

Anti-Poverty Annual Report

2021

Contents

Foreword	Page 2
Key Priorities	Page 3
Key Issues	Page 4
Vulnerable Groups	Page 5
Case Study 1 – Healthy Holidays (Mixenden Summer Camp)	Page 7
Case Study 2 – Fuel Poverty (Citizens Advice Calderdale)	Page 8
Case Study 3– Early Intervention and Signposting (Calderdale Council)	Page 9
Case Study 4 – Tackling Unemployment (Halifax Opportunities Trust)	Page 10
Case Study 5 – Debt - Ben's Story (Noah's Ark Centre)	Page 11
Case Study 6 – Mental Health (Halifax Opportunities Trust)	Page 13
Conclusion	Page 14
Acknowledgements	Page 15

Foreword

Calderdale is a great place to live in many ways, and we have all seen how much our local communities have pulled together during the pandemic to try to show kindness and consideration to each other.

But as a glance at the statistics about poverty to be found on our Calderdale Anti-Poverty dashboard will show, for many people making ends meet can often be a real struggle. 14,000 people in Calderdale are paid less than the real living wage. A quarter of our children live in households that experience poverty on a daily basis. 14% of people over 60 are living in poverty here in Calderdale, whilst one in six households find it hard to pay their fuel bills. With electricity and gas bills set to rise dramatically, and with the cost of food and other essentials going up a great deal as well, this is a worrying time for many people already living on a tight budget.

This report recognises the real challenges that we face in trying to tackle the many problems caused by poverty in our communities - but it also gives examples of some of the really great work being undertaken by local partners. It is making a real difference to so many people's lives.



Councillor Jenny Lynn

Cabinet Member

Public Services & Communities



Councillor Scott Patient

Cabinet Member

Climate Change & Resilience /

Voluntary Sector & Housing

Key Priorities

The Anti-Poverty Action Plan has three key priorities:

Key Priority	Outcome
(1) Prevention	Preventing local residents from falling into poverty
(2) Intervention	Providing support to local residents who have fallen into poverty
(3) Resilience	Keeping residents out of poverty

The Anti-Poverty Steering Group co-ordinates this work and meets every 6-8 weeks. The group is made up of a wide range of statutory and voluntary sector partners and meetings are chaired by Calderdale Council. The group's work is complex and feeds into other priorities and plans.

There is a significant amount of activity by partners which can be viewed in more detail in the action plan on the anti-poverty webpages. Our collective activities are wide ranging and span across housing, welfare and debt advice, education, employment and training, food poverty, fuel poverty, health and wellbeing and early intervention and signposting.

During the first part of 2020 there was a detailed review of the action plan. It remains a live document so that it can respond to changes at national, regional, local and neighbourhood levels. Due to COVID-19, flexibility in the work around poverty is even more important so it continues to be responsive to existing needs and any significant emerging needs of the borough's most vulnerable households and families.

This year the group has developed a core set of indicator data into a single framework. The framework will be used to develop a narrative (a story behind the data) to assess progress and inform future priorities and planning.

This report highlights six case studies, provided as a short summary with a supporting film (all films can be viewed on the Council's [YouTube channel](#)).

To find out more visit the [Anti-Poverty webpages](#) and the [Anti-Poverty dashboard](#).

Key Issues

Deprivation

- Calderdale is ranked 66th most deprived local authority out of 317 in England
- 10 areas in the Borough are within the 10% most deprived in the country.

Children

- 12,484 (24.7%) children in Calderdale live in poverty
- The majority of children at risk of poverty are part of working families (between 52% and 77% across wards)

Jobs

- Calderdale job density was 0.83 per resident in 2019 compared with 0.81 for the Yorkshire and the Humber region
- Average wage per hour of people who work in Calderdale is £13.48 compared with £13.80 for the Yorkshire & Humber region

Fuel Poverty

- 16.7% of households in Calderdale are "fuel-poor" compared with 13.0% in England

Debt

- There were 683 individual insolvencies in Calderdale in 2019, compared with 587 in 2018

Housing

- There are 8,201 housing benefit claimants in Calderdale. Town, Ovenden, Park and Illingworth and Mixenden wards are the highest with 600 or more claimants.

Food Poverty

- 8,033 pupils are eligible for free school meals in Calderdale (2021), which represents 21.8% of all school aged children.
- In June 2020, 4,687 food parcels were issued across Calderdale compared to 2,054 in June 2021.

Digital poverty

- Yorkshire and the Humber 30% still very low digital engagement (28% England)
- Lockdown has created a digital jump forward – based on 2020 data we are now at 2025 levels of UK digital engagement
- 61% of the 36 Energy Redress clients were digitally excluded due to lack of access to technology or skills (CAB - June-Aug 21)

Unemployment

- 7,370 (5.7%) working age people claiming benefits are seeking work
- Calderdale's total claimant count was 7,370 in August 2021 compared to 4,725 in March 2020. This represents an increase of 56% since March 2020
- 190 young people aged 16 and 17 are not in education, employment or training (2021)

Education

- The percentage of young children achieving a good level of development in their first year of school was 70.5% in 2019.
- The attainment gap in achievement at Level 2 at age 19 between young people previously eligible for free school meals and those not eligible was 27.7 in 2020

Crime

- There were 52 first time entrants to the criminal justice system in 2019
- There were 2,925 domestic violence crimes (Sep 2020 to Aug 2021)

Vulnerable groups

Working families and households

- 63% of people in poverty live in a family where someone works at least part time
- In 2019 83.6% of households had at least one person in work compared with 85% in 2018
- Average income in the borough is £24,000

Older People

- 4741 older people claimed Pension Credit in February 2021

Unemployed

- Unemployment in March 2021 was 3.1% for males and 3.9% for females.
- The proportion of people claiming work related benefits increased from 3.6% in March 2020 to 7.0% in March 2021, then reduced to 5.7% in August 2021.

Economically inactive

- The proportion of males who were economically inactive and wanted a job increased from 11.0% in March 2020 to 18.3% in March 2021.
- The proportion of females who were economically inactive and wanted a job increased from 13.9% in March 2020 to 19.1% in March 2021.

People with a disability

- 13299 adults in Calderdale claimed disability benefits February 2021
- Employment rates for disabled people were 51.9% in March 2021 compared to 53.9% in March 2020

People with mental health conditions

- 2948 adults claiming Employment and Support Allowance have mental and behavioural disorders

Homeless people

- In 2020/21 Calderdale Council completed 816 assessments for homelessness. Of these 811 were assessed as eligible for support in terms of prevention (522) or relief from homelessness (289)

Young carers

- In 2020 66% of care leavers aged 19 to 21 were in education, employment or training

Ethnic minorities, refugees and asylum seekers

- People from black and minority backgrounds are more likely to live in deprived areas, employed in low-paid jobs where they cannot work from home.

Children

- 44% of children living in lone-parent families in the UK are in poverty
- Children in large families and children from black and minority ethnic groups are more likely to be in poverty.

Case Studies

The six case studies below show a range of partnership activities and highlight some of the work that has been undertaken in the last 12 months.



This year short film clips have been produced to help communicate the work in a visual format and to show the lived experiences of a range of people who live or work in Calderdale.

Case Study 1

Healthy Holidays (Mixenden Summer Camp: North Halifax Partnership, Positive Impact sports, Ash Green Primary School and Mixenden Addy)

Improving the health and wellbeing of children living in poverty



Children and young people from low-income families have been able to enjoy a range of activities and healthy food options over the summer holidays due to the Holiday Activity and Food Programme, known locally as Healthy Holidays. The programme has provided more than 15,000 available sessions from 28 providers, delivering across 43 different venues across Calderdale. Face-to-face provision included a range of energetic physical activities, nutritious food, and exciting new experiences for children to engage with. Overall total number of attendees was 6254, representing 78% of our children eligible for free school meals in Calderdale.

This case study provides an insight into one of the Healthy Holidays projects. A new partnership was formed between the four organisations to provide a fun action-packed programme of activities for children in receipt of free school meals. Each partner brought their expertise to the project:

- North Halifax Partnership led on the grant application process, managed bookings and provided volunteers.
- Ash Green Primary School advertised the programme to families and provided the facilities.
- Positive Impact Sports provided experienced staff and delivered the sports and arts and crafts activities. Activities also promoted team building and social skills as well as healthy eating.
- The Addy provided nutritious breakfasts and hot lunches.

Parents were also offered workshops on debt (provided by Noah's Ark) as well as nutrition (provided by Positive Impact Sports).



For more information about Healthy Holidays visit www.calderdale.gov.uk/healthyholidays.

To watch this case study, click the film icon below:



Case Study 2

Fuel Poverty (Citizens Advice Calderdale)

Working in partnership to tackle fuel poverty

Energy Redress, known locally as Keeping Calderdale Cosy, provides affordable warmth solutions for local residents. The project can help in the following ways:

- Switching energy providers
- Managing energy debts
- Income - maximisation
- Energy saving tips
- Applying for additional energy services
- Funding applications for energy saving home improvements
- Understanding your bill
- Assisting with energy complaints



Citizens Advice helped a Calderdale resident on Universal Credit to reduce his energy bills. Although energy bills were relatively low, he was spending more on traveling to and using a laundrette. It became apparent that the resident was struggling for food and social contact as he was disabled and isolated, so was put in touch with Calder Community Cares. The resident's finances have increased and his mental health has improved as a result of this project.



To watch this case study, click the film icon below:



Case Study 3

Early Intervention and Signposting (Vulnerable Customer Support Team, Calderdale Council)

Ensuring vulnerable people get the help they need through effective signposting



The Vulnerable Customer Support Team is a small team made up of expert advisors specially trained in trauma. This training enables them to support vulnerable residents promoting trust, safety, choice and resilience. The team has an excellent knowledge of services and signpost and refer residents on to relevant services so they can get the help and support they need. Here we learn about a resident who was struggling to afford to buy food and had no cooking facilities. Having recently fled domestic abuse, the resident had no internet access to complete forms online and although she was receiving emotional support from a women's welfare association where she had lived previously, was struggling to adjust to a new area with no friends or family which led to her feeling isolated. The team made a number of referrals and completed an application for Community Living and Council Tax reduction.

To watch this case study, click the film icon below:



Case Study 4

Tackling unemployment (Halifax Opportunities Trust, Job Centre Plus, Local employer Pennine Pneumatic Services)

Helping young people on Universal Credit into employment



The Employment Services Team at Halifax Opportunities Trust provide a gateway to the Kickstart scheme for local employers. Pennine Pneumatic Services (PPS) are an award-winning compressed air specialist. As a conscientious employer, they are committed to promoting sustainable employment.

The Kickstart Scheme provides funding to create new jobs for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit who are at risk of long term unemployment.

Facilitated by the Trust, Sam was introduced to PPS after being referred by his local Job Centre and after a successful interview was offered his very first job opportunity. Although the role is for an initial 6 months it could lead to a long-term career with the company.

An important part of the scheme is to provide employability support for Sam to enable him to be successful in his new job – this support will be provided by the Employment Services team at the Trust in partnership with PPS colleagues.

Yvonne Gianoncelli, Senior Administrator at PPS says:

“We at PPS are totally committed to developing young people, which is one of the reasons why we have applied for the kickstart scheme. Our team of professionals are always ready and willing to share knowledge and develop young people into the professionals of our future.”

Gateway providers for the Kickstart scheme in Calderdale are Halifax Opportunities Trust, Calderdale College and the Mid Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce.

To hear more about Kickstart and other employment support schemes, click the film icon below:



Case Study 5

Debt - Ben's Story (Noah's Ark Centre)

Helping Calderdale residents deal with debt problems

Supporting Calderdale residents out of debt is a key delivery aim of the anti-poverty action plan. Here we learn about Ben's journey. In 2017 Ben suffered a blood clot in his right leg which resulted in his leg being amputated above the knee. Prior to this he had been working full time, earning in excess of £50,000 per year but overnight he lost this and found himself having to claim Universal Credit. A month before the blood clot he'd just moved into a new home (£900 p/m rent) and now found himself with not enough money each month to pay his outgoings. Despite the loss of his leg, he was declared fit to work which meant his income from Universal Credit was even less. Ben fell into arrears with his rent and other priority bills, and he found himself falling further in to debt as he struggled to manage his money. Over the next few years Ben and his wife accrued almost £55,000 of personal debt as they struggled to survive financially. Ben lost confidence, couldn't cope and turned to alcohol and other substances as a crutch. His mental health was very poor, a combination of the loss of his leg and the stress being in so much debt placed on him. This all had a huge impact on his life and that of his wife and family. With the help, advice and support of Noah's Ark, Ben was able to consider a range of options to manage his debt. After opting for bankruptcy, Ben is able to manage his money. As a result of a stable financial position, his sleep and quality of life has improved, and he has felt able to develop his work with helping fellow amputees.

To watch this case study, click the film icon below:



The 'graduates' of the Noah's Ark course 'Budget like a boss!!!!'

The Money Advice Service clients are asked about their wellbeing before and after they receive help and support. 2020 client data shows improvements in all of the following areas of emotional wellbeing (in order of highest impact):

One year on clients reported the following improvements:

- I haven't felt like talking to anyone
- My problems have felt too much for me & I've felt unhappy
- I've felt able to cope when things go wrong & My thoughts and feelings distressed me
- There's been someone I felt able to ask for help
- It's been hard to go to sleep or stay asleep
- I've done all the things I wanted to
- I've felt edgy or nervous

Source: Noah's Ark Centre (Money Advice Service)

Case Study 6

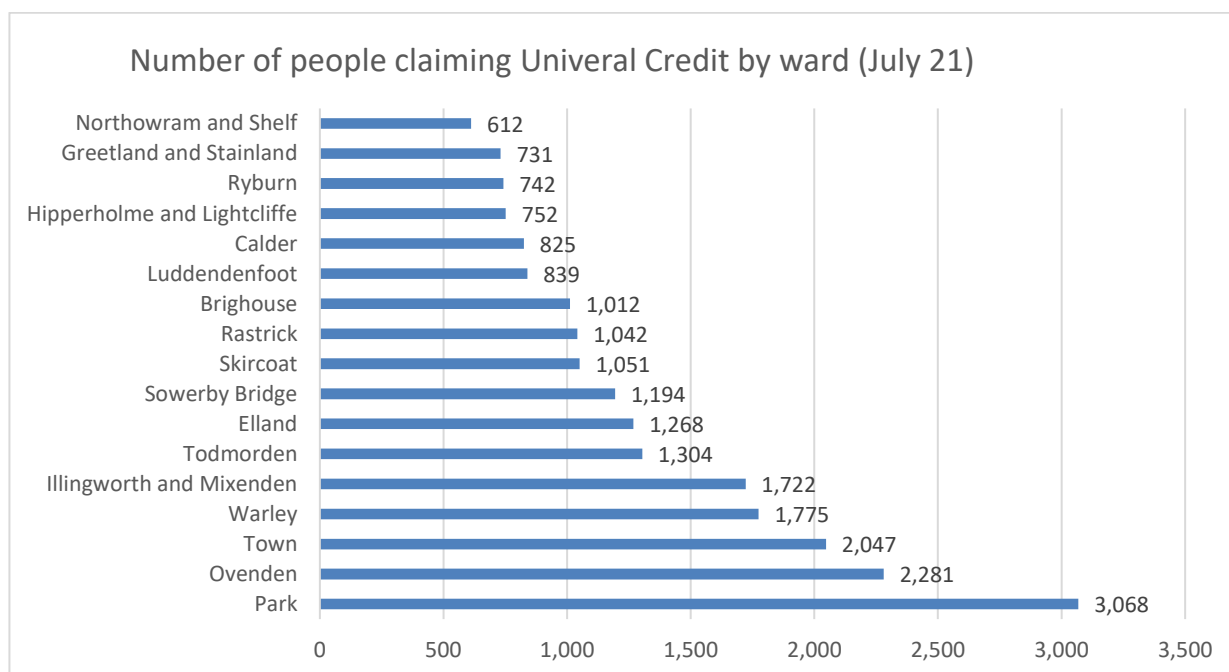
Mental Health (Halifax Opportunities Trust)

Providing mental health support to people and families living in low-income households

Living in poverty can cause mental ill health and providing opportunities to improve wellbeing is an important part of supporting Calderdale residents. The volunteers who help maintain the Outback Community Garden at Halifax Opportunities Trust do so to keep themselves well, either after experiencing mental ill health in some form or to prevent isolation.



The Outback is located in Park ward, which is the most deprived ward in Calderdale. The graph below shows that this ward has the highest number of households on low incomes in Calderdale.



To watch this case study, click the film icon below:



Conclusion

Throughout the pandemic, local communities have continued to show determination in helping people in need. Local services have responded flexibly to the changing needs brought by the pandemic. The impact on poverty will be far reaching in the years ahead.

The Anti-Poverty Steering Group continues to meet virtually. A large partnership event took place in February 2021 to explore the impact of Covid-19 on poverty and inequalities in Calderdale. A [film](#) was made and shown at the event. Over 80 people attended, and the workshop feedback was used to revise the Anti-Poverty Action Plan.

Over the coming year we will continue to strengthen our partnership actions. Our next partnership event in the autumn will focus on supporting children to get the best start in life.

It has not been possible to reflect the full breadth of formal and informal help that takes place every day in our local communities, but examples of this can be easily discovered on social media. The case studies are intended to provide some interesting snapshots of what's been going on.

The year ahead will be hard for many Calderdale residents. The removal of the £20 a week Universal Credit uplift and the increase in energy prices will affect many low-income households and the partnership will continue to look for ways to deal with such challenges.

Acknowledgements

A wide range of organisations and individuals have contributed to the action plan, films and annual reporting.

Special thanks go to staff working in the following Council teams:

Customer First / Customer Services
Public Health
Policy & Voluntary Sector Support
Business & Skills
Housing
Business Intelligence
Education & Inclusion
Communications

Special thanks go to our partners, including:

Halifax Opportunities Trust
North Halifax Partnership
Citizen's Advice Calderdale
Noah's Ark Centre
St Augustine's Centre
VSI Alliance
Voluntary Action Calderdale
DWP/Job Centre Plus
Positive Impact sports
Ash Green Primary School
Mixenden Addy (Community Support Services)

This report highlights six case studies. There are many other organisations, groups, individuals and volunteers in Calderdale that are contributing towards our key anti-poverty priorities. Further details about these can be found in our Anti-Poverty Action Plan.