

5 Point Charter

END CHILD POVERTY NETWORK CYMRU
RHWYDWAITH DILEU TLODI PLANT CYMRU

The End Child Poverty Network Cymru is calling on the next UK Government to prioritise the following 5 Key themes which will contribute towards the cross-party goal of ending child poverty by 2020.

1. Address income poverty and create fair employment

- In-work benefits such as Child Tax Credits provide a much needed income boost to families in low paid jobs and these should be increased to lift families above the poverty threshold
- UK Government should work effectively with the Welsh Assembly Government to improve the take up of tax credits and benefits, to ensure that families get what they are entitled to. Clear and obtainable targets for increasing take up should be set
- Minimum wage levels should be increased to ensure that work is a route out of poverty
- Minimum wage levels for 16-17 year olds should be on a par with adults given that many of costs are the same (food, energy etc). UK Government should progressively look to close the gap with the aim of creating a flat rate for all
- The disincentives to work and work based training should be addressed. Households who move from benefit to work or training often lose a significant proportion of their income e.g. free school meals benefits, housing benefits etc. The UK Government could look to set up a welfare commission to examine the challenges and barriers
- Work with employers to ensure that the skills of employees match the requirements of the employers.

2. Address the safety net for parents and carers

- Ensure that households who find themselves temporarily away from the labour market or who are unable to work due to health reasons, receive a level of benefits which meets acceptable minimum income standards.

3. Address the tax system and tackle inequality

- A more progressive tax system is required if the high levels of inequality are to be addressed. Presently, the poorest bear 38% of their income in tax compared with 35% for the richest. The gap between the wealthiest and poorest is wider now than at any point in the last 40 years and the wealth of the top 10% of the population is over 100 times higher than the wealth of the poorest 10%.
- In tackling inequality, the UK Government should also look to address the gender pay gap

4. Address fuel poverty and the energy poverty premium

- Meet the actions for the UK Government as outlined in the Fuel Poverty Charter Wales. This includes reviewing and extending the reach of the Winter Fuel Allowance to the fuel poor of all ages including households with children and young people, and working with the Welsh Assembly Government to effectively implement existing schemes and programmes. www.fuelpovertycharterwales.org.uk/

5. Address child poverty by meeting the 2020 promise

- Work with the Welsh Assembly Government to help implement key UK priorities outlined in the Child Poverty Act 2010 around parental employment, increasing skills levels and improved financial support for families.

The case for the eradication of Child Poverty should be viewed in the context of social justice, economic and business sense and human and children's rights.

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