

CHILD POVERTY IN BEDFORDSHIRE

Seminar Report

The Harpur Suite, Bedford

Tuesday 4th December 2007



Tackling Poverty Together

in Bedfordshire

www.tacklingpoverty-beds.org.uk

Report produced in January 2008

The seminar was organised on behalf of the TPT Group by **Infotrain** and was funded by **Bedfordshire County Council (Economic Growth)**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Background

This seminar was the 5th countywide anti-poverty event in Bedfordshire organised by the Tackling Poverty Together Group. Previous conferences had been held in 1997, 2001, 2003 and 2005 and had seen a progression from raising awareness of poverty issues, on to generating new ideas to tackle poverty, through to developing strategic links and identifying practical solutions to tackling poverty.

TPT Conferences

1997 Conference - *Poverty in Bedfordshire*

This initial conference raised awareness of poverty in Bedfordshire, developed a statement of intent concerning poverty, and led to the formation of the Tackling Poverty Together Group in Bedfordshire.

2001 Conference - *The way ahead*

This interactive event helped to generate many new ideas on tackling local poverty, acted as a forum for information exchange on anti-poverty issues in Bedfordshire, and generated new ideas, and networks in working together to tackle poverty.

2003 Conference - *Building strategic and practical links*

This conference helped raise awareness of the emerging Local Strategic Partnerships and Local Strategic Forum, and helped develop links between the TPT Group and the LSPs and LSF.

2005 Conference - *The Cost of Debt*

This conference raised awareness of debt issues in Bedfordshire and the support available for people with debt problems. It also identified ways to prevent debt and promote the development of credit unions and the culture of saving and skills, training and employment as pathways out of debt. Following this conference a focus group was set to look at developing a Credit Union in Mid Bedfordshire.

Rather than hold another full-day conference in 2007, the TPT Group decided to organise two half-day seminars. This would allow discussion on two separate issues, relating to financial exclusion, and would hopefully allow a wider group of people to attend the events.

It was agreed that the first seminar should be held in late 2007 and the other seminar in early 2008.

Bedfordshire County Council (Economic Growth) agreed to fund the seminars.

Seminar planning

In June 2007 the TPT Group agreed to a proposal to begin planning two half-day seminars on two topical issues - child poverty and migrant workers.

A Seminar Planning Group was formed and the first meeting to discuss the details of the child poverty event was held in July 2007. The Planning Group met again in September and then reported back to the full TPT Group at its meeting in November.

The Planning Group consisted of representatives from:

- Bedfordshire County Council - Economic Growth, Welfare Rights Service and Children's Services
- Aragon Housing Association
- CVS Mid & North Bedfordshire
- Jobcentre Plus
- Infotrain

As well as the planning meetings, a briefing session was held for seminar speakers and workshop facilitators in November.

Seminar aims and outcomes

The **aims** of the seminar were to:

- Raise awareness of child and family poverty issues in Bedfordshire
- Raise awareness of, and identify gaps in, the support available for families experiencing financial exclusion
- Facilitate networking, partnership working and information exchange between agencies involved with child and family poverty
- Enhance the profile of the TPT Group

It was hoped that the seminar would result in the following **outcomes**:

- A better understanding of the scale of child poverty in the County
- The development of ideas and strategies to combat and prevent financial exclusion and poverty amongst families
- The generation of ideas to help the TPT Group, LSPs etc in action planning - to result in positive strategic and community outcomes

Seminar format and venue

It was decided that the seminar would be held over a morning only (on 4th December) and should follow a broadly traditional format. Speakers were invited to make presentations during the first half of the morning. The seminar planning group strived for a mix of national, local, practical and statistical presentations. The presentations would be followed by a question and answer session.

Later in the morning there would be three locally-focussed workshops: campaigning against child poverty; working to tackle child poverty; and strategic planning to tackle child poverty. Delegates would be able to attend one workshop.

The seminar would conclude with a plenary session to give the workshop facilitators an opportunity to report back to all delegates and for closing comments.

The Council Chamber at County Hall, Bedford was chosen as the venue for the event. The Council Chamber could accommodate the anticipated number of delegates and the required number of workshop rooms was available. Bedfordshire County Council offered to fund the venue costs; thus the TPT Group was able to offer the seminar free of charge to delegates.

Unfortunately, delays in refurbishment work at County Hall meant that the venue would not have been ready for 4th December. At late notice, it was therefore decided to hold the event at The Harpur Suite, Bedford.

Seminar organisers

As in previous years, the TPT Group commissioned **Infotrain** to administer and manage the seminar on their behalf. Infotrain is a local consultancy company which specialises in working in the advice and anti-poverty sectors, and which has close links with the TPT Group.

Seminar chairman

The TPT Group invited Malcolm Newsam (Director of Children's Services at Bedfordshire County Council) to chair the seminar. A briefing session was arranged for Malcolm in November.

Seminar publicity

It was decided initially that the Seminar would be publicised by invitation only. 68 personal invitations to the Seminar were sent out in October 2007. Invitations were sent to:

- Local Councillors holding relevant portfolios and Local Strategic Partnership members in the 4 main council areas (Bedfordshire County Council, Bedford Borough Council, Mid Bedfordshire District Council, and South Bedfordshire District Council).
- Senior officers and managers in the 4 main councils.
- Managers and senior officers from selected, key local organisations.

The response to these personal invitations was disappointing with only 16 bookings and 3 apologies having been received by the end of October.

The decision was then taken to widen the publicity for the event and details were distributed electronically to:

- The 4 main Councils to distribute to appropriate staff and councillors
- Members of Bedfordshire Advice Forum
- The full TPT Group database

TPT Group members were also encouraged to distribute publicity via their own networks.

The event was also publicised through:

- Poverty News (The TPT Group newsletter)
- Bedfordshire Child Poverty Action Group website
- Community and Voluntary Action South Bedfordshire newsletter
- Voluntary Organisations Consortium update

2. SEMINAR REPORT

Delegates

A total of **53 people** booked to attend the seminar on 4th December 2007 and apologies were sent in advance by 16 people who would not be able to attend. On the day **45 people attended the seminar**. A further 5 apologies were received on the day.

Delegates came from a variety of agencies from the statutory and voluntary sectors. A full attendance (and apologies) list can be found in **Appendix 1**.

Information stalls

At the seminar information stalls were set up by:

- Bedfordshire Child Poverty Action Group
- Tackling Poverty Together Group
- Bedfordshire County Council (Economic Growth)

Opening Remarks and Introduction

Malcolm Newsam, the Seminar Chair, officially opened the event. He welcomed delegates to the seminar and set the scene for the morning.

Session 1 - Presentations

Three presentations were given to the delegates at the Seminar:

Child Poverty in Britain - the national perspective

Hilary Fisher Director, End Child Poverty Coalition



See **Appendix 2** for details of this presentation

Child Poverty in Bedfordshire - facts & figures

Sarah Hughes Enterprise & Regeneration Manager
Economic Growth, Bedfordshire County Council



Lindsay Mitton Senior Economic Development Officer
Economic Growth, Bedfordshire County Council

See **Appendix 3** for details of this presentation

Child Poverty in Bedfordshire - practical effects of poverty

Vanda Dray Children & Families Support Services Manager
Manor Farm Family Centre (Christian Family Care)

Sarah Chapman Accommodation Services Manager
Bedford Women's Refuge (Christian Family Care)



Vanda and Sarah explained the work of the Family Centre and the Women's Refuge and gave examples of the situations that face local families and children in poverty

Question and Answer Session

A short question and answer session followed giving delegates the opportunity to ask questions of the speakers to expand or clarify issues raised in their presentations.

Session 2 - Workshops

The seminar delegates broke into three workshops as follows:

Workshop 1

Campaigning against child poverty - raising awareness of local poverty

Facilitator: Len Simkins (Bedfordshire Child Poverty Action Group)

This workshop was aimed at participants who were new to the subject area and who wanted to increase their understanding of the issues. It gave an update of national and local campaigns and looked at how campaigning on child poverty issues could be developed further in Bedfordshire.

Workshop 2

Working to tackle child poverty - good practice from local projects

Facilitator: Anne Cheveralls (Bedfordshire County Council - Children's Centres)

This workshop was aimed at professionals who work with children in poverty. It helped share good practice and focussed on some of the issues facing projects working with families and children in Bedfordshire.

Workshop 3

Strategies to tackle child poverty - ideas for strategic plans & policies

Facilitator: Sarah Hughes (Bedfordshire County Council - Economic Growth)

This workshop was aimed at those involved with LSPs and other strategic networks. It explored how child poverty issues can be incorporated into LAAs, Community Plans etc.

Individual reports on each workshop can be found in **Appendices 4-6**

Final Session

At the end of the morning, delegates came back together in the main hall for a final session to hear a summary of the discussions at the workshops, and for a final summary from the Seminar Chair.

Seminar evaluation

Before leaving, delegates were asked to complete an evaluation form giving their comments on the Seminar. A report on the analysis of these evaluation forms, including delegates' comments, can be found in **Appendix 7**.

The Seminar was well received - 92% of delegates gave their overall opinion of the event as very good (35%) or good (57%). The majority of delegates thought that the event had been well-organised, with 96% rating the administration of the event as very good (54%) or good (42%).

- 96% of delegates said that the conference met its aims, either fully (69%) or partly (27%)
- 96% of delegates said that the conference fulfilled their personal expectations, either fully (65%) or partly (31%)
- 58% of delegates said they would be taking practical and/or strategic action as a direct result of the conference.
- 81% of delegates rated the management of the seminar, and the role of the Chair, as very good (31%) or good (50%)
- 88% of delegates rated Hilary Fisher's (End Child Poverty) presentation as very good (42%) or good (46%)
- 84% of delegates rated Sarah Hughes' and Lindsay Mitton's (Beds County Council) presentation as very good (40%) or good (44%)
- 71% of delegates rated Vanda Dray's and Sarah Chapman's (Christian Family Care) presentation as very good (29%) or good (42%)
- 100% of delegates rated the campaigning against child poverty workshop as very good (72%) or good (14%)
- 88% of delegates rated the working to tackle child poverty as very good (38%) or good (50%)
- 89% of delegates rated the strategic planning to tackle child poverty as very good (33%) or good (56%)
- 96% of delegates thought that anti-poverty events should be held regularly in Bedfordshire. 92% preferred the half-day format introduced this year. 68% said they should be held every 6 months, and 32% said annually.
- The seminar venue did come in for some criticism, mainly concerning acoustics with only 50% of delegates rating the venue as very good (23%) or good (27%).

Delegates described the event as "relevant", "informative" and "worthwhile".

Although one delegate found the day to be "frustrating and dull", another's comment was "well-organised with excellent facts". Some comments were also made regarding the absence of MPs and Health Service representatives.

Much of the action to be taken following the event centred around forging links with other organisations and raising awareness of child poverty issues and the "benefits of working in partnership to achieve the same aim". Building links with, promoting and using the Children's Centres featured frequently in delegates' comments.

Photographs from the seminar



Presentations



Information



Workshops

3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Generally the Seminar was successful as it was attended by 45 delegates and the majority of feedback was positive (see **Appendix 7**).

It is clear that the Seminar met its **aims** of raising awareness of child poverty in Bedfordshire and facilitating networking between agencies involved with child poverty.

The main **conclusions** from the speaker presentations, workshops and discussions were:

- Child poverty is evident in Bedfordshire - largely centred in Bedford, with pockets in Mid and South Bedfordshire;
- There are a number of service providers currently in Bedfordshire that aim to tackle deprivation, child and family poverty, and demonstrate good practice;
- Measuring child poverty is complex and further development in Bedfordshire is required to improve co-ordination of local statistics and information amongst residents and service providers;
- Unemployment and worklessness are key factors in child poverty. Children that are particularly vulnerable include those from black and minority ethnic group families, with lone parents, large families and those affected by disability;
- When we consider the practical effects of poverty, we learn that children from low-income families can be excluded from participating in activities, including missing out on school trips, and often go without basic necessities such as proper clothing, a healthy diet or a warm home. They are also at higher risk of ill health;
- Families on low incomes are at risk of being financially excluded, often unable to open bank accounts, subject to higher interest rates and therefore vulnerable to door step lending;
- There is a link between deprivation and educational attainment, where children dependant on low incomes can show a lower level of attainment by 2 years. The correlation between deprivation and educational results grows stronger as children move from Lower to Upper School;
- Children dependant on low incomes are more likely to leave school at 16 with fewer qualifications and there is a broad range of evidence that links child poverty to later income, employment and skills outcomes, with a greater risk of becoming NEET (not in Education, Employment or Training);
- There is a need to improve co-ordination of local services and multi-agency working;
- The need for a child poverty network should be considered as a mechanism to link service providers and with local, regional and national policy;
- There is an opportunity to adopt a 'poverty proofing' process as part of strategic planning in Bedfordshire to ensure consistency with eradicating poverty.

The planned **outcomes** from the Seminar were:

1. A better understanding of the scale of child poverty in Bedfordshire
2. The development of ideas and strategies to combat and prevent financial exclusion amongst families
3. The generation of ideas and strategies to help the TPT Group, LSPs etc. in action planning

It is clear that the information gathered from the speakers, workshops and discussions helped achieve the desired **outcomes** of the Seminar.

The main **recommendations** made in the workshops and discussions were that:

- A child poverty network should be set up in Bedfordshire - to bring together the local agencies involved in child poverty and to link in with the national End Child Poverty campaign
- Information on child poverty should be collected centrally in Bedfordshire in a coordinated way
- Child poverty should be publicised, in a coordinated way, in the local area
- There should be improvements in the coordination of local services relating to children and families and increased multi-agency working
- Child poverty should be addressed as an issue in local strategic plans and policies and some degree of "child poverty proofing" should be used when drawing up key strategies and policies.

There were also some **learning points** from the Seminar and, in terms of the future planning of similar events, the suggestions are to:

- Continue to arrange anti-poverty events on a regular basis
- Continue to use ½ day seminars - as this length of event was generally well accepted
- Consider changing the format for some future seminars, from the traditional format of speakers and workshops. to make the events more interesting
- Provide microphones for speakers when using a big hall
- Use wide publicity networks at an early stage as well specifically targeted invitations

This report will be distributed to all seminar delegates and then presented to the TPT Group at its next meeting on 4th March 2008. The TPT Group will then decide on how to take forward the recommendations made at the Seminar.

APPENDIX 1

Delegate Lists

ATTENDANCE LIST

(Alphabetical order)

Total Attendance: 45

| Name | Organisation | Position |
|--------------------|---|--|
| Alex Francis | Bedfordshire & Luton Economic Development Partnership | Partnerships & Projects Manager |
| Alexandra Austin | Bedfordshire County Council | Enforcement Officer - Trading Standards |
| Cllr Anita Lewis | Mid Bedfordshire District Council | |
| Anne Cheveralls | Bedfordshire County Council | Development & Commissioning Manager - Children's Centres |
| Avinash Mandalia | Bedford Community Rights Centre | Chief Executive Officer |
| Bob Baker | Beds Youth Offending Service | Project Worker |
| Brian Madigan | Bedfordshire County Council | Commissioning Manager 16+ Support & Housing |
| Carolyn Compston | Aragon Housing Association | Tenancy Support Officer |
| Caron Brooks | GO-East | Communities, Neighbourhoods & Culture |
| Dinah Ames | Bedfordshire County Council | INFORM 0-19 |
| Cllr Apu Bagchi | Bedford Borough Council | Portfolio Holder for Partnerships, Twinning & Transport |
| Cllr David Reedman | Bedfordshire County Council | Cabinet Member for Children & Young People |
| Cllr Ken Lynch | Mid Bedfordshire District Council | Families in Need Project Coordinator |
| Cllr Pat Olney | Bedford Borough Council | Portfolio Holder for Arts, Leisure & Diversity |
| David Brewer | Bedfordshire County Council | Project Manager LAA |
| Dee Dell | Mark Rutherford School | EAL Teaching Assistant Special Needs Department EAL |
| Derry Dynes | Family Groups Bedford | Chief Officer |
| Doug McWilliam | Youth Matters | Director |

| Name | Organisation | Position |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Gary Johnson | Bedfordshire County Council | Manager - Welfare Rights Service |
| Gordon Johnston | Bedford Borough Council | Director of Community Partnerships & Strategies |
| Hazel Mitchell | | |
| Hilary Fisher | End Child Poverty | Director |
| Jane Owen | CVS Mid & North Bedfordshire | Funding & Development Officer |
| Jenny Hedges | Mid Beds Citizens Advice Bureau | Manager |
| Kate Martinow | Goldington Family Centre | Centre Director |
| Len Simkins | Bedfordshire Child Poverty Action Group | Chair |
| Lindsay Mitton | Bedfordshire County Council | Senior Economic Development Officer - Economic Growth |
| Louise Watson | Bedfordshire County Council | INFORM 0-19 - Outreach Officer |
| Malcolm Newsam | Bedfordshire County Council | Director of Children's Services |
| Mark Smith | CVS North & Mid Bedfordshire | Information Officer |
| Maureen Baker | BPHA | Community Development Manager |
| Moira Sharwood | Jobcentre Plus | Beds & Herts District Office |
| Nicola Lee | Bedfordshire County Council | Development Officer Children's Centres |
| Nigel Plummer | Jephson Housing Association | Housing Estates Officer |
| Pat Horn | Bedfordshire CPAG | |
| Paul Buckland | Bedford YMCA | Chief Executive Officer |
| Rob Burton | Luton Rights | Development Officer |
| Roy Waterfield | Mid Bedfordshire District Council | Director of Community Services |
| Sarah Chapman | Christian Family Care | Accommodation Services Manager - Bedford Women's Refuge |
| Sarah Hughes | Bedfordshire County Council | Enterprise & Regeneration Manager - Economic Growth |
| Sarah Smith | Bedfordshire County Council | Development Officer Children's Centres |
| Sharon Potter | Jephson Homes Housing Association | Housing Admin Officer |
| Sheila Bissell | Bedfordshire County Council | Primary Advisory Support Teacher |
| Tom Shaw | Bedfordshire County Council | Community Intelligence Assistant - Corporate Policy Group |
| Vanda Dray | Christian Family Care | Manager, Children & Families Support Services - Manor Farm Family Centre |

APOLOGIES

(Alphabetical order)

Total: 21

| Name | Organisation | Position |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| Carol Axten | Bedford & District CAB | Advice Manager |
| Charnjeet Dhillon | Bedfordshire County Council | INFORM 0-19 Manager |
| Clive Chapman | Bedfordshire County Council | Policy Team Leader Corporate Policy Group |
| Cllr Madeline Russell | Bedfordshire County Council | Leader of the Council & Chairman of Bedfordshire Countywide Partnership |
| Joe Greene | Bedfordshire CPAG | Secretary |
| Katie Theodore | Bedfordshire County Council | Children's Centre Development Manager - Early Years & Extended Services |
| Linda Johnson | Home-Start (South Beds) | Senior Coordinator |
| Lisa McIntosh | Jobcentre Plus | Childcare Partnership Manager Beds & Herts District Office |
| Liz Morgan | Disability Resource Centre | Information Manager |
| Mary Jurance | Christian Family Care | Community Services Manager |
| Peter Doyle | Bedford Credit Union | Chairman |
| Philippa Harris | Bedford & District Citizens Advice Bureau | Chief Executive Officer |
| Samantha Stubbs | Aragon Housing Association | Homeless Tenancy Support Officer |
| Sandra Einon | Mid Bedfordshire District Council | Mid Beds LSP Manager |
| Sarah Harris | NCH | Family Worker |
| Sue Henderson | Christian Family Care | Chief Executive Officer |
| Sue Nelson | Bedfordshire County Council | Head of Corporate Policy |
| Tanya Richardson | Bedfordshire CPAG | |
| Wendie Lovatt | Home-Start North & Mid Beds | Scheme Manager |
| Wendy Davies | Ormiston Children & Families Trust | Service Leader |
| Yasmin Mahmood | Bedford Borough Council | Principle Community Strategy and Diversity Officer |

APPENDIX 2

Child poverty in Britain - national picture Speaker notes



Child Poverty in Britain – the national perspective

Hilary Fisher, Director
Campaign to End Child Poverty



What is poverty?

- “Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or are at least widely encouraged and approved, in the societies in which they belong.”

Peter Townsend, 1978, *Poverty in the United Kingdom*

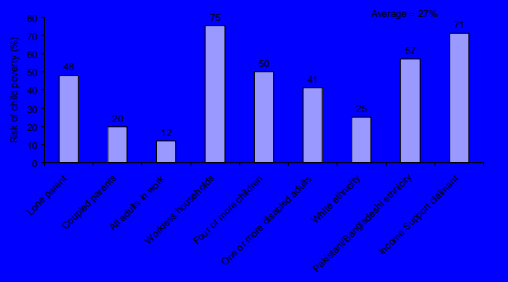


UK child poverty

- One in three children are living in poverty – up to half in some urban areas
- Children are now the most at-risk group
- Passed from generation to generation
- Currently costs each of us £600 per year - £40 billion across the economy



Which children Face the Most Risk?



Source: HBAI



Risk of experiencing poverty

| Nation/ Region | Risk of poverty (%) |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| England | 29 |
| North East | 32 |
| North West and Merseyside | 31 |
| Yorkshire and the Humber | 30 |
| East Midlands | 27 |
| West Midlands | 32 |
| Eastern | 24 |
| London | 41 |
| Inner London | 51 |
| Outer London | 35 |
| South East | 22 |
| South West | 26 |
| Scotland | 25 |
| Wales | 28 |
| Northern Ireland | 27 |

(% of children in poverty presented as 3 year running average (2003/04-2005/06) After Housing Costs)



Parents Perceptions

- Poverty is the *'drip drip erosion of your soul'*
- *"People [in poverty] don't get the same choices as other people...do we heat or eat?"*
- *"Poverty affects your lifestyle and makes you depressed. It is unhealthy for children to see parents in that state."*
- *"The stigma your kids feel...you feel as if you're punishing the kids, but when you've £2 a day for food sometimes you just can't get it."*
- *'Poverty means children miss out.'*



Education

- Children on low incomes more likely to:
- Show a lower level of attainment by 2 years
- Be overtaken by a less able child born into a wealthier family by 6 years
- Miss out on school trips, music and games activities that cost money
- Be unable to afford school uniforms
- Be bullied at school
- Leave school at 16 with fewer qualifications



Children's Perceptions

- *"I just want to fit in the group...people take the mick out of me because I can't afford things. Like my trainers are messy and they don't suit me and I need new trainers and new clothes...I don't get decent clothes like everyone else does."*
- *"Some kids can be really cruel even about what you're wearing. It's sort of like they can be friends with someone and then disown them because they haven't got say Adidas track suit bottoms on."*



Family

- Many families tend to move in and out of poverty – don't move far above poverty line
- 1.3 million children living in "severe poverty"
- 1 million children live in bad housing
- Some families particularly vulnerable
 - black and ethnic minority families,
 - lone parent and
 - large families, and particularly
 - those affected by disability



Life Experience

- Children from low income families are excluded from activities such as having friends home for tea, family outings
 - *"We just couldn't afford to go on holiday, there's never any money left to save, it's just gone....I would like to be able to say let's just go out for the day but I can't."* (parent)
 - *"If I could change something I would do something like bring the beach closer kind of thing so we could get out more."* (child)



Health

- Poor children are more likely to:
- Be born too small – increased risk of infant death and chronic diseases in later life
- Have shorter lives
- Have bad diets - increased risk of obesity
- Have increased levels of stress and decreased levels of confidence
- Be living in bad housing - increased risk of physical and mental health problems



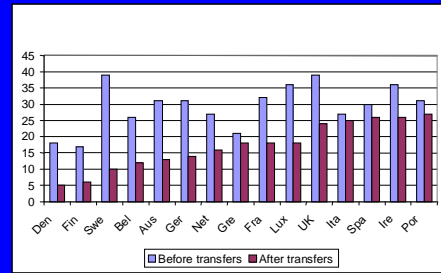
Money

Families on low incomes;

- Are financially vulnerable – unable to have bank accounts or to access lower rates for loans or fuel costs
- Often go without basic necessities such as proper clothing, a healthy diet or a warm home.
- Pay higher prices than better-off families for basic necessities like gas, electricity.
- Pay higher rates of interest between 160% and 800%. as hire-purchase or doorstep lending are the only choices available



Impact of Social Policy



Source: Bradshaw, 2004



Eliminating child poverty

- Income adequacy, in and out of work
- Employment - better sustainable jobs, not just more jobs, supported by good quality affordable childcare
- Education to ensure all children have full access to the requirements – meals, uniforms and activities
- Improving access to affordable housing
- Improving access to good quality health care



What Can Local Authorities Do

- Poverty proof all policies – make each one consistent with eradicating child poverty.
- Ensure policies are joined up across every department and that they are working closely and effectively together.
- Identify and provide the specific support children experiencing poverty need for full access to a good education e.g. are school trips free?
- Ensure good quality affordable child care is available to all.

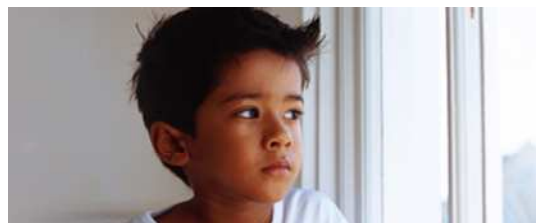


The Campaign to End Child Poverty

- A coalition of over 100 organisations
- Lead a public facing campaign to maintain the current pressure on Government to commit the resources necessary to meet the child poverty targets.
- We focus on:
 - Raising awareness
 - Informing the public about child poverty
 - Campaigning for change



The Campaign to End Child Poverty is working to ensure the Government keeps its promise to millions of children and young people. Join us and help make a difference to children's lives.



www.endchildpoverty.org.uk



APPENDIX 3

Child poverty in Bedfordshire - facts & figures Speaker notes

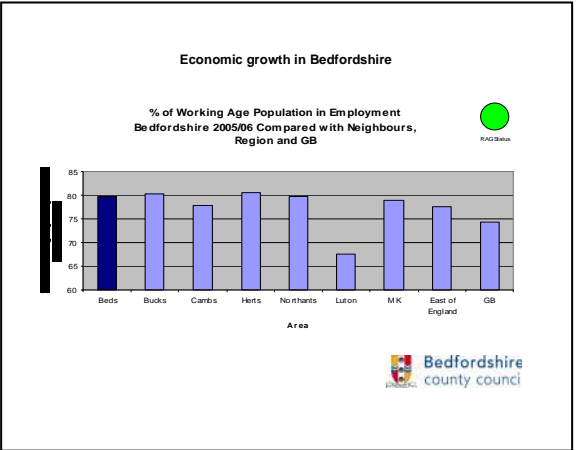
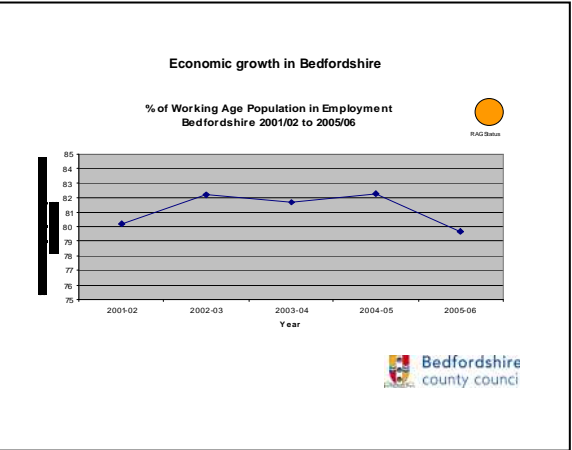
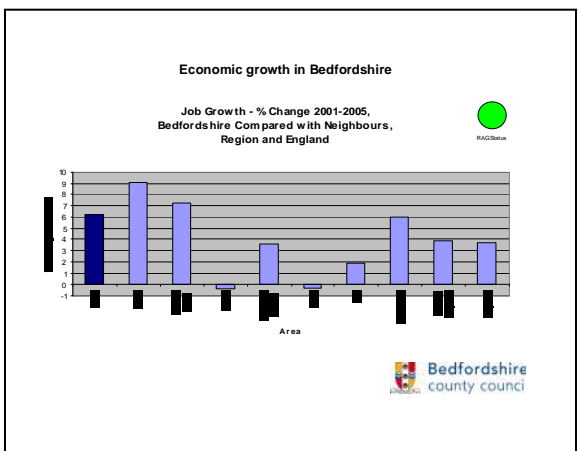
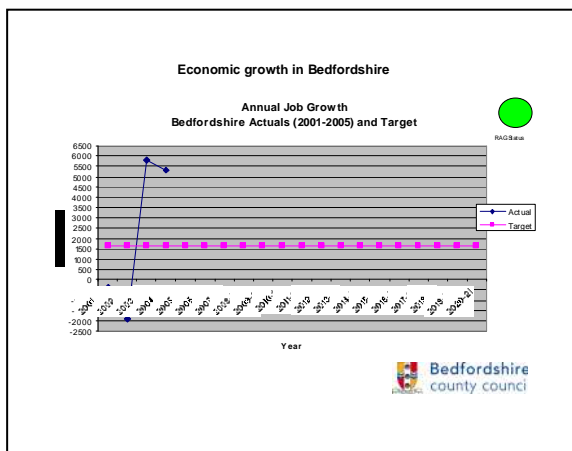
Child Poverty in Bedfordshire Facts and Figures

Sarah Hughes - Enterprise and Regeneration Manager
Lindsay Mitton – Senior Economic Development Officer

Bedfordshire County Council, Economic Growth Group

Objectives

- To provide an overview of economic growth in Bedfordshire.
- Present statistical findings to help build a picture of child poverty in Bedfordshire.
- Identify those at greatest risk of child poverty in Bedfordshire.
- Implications for economic growth.
- Draw conclusions to aid discussion.



Measuring child poverty in Bedfordshire

- Child poverty is complex and particularly difficult to quantify.
- 2004 Indices of Multiple Deprivation and its Supplementary Index - the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index - at Lower Super Output level.
- DWP Household Below Average Income (HBAI) report 1994/95 – 2005/06 – at regional and national level.
- DWP benefit claimant data – at ward level.
- ACORN profiling, which classifies a population in terms of general lifestyle and demographic behaviour by way of their postcode.



Child Poverty in Bedfordshire – Facts and Figures

Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2004, Bedfordshire SOA areas

1. Caudwell
2. Castle
3. Kingsbrook
4. Harpur
5. Caudwell
6. Kingsbrook
7. Goldington
8. Castle
9. Manshead
10. Kempston North
11. Goldington

- Super Output Areas (SOAs) have populations of between 1,000 and 1,500.
- Bedfordshire has 4 entries in the top 10% most deprived SOAs nationally and 11 entries in the top 20%.
- The majority of the most deprived areas are located in Bedford Borough and urban areas of South Beds.
- There are also small isolated pockets in Mid Beds in the urban areas of Sandy, Biggleswade and Flitwick.
- Main issues relating to Education and Skills, Income, Living Environment and Crime, Barriers to Housing and Services.



Child Poverty in Bedfordshire – Facts and Figures

Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2004 Supplementary Index - the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index

Bedfordshire has 8 entries in the top 10% most deprived Super Output Areas (SOA) nationally on the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI).

The percentage of children (up to 16 years) in each SOA that live in families that are income deprived. The IDACI is also closely correlated with pupils who are eligible for free school meals, who are known to perform significantly worse at Key Stage examinations than other pupils and are at risk of becoming NEET.

| | | | |
|------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Castle | 68% | Goldington | 52% |
| Kingsbrook | 57% | Kingsbrook | 47% |
| Caudwell | 54% | Goldington | 46% |
| Caudwell | 53% | Kempston North | 46% |



Child Poverty in Bedfordshire – Facts and Figures

Household Below Average Income (HBAI) report 1994/95-2005/06

- Measures child poverty rates based on children living in households below 60% of the median and is adjusted by household size and composition as a proxy for material living standards.
- Defines a child as: "All those under 16 or an unmarried 16-18 year old in full time non-advanced education."
- 24% of children (288,000) in the East of England are living in poverty, compared to the national average of 30% (3.8 million).
- Groups identified as at greatest risk of child poverty are:

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|--|-----|
| Workless households | 78% | Lone parent | 50% |
| Lone parent not working | 75% | In receipt of Incapacity Benefit | 50% |
| Couple both not in work | 74% | No savings | 49% |
| In receipt of income support | 73% | Four or more children in family | 47% |
| Pakistani/Bangladeshi ethnicity | 66% | One or more disabled adults in household | 42% |
| Local authority tenure | 58% | Receipt of Working Tax Credit | 34% |
| Black or Black British ethnicity | 51% | Receipt of Child Tax Credit | 29% |



Child Poverty in Bedfordshire – Facts and Figures

Number of children in Bedfordshire dependent on workless benefits

Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance and Pension Credit

| | |
|---|--------|
| Number of children dependent on workless benefits aged 0-4 | 3,760 |
| Number of children dependent on workless benefits aged 5-15 | 7,390 |
| Total | 11,150 |

(Source: DWP, April 2006)



Child Poverty in Bedfordshire – Facts and Figures

Bedfordshire wards with the highest number of children aged 0-4 dependent on workless benefits (IS, JSA, IB/SDA, PC) in Beds

| Local Authority Name | Ward Name | Dependent Children Aged 0-4 | % Dependent Children Aged 0-4 |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| South Bedfordshire | Manshead | 130 | 37.2% |
| Bedford | Kingsbrook | 270 | 35.7% |
| Bedford | Goldington | 245 | 34.5% |
| Bedford | Kempston North | 110 | 32.5% |
| South Bedfordshire | Tithe Farm | 115 | 28.8% |
| South Bedfordshire | Houghton Hall | 160 | 28.2% |
| Bedford | Queen's Park | 190 | 27.3% |
| South Bedfordshire | Parkside | 110 | 27.2% |
| Bedford | Caudwell | 200 | 26.9% |
| South Bedfordshire | Stanbridge | 25 | 22.6% |

(Source: DWP, April 2006)



Child Poverty in Bedfordshire – Facts and Figures

Bedfordshire wards with the highest number of children aged 5-15 dependent on workless benefits (IS, JSA, IB/SDA, PC) in Beds

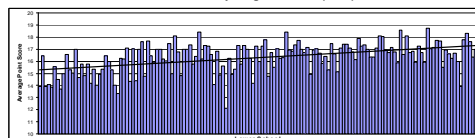
| Local Authority Name | Ward Name | Dependent Children Aged 5-15 | % Dependent Children Aged 5-15 |
|----------------------|----------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Bedford | Kingsbrook | 490 | 34.7% |
| Bedford | Queen's Park | 430 | 32.7% |
| Bedford | Caudwell | 445 | 31.2% |
| South Bedfordshire | Tithe Farm | 275 | 29.7% |
| Bedford | Goldington | 445 | 29.6% |
| Bedford | Kempston North | 240 | 26.5% |
| South Bedfordshire | Parkside | 205 | 23.8% |
| Bedford | Eastcotts | 135 | 23.4% |
| South Bedfordshire | Northfields | 240 | 22.6% |
| South Bedfordshire | Manshead | 165 | 22.0% |

(Source: DWP, April 2006)



Child Poverty in Bedfordshire – Facts and Figures

Acorn Index - Key Stage 1 results (2007)

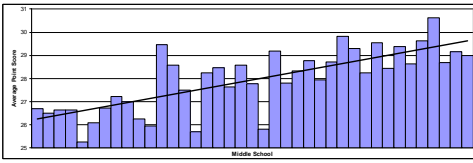


- Each Lower School is categorised based on where the majority of pupils live.
- The school can then be characterised according to its ACORN classification.
- This is illustrated above with schools who have the majority of pupils from the most deprived postcode areas to the left of the chart.
- When plotted against Key Stage 1 results, there is a weak link between Lower School attainment and deprivation.



Child Poverty in Bedfordshire – Facts and Figures

Acorn Index - Key Stage 2 examinations (2007)

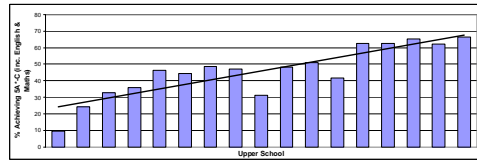


- Each Middle School can be characterised according to its ACORN classification.
- This is illustrated above with schools who have the majority of pupils from the most deprived postcode areas to the left of the chart.
- When plotted against Key Stage 2 results, there is a clear link between Middle School attainment and deprivation.
- Extra curricular activities may be more important.



Child Poverty in Bedfordshire – Facts and Figures

Acorn Index - Key Stage 4 examinations (GCSE results 2007)



- Each Upper School can be characterised according to its ACORN classification.
- This is illustrated above with schools who have the majority of pupils from the most deprived postcode areas to the left of the chart.
- There is a high correlation between deprivation and the outcomes of Key Stage 4 GCSE results.



Conclusions - Facts and Figures

- Child poverty is complex and it is difficult to accurately quantify a child poverty 'rate' for Bedfordshire.
- The Indices of Multiple Deprivation identify the percentage of children that are living in families that are income deprived but unfortunately cannot be tracked over time and therefore don't give us an indication of trends.
- Main deprivation issues are largely centred in Bedford, with pockets in urban areas of South and Mid Beds.
- 11,150 children dependent on workless benefits (April 2006).
- Children living in workless households and with lone parents are particularly at risk of poverty, as are those living in a family headed by someone from an ethnic minority, particularly of Pakistani/Bangladeshi origin, children from large families and those with a disabled person in the household.
- The correlation between deprivation and educational results grows stronger as children move from Lower to Upper Schools.



Implications for economic growth

- Unemployment and worklessness – major factors in child poverty – limits an individual's contribution to and benefit from sustainable economic growth in Bedfordshire.
- Economic inefficiency and inequality amongst minority groups.
- Clear trend of levels of deprivation influencing attainment levels and broad range of evidence that links child poverty to later income, employment and skills outcomes.
- Tackling deprivation in Bedfordshire – Key drivers are Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement, National Indicators.



Economic Growth Service

- Priorities – create (at least) 50,000 new jobs locally whilst building strong, prosperous sustainable communities.
- Supports a wide range of initiatives designed to tackle deprivation and support community regeneration in Bedfordshire - focussing on most deprived wards.
- Strategic interventions – Investing in Communities (Encouraging Enterprise and Entrepreneurship / Healthy Steps to Employment), Europe co-financing projects.
- Working in partnership to achieve specific outcomes – including BPHA, South Beds and Mid Beds District Councils, Bedford Borough Council, Bedford Credit Union, welfare rights organisations, key funder of the Tackling Poverty Together group.
- Community Cohesion – including migrant workers and BME communities.



A training and employment fair in South Bedfordshire held in early 2007, attended by 772 people of which 228 were from a priority estate



Child Poverty in Bedfordshire Facts and Figures

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Bedfordshire County Council, Economic Growth Group



APPENDIX 4

Campaigning against child poverty Workshop notes

Facilitator

Len Simkins - Chair of Bedfordshire Child Poverty Action Group.

Attendance at the workshop

| Name | Organisation |
|---------------------------|---|
| Alexandra Austin | Bedfordshire County Council - Trading Standards |
| Brian Madigan | Bedfordshire County Council - 16+ Support & Housing |
| Cllr Apu Bagchi | Bedford Borough Council |
| Cllr Ken Lynch | Mid Bedfordshire District Council |
| Hilary Fisher | End Child Poverty |
| Len Simkins (Facilitator) | Bedfordshire Child Poverty Action Group |
| Mark Smith | CVS North & Mid Bedfordshire |
| Pat Horn | Bedfordshire CPAG |
| Sarah Smith | Bedfordshire County Council - Children's Centres |

Aims of workshop

This workshop was aimed at participants who were new to the subject area and who wanted to increase their understanding of the issues. It gave an update of national and local campaigns and looked at how campaigning on child poverty issues could be developed further in Bedfordshire.

Len distributed a paper at the workshop that gave an update on national and local child poverty campaigns organised by CPAG. A copy of this paper is available from Len at: len.simkins@infotrain.co.uk



Issues discussed

- **Need a child poverty network in Bedfordshire**
 - Need to map other networks
 - Should link with other organisations e.g. Children's Centres, schools
 - Could link in with the national End Child Poverty Campaign

- **Need to "sell" child poverty**
 - Child poverty week?
 - Personality as head of network?
 - Should stress the real costs of poverty
 - Should emphasise that child poverty costs to society more than fixing it

- **Need to improve co-ordination of local statistics and information**
 - More press releases
 - Stories to counter stereotypes
 - Local interest stories

- **Could use internet / IT etc for publicity/networking**
 - Consider networking sites such as Facebook

APPENDIX 5

Working to tackle child poverty Workshop notes

Facilitator

Anne Cheveralls - Development and Commissioning Manager for Bedfordshire County Council (Children's Centres)

Attendance at the workshop

| Name | Organisation |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Anne Cheveralls (Facilitator) | Bedfordshire County Council |
| Avinash Mandalia | Bedford Community Rights Centre |
| Bob Baker | Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service |
| Carolyn Compston | Aragon Housing Association |
| Cllr David Reedman | Bedfordshire County Council |
| Cllr Pat Olney | Bedford Borough Council |
| Derry Dynes | Family Groups Bedford |
| Gary Johnson | Bedfordshire County Council - Welfare Rights Service |
| Gordon Johnston | Bedford Borough Council |
| Hazel Mitchell | |
| Kate Martinow | Goldington Family Centre |
| Louise Watson | Bedfordshire County Council |
| Moira Sharwood | Jobcentre Plus |
| Nicola Lee | Bedfordshire County Council |
| Nigel Plummer | Jephson Housing Association |
| Roy Waterfield | Mid Bedfordshire District Council |
| Sarah Chapman | Christian Family Care |
| Sharon Potter | Jephson Homes Housing Association |
| Tom Shaw | Bedfordshire County Council |

Aims of workshop

This workshop was aimed at professionals who work with children in poverty. It helped share good practice and focussed on some of the issues facing projects working with families and children in Bedfordshire.

Issues discussed

- Central point for information, signposting
- Children's Centre Services, at central and outreach
- CAF referrals via Children's Centre
- Co-ordination of local services, multi-agency working
- Building relationships, working with parents standards - warm & welcoming
- Toys, equipment, library, furniture schemes, recycle, tidy tips
- Educate on budgets via workshops
- Clear communication and marketing

APPENDIX 6

Strategic planning to tackle child poverty Workshop Notes

Facilitator

Sarah Hughes - Enterprise & Regeneration Manager, Bedfordshire County Council (Economic Growth)

Attendance at the workshop

| Name | Organisation |
|----------------------------|---|
| Alex Francis | Beds & Luton Economic Development Partnership |
| Caron Brooks | Go-East |
| David Brewer | Bedfordshire County Council |
| Dee Dell | Mark Rutherford School |
| Dinah Ames | Bedfordshire County Council |
| Doug McWilliam | Youth Matters |
| Jane Owen | CVS Mid & North Bedfordshire |
| Jenny Hedges | Mid Bedfordshire CAB |
| Lindsay Mitton | Bedfordshire County Council |
| Maureen Baker | BPHA |
| Paul Buckland | Bedford YMCA |
| Sarah Hughes (Facilitator) | Bedfordshire County Council |

Aims of workshop

This workshop was aimed at those involved with LSPs and other strategic networks. It explored how child poverty issues can be incorporated into LAAs, Community Plans etc.

Issues discussed

Issues to challenge through robust strategy

- Housing / cost / affordability particularly of private rented housing
- Access to Services
 - Genuinely meeting the needs of the customer
 - Should be able to fast track / bypass certain systems (eg GP appointments)
- Taking responsibility
 - Unfair banking practises eg interest on overdrafts
 - Practises of utility companies to those unable to pay bills discriminate against those living in poverty.

What is needed in a Strategy

- Political will
- Strong VCS
- Position statement on child poverty
 - Data sources
 - Political commitment
- Must tackle causes of poverty
 - National / regional / local
 - Grass roots
- Must support range of actions and targeted interventions
- SMART targets and measure in 3 – 5 years for impact assessment
 - Short and Long term actions required
 - Consider new CP PI in new basket of indicators (refer to technical guidance)
 - More important to have local PIs to unpick and tackle routes into and out of poverty
- End user input
- SCS tries to get right balance
 - LAA opportunity to join up delivery
 - Target households in poverty to get to children

Delivering Strategy

- Commissioning and Procurement
 - Fair / open / accessible
 - Wider engagement in strategy and planning

Measuring strategy impact and effectiveness

- 'Poverty Proofing' (akin to rural proofing)
 - TPT should lead on this
 - develop toolkit to carry out poverty proofing
 - training and building capacity

APPENDIX 7

Seminar evaluation report

No. of people at Seminar = 45

26 evaluation forms were completed, a return rate of 58%.

Not all delegates answered all questions - the percentages given in the following analysis are based on the numbers who answered the specific question.

1. Do you feel that the seminar met its aims?

- To raise awareness of the poverty issues relating to children, young people and their families in Bedfordshire - creating a better understanding of the scale and impact of child poverty in the county.
- To raise awareness of, and identify gaps in, the support services available for children, young people and families experiencing financial exclusion and to share good practice and strategies to combat financial exclusion.
- To facilitate networking, information exchange and partnership working between agencies involved in tackling child poverty.
- To generate new ideas to help Local Strategic Partnerships, the Countywide Assembly, the voluntary sector and other strategic networks in action planning and developing positive strategic and community outcomes.

Yes - fully

18
(69%)

Yes - partly

7
(27%)

No

1
(4%)

Comments

- All the stated aims were achieved. Excellent speakers for the seminar and workshops
- Closing gaps is a difficult process
- Identifying gaps not so clear
- More information needed on the services provided by the wider partnerships. Too many working alone to tackle the same problems.
- Perhaps we could have personal experiences from a range of people having lived in "poverty".
- This is in no way a criticism - it is such a huge issue there is no way you could fully meet these aims with just one event
- Very good discussions and networking
- Very well structured
- Was very helpful in discovering the wide variety of helping agencies

2. Did the conference fulfil your personal expectations?

Yes - fully

17
(65%)

Yes – partly

8
(31%)

No

1
(4%)

Comments

- Actually exceeded expectations
- Although a lot of the stats were 3 years out of date
- Far more interesting than I thought it would be. Very relevant to the work I am involved in.
- Helps to know what agencies offer and it feels there is a wide variety of helping organisations. It is essential everyone involved knows of others
- Less management talk please and more understandable points to share
- Rather short of time to explore fully

3. Is there any practical, or strategic, action that you, or your organisation, will be taking as a direct result of attending the seminar?

Yes 15 (58%)

No 11 (42%)

If yes, please describe the action

- Be involved in process of developing more usable statistics. Try to attend VCS Reference Group
- Both BCRC and FL(B) will be asked to place their information with all Children's Centres in the area. Furniture Link needs to leaflet the locality regularly as there is still a gap in awareness of the opportunity to donate for re-use.
- Considering the database of information that we hold that could possibly contribute to the picture of child poverty in Mid Bedfordshire
- Ensuring child poverty is considered in the formation of the delivery plan for SCS (the new LAA)
- Feedback information and discuss what is the action to be taken or follow-up
- Giving information on Children's Centres to new and existing tenants
- Have requested a budget of £100,000 to establish Mid Beds Credit Union. Continuation of funding recommended for Christian Family Care. Continued support of roll-out of Children's Centres
- I can really see the Children's Centres being a platform for tackling poverty
- Making more links with housing associations and with initiatives to get people into work
- Promote the work of tackling poverty through Children's Centres
- Promoting child poverty issues amongst voluntary group
- Re-emphasise use of and links to Children/Family Centres
- Try to get involved in the LAA and provide input
- Trying to be more aware of issues and strategies for helping families in poverty
- Will feed back to department - plenty of food for thought, especially regarding definition of child poverty
- No action apart from promoting the benefits of working in partnership to achieve the same aim
- Not because I wouldn't like to - more free, good food at school, but because LEA funding is inadequate.

4. Please give your opinion on the different aspects of the seminar.

| Speakers: | Very good | Good | Fair | Poor | Comments |
|---|-------------|-------------|------------|-----------|---|
| Child poverty in Britain - national picture | 11 (42%) | 12 (46%) | 2 (8%) | 1 (4%) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content excellent but speech too quiet. • Screens too dense with information |
| Child poverty in Beds. - local facts and figures | 10 (40%) | 11 (44%) | 3 (12%) | 1 (4%) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good to have copy of presentation as too complicated on screen. • Content thorough |
| Child poverty in Beds. - practical effects | 7 (29%) | 10 (42%) | 5 (21%) | 2 (8%) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, meaningful, relevant and human. |

General comments on speakers / presentations:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A little fast through the statistics • Could not hear very well at the back • It would be good if notes could be circulated • Powerpoints and handouts too busy and confusing. Please keep it basic. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound quality was poor • Speakers were excellent • Very poor acoustics, found it hard to hear • Sound in the room affected quality |
|---|---|

| Workshops: | Very good | Good | Fair | Poor | Comments |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|---|
| Campaigning against child poverty | 5 (83%) | 1 (17%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well organised. Discussion well stimulated. Useful shared information. Information on children's Centres very encouraging. Hopeful note. • Do not feel that the objectives were fulfilled • Was part of presenting workshop |
| Working to tackle child poverty | 3 (38%) | 4 (50%) | 1 (12%) | 0 (0%) | |

| | | | | | |
|--|------------|------------|------------|-----------|---|
| Strategic planning to tackle child poverty | 3 (33%) | 5 (56%) | 1 (11%) | 0 (0%) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent interaction between individuals and organisations. Useful information discussed. • Excellent workshop • Need to identify outcomes • Could you offer a summary from the workshops by email? |
|--|------------|------------|------------|-----------|---|

Organisation:

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|---|
| Administration - pre-seminar (infotrain) | 14 (54%) | 11 (42%) | 1 (4%) | 0 (0%) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent as usual • Need longer than 10 days' notice of event in future |
| Administration - at the seminar (infotrain) | 13 (50%) | 11 (42%) | 1 (4%) | 1 (4%) | |
| Management of seminar and role of Chair | 8 (31%) | 13 (50%) | 4 (15%) | 1 (4%) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not easy to hear, but professional manner |
| Seminar venue – location, facilities etc. | 6 (23%) | 7 (27%) | 11 (42%) | 2 (8%) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand reasons for choice of venue • Need PA to hear speakers well • Poor acoustics |
| Overall opinion of the seminar | 9 (35%) | 15 (57%) | 1 (4%) | 1 (4%) | |

5. This year the TPT Group has arranged a half-day seminar (with another to follow in 2008) instead of a full-day conference. Which format do you prefer?

Half-day seminar Full-day conference Not sure

6. Should anti-poverty events be arranged regularly in Bedfordshire?

Yes No

If yes, how frequently?

6 monthly Annually

7. Please give any other comments about today's event.

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall very informative with links to my organisation work area. • Really well-organised and some excellent facts • Refreshing to see positive attitudes and people who are interested in change. It would be good to receive a full summary of outcomes of the workshops to fully see what others' views and ideas were. • Useful • More useful than I expected it to be! Well done • Content and intentions first-class • Very well organised. Well done! • All working singly - need to raise awareness of other groups/organisations • Annual events with evaluations • Health care providers noticeable by their absence. • Need to establish performance management framework for reducing child poverty in Bedfordshire • Were MPs invited? Also total lack of Health Service representatives and of public transport providers. Thanks for a worthwhile event. • Felt very frustrated as could not hear the speakers. Format was dull and desperate need of a microphone! Hall too big. |
|--|