A UK WITHOUT POVERTY
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Thanks to ATD Fourth World for the use of photos and stories from ‘The Roles We Play: Recognising the Contribution of People in Poverty’, which explores the roles played by those living in poverty within their families, communities and society at large, and aims to challenge the negative attitudes often held towards vulnerable and excluded families in the UK. ATD Fourth World is a human rights-based, anti-poverty organisation. Photos by Eva Sajovic. [atd-uk.org #rolesweplay](http://atd-uk.org/#rolesweplay)
FOREWORD
BY JULIA UNWIN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE,
JOSEPH ROWNTREE
FOUNDATION AND
HOUSING TRUST
SEPTEMBER 2014

Poverty is a cost the UK cannot afford. It wastes people’s potential and drains public finances, hampering economic growth. If we don’t act it is likely to increase.

A seismic shift needs to happen: we need to move from treating the symptoms of poverty to tackling its fundamental causes. This shift needs to happen now and requires political consensus, commitment and ambition to take on this huge challenge in the UK today.

We need all political parties to place poverty reduction at the heart of their manifestos. But this is not just the responsibility of Government: individuals, business, markets, civil society and communities all have a role to play.

Here, we set out the case for tackling poverty and outline policy options available to governments. We will be refining these further over the coming months and will publish the UK’s first costed, evidence-based anti-poverty strategy for all ages at the end of 2015, with specific recommendations for Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland in 2016.

Poverty is real but it is not inevitable. We can – and must – do something about it.

JULIA UNWIN

2
• Poverty is real but not inevitable. We can do something about it and must tackle its underlying causes.

• To reduce poverty, there is no single response that will succeed on its own. We need to account for the nature of jobs at the bottom end of the labour market, the cost of essential goods and services, whether people are able to reach their potential, and the choices that individuals make, as well as the way the state responds.

• Poverty is a cost we cannot afford. Reducing the costs associated with high levels of poverty in the UK would be positive for the economy: child poverty alone costs £29 billion a year. This is money that could be more productively spent.

• Poverty is wasteful and risky: it stops people reaching their full potential, scarring their future prospects. It risks the stability of people’s relationships.

• Overall poverty levels have stayed fairly flat for the last 25 years, and are predicted to rise if we do nothing.

• JRF defines poverty as when a person’s resources are not enough to meet their basic needs.

• The UK needs a comprehensive, long-term strategy to sustainably reduce poverty, rooted in cross-party consensus. It must address 4 Ps:

  - POCKETS the resources available to households
  - PROSPECTS people’s life chances
  - PREVENTION stopping people from falling into poverty
  - PLACES where people live; their homes and communities
IT’S TIME TO RETHINK POVERTY IN THE UK
The conventional approach to reducing poverty relies heavily on the tax and benefit system. This will only ever address part of the problem and this approach’s success will be further constrained in a period of prolonged austerity, which is likely to continue to at least 2018/19. It is time to rethink how we tackle poverty in the UK.

The face of poverty is changing. More than half of people experiencing poverty now live in working households. Public policy has yet to catch up with this shift.

Several economic indicators point to recovery, but there is no guarantee that growth will benefit everyone. The UK still faces considerable economic challenges – some long standing – including lagging productivity, a disproportionate reliance on low-paid, low-skilled jobs and several years of lost ground in wages to make up.

Poverty scars people’s long-term prospects, wasting their talent and potential. This, along with persistent problems in the labour and housing markets, places a strain on the public purse. Add to that the untapped productivity that results from people being out of work or working below their potential, and it is clear that poverty prevents the economy from firing on all cylinders.

Child poverty alone is estimated to cost the UK £29bn a year.

The public agrees that Britain has a problem with poverty, with a sizeable majority saying they believe there is “quite a lot” of “real poverty”. But public debate is still divisive and misleading, pitting the “deserving” and “undeserving poor” against each other. Blaming people is counter-productive, and political arguments about whether poverty is caused by individuals’ actions or by our economic structure drown each other out. Neither is completely right.

62% think there is quite a lot of poverty in Britain today
Poverty is real, but it is not inevitable. JRF is developing a long-term strategy to sustainably reduce poverty across the UK. Achieving this goal requires a clear understanding of what poverty is, who has a part to play in addressing it, and solutions based on evidence.

Here we set out a new definition of poverty, highlight some of the things a comprehensive strategy to reduce poverty might need, and explain why reducing it would be good for everyone.
People in poverty definitely are discriminated against but it’s not outright, it’s more behind the scenes. When people know you’re from a certain area, they instantly look at you differently.
OVERALL POVERTY LEVELS HAVE STAYED FAIRLY FLAT FOR THE LAST 25 YEARS*

*Percentage below 60% contemporary median AHC. Source: IFS
KATHY

When you live in long-term poverty, you have to depend on services that are delivered with suspicion and disdain. They make you feel humiliated. The media and politicians speak about the poor in derogatory ways when they use terms like ‘lazy’, ‘scroungers’, ‘feckless parents’ and ‘underclass’. The stereotyping of all poor people dehumanises them in the eyes of others.
WHAT IS POVERTY?
JRF defines poverty as when a person’s resources are not enough to meet their basic needs. This includes the need to be part of society, by being able to participate in common customs and activities – like buying a birthday present for your partner or sending your child on a school trip.

People mainly rely on material resources to meet their needs – money earned by working, benefits paid to those with low earnings or without work, or material goods and assets accumulated over time, like household appliances, a pension or savings. However, most people’s resources also include the help and support of family and friends, community and public services.

Defining poverty in this way means that there are two things to be done: increasing the resources available to individuals and households, or reducing the costs of meeting their needs.

The state’s role is clearly important, particularly the tax and benefit system, but alone it will not reduce poverty. The nature of jobs at the bottom end of the labour market; the cost of essential goods and services; where people live; whether they are able to fulfil their potential; and the choices people make all matter too. Working on any one of these aspects in isolation won’t succeed: a more comprehensive approach is needed.
HALF THE PEOPLE IN POVERTY LIVE IN A WORKING HOUSEHOLD

WHAT IS POVERTY?

FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN ARE THE BIGGEST GROUP IN POVERTY

Source: Households Below Average Income (DWP, 2014)
Me and my husband were walking in the cemetery one day when he noticed an area where none of the graves were marked. The local vicar told us they were graves where the poor people were buried when their families couldn’t afford to pay for a funeral.

They had their names taken from them, as though they’d never existed. Their families had nowhere to go to mourn or meet to remember them.

We worked with the vicar to get permission to put a headstone on these graves and asked a local stonemason to donate and carve the stone. On the day the gravestone was unveiled, over one hundred people turned up to see the resting place of those they loved being recognised for the first time. It was a way to give them back their dignity as human beings, even in death.
ALMOST ANYONE CAN EXPERIENCE POVERTY
It is in all our interests to tackle poverty.

Too often, public debate talks about ‘the poor’ as if they were a separate group of people with a completely different way of life. In reality almost anyone can experience poverty – over half of the population spent at least one year in relative income poverty between 1991 and 2003.\(^7\)

Life events and moments of transition – getting sick, bereavement, redundancy or relationship breakdown – are the most common triggers for poverty. On the flip side, a new job, working more hours or a new partner (who works) are some ways people can get out of poverty.\(^8\)

Poverty is dynamic – people’s needs change throughout their lives and the resources they require to meet their needs change too.

Some groups do face a greater risk of poverty than others. Those at high risk include: workless households, those where no one works full time, single parents (more likely to be women) and single pensioners, working-age people with a disability and some ethnic minority groups.\(^9\) For some, discrimination remains a significant issue.\(^10\)

For a small number of people, poverty is one of several complex and sometimes inter-related issues like problem drug and alcohol use, criminality, severe mental health problems and homelessness, while there are some other people and groups who are rarely, if ever, likely to experience poverty.\(^11\)

When poverty does take hold it can be enduring. For example, poverty in working age reduces people’s ability to save for retirement, making poverty as a pensioner more likely.\(^12\) And experiencing persistent poverty early in life increases the risk of poverty as an adult,\(^13\) although the relationship is not automatic: around eight in ten poor teenagers are not poor in their thirties.\(^14\)

Even where poverty is entrenched, there are shared expectations and aspirations across society. For example, 97 per cent of all mothers say they want their new-born children to attend university,\(^15\) and the desire to work and belief that work should be the way to improve material circumstances is found across the population – including where two generations of the same family have never worked.\(^16\) DWP research shows eight out of nine people out of work are either looking for a job or feel prevented from doing so by their circumstances, such as mental health problems, disability or caring responsibilities.\(^17\)
THOMAS

I’m a carer for my son who has special needs. He goes to school so you may wonder why I don’t go out to work when he’s at school but even at school he is still in need of my help at times.

I was last working when my eldest daughter was born. She was sick, though, and spent so much time in hospital that I had to take a lot of time off work. That started to cause problems so I ended up having to stop work and go onto carer’s allowance. I’d love to go back to work as soon as the children are old enough.

You have to understand that people in poverty aren’t there through choice; it’s just through a set amount of things that happen. One day you can be on top of the world and two days later at the bottom.
SOME GROUPS ARE AT HIGHER RISK OF POVERTY THAN OTHERS*

*Source: Households Below Average Income, Department for Work and Pensions
The graphic shows the groups at highest risk of poverty, with other groups included for comparison.

**UK AVERAGE**

- **Disability**: 21%
- **Ethnicity**: 33%
- **Housing**: 42%
- **Location**: 34%
- **Family**: 42%
- **Employment**: 72%

*AhC relative income poverty
POVERTY IS COSTLY, WASTEFUL AND RISKY

8 of 9 people out of work are looking for a job or feel prevented from doing so by their circumstances

Poverty is a cost the UK cannot afford. It is wasteful and risky, both for the people who experience it and for wider society and economic success.\textsuperscript{18}

Growing up in poverty has a scarring effect. It has implications for a child’s sense of self-worth, feeling of control over their lives,\textsuperscript{19} and likelihood of realising their potential at school.\textsuperscript{20} It also increases their risk of poverty in adult life.\textsuperscript{21}

Child poverty costs the UK £29 billion a year overall. This figure combines the direct cost to the state of £5.9bn in extra spending on benefits and lost tax revenue, and £15 billion extra spending on services to deal with the consequences of child poverty, plus an estimated £8.5bn of lost earnings to individuals.\textsuperscript{22}

This is a waste of human potential, a strain on the public purse, and it means the UK economy does not function as well as it could. These largely avoidable costs detract from more productive spending on updating infrastructure and skills.

Work should offer a reliable route out of poverty, but barriers such as low skills and the high costs of housing, childcare and transport prevent some people from working or earning more. This traps them in poverty and carries an economic cost. Economic output is estimated to increase by an average of £13,000 with each person who moves from worklessness to employment on the Living Wage.\textsuperscript{23} Moving into work also increases people’s disposable income, enabling them to spend more and create more demand in the economy, as well as making savings for the Exchequer.\textsuperscript{24}

But the UK’s high rate of in-work poverty means that the nature of work at the bottom end of the labour market is also part of the problem.\textsuperscript{25} More than half of households in working poverty (56 per cent) contain a worker paid less than the Living Wage; for the others, the issue is more the number of hours being worked than the amount they’re paid.\textsuperscript{26} Jobs that are low paid, low skilled, inflexible, insecure and offer no progression all contribute to in-work poverty.\textsuperscript{27}

Authoritative forecasts suggest job insecurity is getting worse at the bottom of the labour market.\textsuperscript{28} Already half of men and a third of women newly claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance have been on the benefit in the previous six months\textsuperscript{29} – a cycle of ‘low pay, no pay’ that poses a risk to the economic security of those caught up in it and adds to the benefits bill. It also feeds into the UK’s productivity problem, made worse by uneven economic performance across the UK.
Our understanding of poverty cannot be based purely on whether people are in paid work or not. For some people, regular work is difficult or they cannot work at all because they are retired, have caring responsibilities or have a long-term medical condition, mental health problem, disability or impairment. There has to be a way for them to live with dignity and respect, so they can contribute to society in other ways.

Poverty also affects personal lives and relationships – the stress it causes and the lack of control people feel has far-reaching consequences. It can trigger depression and anxiety and is one reason why growing up in poverty is so damaging for children. The strain increases the risk of relationship problems and breakdown, which can in turn also lead to poverty, as reflected in the high rates of poverty among lone parents.

Poverty often brings stress, stigma and shame for those who experience it, with a far-reaching impact. We need a comprehensive approach to tackling poverty.

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Child poverty costs the UK £29bn a year

£5.9bn in extra spending on benefits and lost tax revenue

£15bn extra spending on services to deal with the consequences of child poverty

£8.5bn of lost earnings to individuals

I’m a disabled mother of three adult children and I receive benefits. I can’t get employment due to the amount of time I need to attend medical appointments and treatments but I have always been involved in community activities and done voluntary work.

I’m very proud of my children. They have overcome so many of the obstacles that poverty has put in their way; they were raised on a very low income on a rough housing estate in east London but were strong enough to stay away from the gangs, drugs and crime that so many young people become entangled in. They’ve always worked, both in employment and as volunteers, as well as sharing the responsibility of being my carers. We may live in a poor borough but it is full of brilliant people.
THE NUMBER OF SEMI-SKILLED JOBS HAS FALLEN DRAMATICALLY

1993 2012

PROFESSIONAL OR MANAGERIAL

UP 7.9%

LOW-SKILLED

UP 1.6%

SEMI-SKILLED

DOWN 9.5%

Source: Schmuecker, K. (2014) Future of the UK labour market

STEPHEN UDEN
HEAD OF CITIZENSHIP AT NATIONWIDE BUILDING SOCIETY

At Nationwide we’re committed to doing the right thing by our people, therefore ensuring our employees and suppliers who work on our sites are paid fairly is very important to us. By becoming the first major high street brand to become a Principal Partner of the Living Wage Foundation and becoming a Living Wage employer, we can take a leading role in the campaign for fairer pay. Not only is the Living Wage good for the individual, it also improves employee morale and helps to tackle wider poverty in society.
62% of pupils who received free school meals did not achieve at least 5 GCSEs A*–C (including Maths & English) in 2012/13, compared with 35% of those not on free school meals.

Source: JRF Data: http://data.jrf.org.uk/
Past strategies to tackle poverty in the UK have not been good enough.

Previous strategies have lacked a clear vision for a UK without poverty, and have been too narrow – for example focusing only on child poverty. They have failed to take sufficient account of evidence, or of poverty’s dynamic nature.

They have frequently failed to fully consider people’s varying needs and experiences, for example from ethnic minority groups, disabled people and carers. Strategies have also paid too little attention to how both problems and solutions operate differently across the UK, due to differences in labour and housing markets, and in the make-up of the population.

It is time the UK took a more strategic and long-term approach to reducing poverty, with cross-party support. The state will always have a crucial role to play in poverty reduction, but a comprehensive strategy must consider:

- the nature of work at the bottom end of the labour market;
- the cost of living, the markets that provide essential goods and services, and their regulators;
- whether people are able to reach their potential, for example at school and at work;
- the role of civil society and private institutions that play a significant part in people’s lives, such as housing associations, community groups and faith organisations;
- the choices people make.

In August 2014, JRF published a set of 33 research summaries assessing the evidence base for solutions to poverty. It completes the first phase of a programme to develop anti-poverty strategies for the UK and its devolved administrations. The next phase will see more detailed policy development and modelling work to test different approaches. We have started to identify areas that will be important for an anti-poverty strategy, with welfare, work, education, the cost of living, family, community and addressing complex needs emerging as crucial areas of focus.
Interventions that either increase the resources available to households or reduce the costs of meeting their needs will help to reduce poverty. But the experience of poverty is dynamic, and differs at different stages of life, so thought must be given to policies that have an impact now, those that are investments in the future and those that provide insurance against future events.

This can be summed up as four Ps:

**Pockets:** policies concerned with boosting households’ resources now – primarily by increasing their income – so they are better able to meet their needs. Key areas:

- ensuring people get the benefits they need and have contributed to;
- supporting people to take up work, applying conditions where appropriate;
- making sure markets for essential goods and services – like housing, childcare and energy – operate effectively for low-income families, so it costs less to meet needs;
- working with employers to boost productivity and pay.

**Prospects:** policies concerned with improving the life chances of individuals and their families, so people are able to escape poverty in a sustainable way. Key areas:

- supporting child development and educational achievement;
- ensuring it always pays to work;
- employers providing opportunities to progress at work;
- addressing issues such as discrimination, which reduce opportunities for some groups.

**Prevention:** almost anyone can experience poverty during their lifetime, so policies that insure against sliding into poverty are important. Key areas:

- delivering public services and other essential services in a way that enables people to access advice and support early, rather than waiting for a crisis;
mechanisms that can help people to protect against future poverty risk, such as savings and access to low-cost credit.

Places: where people live shapes their lives, affecting their job prospects and access to essential goods and services and affordable housing. Key areas:

- transport availability and accessibility;
- quality and affordability of housing;
- local initiatives to address crime and improve the local environment;
- activities to link skills provision to the needs of the local labour market;
- ensuring the impacts of climate change do not exacerbate poverty and disadvantage.

The table on the next three pages briefly outlines some suggested actions drawn from the evidence base. These are proposals for debate and discussion, which JRF will be testing through the modelling phase of the programme. Each idea is assessed according to four criteria:

- **Which P (or Ps) will the action contribute to?**
- **Coverage** – will the approach help a low, medium or high number of people experiencing poverty?
- **Impact** – how certain are we that it will contribute to reducing poverty for the people targeted and how big is the effect likely to be?
- **Cost** – will public spending be lower, similar or higher than what is currently being spent in a given area?

‘Traffic light’ colour coding also indicates how positive the measure would be – high impact or low cost are coded green, whereas low impact or high cost are coded red. However, the impact of any one action in isolation will be limited. A combination of approaches will be needed for maximum impact on poverty reduction.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION</th>
<th>WHICH PS</th>
<th>COVERAGE – HOW MANY PEOPLE IN POVERTY COULD BENEFIT</th>
<th>POTENTIAL IMPACT ON POVERTY</th>
<th>LIKELY COST TO PUBLIC PURSE (COMPARSED TO CURRENT SPEND)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WELFARE</td>
<td>Continue with Universal Credit to increase take-up of benefits and smooth transitions in and out of work, and consider what further benefits could be included. To improve work incentives, increase the work allowance so more can be earned before benefits start being withdrawn, and reduce the taper rate so they’re withdrawn more slowly.</td>
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<td>New incentive structure for all welfare-to-work providers (including Jobcentre Plus) so they are rewarded for getting people in households in poverty into quality jobs, measured by earnings progression. This should include stronger incentives to provide more intensive support to people with a disability or health condition and ongoing support once in work, where relevant.</td>
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<td>Review how pensions and all benefits are uprated to ensure the system is fair and the living standards of people receiving benefits don’t fall behind.</td>
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<td>WORK</td>
<td>Improve wages by ensuring the minimum wage rate is set with regard to the changing price of essentials and changing average earnings. Businesses that can afford to should voluntarily pay the Living Wage. Government should also help raise awareness of the Living Wage and play a leadership role.</td>
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<td>POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION</td>
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<td>COVERAGE – HOW MANY PEOPLE IN POVERTY COULD BENEFIT</td>
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<td>Localise the skills budget and better coordinate welfare to work, workforce development and skills policy.</td>
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<td><strong>Business-led sector development strategies</strong> for low-pay sectors like retail, catering and care to support employers to tackle workforce poverty by boosting productivity, paying the Living Wage, developing progression for employees and promoting job security and quality.</td>
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<td><strong>COST OF LIVING</strong></td>
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<td>Increase the supply of <strong>housing</strong> to bring down the cost in the long term: projections show 250,000 houses per year are needed; at least 83,000 of these should be social or intermediate housing.³⁷</td>
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<td><strong>Develop area-based schemes to improve energy efficiency</strong> targeted at households experiencing poverty.</td>
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<td>Redesign the <strong>childcare</strong> system to deliver quality, affordable childcare that improves the outcomes for children in poverty and supports parental employment, giving families choice about balancing working and caring.</td>
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## Possible Solutions for Further Exploration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Possible Solutions for Further Exploration</th>
<th>Which PS</th>
<th>Coverage – How Many People in Poverty Could Benefit</th>
<th>Potential Impact on Poverty</th>
<th>Likely Cost to Public Purse (Compared to Current Spend)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reform markets for <strong>essential goods and services</strong> – like energy, financial services and water – so they deliver good-value products for low-income households. Ensure people in poverty can access goods and services and are not subject to a poverty premium.</td>
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<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>Schools should focus on closing the attainment gap while improving standards overall. Rather than investing in school structures, redirect funding into raising teaching quality and incentivising the best teachers to work in the most deprived schools.</td>
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<td><strong>Family and Community</strong></td>
<td>Provision of <strong>relationship support</strong>, with outreach and referrals from public services like GPs and other advice services, prior to, during and following relationship breakdown.</td>
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<td>Improve access to <strong>advice and support</strong> for people in poverty by co-locating and better coordinating statutory and voluntary sector services – for example advice services, GPs, Jobcentres and careers services.</td>
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<td><strong>Complex Needs</strong></td>
<td>Long-term and intense programme of support for individuals and families with <strong>complex needs</strong> – like homelessness, mental health problems, problem substance use and ex-offenders – to move towards independence and out of poverty.</td>
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To maintain government commitment and momentum to reduce poverty, the Office for Budget Responsibility should be tasked with monitoring and forecasting poverty rates for people of all ages. In addition, the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission’s remit should be extended to the whole population, so there is an independent body tasked with holding the government of the day to account for its record on – and plan for – poverty reduction.
I like to help people in need because I’ve been through it before. I know what crisis is. When me, my partner and young daughter were made homeless, we got put on an emergency housing list. Then we were placed in a hostel where we stayed for the next seven months. We had lost our flat in August, just before my daughter was about to start school. So when we moved to the hostel I tried to enrol her in schools in the area. It took six months to get her enrolled in a school. From August, when we lost our flat, to March, she lost six months of her first year of school.

What was hard was the uncertainty. It’s not fun being in that situation when you have a kid; good advice and support can make all the difference in the world.
WHERE ARE WE NOW, AND WHERE ARE WE HEADING?

If we don’t act, poverty will increase in the UK.

The period since the downturn has been tough for the worst-off families. A gulf has opened up between their incomes and the cost of the items the public think are essential for a minimum socially acceptable standard of living. Overall, the cost of a basket of essentials has increased by 28 per cent since 2008, at a time when the National Minimum Wage has increased by 14 per cent, average wages by just 9 per cent, and benefits for both low-earning and workless households have been cut in real terms.38

While the economy is showing signs of recovery, the outlook for poverty is less promising. Despite anticipated growth in jobs and earnings, the Institute for Fiscal Studies forecasts an increase in poverty, with one in three children and nearly one in four working-age adults in relative income poverty (after housing costs) by 2020. Although recent welfare reforms have exacerbated this, an increase in poverty was also forecast had the 2010 system remained unchanged.39

Crucially, both technological change and globalisation are expected to continue polarising the UK’s labour market, with more high-paid, high-skilled jobs on the one hand, and low-paid, low-skilled jobs on the other.

The latter are already more likely to be insecure and lack opportunities for training and progression.40 This precarious existence for those trapped at the bottom of the labour market is anticipated to worsen up to 2030.41

Furthermore, social, economic and environmental change will present new challenges and opportunities for an anti-poverty strategy. Demographers expect our population to continue ageing, and more people to live longer with multiple long-term health conditions, disabilities and impairments.42

How we live our lives is also changing. Forecasts anticipate more people living alone, greater diversity in family structures, and further growth of the non-British-born population.43 There is projected to be an increase in men living alone in mid-life who have never cohabited or fathered children, some of whom are likely to face substantial poverty risks and lack the support needed to deal with those risks.44 The impact of climate change too will present new challenges to some of the most vulnerable communities.45 Meanwhile technological change will continue to shape our working lives, how we communicate, how we receive information and how we access goods and services.
POVERTY IS A PROBLEM WE CAN SOLVE

32% of children will be living in poverty by 2020/21 unless we act

Poverty is real, but it is not inevitable. Looking at pensioner poverty should provide some optimism for what can be achieved. There was a time when reaching retirement meant a sharply increased poverty risk, but pensioner poverty has fallen steadily in recent decades, helped along by concerted action from successive governments and strong cross-party support.

With the same ambition, consensus and long-term commitment, poverty among people of all ages could be similarly reduced.

A UK without poverty will depend on more than just welfare reform. A strategy must also consider markets for essential goods and services, the nature of jobs at the bottom of the labour market, whether people are able to reach their full potential, and the roles of civil society, employers and individuals. Addressing any one of these in isolation will not succeed; a more comprehensive approach is needed.

A poverty-free UK would not only be good for people who experience poverty; it would be good for everyone.
I am Angela, a mum of seven kids, and I live in east London with two of my grown-up daughters, a son with autism and two school-age daughters. I do all the day-to-day things that parents do. Last year I spoke in Parliament about food banks and how using them can leave you feeling humiliated and stigmatised but also how I’d have no choice if it was the only way to provide for my family. It was good to get my point across. It’s important to have a voice.
“This government is committed to eradicating child poverty by 2020 by breaking the cycle of disadvantage based on the principle that where someone starts in life should not determine where they end up.

“We are committed to tackling the root causes of poverty and delivering lasting change that makes a real difference to children’s life chances. As part of the government’s long-term economic plan we are supporting more families into work, improving living standards and raising educational attainment.

“As the economy improves it is vitally important that the economic recovery is accompanied by social change. That means ensuring that everyone who is able to has the skills and opportunities to get a job, whilst ensuring that those who are genuinely unable to do so are given the help that they need – everyone who can playing a productive role, individuals in control of their own lives, and the next generation of children aspiring to even more.”
“Every day millions of Britons wake up worrying about whether they can afford to heat their home, pay their rent, or buy basic clothes for their children. Many of them are in work; others are doing all they can to find a job, or are unable to work because of illness, disability or caring responsibilities. While some talk of economic recovery, some risk falling even further behind.

“We can only succeed as a country if everyone has a stake and a chance to play their part. The last Labour government lifted over a million children out of poverty, and reduced adult poverty rates as well, by helping people into work and making work pay. It also brought pensioner poverty to its lowest level in 30 years. But with the current cost-of-living crisis more and more families are struggling to make ends meet, and both absolute and relative poverty are set to rise again over the years ahead.

“That’s why Labour is committed to building a stronger, more inclusive economy in which prosperity is fairly shared. That includes raising the minimum wage and promoting the Living Wage, freezing energy bills, tackling youth and long-term unemployment with a compulsory jobs guarantee, extending free childcare for working parents, and scrapping the hated bedroom tax that has forced thousands to rely on food banks and payday lenders. We look forward to working with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to develop that agenda.”

“Tim Farron MP, President, Liberal Democrats

“I’m a Beveridge Liberal. The five ills that Beveridge outlined, sadly, still stalk us today. Poverty not only hurts the people it traps, it hurts their families and the communities they live in and our wider economy. I believe we need a new political consensus and a renewed passion to tackle the root causes of poverty. We will disagree on how to tackle it, but we must all work to end the scourge of poverty.

“I believe we must tackle welfare dependence, making work pay through a Living Wage and we must build 300,000 homes a year. There is no silver bullet to end poverty. But we must be ambitious and create a strong, active and I hope liberal government to deliver that. I welcome this pamphlet as another strong voice in that much-needed debate.”
NOTES


15. Menzies, S. (2013) Educational aspirations: How schools can work with parents to keep them on track York: JRF
18. Unwin (2013) ibid
19. DWP (2014b) ibid; Fell and Hewstone (2014 forthcoming) ibid
21. DWP (2014b) ibid
22. Hirsch (2013) ibid
24. Bivand and Simmonds (2014) forthcoming ibid
29. Access via data.jrf.org.uk/
30. Fell and Hewstone (2014) forthcoming ibid
33. DWP (2014a) ibid
36. Ideas in this table are drawn from the
41. UKCES (2014) ibid
42. LSE 2006 – eprints.lse.ac.uk/4459/1/Compression_or_expansion_of_disability_forecasting_future_disability_levels_under_changing_patterns_of_diseases.(LSERO).pdf; Buck (2014)
43. Falkingham et al (2014)
For more about JRF’s anti-poverty strategies for the UK, please visit www.jrf.org.uk/topic/anti-poverty

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