

**London  
Child  
Poverty  
Alliance**



# **A future free from child poverty: our vision for London's recovery**

April 2021

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# A future free from child poverty: our vision for London's recovery

Before the pandemic 4 in 10 children in London were living in poverty and in some areas of our city this reached nearly 6 in 10. Without doubt these figures are now even higher.

The safety net that should protect children from poverty has been tested over the past year and found to be broken. As a result, children across London are being denied their fundamental rights, including to food, health, housing, education and play.

The next Mayor of London will rightly be focused on the city's recovery from the pandemic. These recovery plans must have at their heart a commitment to end child poverty and protect the rights of all the city's children.



# Our manifesto

In this shared manifesto members of the London Child Poverty Alliance (LCPA) are calling on the Mayoral candidates to commit to key actions that we collectively believe will have a significant and lasting impact on rates of child poverty in the capital.

Additionally, the individual members of the LCPA have in-depth knowledge on a wide range of issues gained from their experience of working with communities across London. Areas of specialism include food insecurity, digital exclusion, housing, childcare, employment and transport. Tackling poverty requires action in all these areas and we hope that the next Mayor will engage with us and draw on this expertise during their term in office.



# Action on Income

- The next Mayor must **lobby central Government to maintain the £20 uplift in Universal Credit beyond September 2021 and extend it to legacy benefits** to shore up the welfare safety net. And looking forward they must campaign for a fairer welfare system that addresses harmful inequality and puts children's rights at its heart.
- The combined impact of the pandemic and Brexit means that unemployment in London is rising faster than elsewhere in the UK.<sup>1</sup> Young people are particularly at risk of being unemployed. The next Mayor must **prioritise protecting and creating secure jobs, paid at or above the London Living Wage**. These jobs must be flexible enough to allow parents and carers to stay in or move into work and provide opportunities for young people. The Mayor must also support local authorities and the childcare sector to make sure there is enough high-quality childcare available for every family who needs it.



# Action on Hunger

- Before the pandemic 400,000 children in London were living in households with low food security<sup>2</sup> and this figure will be even higher now. Emergency food parcel distribution has soared over the past year.<sup>3</sup> We ask the next Mayor to **commit to the principle that no child in London will go hungry and to working to end the need for food banks.**
- Throughout the pandemic local welfare assistance schemes have provided those experiencing severe hardship with a lifeline, allowing them to feed their children and meet their basic needs. We call on the next Mayor to work with local councils to **ensure that all Londoners have access to local welfare assistance schemes** when they need them.



# Action on Housing

- At the end of September 2020, over 83,000 children were homeless and living in temporary accommodation in London.<sup>4</sup> Many more live in the private rented sector in over-crowded and unsuitable homes. The next Mayor must work with partners in national and local government to **tackle exorbitantly high rents, urgently deliver new homes at social rent across London, and improve the standards and conditions of temporary accommodation in London.**



# Action on Inequality

- Events of the last year have laid bare the impact of policies that for many years have exacerbated or failed to address inequalities in our community. High levels of child poverty among Black, Asian and minority ethnic families, single parent families, families with disabled children and those with no recourse to public funds, have meant that the impact of the pandemic has been disproportionately severe on these and other groups. Plans for London's recovery **must include targets for reducing inequalities and must be equality impact assessed at the outset, not as an afterthought.**



A future free from poverty in which all London's children have their rights protected is possible. The members of the London Child Poverty Alliance stand ready to help the next Mayor end child poverty in the capital once and for all.

This manifesto is supported by a broad coalition of charities, working as part of the London Child Poverty Alliance (LCPA) and committed to tackling child poverty in London. The LCPA brings together collective knowledge expertise and experience to develop and champion the practical solutions needed to tackle child poverty in London.

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