

London Challenge Poverty Week 2021

Guide For Elected Representatives

Aims of London Challenge Poverty Week

This will be the fourth annual London Challenge Poverty Week. It begins on Monday 11 October and culminates on Sunday 17 October which is the UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. It is an opportunity for all those who care about tackling poverty in the capital to come together to:



Increase the visibility of the reality of poverty in London



Encourage positive debate and discussion about poverty



Show what is being done to tackle poverty & call for the changes we need to end it.

Why get involved in London Challenge Poverty Week 2021?

The pandemic has demonstrated the strengths of London's diverse community; the willingness of many to go above and beyond to support their neighbours and the extraordinary work done by health and care staff, shop workers, delivery drivers and many others who have kept London running day in day out, while often struggling to keep their heads above water.



#LDNChallengePoverty
#povertyfreelondon
#ifnotnowwhen

However, it has also laid bare the impact of policies that for many years have failed to address or exacerbated inequalities in our community and threaten to fracture it. Poverty rates in London are the highest in the UK, emergency food parcel distribution has soared across the city, tens of thousands of children in London are homeless and living in temporary accommodation and more people have died from Covid in deprived neighbourhoods than in more affluent ones. The safety net that should protect Londoners from poverty has been tested during the pandemic and found to be broken.

Londoners want to live in a city free from poverty, where everyone is treated with equal respect and dignity. A city in which people don't have to struggle to pay their rent, they can put food on the table and build a decent life for themselves and their families. Now is the moment for us all; politicians and decision makers, activists, employers, employees, trade unions, public services, voluntary organisations and local communities, to come together, demonstrate our commitment to these values and challenge poverty once and for all.

Everyone who calls London their home should feel that they can live a decent life, free from poverty and have a secure future here. Poverty does not have to exist if the will exists to end it.

Ways To Get Involved

As an MP, local councillor or assembly member we ask you to take some time during London Challenge Poverty Week to engage with those experiencing and working to tackle poverty in your ward, constituency or city-wide, and to use your platform to demonstrate your commitment to bringing about a poverty free London. Here are some suggested ways of doing this:

- Send us a supportive statement to put on the London Challenge Poverty Week website. Simply complete the statement "I am supporting London Challenge Poverty Week because....." and send it to us: 4in10@childrenengland.org.uk
- Attend an event taking place in your constituency or ward to hear from those with lived experience of poverty and those organisations working to challenge poverty. To find out what is happening in your area visit: www.londonchallengepovertyweek.org.uk
- Visit organisations in your constituency or ward who are working to challenge poverty, hold discussions about the reality of poverty in the area and gather suggestions about what can be done to address these issues.
- Speak out on social media or in the mainstream media about the action need to challenge poverty in London. Show your support for solutions to ending poverty on using the hashtags: [#LDNChallengePoverty](#) [#povertyfreelondon](#)
- Advocate during the week in your council chamber, the London Assembly or the House of Commons for policies and actions which will boost incomes and reduce the cost of living for people on low incomes in London.

These are of course, just suggestions and you will have other ideas that you might like to take forward. If you would like to discuss your idea with a member of the 4in10 team do get in touch. Email: 4in10team@childrenengland.org.uk

Themes For The Week

London Challenge Poverty Week has themes for each day of the working week. You can use these themes to tailor your messages and conversations.



Monday 11 October:
Housing and homelessness



Thursday 14 October:
Education and Childcare



Tuesday 12 October:
Income and employment



Friday 15 October:
Hunger and food insecurity



Wednesday 13 October:
Health & mental health

These are just a guide, and you don't need to feel too constrained by them, if it works better for you to hold your activity on a day with a different theme then that is fine!

Across all these themes we encourage those taking part to consider the impact of various forms of discrimination on those experiencing poverty, including Black, Asian and minority ethnic families, lone-parent families, families with disabled children and those with no recourse to public funds.

Poverty In London - Key Facts

Before the pandemic **27%** of Londoners were living in poverty, significantly more than any other part of the UK. ¹

9 out of the 10 local authorities with the highest level of child poverty, after housing costs, are in London. ²

The combined health, economic and social impacts of the pandemic have taken a significant toll on the living standards of Londoners. Tracking these impacts will take time, as data is released with a significant lag, but all the indicators point to these impacts being greatest for Londoners with the lowest incomes.

For example, in the six months to September 2020, food banks run by members of the Trussell Trust network in London distributed **210,000 food packages** to people in the capital, a **128%** increase compared to the same period in 2019. The increase in the rest of England was 56%, demonstrating the severe financial pressures placed on families in the capital. ³

Local Authorities with the highest child poverty

Tower Hamlets	55.5%
Newham	50%
Barking and Dagenham	48.1%
Hackney	47.9%
Waltham Forest	45.3%
Southwark	43.1%
Islington	42.7%
Lambeth	42.6%
Birmingham	42.5%
Greenwich	42%

While the government's schemes have protected many jobs, the scale of the economic impact of the pandemic has still had a significant effect on employment in the capital. In February 2021, the number of jobs – as measured by Pay As You Earn (PAYE) data – had fallen by **5%** in London since February 2020. This equates to just over **209,000 fewer jobs** and takes the number of payrolled jobs in the capital back to a level last seen in October 2016. The fall in payrolled jobs has also been larger in London compared to the rest of England, which saw a **1.9%** fall between February 2020 and February 2021.⁴

While individuals, neighbourhoods and communities all over London have been impacted to some extent, the overall direct health impacts of COVID-19 have not been evenly spread; Even after controlling for a range of neighbourhood characteristics, **mortality rates are 23% higher in the most deprived 20% of neighbourhoods** than in the least deprived 20% of neighbourhoods. They are also higher in neighbourhoods with a high proportion of Black residents.⁵

Dig Deeper Into Local Statistics

On Trust for London's website, you access a wide range of indicators relating to living standards, housing and education, broken down by borough:

<https://www.trustforlondon.org.uk/data/boroughs/>

On End Child Poverty's website you can look up the levels of child poverty at local authority and constituency level:

<https://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/local-child-poverty-data-2014-15-2019-20/>

How We Can Help

- London Challenge Poverty Week is coordinated by **4in10 London's Child Poverty Network**. We have a membership of over 400 organisations and individuals who are working to improve the lives of children living in poverty across the capital.
- If you are supporting constituents who are struggling at the moment, you may find it helpful to visit the **Giving and Getting Help** section on the 4in10 website. This provides a free directory of organisations working to challenge the impact of poverty on London's children and their families.
- In the run up to London Challenge Poverty Week we will be offering a number of learning opportunities to help organisations make the most of it and will make available a range of further resources, including media resources. Details of training and further resources will be posted on the London Challenge Poverty Website. If you would like to be made aware of when new resources are made available why not **sign up** to become a member of 4in10's network and receive our bi-weekly newsletter.