



Tackling Poverty: Our Strategy 2023

Pembrokeshire Public Services Board
Bwrdd Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus Sir Benfro





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**Tackling
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2023**



Section 1: Foreword

**Tackling
Poverty:
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2023**

Section 1: Foreword by Cllr Neil Prior, Chair of Pembrokeshire Public Services Board and words of support from Darren Mutter, Chair of the Pembrokeshire Poverty Working Group and Head of Children's Services at Pembrokeshire County Council.

Poverty is a serious and growing issue for modern society, and this is evident internationally, nationally and locally. There are vast differences in our society between those that are 'well off' and those who have insufficient resources to meet their basic needs. Our goal for this strategy is to make Pembrokeshire a fairer and more inclusive place, to generate opportunities for our citizens to reach their full potential and live prosperous and fulfilling lives free from poverty.

In developing this poverty strategy for Pembrokeshire, we have looked at the priority issues people in our County face when experiencing hardship, alongside identifying what works to support people navigate themselves into better circumstances. As well as capturing the expertise of professionals who have the experience and authority to affect change, critically we have involved people with first-hand experience of poverty in the development of this strategy so that their voice is valued and empowered as part of the process for change.

This strategy seeks to give poverty prevention and reduction the focus it truly needs. Whilst we can celebrate and capitalise on existing good practice and support in our communities, we also seek a long term commitment of action to assist local people in need navigate a turbulent time with a solid support structure.

This strategy offers a clear vision of priorities to address, and outlines what action will collectively be taken in direct response. It will play a crucial role in aligning the efforts of Public Service Board, the Local Authority, and wider partners to ensure a joined up approach; as well as keeping those in need at the heart of every decision made.

Poverty prevention and alleviation is a clear priority for all partners who have contributed to the development of this strategy. We intend to use our combined resources and influence to improve the quality of life for local residents, with a long term vision for the County that promotes a shared responsibility to cultivate an environment where people in Pembrokeshire can thrive.

Our plan focuses clearly on how we will help the county to build on the strong resilience of local people and communities to create a fairer, healthier, more prosperous and inclusive future for all. I look forward to seeing this strategy brought to life with real action taken to support the people of Pembrokeshire.

Cllr N Prior

It's easy to imagine that poverty is not a problem in Pembrokeshire. It's a beautiful and popular place to visit, with areas with high property prices, areas of affluence, and people with money to spend. However, the devastating truth is that behind the oft-seen façade of the Pembrokeshire that tourists see, people are routinely going hungry, going without basic needs being met, and living in the most challenging of financial circumstances such that their lives will be impacted negatively for years to come.

People in poverty will have poorer outcomes across their lifetime, and children who grow up in poverty will have far less opportunity than children who do not live in poverty, to achieve good outcomes for themselves educationally, thereby impacting on their ability to live well in the future. Poverty affects people's physical and mental health; it affects one's ability to socialise; it affects self-esteem; it increases risk of debt, of homelessness and of unsanitary living conditions. All of these things are a daily reality for some people in Pembrokeshire.

It is incumbent on those of us in positions of influence, in privileged positions, who are not hampered by wondering where our next meal is coming from, to first of all listen to those who are in poverty. To hear their stories and to share their experience more widely. Understanding what poverty is like is the first step in being able to tackle it. And we must continue to listen. We must also continue to devote time and effort to this issue, across our organisations and with vigour and energy.

Poverty is sadly not going to disappear in a hurry and therefore our effort must be sustained in the long term. If we can retain our focus on the issues, devote our collective energies together – recognising that we are greater than the sum of our parts – then we can bring about lasting and meaningful change to the people of Pembrokeshire, making it a happier and healthier place for its citizens, where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Darren Mutter

Chair of Pembrokeshire's Tackling Poverty Working Group & Head of Children's Services at Pembrokeshire County Council



Section 2: Why This Strategy?

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Section 2: Why This Strategy?

The origins of this strategy lie in a Notice of Motion from Cllr David Lloyd put before a meeting of Pembrokeshire County Council on 15th July 2021, and considered at the Cabinet on 4th October 2021. The motion was as follows:

“That PCC establishes a standing, multi-disciplinary working party to address child poverty in Pembrokeshire. Pembrokeshire ranks highest of the 22 authorities in Wales with 31.03% of our children falling into the category of relative poverty.

Initially, the working party would comprise elected members, council officers, and representatives from PAVS, Planed, Dyfed Powys Health Board and the Citizens Advice Bureau who would meet in a structured way on a long-term basis to eradicate the shame of child poverty in our county. As its work develops, the working party would be free to add to its numbers further representatives from other bodies that it decided were germane to the on-going work programme.

There is a powerful desire from members and officers that the problem be tackled in a high-profile way in order to give a basis of hope to those families suffering poverty in the midst of the comparative wealth and privilege enjoyed by the many.”

The motion was prompted by the release of statistics by the ‘End Child Poverty Coalition’, sourced from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), which showed Pembrokeshire as having the highest child poverty rate in Wales at that time, based on figures for 2019.

The motion was unanimously supported by Cabinet, and it was determined that the best way to take the work forward was for an officer working group to be established initially. This group outlined the initial terms of reference but then quickly moved to include wider external partners, recognising that the approach to poverty in Pembrokeshire had to be based on a ‘whole county’ approach. It therefore followed naturally, given the spread of partners being invited to join the group, that it would exist as a sub-group of Pembrokeshire’s Public Service Board (PSB) to take the Lead. In April 2022 the group also agreed to broaden the remit of the project beyond child poverty specifically, to encompass poverty generally.

As well as developing this strategy, the group has necessarily had to develop the County’s response to the cost of living crisis that began to develop in late 2021. It has been a challenge to balance the need to respond to the crisis and support our most vulnerable residents, particularly through the winter of 2022/23, against the more medium to long-term actions that this strategy seeks to set out.

Leaving aside the specific circumstances that led to the development of the strategy, as PSB partners we are clear that actions to mitigate and tackle the effects of poverty are a critical component of the Well-being Objectives we set out in the Wellbeing Plan for Pembrokeshire which encompass the four following priorities:

- Support growth, jobs and prosperity and enable the transition to a more sustainable and greener economy
- Work with our communities to reduce inequalities and improve well-being
- Promote and support initiatives to deliver decarbonisation, manage climate adaptation and tackle the nature emergency
- Enable safe, connected, resourceful and diverse communities

Whilst this strategy constitutes the action plan for the second objective, there is clearly an inter-relationship with the other objectives – perhaps particularly around jobs and prosperity and resourceful communities. As our work on these other objectives develops, we will ensure that the evidence set out in this document informs the action plans that are developed from across the range of well-being work.



Section 3: Poverty in the UK, Wales and Pembrokeshire

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Section 3: Poverty in the UK, Wales and Pembrokeshire

There is no single, universally accepted definition of poverty, but the ones most commonly referred to in UK policymaking are explained below.

Poverty is broadly understood as a state of having **insufficient income** (for a safe, healthy, fulfilling life). While there may be debate about what counts as “sufficient”, having an income below a certain level makes it very likely that people will be experiencing deprivation, leading to negative experiences and poorer life outcomes. Therefore, in practice, income levels often serve to define someone as being in poverty in the UK.

The negative experiences associated with poverty (i.e. poor physical health and lower life expectancy, poor living conditions, lack of educational attainment and professional qualifications, high levels of stress and poor mental health, and higher exposure to various aspects of adversity), are ultimately the result of the lack of resources, opportunities and choices which people face when there is no ‘wriggle-room’ in their budgets.

Both the measures explained below may be taken **Before Housing Costs (BHC)**, which generally presents a more positive picture; or **After Housing Costs (AHC)** which gives a more accurate portrayal of disposable income. Housing costs in the UK are generally high but extremely variable, causing vast differences in the amounts households have remaining for other living expenses, even within the same county.

(i) Absolute Poverty

In 1995, the United Nations defined **absolute poverty** as:

“severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information”

This definition is important for comparing living conditions and outcomes around the world, but is less useful in a developed country where we expect everyone to have their basic needs for survival met. Here, poverty is more about missing out on things which others in the same society take for granted, and, as a result, being over-exposed to difficulties which others do not have to face.

In the UK, absolute poverty is measured as:

Household income less than 60% of median in 2011, adjusted for inflation.

Median income recorded in 2011 is selected as a fixed point that can be used to track changes in the living standards of low-incomes households over time. This measure allows the rise or fall in numbers of people below a fixed (“absolute”) income point to be monitored over time. However, the 60% of median measure is, itself, a relative measure. As explained below, measures based on a proportion of median provide no information on living standards. This measure has no correlation with the experience of absolute poverty as defined above.

“Absolute child poverty is set to rise by 2.9 percentage points (400,000 children) between 2021/22 and 2023/24.”

Resolution Foundation, The Living Standards Outlook 2023

(ii) Relative Poverty

Relative poverty in the UK is measured as:

Household income less than 60% of the current national median.

This measure tells us nothing about actual standards of living. When the median is high, 60% of median may be enough to meet everyday costs; when the median is low then even the median may not be sufficient for a good life. It is a measure of income inequality more than it is a measure of living standards, but we can presume that people below the line will ~~be~~ certainly be less able to obtain the standard of living generally enjoyed by others at the time, and will likely be missing out on experiences and opportunities commonly taken for granted. This figure can also be tracked to show the rise or fall in people in relative poverty over time, not according to a fixed amount of income, but in relation to the rest of society.

- Median weekly income data for Wales can be found [here](#)
- Median weekly income data for UK can be found [here](#)

Median weekly income in the UK in 2011 was £498.30 – adjusted for inflation that's £685.23. The latest data available for current UK median earnings is for 2022 (£640) and is lower than the adjusted 2011 figure. Current median earnings may remain lower than the adjusted 2011 figure owing to wages failing to rise in line with inflation.

For many years, the accepted measure of poverty (which therefore “defines” poverty in terms of income) throughout the EU and the UK has been:

Household income less than 60% of national median, after housing costs.

Minimum Income Standard

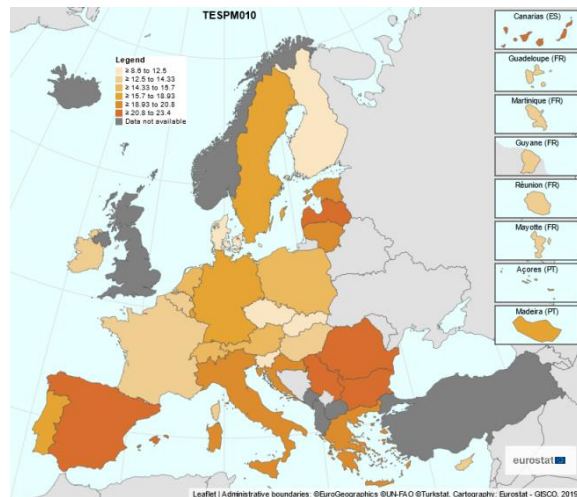
Research every two years establishes the goods, services and experiences which the UK population generally agree to be essential for a decent but basic standard of living. These are costed up (adjusted annually for inflation) to set a **Minimum Income Standard**, which informs the Living Wage: the hourly rate of pay at which a single adult working full time would meet their MIS.

Most households tend to require around 75% of median income to afford everything considered “essential”. This shows that the official 60% measure fails to include many households which are, nevertheless, unable to afford the daily expenses associated with having a decent, basic living standard, by modern expectations.

Income is set to fall for everyone: In March 2023, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecasted that real household disposable income per person (a measure of living standards) will fall by 5.7% during the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years. Absolute low income is likely to rise in the short run. The Resolution Foundation forecasted in January 2023 that absolute low income will increase from 17.2% in 2021/22 to 18.3% in 2023/24. This means an additional 800,000 people in absolute low income, with expectations that relative child poverty will to return to its upward trend at the end of the cost of living crisis and reach its highest levels since 1998/88 in 2027/28.

International Comparisons – UK and Europe

Below is a map from Eurostat, showing the poverty rates for EU member states. (Eurostat actually terms this the “At Risk of Poverty” rate, recognising that having 60% of national median income, “does not necessarily imply a low standard of living”). The figures relate to 2021, so they do not include the UK, which had a poverty rate of 20% in 2020-21ⁱ, placing it joint 24th out of 32 countries listedⁱⁱ,



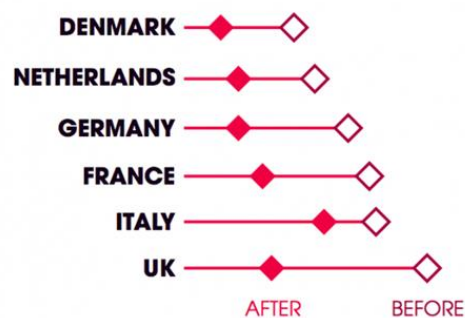
Poverty Rates, Europe, 2021 - <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tespm010/default/map?lang=en>

The Eurostat figures are based on income figures after tax and social security payments have been taken into account.

Poverty rates are higher in Europe (and in the UK) when we look solely at children. The Child Poverty Action Group emphasises that *before* tax and benefits, the UK has a higher rate of child poverty than any country in Europe bar Ireland.

Tax credits and benefits raise income levels for households with children so that the child poverty rate falls more in line with the European average. This demonstrates the problematic in-work poverty we have in the UK: wage levels are comparatively lower here than in other countries on the continent. Children are heavily reliant on social security to top up parental low pay, in order to have a child poverty rate close to the European average.

CHILD POVERTY RATES BEFORE AND AFTER TAX AND BENEFITS



Source: Child Poverty Action Group - <https://cpag.org.uk/poverty-across-world>

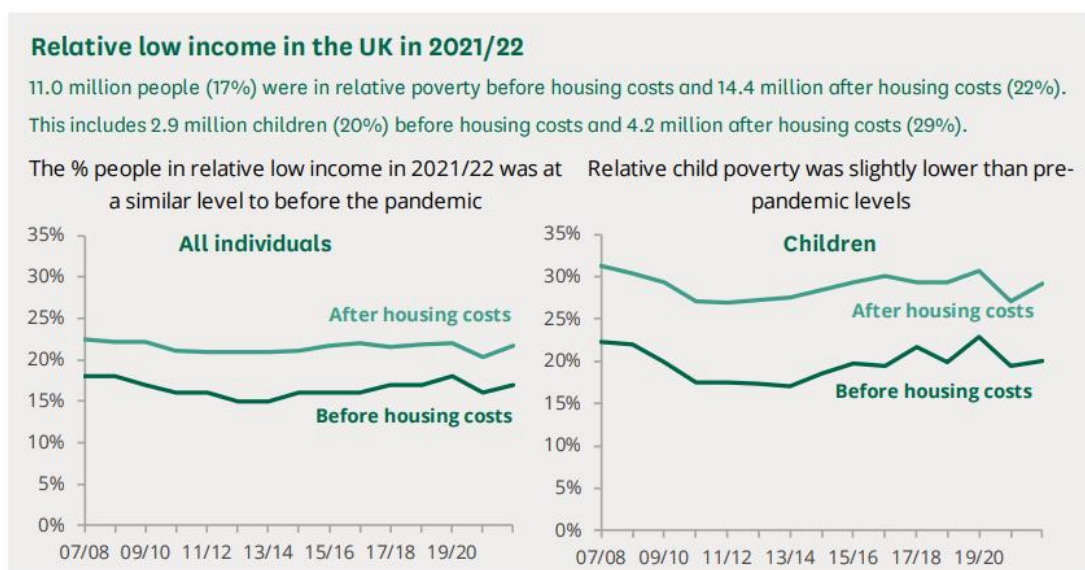
Poverty in the UK

The latest official data is for the 2020-21 year, which was atypical in modern trends due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

20% of the UK population was in poverty in 20-21; 13.4 million people, including:

- **1.7 million pensioners**
 - **3.9 million children**
- **7.9 million working-age adults**

More recent data shared by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) shows that around one in six people in the UK were in relative low income (relative poverty) before housing costs in 2021/22. This rises to just over one in five people once housing costs are accounted for.



Source: DWP, [Households Below Average Income](#), 2021/22

Some groups are more likely than others to be in poverty. According to DWP, in 2021/22 poverty rates were highest for people in households where the head of the household is from the Pakistani or Bangladeshi ethnic groups and lowest for those from White ethnic groups. Poverty risk is higher for certain ethnic minorities, reflected in the figures for this period, with poverty being experienced by:

- Approx 50% of people in households headed by someone of **Bangladeshi** ethnicity.
- Over 40% of people in households headed by someone of **Pakistani** or **Black** ethnicity.
- ... which is more than double the rate of people in households headed by someone of white ethnicity.

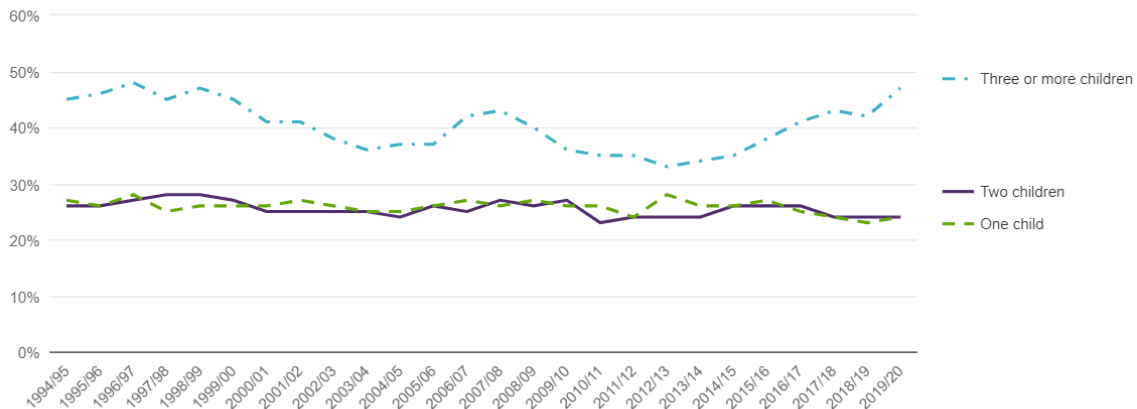
Around 38% of working-age adults in workless families were in relative poverty before housing costs in 2021/22, compared to 10% in families where at least one adult was in work.

43% of social renters and 35% of private renters were in relative low income after housing costs in 2021/22, compared to 15% of people who owned their home outright and 9% of those who have a mortgage.

The proportion of people in relative low income before housing costs (BHC) was 24% for families where someone is disabled, compared to 14% for people living in families where no one is disabled. There was no change in this period in the trend of poverty being more prevalent among **larger families** (three or more children), and households with a **disabled person** or an **informal carer**.

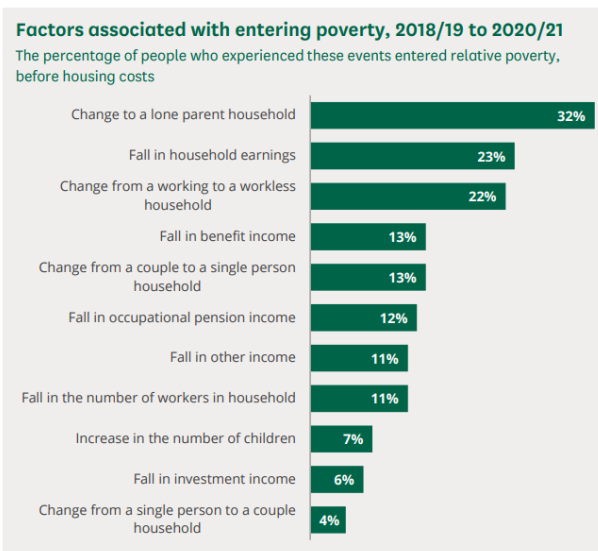
The effects of family size on poverty are negative and recessive, meaning that larger families tend to have lower incomes, lower savings, lower levels of education and higher dependence on welfare. Since 2012/13 the proportion of children in large families who are in poverty has increased substantially from 33% to 47% only 7 years later.

Child poverty rates by number of children in the family



Source: Households Below Average Income, 2019/20, DWP

But what causes people to fall into poverty?



Source: DWP, *Income Dynamics*, Tables 1 and M.9

Relative influence of factors on length of child poverty spell

Factor	Certainty	Strength	Coverage
Long-term worklessness and low earnings	High	High	High
Parental qualifications	High	High	High
Family instability	High	Medium	Medium
Family size	High	Medium	Medium
Parental ill health and disability	Medium	Medium	Medium
Drug and alcohol dependency	High	High	Low
Child ill health	Medium	Low	Low
Housing	Low	Low	Medium
Debt	Low	Low	Medium
Neighbourhood	Low	Low	Medium

The tables above show the key risk factors that have the largest impact on people entering poverty, as well as on how long a child is in poverty.

The government review found that the most important factors preventing families from exiting poverty were long-term worklessness and low income of parents and parental qualification.

This information allows us an insight into not only the barriers people can face in becoming trapped in poverty, but also how we can create pathways out leading to more prosperous and financially stable futures for families.

Comparing UK Regions

Unless stated, figures below relate to the period to 2021, reported in 2023ⁱⁱⁱ.

Northern Ireland: With cheaper housing than elsewhere, requiring less borrowing and therefore less interest, NI has the lowest poverty rate (17%) of the four nations, despite having the highest rate of unemployment, as well as high rates of low-paid employment and high uptake of means-tested benefits, similar to other areas with much higher poverty rates (notably Wales, the North of England and the West Midlands). This gives a valuable suggestion, notable for Pembrokeshire, of high housing costs being even more of a risk factor in poverty than unemployment.

Scotland: The most radical work to tackle child poverty happens here, with a payment to support children having been gradually rolled out, initially £10 per week (February 2021) for low-income families with a child aged under 6, extending to £25 per week for all qualifying children up to age 16 (November 2022). Initial estimates are that in 2023-4 (the first complete year of full roll-out), this payment will lift 50,000 children above the poverty line^{iv}. Scotland's powers over social security have enabled the introduction of various new payments to support families, and a different way of administering Universal Credit, which enables people to have payments every two weeks instead of monthly, and to have the housing element paid directly to the Landlord. These measures making falling into debt less likely.

England: Variations between English regions see poverty rates from 19% in the South West and East, to 26% in the North East, overtaking London which had topped the poverty ratings for 20 years (mainly due to housing costs). In the poorest areas of England (including Yorkshire and Humberside; West Midlands), people are more likely to live in rented homes but they are typically in poverty even before housing costs are taken into account, suggesting that low income (high unemployment, economic activity and in-work poverty) is a more significant driver of poverty than high rents. In the English regions with the lowest poverty rates there tend to be higher proportions of working-age adults in work, with those in work tending to have higher paid managerial and professional jobs.

Wales: A high level of in-work poverty contributes to Wales having the highest poverty rate of the four nations during this reporting period (24%). Nearly a third of those in work have low-paid jobs in agriculture, clerical roles, production and sales and services production, sales and services, agricultural and clerical roles (32% of those in work) and there is a relatively high proportion of working-age adults not in work (**currently** 26%, compared with the same in NI and 21% in both Scotland and England)^v and of people in receipt of UC or equivalent benefits (21%).

Comparing the picture across the UK highlights useful warnings for policymaking anywhere in the UK to be mindful of. People need good jobs with decent pay; innovative ways for the state to top up low incomes for those on poverty wages or unable to work can make a huge difference; high housing costs (particularly in the private rented sector) are a significant driver of poverty.

Current UK Issues Compounding Poverty

While rates of poverty can differ across the UK, the experience of poverty tends to be similar. There are some notable differences between urban and rural locations: people are differently challenged by access to services, transport costs and the general availability of opportunities (social, cultural, employment etc) in areas of greater or lesser population density. Figures on poverty rates tend to show little change over time and the experience of poverty also remains fairly consistent, but there are some factors of UK life in 2023 which are having particular impacts on low-income people.

Coronavirus Pandemic

In brief, the pandemic caused more illness and death amongst people on low incomes, who have also been more deeply affected by the economic impacts. Jobs in lower-earning sectors like catering and hospitality (the worst affected sector) were lost; some were created, mostly to directly help deal with the effects of the pandemic, but these were in the sector of public administration, which is not where those losing their jobs in lower-paid sectors would find replacement work.

The Office for National Statistics reports that in October to December 2021, employment was still 11% below pre-pandemic levels in the accommodation and food sector and 9% below in manufacturing.^{vi}

There are now high levels of vacancies and generally low unemployment, which is partly due to so many people being economically inactive (not working and not looking for work; largely due to ill health). The Institute for Fiscal Studies reported in July 22 that the number of people with long covid had been steadily increasing, reaching almost 2 million by June 22, and that “sufferers are more likely to have a pre-existing health condition, be female and be middle aged ... also more likely to live in social housing, to have been claiming benefits before the pandemic, and possibly to be in poverty.”

Data indicating a **fall** in the poverty rate during the pandemic period merely demonstrates what happens when, “A falling average income caused the relative poverty line to drop.”^{vii} The median falls, 60% of median falls, the number of people below the poverty line is fewer. *This does not indicate a rise in living standards.*

This point also relates to the use of 2011 median income as a measure of absolute poverty: each year relative poverty can change in line with incomes. In the above case, average incomes fell during the pandemic, thus the relative poverty threshold also declined. However, the measure of absolute poverty remains 60% of median income in 2011 (adjusted for inflation).

Cost of Living Crisis

Awareness of poverty is perhaps higher now than at any time in the last twenty years, due to increasing numbers of people being unable to afford basic living costs. (This arguably detracts from the plight of people who have never known anything else.) Inflation in general is an issue, driven by increasing demand for goods and materials in the post-pandemic growth period; the UK’s annual inflation rate exceeded 11% in October 2022, the highest level for 41 years.^{viii} Apart from general inflation, the main drivers of the so-called crisis are the rising cost of energy and food.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine prompted a huge escalation in the price of wholesale gas, pushing up domestic gas bills by 129% and domestic electricity by 67% from January 2022

to January 2023. Increased energy costs inevitably push up the prices of goods whose production and distribution are affected. The conflict also resulted in price increases for particular goods which both countries export in large quantities, including wheat, agricultural products and some metals.

Leaving the EU added, on average, £210 to household food bills over the two years to the end of 2021, due to *Non-Tariff Barriers* to free trading^{ix}.

- Energy price inflation has slowed over the past 3-6 months; prices are rising at a slower rate of 8.1% in May compared with 10.5% in April
- Energy price inflation is higher in the UK relative to the rest of the world mainly owing to longer lags between changes in wholesale prices leading to changes in consumer prices
- “The impact of the recent decline in wholesale gas prices will only filter into utility prices in July 2023, following the next update on the Ofgem price cap.” (ONS, 2023)
- Food price inflation is also slowing relative to 2022, although it remains high at 18.4%

Social Security: Systemic Problems

The “safety net” offered by social security in the UK does not serve to keep people out of poverty. Problems with the current system include:

- Other than for pensioners, standard benefit rates do not generally keep recipients above the poverty line. The rates are particularly low for younger people (those aged under 35, and even more so for under-25s).
- Universal Credit (UC) has many problematic features:
 - 5 weeks at the start of a claim during which no eligibility for money exists;
 - a monthly payment cycle which does not work with the expenditure patterns of low-income households who tend to spend little and often;
 - payment to one member of a couple who may be financially abusive;
 - payment directly to tenants rather than landlord.

In spite of the £20 per week uplift to Universal Credit during the pandemic, 46% of families receiving Universal Credit were below the poverty line.

UC claimants are encouraged into debt through “advances”, but since UC often isn’t sufficient to cover essential living costs, this creates unaffordable debt (see below).

Local Housing Allowance – the amount of support given towards housing costs – is far below the typical cost of private sector rents. Between May and December ’21, the LHA was found to cover the advertised rent of less than 4% of private rental properties across 10 Welsh Local Authorities, and in Pembrokeshire no properties advertised at LHA or below were available without conditions which would bar a low-income tenant^x. In Pembrokeshire the gap between LHA and advertised rent is particularly high for shared accommodation, which is all that a childless (or temporarily accommodating parent) under 35 qualifies for.

The Impact of UC Deductions

“Take a couple with three children whose universal credit payment is, in theory, £46.11 a day. However, when their payment lands they have just £35, because around a quarter of their benefit has been deducted to pay back the loan they had to take out on joining universal credit to cover the five weeks they were denied benefit. And an extra 5% has been deducted as back payment to

their utility company ... money can be deducted for repayment of advance or emergency loans, and even on behalf of third parties for rent, utilities and service charge payments.

“With gas and electricity likely to cost, at a minimum, £7... and with a council tax contribution to be paid on top, they find that they have just £25.80 a day left over, or £5.16 per person, to pay for food and all other essentials.”

Gordon Brown, 14.12.22^{xi}

Paul Johnson, Director of the IFS, attended a Citizens Advice LCA briefing in May 2023, he noted that IFS calculations have found that benefits levels won't reach their early 2020 levels until April 2025, assuming the continuation of the current indexation process whereby benefits are linked to inflation as it was in the previous September. Original source can be found [here](#)

Poverty in Wales

Data on poverty trends is always retrospective; the following summary is from the Wales Centre for Public Policy's report from September 2022^{xii}, but all source data is from 2021 or before. In Wales:

- Around 57% of people in poverty are of working age.
- Children have the highest risk of poverty but they are the smallest group of people in poverty in terms of total numbers. Most children in poverty are in working, not workless, households.
- You are more likely to be poor if you are unemployed, but a job does not always prevent poverty. In-work poverty has worsened over the last 20 years.
- Since the 1990s, efforts to tackle pensioner poverty have been successful, with pensioners now being the household type least likely to be in poverty. In recent years, though, the proportion of pensioners in poverty has crept back up, largely due to high living costs.
- 44% of lone-parent households are in poverty.
- Poverty rates are consistently higher among young people, those with disabilities or chronic illnesses, single parents, social and private renters, women, and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people. (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people make up only 2.3% of those in poverty, due to their small numbers in the Welsh population.)

The Bevan Foundation's latest 'snapshot' of poverty has revealed that more than one in eight Welsh households either sometimes or often struggle to afford everyday items. In total 45 per cent of Welsh households never have enough money for anything other than the basics. These all-Wales figures are bad enough, but the pressure on households in rural communities is even worse. Why? Because rural areas face a triple squeeze from high costs, low incomes and limited support for hard-pressed households. Household incomes in rural areas are struggling to keep up. For employees, median earnings in May 2022 were the lowest in Wales in Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion, Conwy, Gwynedd and Powys. A typical worker in Pembrokeshire is a belt-tightening £346 a month worse off than a typical UK worker.

Poverty in Pembrokeshire

According to the Trussell Trust between April 2022 and March 2023, almost 3 million emergency food parcels were distributed by foodbanks, an increase of 37% compared with the same period last year; with more than one million of these parcels distributed for

children, They further say that between April 2022 and March 2023 the number of people that used a food bank for the first time was 760,000.

In direct local response to Pembrokeshire sadly following the national trend of increased food poverty, the Food Poverty Support Network was established in 2021 which is a growing network comprising organisations from across the county offering food support to people in Pembrokeshire. During 2022-23 PCC was awarded funding from Welsh Government and the Welsh Local Government Association to support those in food poverty. Considering the cost of living crisis at the time PCC added to this from their annual Discretionary Funding allocation. The Food Poverty Support Grant was established and through this funding a range of voluntary sector organisations were supported to purchase food, create meals and social gatherings (lunch clubs, weekday soup, early tea) for communities outside usual operating hours to reach those most in need.

A total of 15,121 people were supported and 18,876 meals were received between November 2022–March 2023.

PATCH the largest foodbank in Pembrokeshire distributed 165,000 meals to individuals and families during 2022-23 a **34% increase in demand from 2021-22**. Pembrokeshire Foodbank saw demand increase by 1% from 2021-22 to 22-23 and they distributed 86,429 meals. Finally the Peninsula Food Pod focusing upon Fishguard and St Davids provided 51,976 meals to people during 2022-23.

Foodbanks are seeing the numbers of self-referrals increasing where families have hit a 'bump in the road' and need additional support outside of any external agency intervention. All have indicated a reduction in donations, added to that supermarkets are under pressure to produce less waste and so are managing orders more effectively, so those traditional avenues of support are now closing or significantly reduced.

Child poverty

The usual data lag meant that at the time of writing, the Well-Being Assessment reflected data to 2018/2019 indicating that Pembrokeshire had the highest rate of child poverty in Wales, at some 31%. More recent data (2020/2021) puts Pembrokeshire level with Rhondda Cynon Taff, Ynys Mon and Conwy at 36% and behind Cardiff and Newport at 37%^{xiii}.

This statistic reflects the proportion of all the children in the county who are currently living in households with an income below 60% of the UK median, after housing costs. This measure, as explained above, does not tell us anything about standard of living, but we can safely assume that any household with children relying on benefits and not exempt from the cap is living in a dire situation, because:

- The benefit cap applies to all households regardless of the number of children, and 85% of households subject to it do contain children.
- The pre-April 2023 cap was set and frozen in Nov 2016, with capped households seeing no benefit from social security uprating to account for inflation.
- Almost all capped households with children are in deep poverty (50% of median, or below)

Constituency data on child poverty is provided by the House of Commons [here](#), although this does mean that the data relevant to Pembrokeshire is split between Preseli and Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire.

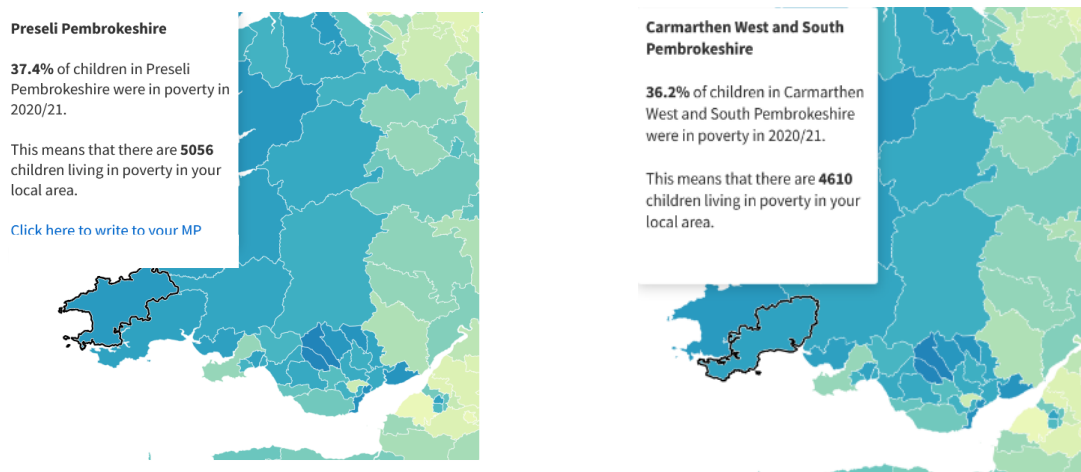
In Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire:

- In 2021/22, the relative child poverty rate was 22.7% compared with 22.1% for Wales and 20.1% for the UK
- In 2021/22, the absolute child poverty rate was 15.7% compared with 14.8% for Wales and 15.3% for the UK
- The House of Commons tool also provides data for small areas within each constituency. Monkton recorded the highest rate with 35.2% of children in relative poverty in 2021/22

In Preseli Pembrokeshire:

- In 2021/22, the relative child poverty rate was 24.1% compared with 22.1% for Wales and 20.1% for the UK
- In 2021/22, the absolute child poverty rate was 17.2% compared with 14.8% for Wales and 15.3% for the UK
- Northeast Pembrokeshire recorded the highest rate with 34.1% of children in relative poverty in 2021/22

End Child Poverty Coalition Interactive Map (2022 data)^{xiv}



Given the correlation with unemployment data, below, and the general similarity of the situation across Wales, some plausible drivers of local child poverty include:

- Lack of affordable/available childcare: Pembrokeshire's Childcare Sufficiency survey indicates this is likely to be a barrier to parental employment.
- Lack of affordable/available transport: Difficulties accessing childcare and employment within necessary times compounds the challenge for parental work.
- Lack of well-paid employment compatible with family life (particularly part-time).
- High costs of housing with two or more bedrooms, affecting those with children.

Bedroom Tax and Benefit Cap

These two policies have both drawn criticism from the United Nations for their impacts, severely diminishing the incomes of some of the UK's already poorest households and having particularly harsh impacts on households with children.

The examples below are for a single parent of working age with different household compositions in terms of the number, ages and sexes of children. In all cases the example is for a **3 bedroom home in Pembrokeshire**. An accurate council rent figure for 2022-23 has been used and the private rent figure was researched by the Housing Department in 2022.

Bedroom Tax (BT on the table below) applies if a home has more bedrooms than the policy deems necessary, given its stipulation that two children of either sex should share a room until the age of 10 and two of the same sex should share up to the age of 16. A 3-bedroom home can be considered excessive or not, depending on the ages/sexes of the same number of children, having a surprising impact on household finances.

The **benefit cap** (BC) ensures that no household outside London receives more than £20,000 in benefits (pre-April '23 rate). The more children in the family, the greater the impact.

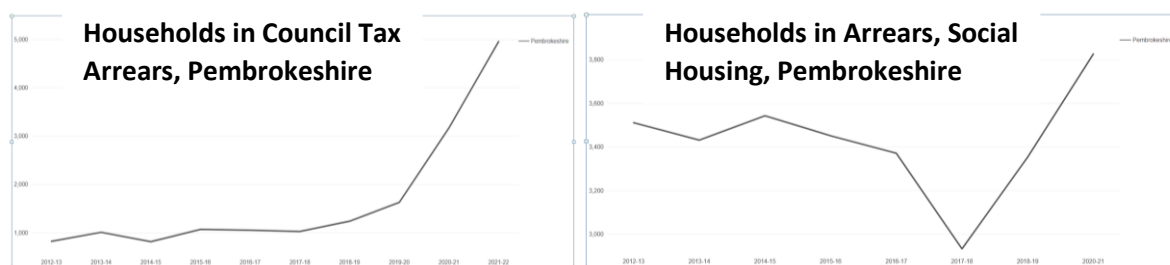
In all examples below, Council Tax Reduction covers the full liability, except where the parent is working. Benefit Income is UC plus Child Benefit. Figures are for 2022-23.

	Family Makeup	Rent: 3 bedrooms	Help with rent	Benefit income	Wages, Min Wage	Income after rent & CT	Income per head after housing costs
BT	Council tenant, 2 children, same sex, under 16	£114.91	£98.96	£335.72	£0.00	£220.81	£73.60
BT	Private tenant, 1 boy, 1 girl, under 10	£191.49	£98.96	£335.72	£0.00	£144.23	£48.08
	Council tenant, boy, 8 and girl, 12	£114.91	£114.91	£351.80	£0.00	£236.89	£78.96
	Private tenant, boy, 8 and girl, 12	£191.49	£120.82	£351.80	£0.00	£160.31	£53.44
BC	Council tenant with 3 children under 10	£114.91	£114.91	£384.62	£0.00	£269.71	£67.43
BC	Private tenant with 3 children under 10	£191.49	£120.82	£384.62	£0.00	£193.13	£48.28
						<i>Here the Benefit Cap removes £39 per week. Working 16 hours lifts the cap, but does not increase benefits. CTR of £15 and £1.86 UC are lost. There is a net gain of £135, before childcare & transport costs.</i>	
BC	Council tenant with 2 boys, 2 girls, under 16	£114.91	£114.91	£384.62	£0.00	£269.71	£53.94
BC	Private tenant with 2 boys, 2 girls, under 16	£191.49	£114.91	£384.62	£0.00	£193.13	£38.63
	Council tenant with 2 boys, 2 girls, under 16, working 16hrs pw	£114.91	£114.91	£493.58	£152.00	£515.53	£103.11
	Private tenant with 2 boys, 2 girls, under 16, working 16hrs pw	£191.49	£120.82	£493.58	£152.00	£438.95	£87.79

Unemployment: For the last period for which data was available (2018)., Pembrokeshire had the highest rate in Wales of children in workless households (20%), markedly higher than the Welsh average (13%)^{xv} Indeed, for workless households generally, Pembrokeshire ranked highest in Wales (22%; Welsh average 17%). More recent data (2022) indicate continuing problems with unemployment in the county, with the highest rate of people claiming out-of-work benefits over 6 months, and 3rd highest for claimants of over 12, 18 and 24 month durations.

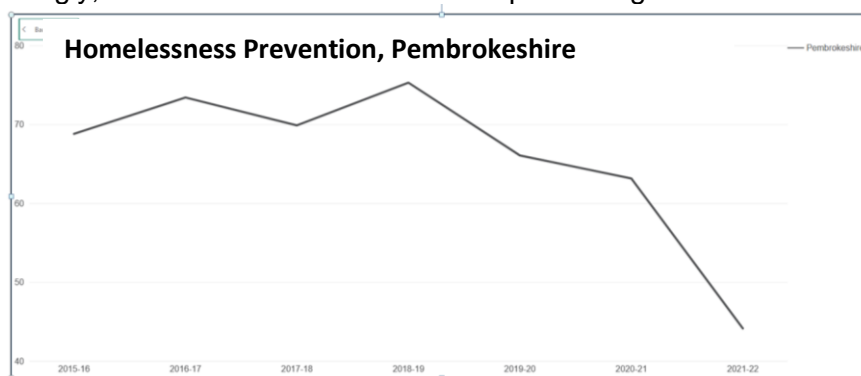
Qualifications: Indicator data from the last Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation^{xvi} shows a changing trend in Pembrokeshire, with every age group having a lower percentage of working-age adults with no qualifications than the Welsh average, apart from 16-24s. This may be because people are achieving fewer qualifications, or those with qualifications are leaving the area. Local people do have a concern that young people are moving elsewhere, for housing and jobs.

Housing Debt and Homelessness: Graphs from the Audit Wales Poverty Data Tool^{xvii} show the increase in households falling into arrears with housing costs:



Numbers of households presenting for support with homelessness have increased annually and the Housing Department report an increase of some 46% in applications for council housing since 2018. The most significant single reason for homelessness is **loss of tenancy**, for reasons other than rent arrears, cited in 200 cases in 2019-20, 258 in 2021-22 and the team is projecting 492 households to be affected in 2022-23, an astonishing increase.

Correspondingly, Audit Wales shows success in preventing homelessness is declining:



According to central PCC records, from April 2020 to April 2023, social housing rent arrears in Pembrokeshire has risen by over £1 million.

This 94.6% increase over a three year period now means that there over two million pounds of SH rental debt in Pembrokeshire as of June 2023.



Section 4: The Reality of Poverty in Pembrokeshire

**Tackling
Poverty:
Our
Strategy
2023**

Section 4: The Reality of Poverty in Pembrokeshire

People who live with the difficulties that public services are tasked with supporting have insights which can be powerful tools for informing policy development and practical interventions. Success is far more likely when our work is based on the needs and suggestions of these ‘experts by experience’.

Qualitative Research by PAVS

In 2022, with funding from UK Government (UK Community Renewal Fund) and the local authority, Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services (PAVS) undertook research to capture people’s lived experiences of financial hardship, their barriers to securing employment and/or increasing their income, and their ideas for making things better.

The full report contains an invaluable breadth of information about people’s lives, views and concerns. Below, the most common issues raised within the research have been identified and extracted. Therefore, the issues listed here are not an exhaustive list of problems discussed, but are typical problems cited by numbers of participants. The separate issues identified are of course interlinked, compounding impacts: one stressful or costly situation worsens another, which in turn has implications for another, and so on.

Essential Living Costs – A Struggle

Food

- Food shopping is reduced to “essentials” and “basics”, cutting out meat and treats. (Costs had increased from £60 to £100 for the same items in one case, £50 to £70 in another.)
- Costs of special diets are unmanageable (the coeliac grant of £54/quarter barely makes any impact).
- Children are often given cheap, filling carbohydrates, like toast, sandwiches and breakfast cereal in the evenings, as their parents know they have had a hot meal at school.

“Embarrassing and shameful”

Housing

- Housing is in poor condition (e.g. damp, cold, poorly insulated) and costly to heat.
- Unaffordable heating means problems with condensation, mould and further deterioration.
- Housing is unaffordable and/or unavailable. People are leaving or considering leaving Pembrokeshire (especially coastal communities) for cheaper and available rents/homes.
- The gap between LHA and rents is particularly large in ‘desirable’ areas. For example, in St. Dogmaels it is £320 per month.
- Homeowners worry that when current rates are renegotiated, mortgages will be unmanageable.
- Bedroom tax applies even to a bedroom used for visiting children. People affected are often unable to move (downsize) within the same community, so rent arrears worsen.

- The shift to paying the housing element of benefits to claimants, rather than directly to their landlord, has created arrears. (Maintaining discipline over a miniscule budget is very tough.)

Energy

- Fuel costs are an increasingly significant part of household spend.
- Mains gas has doubled in cost.
- Those off-gas have it even worse, with oil and especially electricity being so costly.
- Individuals report, for example, a quadrupling of electricity consumption in the winter months; a tripling of electricity costs (equal to ¾ of their pension).
- Fuel support payments are welcome but confusing.
- People manage their energy meters meticulously - knowing how many days they can afford and restricting their use of heat.

“We will not be putting the heating on this winter, as the cost of hot water alone has gone from £3.50 to £8.50 a day”.

“I pay each bill as it comes in, then I know what’s left for food”

School

- Younger children wear out their school shoes quickly, which are not readily available second hand.
- School uniforms are a difficult expense. Schools insisting on embroidered badges versus plain items can add £10+ per item.
- Trips and non-essentials, such as school photos, put a real strain on some families.

“There is always something, this week the school photos are due in and I think ‘Oh my goodness, how can I pay”.

Childcare and Early Years provision

- Childcare/ Meithrin is completely unaffordable for some families, especially in non-Flying Start areas (supporting children aged two years).
- Some providers charge for a whole week to keep a place, regardless of how many times the child attends. If allowed, some parents send their children only once or twice a week.
- The lack of Flying Start in the mid and north of the county makes people feel discriminated against. Provision in Pembroke Dock and Cardigan for example “feels unfair”.
- From age three, there is Welsh Government support, only for **working** parents.
- To access the childcare element of Child Tax Credit, both parents must work 16 hours or more (regardless of how many one may work, e.g. 60 hours).

“Being worse off after childcare is a very real barrier to work. Even in better paid roles, childcare consumes so much income; with added travel to childcare it is “not worth it.”

Transport

- Public transport is unaffordable for many. Community transport, such as Flexi-bus, is not available everywhere.
- Anxiety (common in people struggling with the stress of low-income life) can be a barrier to public transport, and thus to services in other locations, e.g. community fridge.
- In rural areas, with little or no public transport available, people “have to have a vehicle”.

- For those who must use their vehicle for work (e.g. carers), and to access services, fuel consumes a large chunk of the household budget.

The Poverty Trap in Action

In-Work Poverty

- Some who work, and don't receive support with school meals, water rates, council tax, or social tariffs for fuel, feel they have less remaining than those on benefits (and may be right).
- Loss of the above supports, plus childcare and travel costs, can mean that employment does not make financial sense: "the system is almost forcing people out of work".
- People feel penalised for working (often in low-paid but essential roles).
- There appears to be a lack of career opportunities that pay enough to escape poverty.

"Our boys won't come back - what is there here for them? They went away to university and now there's nothing for them to come back to".

"There is nothing in Pembrokeshire for young people to progress in life ... I feel like there are more opportunities in other parts of the UK than Wales" (age 23)

Issues with Universal Credit (UC) and other benefits

- Some on UC who took an initial advance constantly have to borrow more (from the DWP); those still on Working Tax Credits and Job Seekers Allowance fear the switch to UC.
- Self-employed individuals with fluctuating income have managed OK with top-ups through Working Tax Credit (though changes can be stressful) but expect more difficulty with UC.
- Larger families are particularly penalised. The two-child limit applies and the benefit cap limits income to £20,000, whether a household has 2 children or 3, 4 or more.

Streamlining and One-Stop Shops

It is difficult to know what help is available. People report a constant, time-consuming "battle" or "fight" for information.

Systems for people to learn what they might be entitled to and access it seem complicated and convoluted. People are daunted by the multiplicity of criteria and application forms.

People are asking for such services to be streamlined, more like a 'one stop shop' to focus on an individual, and their circumstances.

Stress, Disappointment and Poor Mental Health

- Mental health issues are common, precipitated and/or exacerbated by the stress of poverty.
- Very long waits for non-urgent assessment (particularly Autism Spectrum Disorder and ADHD in children) adds to family stress.

- Life is not what was anticipated, “disheartening” for those who feel they cannot give their children the life they would wish and those who have paid into ‘the system’ that does not now allow them to even ‘manage’.

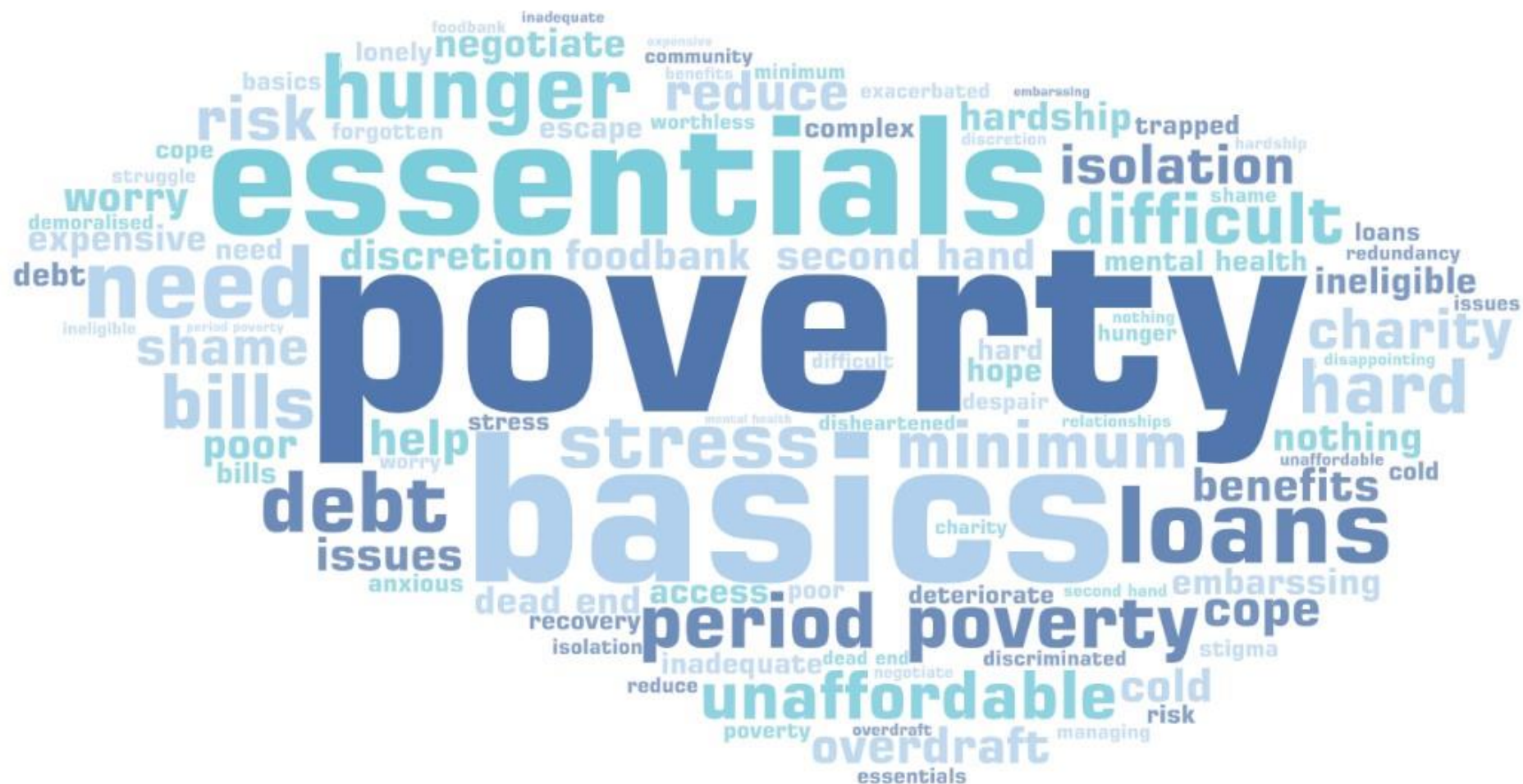
Coping Strategies

Households are going without ...

- Clothing for parents
- Repairing/replacing household items and white goods
- Visits to relatives, or longer distance day trips, due to fuel costs.
- Anything “nice” or “treats”, such as a cafe lunch
- Family days out/leisure activities

For ...	People are turning to ...
Food or help with bills and living costs	Their adult children, their parents, other relatives, friends.
Help with large household costs such as fridge freezers, washing machines, vet bills, fuel	Friends and relatives
Affordable second-hand clothing	Charity shops, hand-me-downs, ‘Vinted’ and Facebook
Food	Pembrokeshire Action To Combat Hardship (PATCH) food parcels or Pembrokeshire Foodbank
Children’s activities, clubs, toys at Christmas (also laptops during lockdown)	Action for Children

Below is a word cloud generated from some of the language and vocabulary linked to hardship, that was used by participants and recorded by researchers capturing the local and lived experience of poverty in recent times:



Case Studies from FaCE- Family and Community Engagement

FaCE (Family and Community Engagement) is a new Pembrokeshire project aiming to support schools in targeting disengaged families, through structured numeracy based learning and enrichment activities. These case studies, part of the project monitoring, particularly highlight:

1. The negative impact of poverty on the mental health of everyone in the home, particularly adults who express guilt and shame for not being able to provide more for their children.
2. Reduced or completely missing positive enrichment opportunities, both as a family unit and for the children as individuals. Costs to access hobbies or days out are prohibitive for the majority, who can only benefit from free activities.
3. Housing: poor quality or unsuitable accommodation, arrears and mounting debt, inability to afford repairs or maintain properties to a decent standard, houses feeling like unsecure placements with a lack of stability and sense of 'home'.

Family A: Mr and Mrs A live in Neyland, with 4 sons aged 10-15. 10 years ago dad had an accident at work, surgeries were unsuccessful in repairing the damage to his back. At the time, mum was attending the local college, they owned a 3 bedroom home, were paying off their mortgage and keeping up with the bills and had never needed benefits. Their sudden change in fortunes soon had them seeking financial advice, agreeing an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA) to pay back debt accrued and extending their mortgage to a 35 year term to reduce the monthly payment. Mum and dad's mental health has declined over the last 10 years and dad's physical health has not improved.

Living costs: The house is in considerable disrepair with no funds for general maintenance. There is no entitlement to support with housing costs and no equity in the house because it is mortgaged to the maximum value. The lack of housing benefit and the IVA payments impact greatly on the household. They regularly rely on weekly food packages from PATCH.

Household life: The eldest son has a tiny box room, the middle two share and the youngest, with autism, shares a bedroom with his parents. Home life is often fraught in this small house, with small rooms; the boys fight. They cannot attend any extracurricular activities unless they are free, with free transport provided. They play online computer games and rarely go out of the home. With rapid growth spurts, all clothes are handed down from each boy to the next and on one occasion one son had to endure broken footwear, waiting until payday.

Mum is concerned that her older boys, very bright, will miss out on extra study sessions at school because they cannot attend unless free transport is provided.

They do not have family holidays or family days out. Everything has to be shared and they rely on donations from wider family members. Both parents feel awful that they cannot provide for their children and this sadness exacerbates their poor mental health.

Family B: Single mother living with boyfriend in Housing Association accommodation on the Mount Estate in Milford Haven. Six children, from 18 months to 15 years old.

Early 2020 the family moved from their substandard housing to a new, 4-bedroom Housing Association property, with a substantial increase in rent. At the time this was affordable for her a single mum. When her partner moved in, prompting a dual household benefit assessment, she lost her housing benefit; but he does not financially support the family. He sends wages back home to Lithuania and has a gambling habit.

She became pregnant with her youngest child during this time and lost her father to covid. Having been very close with her dad (losing her mum when still a child), she is grieving deeply.

Living costs: Rent, no longer covered by benefits, is £700 a month, plus mum has a payment plan for past rent arrears. There is no contact with the other children's fathers, so she receives no child support.

Household Life: Social services have been in contact recently regarding a second complaint from concerned neighbours about the children's behaviour on the estate. Mum is concerned that their behaviour is becoming disruptive and acknowledges that since the loss of her dad, she is struggling to cope. She doesn't have the means to entertain them, being unable to buy play equipment or computer games and phones that other children have. Her 8 year old son recently really enjoyed a free boxing club trial but the subscription of £3 per week prevented him signing up.

Most mornings Mum fears she won't have enough milk for breakfast and baby so often only the younger children get breakfast. The next worry is fruit. If the children don't bring fruit, or money to buy fruit, the school will provide half an apple. The thought of them only having half an apple and everyone knowing it's because she hasn't sent a snack or money "absolutely kills" her. Her 15 year old daughter can't afford make up, clothes, phones, trips to town, etc which prevents her maintaining friendships. Even her everyday necessities are unaffordable. A lot of her time is spent caring for her younger siblings.

Mum has hopes and dreams for all her children and is keenly aware that the poverty trap she is in will hinder their life experience and chances.

Family C: Single mum living in Haverfordwest with 2 daughters aged 6 - 14. Two of the children have Additional Needs (ODD, communication barriers, very aggressive, hearing aids) and are on slow release medication. Mum suffers from anxiety & depression and the older children are carers for mum as well as mum being a carer for the children. They live in rented housing close to school.

Living cost: Mum believes that her budget is okay, they just can't have luxury items, or afford anything non-essential (like a holiday). She shops in local charity shops and does her absolute best to budget. On occasion they have been dependent on food parcels from their local church. The rising costs to household bills is impacting on this finely tuned budget.

Household Life: Due to Mum's ill health and the younger siblings' medical conditions the two older children are registered young carers and regularly attend group sessions with Action for Children. Mum is unable to fund any extracurricular activities and will seek out and sign up her children to any free activities on offer, but can only do so if free transport is provided.



Section 5: What Have We Done So Far?

**Tackling
Poverty:
Our
Strategy
2023**

Section 5: What have we done so far?








Our largest scale multiagency response to the ongoing Cost of Living Crisis has to date been the Keep Warm Keep Well (KWKW) programme. This community focused offer of support was established in October 2022 for residents of Pembrokeshire during the cost of living crisis. The KWKW campaign was led by the Pembrokeshire Community Hub in partnership with Pembrokeshire County Council, Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services (PAVS) and a variety of agencies including Hywel Dda Health Board, Emergency Services, and the Voluntary Sector. This section of the report is a summary of what has already been achieved to support poverty and the cost of living crisis through KWKW, and the following information in this section of the strategy has been provided by PAVS as taken from their complete KWKW project report.



The cost of living crisis continues to affect people from all walks of life, and has proven to be a worrying and uncertain time for so many of us. In direct response to the quickly changing and challenging circumstances local people had to navigate, work quickly took place to connect people to local information, support and services to help them throughout the coldest months of the year. Across Pembrokeshire we saw communities and organisations responding to the crisis offering a range of local solutions including Warm Welcome Community Spaces, hot meals, community activities, plus energy, money, and debt advice.

PAVS's Third Sector Health & Wellbeing Facilitator took a lead developing the programme and facilitating fortnightly steering group meetings, which brought together representatives from a wide range of partner organisations. The steering group reported to the Poverty Working Group led by Pembrokeshire County Council. The Steering Group decided to adopt a two-phase approach to the delivery of a coordinated package of information, advice, and practical support for people in Pembrokeshire experiencing financial hardship as a result of rising energy and living costs. This two-phase approach meant that we could assess where additionality was most needed and also where the biggest positive impact was being made via the funding awarded. The programme was kept under review by the Keep Warm, Keep Well Steering Group and adapted in light of service demand and available resources.

What was delivered:

	<p>Warm Welcome Community Spaces</p>	<p>107 Warm Welcome Community Spaces registered on the interactive map</p> <p>73 Warm Welcome Community Spaces provided with grant funding</p> <p>1455 Warm Welcome Community Space sessions were delivered.</p> <p>14,989 people benefited from Warm Welcome Community Spaces.</p> <p>581 volunteers were involved in the coordination and delivery of Warm Welcome Community Spaces.</p> <p>14,655 hours of volunteering were recorded.</p> <p>28 of the 73 funded warm spaces have made some level of commitment to continue the projects which were supported by this fund up to 31st March.</p>
	<p>Energy & Fuel</p>	<p>734 energy vouchers issued</p> <p>594 Warm Packs delivered</p> <p>260 air fryers distributed</p> <p>25 £250 DAF fuel top-ups for oil issued</p> <p>1 Fuel Poverty Champion recruited (volunteer)</p> <p>521 people provided with fuel poverty advice/support</p> <p>An estimated £12,000 in reduced bills or funding accessed for clients</p>
	<p>Money management</p>	<p>242 families and 74 individuals in crisis received holistic financial support</p> <p>9 families and 6 individuals assisted with Debt Relief Orders/bankruptcy fees</p> <p>40 older people supported with income maximization</p> <p>Additional income secured for older people Grants £1800 Welfare benefits £9464</p>
	<p>Food</p>	<p>12772 hot meals were provided in Warm Welcome Community Spaces.</p>
	<p>Pet food</p>	<p>337 pet food donations made</p> <p>282 individuals and families supported</p> <p>24,471 meals provided for pets</p>
	<p>Essential items</p>	<p>184 people supported by the PAVS Data Bank</p> <p>141 families supported by Baby Bank</p> <p>160 babies/children supported by Baby Bank</p> <p>355 items/clothing bundles distributed by Baby Bank</p>
	<p>Communication & information</p>	<p>2072 calls received by the Pembrokeshire Community Hub</p> <p>6259 views of the Keep Warm, Keep Well in Pembrokeshire webpage</p> <p>3063 views of the interactive Warm Welcome Community Spaces map</p> <p>140,692 leaflets delivered to households</p> <p>33 KWKW campaign posts/ads on social media received a total of 6188 interactions.</p> <p>7 Pembrokeshire Community Support Network (PCSN) meetings hosted by PAVS</p>

Warm Welcome Spaces



It was decided by the Keep Warm, Keep Well Steering Group that a substantial amount of the available funding would be allocated to the development of a network of Warm Welcome Community Spaces in Pembrokeshire. This decision was based on advice from national and local organisations, and Welsh Government, that people would be seeking shelter in 'warm rooms' around the country as the cost of living crisis means many would struggle to keep their homes at a healthy temperature through the winter. Warm Welcome Community Spaces offered a safe, accessible, and warm environment during the day, with a few in the evening, to help those facing extreme fuel poverty.

The Supporting Community Action Fund (SCAF) is a fund distribution mechanism developed and managed by Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services (PAVS) to enable a range of funding sources to be distributed to the sector in Pembrokeshire. Through SCAF PAVS has works in partnership with Pembrokeshire County Council, West Wales Care Partnership and Welsh Government to support groups to address local need.

Round 6 of SCAF offered funds of up to £3,500 to provide a warm welcome under the priorities:

- **Warm Rooms Running Costs Funds** for running costs to keep the spaces open and heated, providing additional opening hours to those already provided i.e., new, or additional opening hours.
- **Warm Room Activities Funds** for activities to happen in the centres, volunteer expenses, funding to buy games, films, refreshments etc

As a result of the funding awarded, the following has been achieved:

- 57 Warm Welcome Community Spaces were funded in SCAF Round 6.
- 16 community projects were also funded to develop warm spaces in SCAF Round 5 through the Living Well this Winter fund.
- 73 Warm Welcome Community Spaces in total were funded.
- 107 Warm Welcome Community Spaces registered with the Pembrokeshire Community Hub and were added to the interactive map developed by PAVS. These also included Local Authority run facilities, 11 Pembrokeshire Libraries and 7 Leisure Centres.
- 14,55 Warm Welcome Community Space sessions were delivered.
- 14,989 people benefited from Warm Welcome Community Spaces.
- 12,772 hot meals were provided in Warm Welcome Community Spaces.
- 581 volunteers were involved in the coordination and delivery of Warm Welcome Community Spaces.
- 14,655 hours of volunteering were recorded.
- 28 of the 73 funded warm spaces have made some level of commitment to continue the projects which were supported by this fund up to 31st March.

Additional Welsh Government funding was made available for recipients of the Local Authority administered Food Poverty Support Grant towards running costs, heating, and lighting. This encouraged several Warm Welcome Community Spaces to expand their offer from refreshments to hot meals. **12,772 hot meals were provided** at either no or very low cost across the Warm Welcome Community Spaces network during Winter 22-23, with many continuing to offer meals as a way to provide continuing support to those who need a meal as the cost of living crisis continues to have an impact.

A full project report is available, but we have extracted some valuable feedback that has been submitted from community members who engaged with the Warm Spaces. Throughout the development of this provision, as well as the drafting of this strategy, we have continued to be mindful that service user voice is a powerful tool that we should be utilising to help guide our planning to best meet the needs of those in our communities who most need our support.

“Amazing to get out of the house and have people to talk to. I am a single, disabled mum of three children and even though my youngest son comes with me I can relax and be me.”

“One stand out moment was our 94-year-old beneficiary who told us that we were a lifeline for her as many evenings she did not eat because she could not be bothered to make something for herself and often went to bed because there was nowhere to go and nothing to do. Us being open twice a week in the evenings gave her not only something to do & have some companionship but alleviate any fears she had about having to feed herself for a few days as she often took extra portions home with her for the next day.”

“It has made a difference to me this winter, everyone is so friendly.”

“A lot of younger people just wanted to escape cold homes and escalating poverty. They saw warm rooms as a potent symbol of the cost of living crisis in Wales.”

“Some of our elderly residents commented on an unforeseen benefit. The warm rooms challenged the social blight of loneliness! It was getting away from an empty house that many found most gratifying about our warm space.”

“A 97-year-old local resident came along for a few weeks with his daughter. He had recently lost his wife of 70 years and needed to be with other people and enjoy some social interaction in a warm space away from his own home. He stayed with us until the end of the sessions and now has become a regular attender of our OAP Monthly lunches.”

“Simple things can be a great help – during conversations at the warm rooms it was found that several people were having difficulty getting new bus passes, and Sharon from TTC was able to help them to do just that.”

“Two of the elderly participants that attended the meals frequently and were given lifts to do so had not been at a social gathering since before the pandemic, and they shared their joy at having a free hot meal and company for a day in the week.”



Keep Warm, Keep Well in Pembrokeshire

The cost of living affects everyone.
Support is available via Pembrokeshire Community Hub.

Call **01437 723660** or email
enquiries@pembrokeshirecommunityhub.org



Support available:

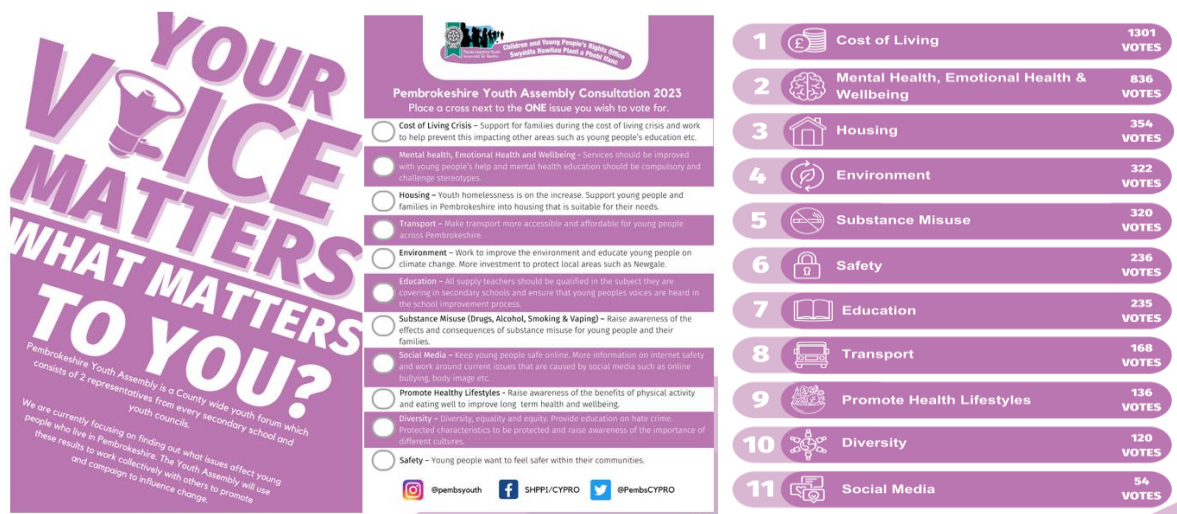
- Map of warm welcome spaces available via www.connectpembrokeshire.org.uk or call the Hub to find your nearest.
- Information on a wide range of cost-of-living support.
- Connecting you with local support and services who can help when finances are stretched.
- Access to mobile data to stay connected.

One call, that's all

We're recruiting community volunteers to ensure no-one goes cold or hungry this winter – if you have a spare hour or two, please call us.

It is difficult to capture the full extent of what has already been achieved in Pembrokeshire to support with the cost of living crisis, the proactive work taking place across our communities has been extensive. The strategy highlights the most prominent and large scale work that has taken place, but this has been complimented by a host of projects and initiatives generated by the Poverty Group membership, PSB and beyond. Many local groups and communities have come together to support each other in creative and sustainable ways, and there is potential that many of the strands of support developed out of necessity to help local people during extremely difficult times will leave a legacy of resilience and connectedness across the County.

Young Person’s Voice



The Children and Young People's Rights Office (CYPRO) in Pembrokeshire leads on delivery of Participation and Rights of Children and Young People for Pembrokeshire County Council. This work enables young people to have a say on decision making that affects them and promotes the voice of young people and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Every two years, Pembrokeshire Youth Assembly create and facilitate their 'What Matters to You?' Consultation. This consultation was created to find out what topics matter the most to young people in Pembrokeshire, and also identify what work needs to be done around this to ensure that we are addressing the barriers young people tell us are negatively affecting their present lives as well as their future plans. In terms of the priority issues young people highlighted as their biggest concerns, there were some really prominent themes that emerged this year with a clear consensus as to the dominant issue affecting local young people.

The number one concern shared by young people in Pembrokeshire was 'Cost of Living'- with 1301 votes.

There was almost a 500 vote gap between this and the next highest ranked concern, which was Emotional Health and Wellbeing with 836 votes.

In relation to the poverty strategy and informing our response, what these results tell us is that children and young people are clearly seeing and feeling the direct effects of poverty and hardship. They are recognising the impact that this is having on not only their day to day lives now, but also how this will affect their future opportunities and aspirations.



Section 6: Action Plan

**Tackling
Poverty:
Our
Strategy
2023**

Section 6: Action Plan

Since its inception, core members of Pembrokeshire's Poverty Strategy Steering Group have represented local services and organisations in ongoing discussions surrounding the impact on poverty on our local area and residents, in particular relating to children and families.

Group members have voiced their varied and collective experiences of supporting communities, both the challenges faced as well as successful practice that has generated positive impact and mitigated some of the negative effects of hardship and poverty generated by recent circumstances.

We now seek to capture our combined plans for the short term as well as longer term actions partners seek to commit to. Members of the Steering Group were invited to submit their offers of support, which have now been collated and outlined in the following action table as a declaration of our collective efforts and multiagency plan to help the people of Pembrokeshire thrive.

Our organising framework for our forward actions under this strategy is the four categories of prevention agreed between the Future Generations Commissioner and the Welsh Government:

- Primary prevention (PP): Building resilience – creating the conditions in which problems do not arise in the future. A universal approach.
- Secondary prevention (SP): Targeting action towards areas where there is a high risk of a problem occurring. A targeted approach, which cements the principles of progressive universalism.
- Tertiary prevention (TP): Intervening once there is a problem, to stop it getting worse and prevent it reoccurring in the future. An intervention approach.
- Acute spending (AS): Spending, which acts to manage the impact of a strongly negative situation but does little or nothing to prevent problems occurring in the future. A remedial approach.

Wherever possible, we will seek to work in the Primary and Secondary prevention domains, as these are the most sustainable approaches with the greatest potential for long-term impact. However, we are acutely conscious that the rising poverty rates in the County, and the impact of the ongoing cost of living crisis, demand an immediate response. In that sense, we make no apology for including actions that can be classed as Tertiary prevention, or even Acute spending.

Primary Prevention		
Action	Lead Partner	Timescale
The Raising the Achievement of Disadvantaged Youngsters (RADY) project will continue, as part of a long-term commitment to addressing the achievement gap between disadvantaged young people and their peers.	PCC Education	2023 onwards
Promote and facilitate the work of Family Engagement Officers (FEOs) in schools, with an emphasis on prioritising support towards the most economically disadvantaged.	PCC Education	2023 onwards
Free School Meals- The Universal Primary Free School Meals policy is part of the Co-operation Agreement between the Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru, which will see free school meals extended to all primary school learners over the next three years. From September 2022, schools in Pembrokeshire will roll out Free School Meals to children in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full time nursery • reception • and years 1 and 2 pupils in primary schools In Pembrokeshire, all Primary school pupils (full time nursery through to year 6) will receive free school meals from September 2023.	PCC	Sept 2023
Implement the actions in our 'Whole School Approach to Mental Health and Wellbeing' strategy, particularly those Trauma- informed interventions most likely to benefit disadvantaged children and young people.	PCC Education	2023 onwards
Reduce the inequalities which exist in the Health Education and Economic outcomes of children and families living in poverty, by providing access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care provision (including the delivery of the Foundation Phase in the nursery setting) • Utilise Reaching Wider monies to provide enhanced support for Young People Looked After (YPLA). • Support the work of multi-agency partners • Health and Well Being programme • Enrichment programme (to include leisure, super curricula and cultural activities) • More Able and Talented Programme (MAT) 	Pembrokeshire College	2023-25
Develop and implement a strategy to reduce health inequalities in the Health Board area.	HDHB	Currently ongoing
Continue the ambitious programme to improve the energy efficiency of council housing stock that will see a reduction in the energy bills for tenants. Aligned with this programme will be a tenant behavioural change	PCC Housing	Ongoing

programme to ensure that tenants are able to understand and utilise the new technology and improved thermal efficiency of housing stock to ensure fuel poverty is minimised.		
Maximise opportunities for affordable warmth solutions in private sector housing in support of WG target to achieve EPC A for those in fuel poverty by 2030 and all housing tenures by 2050.	PCC Housing	2023-26
Develop a Decarbonisation Plan for our council housing stock, in order to work towards WG Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) A targets by 2033, and in the implementation of Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) 2023 targets. Aligned with this programme will be a tenant behavioural change programme to ensure that tenants are able to understand and utilise the new technology and improved thermal efficiency of housing stock to ensure fuel poverty is minimised.	PCC Housing	2023 Ongoing
Complete development of a Housing Strategy for Pembrokeshire, involving key partners and to provide the framework for targeting resources available from council tax premium, commuted sums, Social Housing Grant programme, low cost home ownership (LCHO) /rent options. This will be agreed by Cabinet in 2023, and be supported by the development of a multi-agency Strategic Housing Partnership.	PCC Housing	2023 Ongoing
An outdoor clothing recycling scheme has been set up, designed to pass on used and/or unwanted good quality outdoor gear to assist local residents to keep warm and active year round. This supports equitable access to good quality equipment for those who would otherwise not be able to afford the clothing needed to engage in the outdoors in all weathers.	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	Ongoing
Commitment to the Real Living Wage; by paying our staff a supplement to ensure that everyone is paid the Real Living Wage and adapting our HR policies to support more flexible ways of working that afford staff a better work-life balance	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	Ongoing
PCNPA runs a 1st 1,000 days project which delivers a programme of outdoor play based opportunities in the Pembroke Dock/Pembroke area. The 1st 1,000 days project was set-up in response to the Welsh Parliament's 1,000 Days consultation, which described the first 3 years of a child's life as "a time of tremendous potential and enormous vulnerability".	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	Ongoing
Roots to Recovery is a people-led project focussed on nurturing the restorative powers of Pembrokeshire's amazing outdoors as a means of boosting mental well-being. The project is delivered by PCNPA in partnership with Mind Pembrokeshire and is supported through the National Lottery Community Fund until September 2024.	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	Ongoing
The PCNPA Pathways Volunteering Project, helps people aged 16 and above to improve their health and wellbeing as they gain new experiences and skills through practical activity outdoors. The project activity also supports the development of skills and knowledge for education and employment. Target groups for the project include young people and those who have mental health issues.	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	Ongoing
Providing a wide range of volunteering opportunities as a means of supporting local residents to gain skills and confidence, in turn, improving their employability whilst creating a network of friendship and support.	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	Ongoing

Secondary Prevention		
Action	Lead Partner	Timescale
<p>The 'People PWR' project, in partnership with Citizen's Advice Pembrokeshire, will provide welfare rights and financial advice and support to families across the County, focusing on delivering through schools and other community settings.</p> <p>This project, which was developed in partnership with PCC, has been commissioned to focus on income maximisation for local families in an effort help to tackle poverty and the many associated effects of hardship.</p> <p>Citizens Advice Pembrokeshire has worked with families for many years, and as part of this new project we continue to offer specialist support with things such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free, impartial and confidential advice. • Check parents and carers are claiming their full benefit entitlement- including support with completing claim forms where needed. • Propose ways that households can maximise their income. <p>The purpose of People PWR is to widen access to Citizens Advice and to raise our profile in the local community, hopefully making it easier for families to get the help they need. The aim is to create greater financial stability for households, address inequalities and improve financial capability.</p>	<p>Citizen's Advice Pembrokeshire & PCC Education</p>	<p>2023-25</p>
<p>The Council has partnered with CAB to provide a free, tailored and confidential advice, debt and income maximisation service within Pembrokeshire. Citizens Advice Pembrokeshire are committed to tackling local poverty by providing a frontline advice service which looks holistically at clients' individual situations.</p> <p>We aim to help our clients resolve financial hardship by firstly addressing any emergency debt concerns, through our specialist debt advisers, to prevent further hardship and anxiety. We then look to maximise their income through benefit checks and budgeting support. The benefit system can be difficult to navigate for many of our clients so having access to resources like 'Better off' calculations to check how any employment opportunities or family-based decisions could affect their income is imperative to their financial resilience.</p> <p>We also offer a referral pathway to free legal advice for clients dealing with relationship breakdowns or family law issues as these situations can often quickly and drastically impact a household's typical income.</p>	<p>Citizen's Advice Pembrokeshire & PCC Regeneration</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Support Milford Haven secondary school in its efforts to achieve 'Trauma Informed School' status.</p>	<p>PCC Education</p>	<p>2023 onwards</p>

The Peer Tutoring project (focusing on achievement of disadvantaged children and young people) will continue to expand, with increasing numbers of tutors and tutees in primary schools.	PCC Education	2023-25
<p>A portion of SPF funding is being utilised to expand the FaCE (Family and Community Engagement) programme more widely across the LA, as this was a hugely successful pilot recognised as good practice by WG. We aim to have delivered at least one round of FaCE in all Pembrokeshire schools, both primary and secondary, by the end of March 2025.</p> <p>The focus of FaCE is to provide a structured programme of numeracy based learning opportunities and enrichment activities to support schools in targeting disengaged families. FaCE aims to build mutually respectful and supportive working relationships that positively impact on the home-school dynamic and interactions; to improve the life prospects of the families, their children, the learners and subsequent learner outcomes.</p>	PCC Education	2023-April 2025
Support families to reduce worklessness through tutorial provision and the College employment bureau.	Pembrokeshire College	2023 onwards
<p>Increase household income as a key component of tackling poverty by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing access to information and support from learner financial support including EMA, WLG and FCF • Undertaking a survey during induction to inform the College of learners' and Staff's access to technologies and broadband access • Introduce a support scheme for work-based learners who are ineligible for FCF support • Provide free college meals (FCM) to replace free school meals (FSM) • Provide financial literacy courses, access/ referral to debt counselling services, and assistance with childcare costs • Establish a college credit union • Integrating courses to support the development of financial literacy within the tutorial offer. 	Pembrokeshire College	2023 onwards
Expanding the housing support team from 3 to 6 staff to enable us to provide more support to PCC tenants.	PCC Housing	2023
Continue with the implementation of the Private Rented Sector (PRS) Leasing scheme in the county as part of the national WG rollout – increase in PRS lettings, more empty homes brought back into use.	PCC Housing	2023 onwards
Access for All is a series of initiatives designed to improve access to the National Park for residents and visitors with mobility issues. This includes hugely successful projects such as the Authority's Beach Wheelchair scheme.	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	Ongoing

<p>Free access to the Authority's visitor sites (Oriel y Parc, Castell Henllys and Carew Castle) for residents that live close by. As well as reduced admission prices to the above sites for 65+ and students plus free entry for wheelchair users and carers.</p>	<p>Pembrokeshire Coast National Park</p>	<p>2023-ongoing</p>
<p>Period Dignity Grant- PCC have been able to implement and grow a hugely successful period product subscription service, this is targeted support and has been instrumental in positively engaging with some of our most disadvantaged residents as well as minority groups. We have now funded 400 monthly free period product subscriptions are being issued, offering delivery of free sanitary items direct to the home in an effort support local people experiencing period poverty. This system allows equitable access to support regardless of their location in the County.</p>	<p>PCC</p>	<p>Ongoing for the duration of the grant funding.</p>

Tertiary Prevention																						
Action	Lead Partner	Timescale																				
<p>The People and Skills Anchor project funded by SPF is a collaborative Council response to key themes in the Regional Investment Plan; bringing together the Council’s internal employment and skills services, youth outreach service, year 11 transition support and adult and community learning from the Council’s Social Care, Education and Community Services directorates.</p> <p>Some of the outcomes that we hope to achieve as a result of this work are as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of people reporting increased employability through development of interpersonal skills funded by UKSPF</td> <td>70</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of people sustaining engagement with keyworker support and additional services</td> <td>55</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of people engaged in job-searching following support</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support</td> <td>125</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of people experiencing reduced structural barriers into employment and into skills provision</td> <td>150</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of people familiarised with employers’ expectations, including, standards of behaviour in the workplace</td> <td>70</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of people gaining a qualification or completing a course following support</td> <td>114</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Increased number of people engaged in life skills support following interventions (% increase)</td> <td>235</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Multiply only - Number of adults participating in maths qualifications and courses up to, and including, Level 2</td> <td>540</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Number of people reporting increased employability through development of interpersonal skills funded by UKSPF	70	Number of people sustaining engagement with keyworker support and additional services	55	Number of people engaged in job-searching following support	80	Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support	125	Number of people experiencing reduced structural barriers into employment and into skills provision	150	Number of people familiarised with employers’ expectations, including, standards of behaviour in the workplace	70	Number of people gaining a qualification or completing a course following support	114	Increased number of people engaged in life skills support following interventions (% increase)	235	Multiply only - Number of adults participating in maths qualifications and courses up to, and including, Level 2	540	PCC – Learning Pembrokeshire, Education and Pembrokeshire Youth	Present to March 31 st 2025
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<p>Futureworks, via SPF funding, will support families to reduce worklessness through employability and skills programmes for people aged 14+ who are most disadvantaged in our communities. (Communities for Work+, Jobs Growth Wales+, Restart, Skills Futures, Skills for Success, PEPs, School Work Experience), programmes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial literacy, budgeting and income maximisation support • Wellbeing programme • Assistance with barriers, training, digital literacy and childcare costs • Learning allowance, travel and daily food allowance for young people aged 16-18 years. • Support the work of multi-agency partners 	Futureworks	Ongoing till March 31 st 2025																				
<p>The Community Youth Team operates a school holiday programme using any available grant funding. Where possible children have access to free food, this was achieved over the winter with ‘Fit and Fed’</p>	Pembrokeshire Youth	Ongoing																				

<p>money. The holiday programme is in principle a 'universal open access provision' as is our youth clubs. However in advance of the programme being generally available, we send out information to social workers and other stakeholders so that those working with vulnerable children can have support to access the provision.</p>		
<p>The Youth Support Team work with young people age 16-25 to deliver Floating Support to young tenants in order for them to maintain their tenancy. The team is also commissioned to operate supported accommodation. The objective of these projects is to develop a pathway towards independent living and prevent tenancy breakdown and homelessness.</p>	Pembrokeshire Youth	Ongoing
<p>We continue to use Edge of Care revenue monies to support families with children with basic necessities, as a means to try and divert them away from needing statutory intervention. This includes provision of food vouchers, travel warrants, purchase of white goods, settling of rent debts, new carpets, clothing for children etc. (a bid for an uplift to WG for this pot was successful and will be provided for 23/24 & 24/25).</p>	PCC Children's Service	2023-2025 confirmed funding
<p>We will continue to maintain our increased foster carer allowance rates, contrary to the approach of the other 21 LAs in Wales. This is in recognition of the fact that foster carers might easily fall into poverty as a result of their limited earning capacity due to caring responsibilities. This included a back dated payment in a lump sum to all eligible carers.</p>	PCC Children's Services	2023-ongoing
<p>We will continue our partnership with the Fuel Bank Foundation to be able to help our tenants with gas & electricity vouchers and to also help with the cost of oil and LPG gas. This compliments existing work, such as supported applications for Cost of Living and Winter Fuel payments, as well as the proactive use of the Discretionary Assistance Fund to help tenants in emergency situations and to help with essential items.</p>	PCC Housing	Ongoing
<p>Implement the Rapid Rehousing Plan with the aim of addressing the escalating pressures on temporary accommodation in the county – additional 1 bed accommodation, implementation of the 'Housing First' model.</p>	PCC Housing	Ongoing
<p>PCC's business support function will continue to proactively support and encourage supply chain engagement with local businesses and large scale contracts/projects meaning economic benefits are filtered through the county.</p> <p>The support provided to people and skills encourages employability, upskilling and cross skills matching, securing resources within local economy and the creation of well-paid employment to the residents. This activity opens up new markets and revenue streams for businesses and also allows for growth potential. Safeguarding positions as well as creation of new role in the work force of the county.</p>	PCC Regeneration	Ongoing
<p>The Celtic Freeport in Milford Haven and Port Talbot. The freeport will be based around the port of Port Talbot in Neath Port Talbot, and the port of Milford Haven in Pembrokeshire. The plans focus on low carbon</p>	PCC Regeneration	Ongoing

<p>technologies, such as floating offshore wind (FLOW), hydrogen, carbon capture, utilisation, and storage (CCUS) and biofuels to support the accelerated reduction of carbon emissions. The freeport aims to attract significant inward investment, including £3.5 billion in the hydrogen industry as well as the creation of 16,000 jobs, generating £900 million in Gross Value Added (GVA) by 2030, and £13 billion by 2050.</p>		
<p>Pembrokeshire Food Park is a ground breaking 23 acre Food Park at Withybush Business Park providing exciting growth opportunities for a wide range of food and drink producers to showcase the best of Pembrokeshire produce, divided into 3 distinct areas and is within the Haven Waterways Enterprise Zone. It will provide development and employment opportunities for start-up incubators to get people off their kitchen table, supporting their initial development as a business and helping them move to the first stages of unscaled production.</p>	<p>PCC Regeneration</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>The Enhancing Pembrokeshire Grant, uses funds raised via the Second Homes Tax to support projects that help address the negative impact of second homes; in doing so adds value to our communities. Outcomes are structured around five well-being objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising overall standards of achievement • Healthy communities: Communities supported by affordable and appropriate housing; improving social care • Increase the economy's productivity and address regeneration issues • Safeguarding our environment • Self-sustained and vibrant communities 	<p>PCC Regeneration</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Acute Spending		
Action	Lead Partner	Timescale
We will continue the PDG Access Plus scheme, renaming it the Education Support Grant. It will support families and young people in severe hardship with education-related costs with an annual budget of £28,000.	PCC Education	2023 ongoing
Identify families/ learners who are in crisis and provide immediate support e.g., Food parcels	Pembrokeshire College	2023 ongoing
<p>We will make available £100k of funding, via the Welsh Church Act Fund, which will support an additional 5 local school settings in Pembrokeshire to implement Big Bocs Bwyd, or other similar initiatives, in targeted catchment areas where hardship is prevalent.</p> <p>Big Bocs Bwyd is an initiative that aims to ensure that no child is hungry, and that every child is able to learn how to make good food choices that enable them to thrive. Within this project children and families are provided with food at 'pay what you can' prices, supported with authentic learning experiences through growing and cooking food.</p> <p>The installation of Big Bocs Bwyd in a school setting is explicitly linked to the 4 purposes of the Curriculum for Wales, ensuring that children are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Healthy, confident individuals •Ambitious, capable learners •Ethical, informed citizens •Enterprising, creative contributors 	PCC Education	2023 ongoing
Reduced/cleared tenant rent arrears by accessing PCC prevention grants totalling £20,000 and further funding via DHP's.	PCC Housing	2023

In terms of how we will hold ourselves to account and monitor progress of the targets we have set, consideration is being given to a data dashboard similar to what colleagues in Ceredigion have developed. There is a possibility that this piece of work could be commissioned, however at present we do not have the all information required to make a decision as to whether the group would decide to progress this idea.

An annual Pembrokeshire Tackling Poverty Conference will commence in 2023 ensuring that we continue to shine a light on poverty in all of its forms and celebrate progress made, as well as provide large scale updates on any additional developments and lessons learnt throughout our ongoing journey. It is intended that Pembrokeshire College will host our initial conference in coming months.

The Poverty Group has generated successful and productive working relationships that focus on the poverty agenda and so we will continue to meet to ensure that colleagues are able to support each other to meet the actions we have collectively set, with regular feedback to Pembrokeshire PSB (specifically around the measureable outcomes reached). We will reduce the frequency of meetings to quarterly, allowing time in-between discussion and reflection for action and change to be generated.

Most importantly, we intend to continue to engage with local people with lived experience of poverty, ensuring that their voices are heard throughout the process of planning and decision making. Thanks to the strong community connections that were highlighted during the work commissioned by PAVS, many local people already have an awareness of this strategy and have expressed an interest in continuing their working relationship with the professional parties involved to make sure that the support we offer is suitable and dignified for people to access the help they need.

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- i <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn07096/>
- ii <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tespm010/default/table?lang=en>
- iii <https://www.jrf.org.uk/data/uk-poverty-rates-region>
- iv <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-child-payment-estimating-the-effect-on-child-poverty/>
- v <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/regionalabourmarket/february2023>
- vi <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/how-has-the-pandemic-affected-industries-and-labour-in-the-uk/>
- vii <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2023>
- viii <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9428/>
- ix <https://www.lse.ac.uk/News/Latest-news-from-LSE/2022/1-December-22/By-the-end-of-2021-Brexit-had-already-cost-UK-households-a-total-of-5.8-billion-in-higher-food-bills-%E2%80%93-new-LSE-research>
- x <https://www.bevanfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Wales-Housing-Crisis-Making-the-LHA-work-for-Wales-report-1.pdf>
- xi <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/dec/14/dwp-debt-collector-energy-crisis-universal-credit-fuel-payments-gordon-brown>
- xii: <https://www.wcpp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/WCPP-Poverty-and-social-exclusion-in-Wales-September-2022-English-final-updated.pdf>
- xiii <https://www.jrf.org.uk/data/uk-child-poverty-rates-local-authority>
- xiv <https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/child-poverty/>
- xv <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Workless-Households/childrenlivinginworklesshouseholds-by-area-variable-householdstatus>
- xvi <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Welsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation/Archive/WIMD-Indicator-Data-By-Age/noqualifications-by-localauthority>
- xvii <https://www.audit.wales/our-work/data-tools> and <https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiNDg4Y2M3NjctYWUyMS00NTQ2LWJhNmUtZmVjMmZhOGU2YjUyYywiwidCI6ImRmZDY5MmYwLWTE2YmYtNDQ0OS04OGUzLWU3NzM1ZGZjY2ZiOClsmMiOjh9&pageName=ReportSection0d8d49278965a2510172>