



# THE EDINBURGH PARTNERSHIP

## End Poverty in Edinburgh Annual Report 2022

### 1. Executive Summary

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- 1.1 This is the second annual update on progress made by city-wide partners in response to the Edinburgh Poverty Commission's calls to action.
- 1.2 The report covers the period from October 2021 to the end of September 2022 and includes the ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic and to the emerging cost of living crisis, both of which have been significant in informing current and future actions.
- 1.3 In line with recommendations made by the Commission, the report also incorporates and meets a statutory duty for the Council and NHS Lothian to co-produce an annual Local Child Poverty Action Report.

### 2. Recommendations

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- 2.1 It is recommended that the Edinburgh Partnership:
  1. Considers and discusses the second annual progress report against the End Poverty in Edinburgh Delivery Plan, including proposed actions for priority delivery during the next 12 months.
  2. Agrees that during 2023/24, in advance of reporting against interim targets set for end 2024, Edinburgh Poverty Commission members are invited to reconvene to provide the partnership with advice on progress to date and recommended next steps.

### 3. Main Report

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- 3.1 In September 2020 the Edinburgh Poverty Commission published its final report with a call to action for the steps the city needs to take to End Poverty in Edinburgh by 2030.
- 3.2 In [December 2020](#) the Council's Policy and Sustainability Committee approved an End Poverty in Edinburgh Delivery Plan in response to the Commission's findings. During the same month, [Edinburgh Partnership](#) agreed a report on partnership actions arising from the Commission's findings for incorporation in the Edinburgh Community Plan.
- 3.3 These plans agreed an annual cycle of progress reporting against actions to end poverty in the city, aligned to the statutory duties held by the Council and NHS Lothian to produce an annual report on actions to reduce child poverty.
- 3.4 To meet this requirement, a single annual progress report is produced by Council and NHS Lothian officers for scrutiny by Council committees, appropriate NHS Lothian Boards, and the Edinburgh Partnership.

- 3.5 Appendix 1 to this report provides the second annual review of delivery of Edinburgh Poverty Commission calls to action. The report covers the period from October 2021 to the end of September 2022 and includes the ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic and to the emerging cost of living crisis, both of which have been significant in informing current and future actions.

### **Delivering on the calls to action**

- 3.6 Guided by the Edinburgh Poverty Commission's findings, highest impact actions delivered by the Partnership and stakeholders during the past 12 months have included:
- 3.6.1 **Addressing the cost of living crisis and providing lifeline support for people in immediate need.** Money and Welfare advice services in the city helped Edinburgh citizens access £20.5m in financial gains during the past 12 months. Council led cost of living crisis investments provided for a total of £8m of support for people on low incomes, comprising direct cash payments to 31,900 families, alongside additional resources for crisis grants, energy grants, debt relief, and other support.
  - 3.6.2 **Helping people in Edinburgh access fair work that provides enough to live on.** Actions to promote the real living wage in Edinburgh, led by the Edinburgh Living Wage Action Group, helped encourage 116 businesses become living wage accredited employers, and over 1,400 workers to receive direct pay uplifts as a result. Alongside this, Council's employability services supported 3,755 people into work or learning during the year.
  - 3.6.3 **Addressing the housing and homelessness crisis in Edinburgh.** £64.8m of Council funds were invested in building new homes and improving existing homes and neighbourhoods, with 247 new social rented homes built. During 2022 Edinburgh established Scotland's first city-wide Short Term Lets control area, with an aim to improve availability of private rented accommodation in the city. At the same time, homeliness prevention activities successfully supporting 240 households to avoid homelessness in 2022, and
  - 3.6.4 **Continuing to build a strong foundation for long-term prevention of poverty.** In particular, work has continued to develop the prevention-based service models critical to meeting the Commission's long-term calls to action for reform in the way people in Edinburgh access support to escape and avoid poverty.
  - 3.6.5 **Continuing recovery from covid and its impacts on health inequalities:** NHS Lothian led work during 2022 to continue to respond to the Covid pandemic alongside the longer term work needed to address health inequalities. Community Link Workers, embedded in GP surgeries, provide vital non-medical support including financial issues, while mental



health services have received increased funding and improved access routes for people, with Thrive taking a no wrong door approach.

- 3.7 Work throughout the year has continued to be supported and challenged by End Poverty Edinburgh - an independent group of citizens with lived experience of poverty, formed in 2020 during the latter stages of the Edinburgh Poverty Commission. Section 4 of the appended report provides an update on activities supported by this citizen's group in 2022, alongside the group's own assessment of progress and challenges facing the city.

### **Next Steps**

- 3.8 The data presented in this report indicates that the risk of poverty and severe hardship are increasing in Edinburgh, and across the UK, during late 2022, driven by the increasing cost of living.
- 3.9 The locally led actions described in this report are a critical and effective part of helping lift people and communities out of poverty. But the report recognises that the major tools needed to address this challenge remain with national governments, in the form of social security, tax, and regulatory powers.
- 3.10 In particular, the report notes that independent analysts such as Joseph Rowntree Foundation and others recommend that UK and Scottish Governments go beyond existing policy announcements and outline specific additional actions needed to meet statutory and Edinburgh Poverty Commission targets for the city to:
- 3.10.1 Ensure that social security systems provide an effective lifeline for people who are struggling to get by - including protecting low income families from rising energy costs, raising the value of core benefit payments, and investing in crisis funds, and
  - 3.10.2 Increase grant funding to support delivery of new affordable and social rented homes in Edinburgh
- 3.11 Alongside these national actions, the report recommends that priority local, partnership led actions over 2023 and 2024 should focus on ensuring:
- 3.11.1 People can access fair work and the support they need to prevent and stay out of poverty
  - 3.11.2 People have decent, energy efficient, climate proofed homes they can afford to live in,
  - 3.11.3 Attainment, achievement, and positive destinations are improved for all with a particular focus on those in poverty
  - 3.11.4 Public Health and NHS Lothian led partnership and services to reduce poverty and its effects are developed and enhanced



#### 4. Contact

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