



Poverty2Solutions Request to meet with Harriet Harman, MP

Summary of request

I'm writing on behalf of a coalition of three groups with direct experiences of poverty based in London (ATD Fourth World), Leeds (Dole Animators) and Stockton-on-Tees (Thrive Teesside).

A specific policy ask: to look at calling on the Government (and the Labour opposition) to commit to the creation of a Socio-Economic duty has been agreed upon by the three groups and they are inspired and encouraged by the efforts made to introduce just such a duty in the past, the work taking this forward recently, the Localising Social Rights proposal led by Just Fair and also by the developments progressed in Scotland.

The group would really welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss your thoughts on the Socio-Economic duty and to explore:

- (a) The feasibility of once again trying to get such a duty passed into legislation and,
- (b) How people with direct experience of poverty can support the work going forward

People with direct experience not only want their voices to be heard, but to also find ways of using their voice and are able to hold politicians to account for the very real impact that their decisions have on their life. People with direct experience are 'experts by experience'. They are knowledgeable, solution focussed and have the motivation to create changes that improve livelihoods

We are asking to have some time set aside with you (and/or others who might like to attend such a meeting - for example, former special advisers who were integral to the development of the original policy proposal and/or those who you know have an ongoing interest in this area).

This meeting can take place in Addington Square with a representative of people with direct experience of poverty living in your constituency

Poverty2Solutions

Poverty2Solutions are a collective of 3 active organisations who have direct experience of poverty: Atd Fourth World; Dole Animators and Thrive Teesside

Atd Fourth World hold a vision of a world without poverty, a society where each person is respected. Poverty is an affront to human dignity, and people in poverty have unique knowledge and experience that can lower the barriers separating people and communities. ATD Fourth World is a movement that gathers people from all backgrounds in order to think, act, and live together differently.

The local organisation uniting with Poverty2Solutions is based in Addington Square, London. Their 'Giving Poverty a Voice' project strives to support people experiencing poverty and inequality in London to engage and participate in their communities and have a say on decisions that affect their lives. The project also seeks to build networks with grassroots and community organisations across the borough and the capital to strengthen links between diverse experiences and perceptions of poverty as well as planning meetings with local and regional policy makers

Dole Animators are a group of benefit claimants based in Leeds who have taken part in a piece of qualitative research exploring lived experiences of Welfare Reforms. This piece of research led to the development of an animated documentary ("All in this together") about the reality of the impact of Government Welfare Reforms

Thrive Teesside are a local charity based in Stockton-on-Tees. It is a grass roots organisation which was developed as a direct response to the needs faced by financially and socially excluded members of the community living throughout Teesside. Its charitable aim is the 'relief of poverty in Stockton on Tees and the surrounding Boroughs'. Thrive have a track record of working closely with and for people in deprived communities...they have already begun to make a difference to not only people's lives, but by challenging those with power, be it from the Job Centre, Police or private firms. They have had to see problems afresh from the eyes of their clients.

More recently, Thrive have brought together civic and business leaders around the table with people living in Stockton and have begun a journey through the Stockton Poverty Truth Commission.

Background

Since 2016, the three groups with direct experiences of poverty have worked with Ruth Patrick (York University) and graphic designer Dan Farley to develop visual blueprints to what might make a difference in solving poverty. Each group came up with their own solutions, and worked in partnership with Ruth and Dan to design and visualise what they felt might make a real difference in reducing rates of poverty in the UK.

The three final designs were launched in July 2017 at an event in the Houses of Parliament, hosted by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Poverty. What was notable from this project was the extent of crossover between the solutions the three groups identified, both between the groups, and in terms of what other anti-poverty organisations have highlighted as important areas for change.

The group has been working with and speaking to a range of organisations (including Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Child Poverty Action Group, Just Fair and other groups made up of experts through experience) to build on it's initial work on solutions to poverty. Throughout 2018, a campaign pertaining to progressing the Socio Economic Duty has been developing and the collective are working on ensuring that the voices of people in poverty are better heard in policy and media debates around this. The collective feel very strongly in relation to how the Duty can put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making

There has always been a long term commitment from the 3 groups to continue to collectively work together and further develop their poverty2solutions piece of work. It is intended that the collective will develop relationships of mutual respect, ensuring the 3 groups are viewed as key stakeholders, acknowledged for their commitment to looking at solutions to poverty and creating a good society.



Our story so far

TIME LINE



2016

We developed our solutions to Poverty based on our experiences

In 2016 ATD Fourth World, Dole Animators and Thrive started working with Ruth Patrick, a researcher at the University of York and Dan Farley, a designer. We ran a series of workshops and developed some of the policy changes that we believed could make a lasting difference to the lives of those living in poverty. We then produced them in infographic / poster format.



2017

We launched our proposals at a parliamentary event

Alongside the Webb Memorial Trust and the All Party Parliamentary Group on Poverty, we brought people with experience of poverty together with MPs, policy makers, and key figures from the third sector.

2018

We developed our ideas and started working with other groups who want to end UK poverty

We met up with other groups who are working to end UK poverty - including Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Leeds Poverty Truth Commission, Hope Rising Action Group, Salford Poverty Truth Commission and Expert Series to discuss ideas for solving UK poverty and for working together. The APLE collective was formed from this work.



2018

We developed a policy ask

We worked alongside policy experts from a range of organisations (including Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Child Poverty Action Group, Just Fair) to develop a specific policy ask. We chose to focus our initial attention on calling on the Government (and the Labour opposition) to commit to the creation of a Socio-Economic duty.

APLE
collective



Next steps

To progress the next phase of the collective, the following actions have been agreed

1. To meet with Harriet Harman you to discuss thoughts on the Socio-Economic duty and to explore:
 - (a) The feasibility of once again trying to get such a duty passed into legislation and,
 - (b) How people with direct experience of poverty can support the work going forward
2. To progress the work with Just Fair – Localising Social Rights in England. If successful with funding, Thrive, Atd Fourth World and Dole Animators will work in collaboration with Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPRP and community links to build and develop community led monitoring and advocacy of social rights. The purpose of this project proposal is to build a social movement in support of social rights, namely the right to education, adequate housing, healthcare, food, social security and an adequate standard of living. Public authorities hold the main responsibility to realise these rights, and businesses, civil society groups and society in general should contribute to create the conditions for their fulfilment
3. To visit the Get Heard project in Scotland and gather information around the development and implementation of the Fairer Duty Scotland. The Poverty Alliance Network have agreed to meet with the Poverty2Solutions collective in February

I hope the information provided fully informs you of the work of the collective to date and clarify our reasons for requesting to meet you

The work of the Poverty2Solutions collective is an innovative approach, especially in trying to merge and blend expertise of experience. The three groups have been supported to work together for a number of years and this work has culminated in a specific piece of work going forward.

I look forward to your response

Tracey Herrington

Thrive

For and on behalf of the Poverty2Solutions