review of Community Councils that led to the development of a detailed Action Plan to support their growth and development.
- Concluded the West Dunbartonshire wide conversation on the demand for Community Transport provision with a successful funding bid to support delivery of a pilot project.

The teams will continue to develop and deliver their plans with emphasis being placed on issues such as period poverty, holiday hunger, addressing illicit money lending and supporting the Connecting Scotland programme.

As COVID-19 takes hold, it is anticipated that the teams will be central to the delivery of humanitarian aid by supporting access to crisis support and providing practical support for individuals and families affected by the pandemic.

More information about CLD and Empowerment plans and activities can be found on line at:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/cld-plan-2018-2021/>

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/community-planning-west-dunbartonshire/community-empowerment-scotland-act-2015/>

Access to Further Education in the Community

The collaboration between West College Scotland and West Dunbartonshire Council facilitates adult participation in a range of learning opportunities at a variety of levels.

We have a flexible approach to learning that provides the students with clear pathways, guidance and support to positive destinations. We deliver a range of subjects many of which are geared towards opportunities in the local labour market. Drawing on support from 14 College departments we deliver course on:

- Counselling, Psychology, Mindfulness, Wellbeing;
- Childhood practice; Fashion and Textiles Technology; Upholstery; Carpentry and Joinery, Painting and Decorating;
- Criminology; Creative Writing; IT - Microsoft Apps: Word Processing, Presentations, Excel; and
- Administration; Hair and Beauty; Cookery; and Horticulture.

The venues we use are located throughout West Dunbartonshire and childcare is provided to facilitate participation and we use local centres to minimise travel costs and enable learners to engage in the opportunities from within their local communities.

Table 9: Community Learning Facilities					
Facilities	Locations				
Community Facilities	Alexandria Library	Dalmuir Community Centre	Faifley Resource Centre	Central Alexandria Tenants and Residents	
Schools	Clydebank High School	Our Holy Redeemer Primary School Clydebank	Linnvale Primary School Clydebank	Our Lady of Loretto Primary School Dalmuir	St Josephs Primary School Faifley
Partner Premises	Chest Heart & Stroke Office Dumbarton	Levengrove Training Centre Dumbarton	Safe as Houses supported accommodation Drumry	Autism and Asperger Centre Renton	West College Scotland Clydebank Campus

We will review community access in the light of COVID restrictions. Nevertheless we will continue to deliver learning services and focus on attracting learners from disadvantaged backgrounds; many of which will be delivered through a blended approach because of the unfolding pandemic. Those opportunities with practical elements which cannot be carried out on-line will be deferred until the college opens in September.

Addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences

The term Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) refers to:

‘Events that happen to a child, in the absence of safety, which are traumatic for that child and causes toxic stress, can change their biology and increase their risk of experiencing a wide range of physical and mental conditions during their life course’.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful events occurring in childhood including, for example:

- Families experiencing domestic violence;
- parental abandonment through separation or divorce;
- living in a family with a parent with a mental health condition;
- being the victim of abuse (physical, sexual and/or emotional);
- being the victim of neglect (physical and emotional);
- a member of the household being in prison;
- growing up in a household in which there are adults experiencing alcohol and drug use problems.

Tackling adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) continues to be a key priority in West Dunbartonshire and following a Learning and Engagement event, ‘Nurturing Individuals and Building Resilient Communities’ was held in 2020.

In 2020/21, the ACEs workforce development activities moved online. Since the relaunch of West Dunbartonshire’s ACEs Hub as a strength-based ‘Resilience’ Hub in Feb 2020, the membership has remained at around 400. The Hub, which is a community of practice, includes staff working across the Council, HSCP and third sector. The first virtual Resilience Hub meeting was held in March 2021 with 70 local staff attending. The theme was Bereavement & Loss and had inputs from WDC Educational Psychology and Stepping Stones.

The ACEs documentary film, ‘Resilience: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope’ continues to be a key resource to increase ACE awareness among the local workforce. The film was shown online in December 2020 with 60 people attending and participating in the post-film panel discussion. This brings the cumulative total to 1060 staff that have seen the film since 2018.

Planning is underway to look at implementing the national Trauma Training Plan locally across all levels, supplemented by the range of national training material in both a targeted and universal approach. This is being co-ordinated by the local Trauma Champion alongside local Scottish Trauma Informed Leaders in agencies including Justice, Education and HR. Collectively, they are working to implement the six elements of the IS/Scottish Government Trauma-Informed Approach to Scotland’s COVID-19 Recovery, Renewal and Transformation via a reformed ACEs/Trauma Reference Network.

The purpose of the Hub will be reviewed as it evolves but it is currently to:

- Increase awareness of ACEs and share information among people working in WD, including changes to national/local strategic context; new research; resources; video clips; training opportunities; national & local events.
- Enable networking - share organisational news or info about access to services, referral pathways, etc.
- Share good practice and information about what works.
- Stimulate action among individuals and organisations.

The Resilience Hub has been operating as an online forum during COVID-19 restrictions with a number of aims that include linking link staff development to the trauma training framework.

More information about Adverse Childhood Experiences work in West Dunbartonshire and the West Dunbartonshire Integrated Children's Services Needs Assessment 2018 can be found at:

<http://www.wdhscp.org.uk/useful-information/children-and-young-people/>

Family Nurse Partnership

Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) is an intensive home visiting programme delivered by specially trained nurses to first time mothers aged 19 years and under. The support is provided from early in pregnancy until the child is two years of age.

In NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHSGGC) 92% of FNP clients reside in the most deprived areas (SIMD 1 and 2). FNP teams routinely see families who are affected by poverty. The FNP aims to improve:

- pregnancy and birth outcomes;
- child health and development;
- parents' economic self-sufficiency.

The programme works with the strengths of the client and encourages them to fulfil their aspirations for their baby and themselves. A pattern of weekly and fortnightly visits begin early in pregnancy and continue until the child's second birthday.

The Family Nurse Partnership works with a range of organisations and agencies to facilitate access to support including support that is set out within the context of the West Dunbartonshire Integrated Services. More information about integrated children's services needs can be found at:

<http://www.wdhscp.org.uk/useful-information/children-and-young-people/>

This pandemic continues to be extremely challenging in particular for families living on low incomes. Pre-COVID 19, Greater Glasgow and Clyde Valley had a child poverty rate higher than the national average. Family Nurses spend a great deal of time mitigating the impact of poverty. The process for FNP supporting young mums with community learning and employability opportunities along with clear referrals to welfare and benefit support will be developed in the forthcoming year.

More Information about Family Nurse Partnerships can be obtained at:

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/about-us/professional-support-sites/information-for-gps/referral-clinical-guidelines-and-ggc-drug-formulary/temporary-COVID-19-guidelines-and-referral-pathways/family-nurse-partnership/#>

Domestic Abuse Partnership

West Dunbartonshire has a higher than average incidence of domestic abuse. This has the potential to have devastating consequences on families with children. As such West Dunbartonshire Council has established a Domestic Abuse Partnership that aims to fully support victims and create a culture of challenge zero tolerance to all forms of abuse.

In addition, we have established a procedure to tackle domestic abuse set around the theme of 'No Home for Domestic Abuse'. This procedure follows two main routes of action and is based on the consent of the victim(s).

These two action points are:

- Offering the victim and any dependant/s legal claim back to the matrimonial home via Matrimonial Homes Act (Scotland) 1981; and
- Identifying and pursuing appropriate legal restriction to tackle behaviour of the offender.

The procedure is designed to protect victims and change the behaviour of perpetrators by the combined use of Multi Agency Risk and Communications Committee' model (MARAC) and a Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordination (MATAC) process.

The MARAC model involves a thorough risk assessment in all reported cases of domestic abuse to identify those at highest risk and to establish the foundation for a multi-agency approach.

This is complemented by the MATAC process that aims to identify and target the most harmful perpetrators through analysis of incidents, their frequency and gravity of offending. Identified perpetrators will be referred into the MATAC process where a bespoke set of interventions will be established using a '*Domestic Abuse Toolkit for West Dunbartonshire*'.

The No Home for Domestic Abuse service, whether MARAC or MATAC offers

- a comprehensive, confidential assessment of accommodation and support needs;
- advice, assistance and housing options as well as advice on rights as a homeless person;
- temporary or permanent accommodation as appropriate or where required;
- access to specialists support services such as Women's Aid and Cara Project;
- access to benefits and debt and money advice to maximise income and reduce the burden of debt.

The Council's No Home for Domestic Abuse service has expanded with the appointment of Tenant Liaison Officers to ensure service capacity and resilience.

An amendment to the Council's housing allocations policy is being made in order to ensure victims can always be assisted to remain in their home and perpetrators rehoused elsewhere. This also takes account of changes to Domestic Abuse legislation.

<https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/case-studies/west-dunbartonshire-council/west-dunbartonshire-council-urges-domestic-abuse-victims-to-seek-support-during-pandemic>

More details about the 'No Home for Domestic Abuse' programme can be found at:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/housing/no-home-for-domestic-abuse/>

Family Opportunity Hubs

The West Dunbartonshire Family Opportunities Hub is a collaborative effort between West Dunbartonshire Council, 'Housing and Employability Service' (Working 4 U) and West Dunbartonshire, 'Education Services' which is partly funded through European Social Funds and Scottish Attainment Challenge Funds. The aim is to provide support for families, particularly those on the verge of crisis, to stabilise their family circumstances and help their children to meet the demands of the school day.

The Hubs are located in three secondary schools in West Dunbartonshire ('Our Lady and St Patrick's', 'Clydebank High School' and most recently 'Vale of Leven Academy'. The Hub in the Vale of Leven was launched in February 2020). Hub support is extended to local primary schools and early education and childcare centres.

The Hubs are delivered by staff with experience of employability and welfare rights services. The team uses of a broad assessment tool and work on a 1:2:1 basis with parents to identify and address issues they face in their daily lives. This self-assessment explores issues such as:

- **'Pockets'**, - maximising household resources/income from benefits and addressing debt;
- **'Prospects'** - tackling the underlying barriers that prevent people from capitalising on opportunity, for example issues related to health and well being, numeracy/literacy, confidence, skills;
- **'Place'** - addressing place based issues that act as a barrier to inclusion and progression, for example, cost of living, energy efficiency housing and community based issues.

Support generally consists of money, welfare, fuel and financial services as well as improving financial capability, access to affordable products. As a result parents will improve financial inclusion and improve their financial capability.

In addition we also support training and learning that will focus on language skills, literacy, numeracy and vocational and non vocational skills. This will allow participants to make a positive contribution to their families' development needs; assist them to contribute to their local community; and secure employment.

The Family Opportunity Hubs in West Dunbartonshire will be operational from bases in three secondary schools. This will allow us to provide more support in each geographical area to parents of children attending all educational establishments, including primary schools and early education and childcare centres. We will also increase capacity to deal with referrals from other services such as Housing, Social Work and NHS.

In addition, the team will work with colleagues delivering the Connecting Scotland project to maximise access to digital equipment and provide support for families through our Digital Champion.

More information about the Family Opportunity Hub can be found at:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/jobs-and-training/working4u/work/adult/family-opportunity-hubs/>

West Dunbartonshire Improving the Cancer Journey Service

Cancer doesn't just affect your physical wellbeing, it can affect every aspect of your life, from your emotions to your finances. However, people often don't know where to turn for support.

That's why West Dunbartonshire Council and Macmillan Cancer Support have launched the Improving the Cancer Journey Service. Our Service is here to help people affected by cancer get the support they need, whether it's financial, emotional, medical or practical.

Improving the Cancer Journey is a service available to all cancer patients within the West Dunbartonshire Council area; however, while we prioritise everyone, our focus is places on those already experiencing disadvantage, including those affected by family poverty.

The initiative is funded and supported by Macmillan Cancer Support (Scotland). The team includes an ICJ manager, two ICJ Link Workers and an admin support worker. The service sets out to:

- Invite all with a cancer diagnosis in West Dunbartonshire to complete a Holistic Needs Assessment (HNA) and develop an individual care plan that includes carers and family members;
- Provide the dedicated support of a named 'link Worker' to everyone in West Dunbartonshire with a cancer diagnosis, and to his or her carer or family; and
- Facilitate the delivery of effective Health and Social Care support solutions, based on their needs.

The service provision has been affected by the onset of COVID-19 and associated restrictions, however, we have developed a blended service and we will continue to focus on people affected by cancer, their wider families, and the wider community within the West Dunbartonshire boundary.

Furthermore, we will contribute to the development of integrated referral pathways between council, HSCP and third sector organisations across the local authority area, to meet the needs of those affected by cancer, and to help families in poverty.

Further information about 'Improving the Cancer Journey in West Dunbartonshire can be found at: www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/jobs-and-training/working4u/money-advice/cancer-journey-service/, calling the Macmillan Support Line on 08009809070 or emailing improving.cancerjourney@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Connecting Scotland

Connecting Scotland is a Scottish Government programme set up in response to COVID-19. The programme provides iPads, Chromebooks and support to develop digital skills for people who are digitally excluded and on low incomes.

In order to reach these people, Connecting Scotland collaborates with local councils, public and third sector organisations who are already working with them. In West Dunbartonshire Working 4 U is taking on a lead role in ensuring access is maximised. Those eligible for support will be assisted in three ways, providing:

- equipment – internet enabled devices;
- connectivity – through mobile data;
- training and support – for staff and volunteers to become 'digital champions'.

The project has been delivered in a number of phases.

Phase 1 (April – July 2020) focused on those who were at risk of isolation due to COVID-19 because they were in the extremely high vulnerability group ('shielding') or the higher risk of severe illness group. West Dunbartonshire had 150 devices to distribute

Organisations in West Dunbartonshire successful in securing devices to assist their service users to overcome digital exclusion were:

- Work Connect, Specialist Supported Employment Service.
- Glasgow and Clyde Rape Crisis.
- West Dunbartonshire Council.
- West Dunbartonshire Council Homelessness Team.
- West Dunbartonshire Council's Working 4 U Adult Learning and Literacies Team.
- West Dunbartonshire Council's Working 4 U Crisis Support Team.
- Bellsmyre Digital Community.
- Carers of West Dunbartonshire.
- Clyde Shopmobility.
- Dumbarton District Women's Aid.

Phase 2: The number of devices available increased to 545 and the target groups for phase 2 are those specifically identified within the context of the Child Poverty legislation:

- households with children, or where a child is normally resident (this includes pregnant women with no child in the household);
- Care leavers up to the age of 26 (in line with eligibility for aftercare support).

Awards for Phase 2 were announced in November 2020.

Phase 3 currently being delivered (June 2021) . This will focus efforts on supporting families who are experiencing disadvantage.

Further details of the Connecting Scotland phases can be obtained at:

<https://connecting.scot/>

Understanding Credit (Illicit Money Lending) (Updated Sept 13th)

The illicit and high interest lending project was developed on the basis of a number of key objectives including raising awareness in West Dunbartonshire to ensure residents will be more aware of:

- the dangers and consequence of illegal money lending;
- methods for avoiding the use of money lenders and high interest lending; and
- The support available to help them to extricate themselves from difficult circumstances and manage debt.

Our objectives for the project are to:

- educate residents on the issue of illegal money lending;
- increase and improve budgeting skills among vulnerable groups and individuals;
- support transition of clients to bank accounts;
- support exploration of savings opportunities;
- raise awareness of the issue and the support and referral routes among staff within intermediary organisations, health, social care, housing, education services;
- develop a group of volunteer community champions;
- disseminate project learning beyond West Dunbartonshire.

Our project will not only engage with families that are most at risk of illegal money lending or engaging in high interest loans, we will also engage with children and young people in a school setting to take an early intervention approach.

The project is aimed at adults and young people who identify as being financially excluded. Work started in October 2020 and outcomes achieved so far include:

- A 1-to-1 referral service launched, which has helped 106 people for financial exclusion support. Referrals have been from other council teams, Action for Children, Social Security Scotland, local housing associations and other community groups;
- 32 bank accounts opened for local residents who did not have a bank account at the time of initial engagement, including full set up with direct debits and standing orders;
- Supersavers, a Money Management Class, attended by 12 learners;
- 104 people attended IML awareness raising sessions through workshops within community groups;
- Text-in service launched for people to ask for money advice through Whatsapp or text. Advice is provided through their own existing council Money Advisers.
- Outreach sessions in secondary school playgrounds talking to 56 young people about financial mistakes they could make and Illegal Money Lending awareness.
- Signposting for money/employment/learning support presence at food banks

Planned work going forward includes face-to-face workshops in schools; parental engagement events; workshops for residents in local homeless hostels and with community groups; drop-in sessions for money advice in the heart of the local community, for example in local cafes, churches and foodbanks; developing an online Money Hub for adults.

Addressing Mental Health

In July 2019, the Children and Young People's Mental Health Taskforce which was jointly commissioned by the Scottish Government and COSLA published their recommendations

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/children-young-peoples-mental-health-task-force-recommendations/>

As a result planning is underway in West Dunbartonshire to undertake a comprehensive local review and analysis of the services available, their accessibility and value to the local community.

This planning includes the development of a Working group, connected to Nurtured DIG established and meeting monthly to lead on the implementation across Community planning partners of the Children and Young People Community Supports and Services framework available at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/community-mental-health-wellbeing-supports-services-framework/>

Robert Owen Centre, Glasgow University commissioned to undertake research in relation to local services and partners linked with children and young people mental health and wellbeing. Stakeholder interviews completed and report expected April 2021.

Funding has been provided to six local short term projects (HSCP and third sector) that can demonstrate prevention and early intervention activities related to emotional/mental distress for children, young people aged 5-24 years (26 years if care experienced) and their parents/carers.

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In 2020/21 the main focus was to establish a comprehensive understanding of local service provision, identify gaps in provision and obtain an understanding of the relationships between services that are addressing the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. This understanding will help to shape new or enhancements to existing service provision over the next year.

Some of these issues have already been identified and include:

- awareness particularly supporting parents and carers to build awareness and understanding of mental health and wellbeing and reducing stigma;
- workforce (training);
- opportunities for physical activity (recognising the positive impact of physical activity on mental health and emerging evidence);
- resources for Children and Young People, parents and carers on being mentally fit and building up community champions;
- access to short term funding.

Going forward we will consider actions from Phase 1 commissioned report and Commence stage 2 of commissioned research engagement with young people in service planning and design.

- Progress and launch a local associate programme for 'Distress Brief Interventions' for 16-24 years (26 years if care experienced);

<https://www.dbi.scot/>

- connect work between substance misuse, mental health and well being and Children's Neighbourhood Scotland site to implement a communication strategy and source of wellbeing resources.

More Information about these services can be obtained at:

<http://www.wdhscp.org.uk/useful-information/children-and-young-people/>

Conclusion – No Wrong Door

The West Dunbartonshire Local Child Poverty Report has been prepared not simply as a list of good projects and programmes. It is set out to provide the reader with an indication of the activity designed to address child poverty by focussing on the key drivers of poverty.

This is not an exhaustive review of all activity. It will, however, guide those who need support to a range of agencies where support can be obtained and guidance provided about other available services that may help them in their circumstances.

In effect ‘no wrong door’ for people who need assistance to: maximise income from work and benefits, reduce their costs of living; address circumstances and triggers that are affecting their lives; and overcome the worst aspects of poverty.

Appendix 1: Local Employability Partnership Progress Indicators

Table 10: Employability Partnership Progress Indicators			
Key Progress Indicators by Partners...	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Planned	Note
West Dunbartonshire Council (Working4U)			
Number of unemployed people that have participated in council funded or operated employability activities (Including NOLB, PESF, ESF Pipeline)	815	616	This support for people with multiple barriers to opportunity, including those families/parents most likely to be affected by poverty.
Number of unemployed people that have progressed to employment as a result of their participation in council funded or operated employability activities	216	378	This support for people with multiple barriers to opportunity, including those families/parents most likely to be affected by poverty and securing employment as a result of the support provided.
Number of people gaining a qualification	315	606	This support for people with multiple barriers to opportunity, including those families/parents most likely to be affected by poverty and gaining a qualification as a result of the support provided.
Number of people supported through Kickstart programme	153	60	Support for young people 16-24 years securing employment through the Kickstart Scheme (managed by Working 4 U)
Number of young people supported through Young Person Guarantee	178	168	Number of young people 16 -24 years supported using Young Person's Guarantee Funding.
Skills Development Scotland			

Table 10: Employability Partnership Progress Indicators			
Key Progress Indicators by Partners...	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Planned	Note
Total Number of Modern Apprentices	834	600	Annual figures reflecting the availability of opportunities in West Dunbartonshire
Total Number of Foundation Apprentices	74	100	Annual figures reflecting the availability of opportunities in West Dunbartonshire
Total Number of Employability Fund	141	212	Annual figures reflecting the availability of opportunities in West Dunbartonshire
Total Number of School Pupils supported	2,584	4,500	Annual figures reflecting number of school pupils supported to develop a career path in West Dunbartonshire
Total Number of Post School Customers Supported	2,255	1,500	Annual figures reflecting number of post school residents supported to develop a career path in West Dunbartonshire
West College Scotland			
Number of learners enrolled on Community Outreach Adult Learning Programme	270	600	Joint work with West Dunbartonshire Adult Learning to provide access to community-based learning.
Number of courses provided on Community Outreach Adult Learning Programme	29	40	Number of courses available for learning and to develop skills in West Dunbartonshire.

Table 10: Employability Partnership Progress Indicators			
Key Progress Indicators by Partners...	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Planned	Note
Number of pupils enrolled on senior phase vocational courses	335	411	Pupils supported with vocational training by West College Scotland
Number of pupils on Foundation Apprenticeship Programmes	2	34	Number of Foundation Apprenticeships delivered by West College Scotland
DWP			
Number of people supported through Dynamic Purchasing support in West Dunbartonshire	61	200	Dynamic purchasing provides resources to address the needs of people seeking work. This figure reflects the number of people who have benefitted and improved their employability skills as a result.
Number of people engaging in Sector Work Academy Programmes	277	150	Sector work academies provide targeted support assisting people to secure employment in specific industrial sectors.
Number people referred to Kick Start Opportunities	257	200	This is the total availability of Kickstart opportunities in West Dunbartonshire. This includes all gateway and individual organisations and employers who are providing access to opportunities
Work Connect (Specialist Supported Employment Service)			
Total Number of Adults referred to Service	107	120	Work Connect provides support for disabled people and supported employment. The figure reflects the

Table 10: Employability Partnership Progress Indicators			
Key Progress Indicators by Partners...	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Planned	Note
			number referred to Work Connect for support
Total Number of Adults Engaged and Supported	121	117	The number of disabled people or people with health related barriers to opportunity supported by Work Connect.
Developing Scotland's Young Workforce			
Number of Young people supported through Young Persons Guarantee	n/a	Tbc	DYW schools coordinators will identify numbers to focus on
Number of young people engaged in DYW activities	285	285	This is the number of people participating in the activities developed and delivered by the DYW Team
Number of employers engaged in DYW activities	17	45	This is the number of employers in West Dunbartonshire engaged by the DYW Team to provide support for school pupils- work placement, employment, in-school talks.
WDC Education Senior Phase			
Total Number of young people referred to Transition Service	54	90	Number of young people being supported through Transition support each year
Total Number of young people accessing Employability Skills Programme	1,300	1,300	Number of school pupils receiving employability skills development support

Table 10: Employability Partnership Progress Indicators			
Key Progress Indicators by Partners...	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Planned	Note
Total Number of Education Employer Partnerships	0	14	Number of partnerships developed between schools and employers.

Appendix 2: NHSGGC Child Poverty Leads Group:

Joint long term objectives

There are 6 Local Authorities within the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde area. In response to the 2019 Poverty and Inequality Commission review of year one Local Child Poverty Action Reports; an increased focus on partnership working and long term objective setting has been agreed between child poverty leads across NHSGGC

The following joint long term objectives will be reviewed by the NHSGGC child poverty leads group on an annual basis.

1. Role as an employer

- Increase family friendly working approaches
- Attaining and maintaining Living Wage Employer Accreditation
- Parents as a priority group for interventions with staff who have money and debt worries
- Parents as a priority group in our Employment and Health approach
- Parents as a priority group for recruitment initiatives
- Child poverty a feature, as appropriate of Learning and Education programmes
- Child poverty outcomes in community benefit clauses

2. Role as a service provider (Children and Families Settings)

- Ensure every opportunity is used to maximise income and reduce outgoings
- Develop innovative co-location models (e.g. with Social Security Services Scotland, Department of Work and Pensions)
- Ensure engagement with people with lived experience of child poverty to inform planning and review
- Analysis, where possible, of reach of interventions by Child Poverty Act priority groups (i.e. children of lone and/or young parents, children with disabilities and/or children of parents with a disability and black and minority ethnic children and also kinship carers)

3. Role as a partner

- Leadership on child poverty at Community Planning Partnership Boards
- Influencing, from local and regional perspectives, key national partners (e.g. SSS, DWP, Health Scotland)
- Influencing, from a child poverty perspective, housing policy
- Influencing, from a child poverty perspective, transport policy

In addition, NHSGGC will -

- Ensure child poverty is comprehensively addressed in the Children and Families Universal Pathway
- Develop child poverty, as appropriate, as a 'golden thread' in Acute health improvement programmes
- Providing public health data for use in Acute and CPP areas

And - All LCPARs in the NHSGGC area aim to optimise flexible childcare approaches.

Appendix 3: Partnership Group Membership

Partnership Members	Remit
<p>Community Planning West Dunbartonshire Nurtured Delivery Improvement Group.</p>	<p>The Nurtured DIG is also lead group, among other strategic management responsibilities, for the <i>Integrated Children Services Plan</i> and the <i>Community Learning and Development Plan</i>.</p> <p>As such this group provides strategic oversight and support for the development and implementation of actions outlined in the in West Dunbartonshire Local Child Poverty Action Report.</p>
<p>The Strategic Employability Group in West Dunbartonshire consists of representatives from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Dunbartonshire Council - Working 4 U; • West Dunbartonshire Council Education Services; • Skills Development Scotland; • DWP/JCP; • West College Scotland; • Work Connect; • Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce (DSYW); • West Dunbartonshire CVS; and • SQA. 	<p>Main objectives centre on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To co-ordinate improved service delivery to West Dunbartonshire citizens accessing local employability services through an agreed agenda. • To identify priority geographical areas and generic issues and to co-ordinate multi-agency initiatives to respond effectively. • To improve opportunities for citizens to gain access to appropriate learning, education, volunteering, training and employment.
<p>Adult Learning Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSCP • West Dunbartonshire Libraries • Communities Team, West Dunbartonshire Council • West College Scotland • West College Scotland • Skills Development Scotland (SDS) • West Dunbartonshire Council for Voluntary Services (WDCVS) • Clydebank Housing Association • Adult Learning and Literacies, Working4U 	<p>The Adult Learning Partnership is a forum to create and support a shared vision of Community Based Adult Learning in West Dunbartonshire through effective partnership working.</p> <p>Our partnership work is in the context of West Dunbartonshire’s Local Outcome Improvement Plan: Plan for Place 2017 – 27; the Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships for Community Learning and Development (2012);</p> <p>Activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility: explore ways to improve access to services in terms of child care, venues, timetable and IT resources • Guidance and progression: strengthen the Partnership’s approach to providing Adult Learning guidance for West Dunbartonshire Learners
<p>The Youth Alliance in West Dunbartonshire consists of representatives from;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Dunbartonshire Council – Working 4 U; • Police Scotland; • Y Sort-it • Tulloch Trust 	<p>Main objectives centre on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To co-ordinate improved service delivery for young people through an agreed agenda. • To identify priority geographical areas and generic issues and to co-ordinate multi-agency initiatives to respond effectively to young people’s needs and aspirations.

Partnership Members	Remit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Dunbartonshire Council – Housing • West Dunbartonshire Council – Throughcare and Aftercare Teams • Action for Children • Skapade • West Dunbartonshire HSCP • West Dunbartonshire Champions Board • West Dunbartonshire Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a high quality youth participation and engagement structure that partners can utilise to inform future service delivery and which gives young people a voice. • To improve access to a range of joined-up services for young people that will keep them safe and improve their life chances, health and well-being. • To improve opportunities for young people to gain access to appropriate learning, education, volunteering, training and employment. • To have a shared approach to funding for youth work/youth services to ensure strategic use of funding across the partnership.
<p>West Dunbartonshire Information and Advice Partnership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Dunbartonshire Council – Working 4 U; • West Dunbartonshire CAB; • Clydebank Independent Resource Centre; • Clydebank Asbestos Group; • Scottish Social Security Agency; • DWP – West Dunbartonshire 	<p>To coordinate welfare/debt information and advice services maximising local investment in services and responding effectively to emerging issues.</p>
<p>Strategic Solutions Partnership (Housing)</p> <p>Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Dunbartonshire Council; • West Dunbartonshire Registered Social Landlords. 	<p>Aim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participate in the West Dunbartonshire Housing Solutions Partnership and assist in the monitoring and implementation of West Dunbartonshire Council’s Rapid Re-housing Transition Plan (RRTP) to ensure the progression of the transition to Rapid Rehousing within West Dunbartonshire is carried out efficiently. • Contribute to an annual review and update of our RRTP. • Work in collaboration to build funding mechanisms to ensure future service provision. • Play a positive role in the delivery of the 5-year action plan.
<p>Food Insecurity Group consists of representatives from::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Dunbartonshire Council Working 4 U; • WDC Communities Team; • West Dunbartonshire Food4Thought; • West Dunbartonshire Community Foodshare 	<p>The group was established to manage the risk of food insecurity emerging as a result of Britain’s exit from the European Union. The group has subsequently established responses to COVID-19.</p> <p>The aim is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to maximise access to food resources in West Dunbartonshire; • Establish and maintain process to ensure that those most in need secure emergency food supplies; • Coordinate the distribution of food; • Provide access to support that will address

Partnership Members	Remit
	the causes that drove service users to require emergency food.
<p>Cost of the School Day – Short-life working group.</p> <p>To research and identify actions designed to reduce the cost of the school day.</p>	<p>Members of the short life working group representatives from :</p> <p>Vale of Leven Academy (Teacher);</p> <p>Head of Centre Meadowview ELCC;</p> <p>Depute Head Teacher, Renton Primary;</p> <p>Depute Head Teacher – Our Lady of Loretto Primary;</p> <p>Education Support Officer.</p>