

# Wokingham Tackling Poverty Strategy Year 2 Action Plan

Fiona Price – Age UK Berkshire  
Amy Garstang – Wokingham United Charities  
Emily Higson – Wokingham Borough Council

## Purpose

Raise awareness of the projects being delivered in Wokingham Borough

Identify any links to existing services or projects – potential for collaboration

Identify any remaining gaps to consider in year 3

# The Hardship Alliance

Formed in 2022

Members are

- Age UK Berkshire
- Citizen's Advice Wokingham
- First Days Children's Charity
- Wokingham Borough Council
- Wokingham United Charities

Co-produced Wokingham's first Tackling Poverty Strategy in 2022

Led the Wokingham community response to cost-of-living crisis

# Tackling Poverty Strategy

Our long-term aspiration is doing everything we can to prevent poverty, working towards ending it completely in our borough.

We are aiming to:

- Lessen the short-term effects of poverty
- Prevent more people falling into poverty
- Better support our residents living in poverty
- Enable residents to better address the barriers to overcoming poverty

The strategy aims to help three main groups:

- People in persistent hardship - these are people on low income, Universal Credit or other benefits
- People who are just about managing - these are people who don't have much money left at the end of the month
- People who are asset rich, cash poor - these are people who own a home or a car, which is an asset, but they don't have much money

# Year One Achievements

53

Libraries staff trained on income maximisation

Additional Debt Advisor based in CAW

Equality Impact Assessments include low income

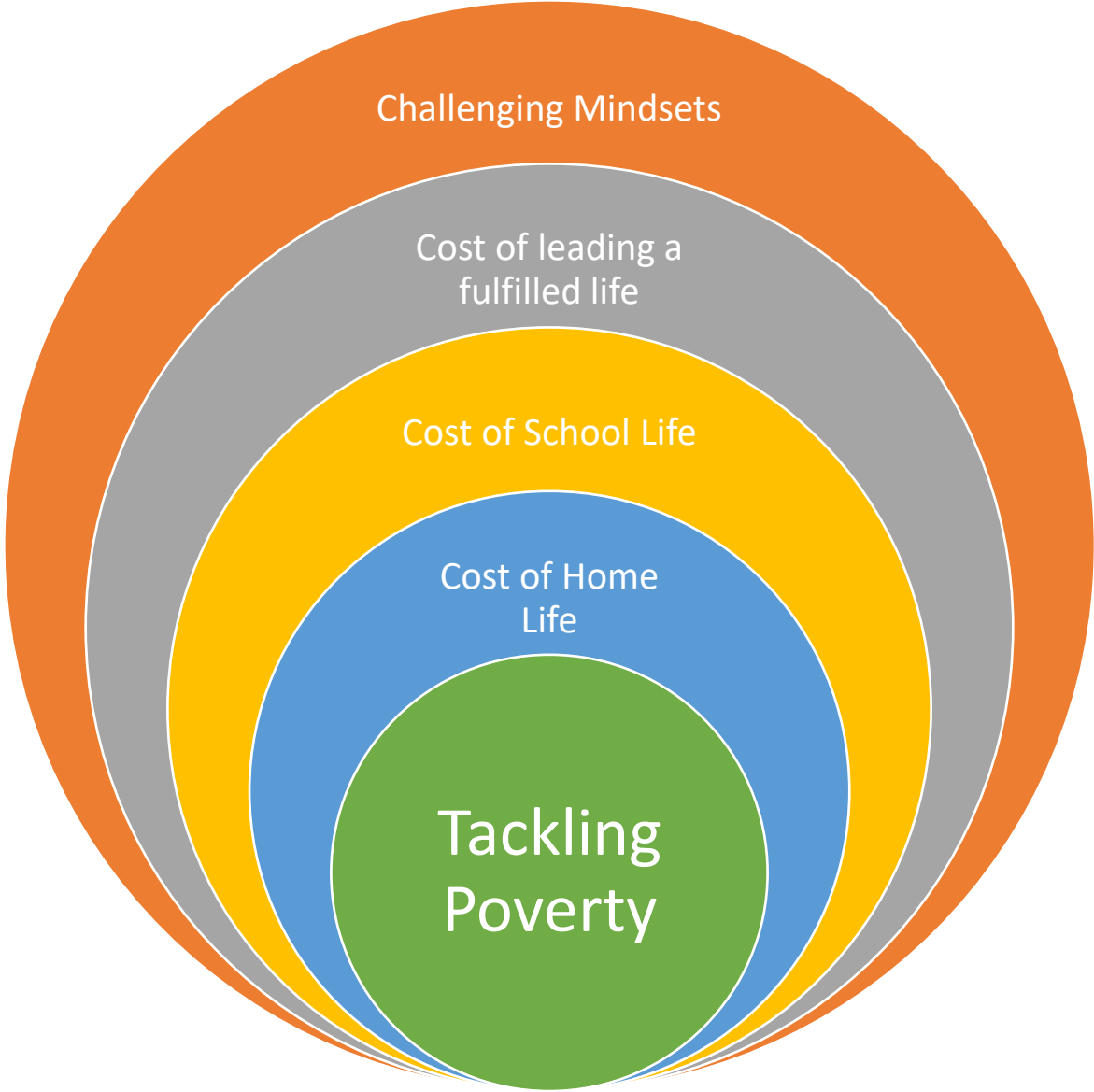
Distributed £550k of Household Support Fund

Distributed winter warmer packs to residents in need

Employment of a Project Coordinator to support the delivery of the Tackling Poverty Strategy.

A Community Coach employed to deliver a coaching model to support residents with complex / long term needs

# Strategic Themes



# Cost of Home Life

Outcome	High level Action
55 Residents can access low-cost, nutritional food in a way that provides choice and is sustainable, community based, and long term.	Establish a community food project
Residents are prevented from falling into financial difficulties due to costs of essential home items	Work with partners to improve coordination of the provision of essential household items for residents on low income
Residents can access support on debt management and sustainable borrowing and savings options.	Provide debt advice and sustainable borrowing and saving opportunities to residents willing to gain greater management of their finances

# Cost of School Life

56

## Outcome

Students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds have equal opportunities to succeed at school and can participate in all aspects of school life.

## High level Action

Establish a pilot to 'poverty proof the school day' to model and evidence effective interventions

Work with schools, communities and partners to improve access to no/low-cost uniform and other essential learning tools for all students.

Promote and expand opportunities for students from low-income families to participate in all aspects of school life



# Cost of a Fulfilled Life

Outcome	High level Action
57 Residents on low-incomes have improved access to leisure, arts, and cultural activities	Identify and promote no/low-cost leisure and culture activities Identify and address barriers to accessing low-cost activities
Residents on low-incomes have improved access to skills development and training opportunities	Review current provision of training and job opportunities and address gaps in provision

# Challenging Mindsets

58

Outcome	High level Action
The council and partners can efficiently signpost residents in financial hardship to support across a range of organisations.	Develop a successor to the One Front Door project, enabling local services, organisations and partners to signpost effectively to the range of support available.
The lived experiences of residents in financial hardship informs and shapes the actions of the hardship alliance.	Work with residents, front-line services, and partner organisations to gather insight on the lived experience of those in financial hardship
Residents in financial hardship receive proactive communications about where and how to access support.	Deliver a programme of communications, to raise awareness of the available services and support for those in financial hardship

# Current status

---

Projects for poverty proofing the school day, community pantry and provision of school uniforms and education packs successfully tendered

---

5 Further funded projects to be released in lots later in Autumn

---

Unfunded projects have been initiated

---

Performance measures being developed

This page is intentionally left blank