

Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot Evaluation: Second Synthesis Report

GHK

This research report was written before the new UK Government took office on 11 May 2010. As a result the content may not reflect current Government policy and may make reference to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) which has now been replaced by the Department for Education (DFE).

The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education.



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Key Messages

The Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot (LAIP) was established by Child Poverty Unit (CPU) in 2009 and ends in March 2011. Ten local authorities were successful in their proposals for funding to trial locally appropriate and innovative approaches to addressing child poverty. The LAIP evaluation is structured to provide a local evaluation to each of the ten programmes and a synthesis evaluation to CPU. This is the second synthesis evaluation report, based primarily upon fieldwork undertaken in March 2010 at the mid-way point of the pilot programme. The key messages in the report are:

- Although established by the previous government, the aims and objectives of the LAIP programme mean that it is well placed to offer valuable learning for the Coalition Government priorities of: addressing poverty and increasing parental employment; the 'Big Society'; localism and local delivery; and, strengthening families.
- The ten LAIP programmes reflect a true *pilot* ethos, with local models of provision: adapted as innovative practice is trialled; and, flexible and responsive to issues as they are encountered. Developing new practice takes time and resources. Challenging established practice can cause tension and meet resistance. Embedding new practice requires high level leadership at strategic and operational level.
- A range of approaches are required to target, identify and engage parents and families in activity that aims to address child poverty by: increasing family income; increasing parents', children's and families' access to local provision; supporting parents to access provision that increases skills and employability; and, supporting parents from a range of backgrounds and with a range of strengths and needs into employment.
- Families can face a range of barriers in accessing provision that supports improved wellbeing outcomes, and *parents* can face a range of barriers in moving towards and returning to the labour market. Flexible and resourced packages of personalised support that are coordinated through a casework or case-management approach are required to address such barriers.
- If the range of barriers that parents and their families face are to be identified and understood, family-based approaches are required. These do not necessarily engage the whole family, but they do take each of the individuals and the family as a unit into account. It is important to understand the responsibilities and perspectives that parents have and not to see them as adults who may or may not have children.
- Access to affordable childcare that is flexible and available is described by stakeholders as a key barrier to parental engagement in employability activity as well as employment itself. This has three dimensions: parental perceptions of the childcare that is available; the cost of childcare being prohibitive for those entering employment; and, the availability of childcare that is local and flexible to employability activity such as training and job search provision.
- Partnership working is important at both strategic and front-line levels. Strategic partnerships are important for supporting the development of new provision that works across service and sector boundaries, and for ensuring that learning is embedded and effective provision supported. Front-line partnerships are important for ensuring that packages of support can be coordinated and tailored to individual and family circumstance.
- In developing new provision to address child poverty, *time* is an important dimension: time needed to explore and develop pilot provision; time to identify, engage and support parents and families towards outcomes; and, time to identify and build relationships with partners. Our next report will explore how these elements relate to the time required to achieve different outcomes with different groups.

Executive Summary

1 Introduction

This is the second report from the national evaluation of the Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot (LAIP). The LAIP is a programme that trials locally appropriate and innovative ways of addressing child poverty. The LAIP and the evaluation are managed by the cross-government Child Poverty Unit (CPU). The evaluation is structured to provide each of the ten LAIP programmes with a local evaluation. This report presents a synthesis of the second local evaluation reports, provided to LAIP authorities in June 2010. It provides emerging messages from qualitative interviews with stakeholders, providers and beneficiaries across all ten Innovation Pilots.

The Innovation Pilot began in March 2009 and ends in March 2011. Ten local authorities were successful in their proposals for funding. LAIP programmes are expected to address at least one of the following themes:

- Increasing parental employment;
- Raising family income, including through the improved take-up of tax credits and benefits, including local authority administered benefits;
- Narrowing the outcome gap between children in low income families and their peers;
- Promoting economic regeneration focused on families and tackling regeneration at a community wide level; and,
- Building the capacity of communities to address child poverty.

Full details of the evaluation methodology are provided in Annex 1.

2 Pilot Context

Although it was established under the previous government, the Innovation Pilot will provide valuable learning for the priorities of the new Coalition Government: to move parents into employment; to promote the 'Big Society'; and, to promote greater freedom for local authorities in using resources to address their priorities.

The Child Poverty Act became law on 25th May 2010. The Act creates a framework for national and local action to address child poverty. The Act requires local authorities and named partners to work together to undertake a Child Poverty Needs Assessment and to produce a Child Poverty Strategy. There are four child poverty 'building blocks' that have been developed by CPU and suggested as the basis for local and national strategy and action: Life Chances and Families; Employment and Skills; Financial Support; and, Place and Delivery. The local LAIP programme evaluations organise learning around these themes and this report draws these findings together.

3 Pilot Overview

The report provides a two page overview of each of the ten LAIP programmes. The pilots have continued to face challenges. In the spirit of a true 'pilot' programme they have learnt from their early experiences and made changes to their approaches accordingly. The pilots have shown many examples of responses to their delivery experiences, which include:

- Amending targets and timescales where implementation has been delayed, to allow for the robust testing of approaches within the funding period;
- Amending pilot delivery models where early implementation identified issues with intended approaches or techniques, to explore effective practice;
- Strengthening partnership arrangements both to provide a broader range of support and to embed learning from new practice; and,
- The use of voluntary and community sector organisations to deliver flexibility – for example with staffing issues and the provision of discretionary funding.

A summary table for the LAIP programme is provided in Annex 2.

4 Pilot Learning: Emerging Messages

This section of the report presents learning that is emerging from the synthesis evaluation of the ten Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot (LAIP) programmes as they reach the mid-point of their two year funding. The discussion draws on analysis of primarily qualitative data. The learning is organised into five core themes.

4.1 Targeting and engaging parents and families

Combinations of approaches are required to identify targeted parents and families and to promote referral and self-referral. Techniques include: publicity; outreach; data-led approaches; persistence; and, work with partners. Although it is time consuming, developing relationships with partners is important as they can take time to develop confidence in new provision.

When working with parents and families to provide support beyond signposting, needs assessment is an ongoing process. Family-based approaches do not necessarily engage the whole family, but they do take each of the individuals and the family as a unit into account. It is important to understand the responsibilities and perspectives that parents have and not to see them as adults who may or may not have children.

4.2 Increasing employment and employability

There is a high demand for the flexible and holistic approaches to supporting parents towards employment that many of the pilot programmes provide. Effective approaches are delivered by a caseworker who can access resources and co-ordinate multi-agency responses to an action plan that is 'owned' by a parent or family and that demonstrates progress. These coordinated approaches mean that the barriers faced by parents can be addressed together.

4.3 Alleviating the impacts of poverty

The provision of resources to parents and families brings immediate alleviation of poverty. Including these within a package of support is more likely to lead to sustainable impacts. Signposting and supporting access to local provision can enable families to engage with services for the first time and also build longer-term impacts. This includes support with debt and money management.

4.3 Addressing barriers

To address the range of barriers that *families* can face in accessing provision that supports improved wellbeing outcomes, and that *parents* can face in moving towards and returning to the labour market, flexible and resourced packages of personalised support that are coordinated through a casework or case-management approach are required.

4.4 Innovation and sustainability

All of the pilots have developed programmes of provision that are innovative in developing new partnerships and new models of delivery. Where it is being delivered, parent- or family-focused flexible, resourced employment and employability support is identified by stakeholders as innovative. There are also examples of innovative community capacity building approaches. Across the LAIP programme, partners are coming together to promote financial inclusion and address child poverty.

Workforce development is a focus of some of the LAIP programmes; learning from these pilots indicates that innovative practice causes tension and meets resistance as it challenges established practice. The local pilot programmes have established strategic structures that will need to be exploited in order for effective pilot practice to be sustained or mainstreamed.

5 Conclusion

5.1 Key findings

In conclusion the key findings from the evaluation are presented in two ways: their contribution to the priorities of the Coalition Government; and, the learning provided for the four child poverty 'building blocks'.

5.2 Coalition Government priorities

Addressing poverty and increasing parental employment.

Immediate impacts can be made on poverty and inequality by providing parents and families with resources to alleviate the effects of living on a low income. The provision of resources that support parents and families to engage with progression or action plans towards employment will address the causes of child poverty and thus build long-term outcomes.

The Big Society

Involving and engaging local people in activity to build community capacity to address child poverty and family disadvantage is a theme of pilot programmes in Knowsley and Tyne Gateway. These two Pilot programmes indicate a high level of local interest in community action and will provide valuable learning for the Big Society agenda as they progress.

Local delivery

Each of the Pilots involves working with local services to develop responsive provision and to support parents to access that which is new as well as established. The programme has a true *pilot* ethos, with local authorities and their partners exploring and adapting their strategies and learning about ways of establishing and reaching local targets.

Strengthening families

The report presents evidence of the ways in which families can be supported to address the problems that cause strain on relationships between parents and within the family as a unit. Accessing local services, adapting services so that they are responsive to family-based issues and take a family perspective, and supporting families to take action to address their needs by building on their strengths are all themes that the findings from the evaluation contribute to.

5.3 The Four 'Child Poverty Building Blocks'

Our conclusion demonstrates the key messages for each of the four child poverty 'building blocks'. In summary, they include:

- **Employment and skills:** packages of training and support should be bespoke and tailored to parents' strengths and needs.
- **Life chances and families:** packages of support bring a range of benefits for individual and family wellbeing. As these links are often inherent, a single intervention with an individual can also bring a range of individual and familial benefits.
- **Financial support:** there are high levels of debt amongst low income parents, with a range of associated problems including impacts on family wellbeing and disincentives to (re)enter the labour market.
- **Place and delivery:** Effective targeting of low-income families requires a range of techniques and approaches. Work to raise awareness with local partners can be effective but must be dedicated activity that is well structured and resourced.

1 Introduction

This is the second report from the national evaluation of the Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot (LAIP). The LAIP is a programme that trials locally appropriate and innovative ways of addressing child poverty. The LAIP and the evaluation are managed by the cross-government Child Poverty Unit (CPU). The evaluation is structured to provide each of the ten local authority pilot programmes with a local evaluation. This report presents a synthesis of the second local evaluation reports, provided to LAIP authorities in June 2010. It provides emerging messages from qualitative interviews with stakeholders, providers and beneficiaries across all ten Innovation Pilots.

At the time of the first interim report (December 2009) the local programmes were either just beginning to deliver their proposed services or in the latter stages of preparation. The most recent fieldwork identified that each pilot is now either delivering services or has firm, and scheduled, plans for delivery across the range of their proposed activities. The pilots' progress, and the emerging learning from their experiences, forms the main focus of this report.

1.1 The Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot

The Innovation Pilots began in March 2009 and central government funding ends in March 2011. Ten local authorities were successful in their proposals for funding to trial locally appropriate and innovative approaches to reducing child poverty. LAIP programmes are expected to address at least one of the following themes:

- Increasing parental employment;
- Raising family income, including through the improved take-up of tax credits and benefit, including local authority-administered benefits;
- Narrowing the outcome gap between children in low income families and their peers;
- Promoting economic regeneration focused on families and tackling regeneration at a community-wide level; and,
- Building the capacity of communities to address child poverty.

The Innovation Pilot is being continued by the new Coalition Government in recognition of the learning it will provide for local action to increase employment and address child poverty.

1.2 The National Evaluation

The national evaluation of the LAIP was commissioned in April 2009¹. The evaluation provides each local authority with a local evaluation and then provides a synthesis of these reports to CPU. Our first report (February 2010) described the evaluation methodology² and described the ten LAIP programmes, established through our first fieldwork (November 2009). At that time, local delivery was in its earliest stages. This report presents evidence from our second (of four) round of fieldwork, conducted in March 2010. In total this fieldwork involved 357 interviews. More information on the fieldwork and the evaluation can be found in Annex 1.

1 The evaluation is led by GHK, working with Prof. Mike Coombes and colleagues at the Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies (CURDS) at Newcastle University; and, with expert advice from Prof. Jonathan Bradshaw (University of York) and Dr. Tess Ridge (University of Bath).

² GHK (2010) *Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot: First National Evaluation Report*, London: DCSF/CPU

Table 1.1 Evaluation Interviews

Interviewee Group	Total interviews
Strategic Stakeholders	30
Pilot Teams	64
Partners	96
Beneficiaries (parents)	167
Total	357

The evaluation also includes analysis of local programme monitoring and outcome data. Because of the range of different approaches across the ten local programmes, the Innovation Pilot was established without a single, prescribed monitoring dataset. The evaluation included an initial ‘scoping phase’, which provided support to the LAIP authorities in developing their outputs, outcomes and indicators. A national outcomes set was developed as a framework for local indicators. The five national outcomes for the Innovation Pilot are:

- Increasing parental employment;
- Increasing parental employability and wellbeing;
- Increasing family wellbeing;
- Increasing children’s wellbeing; and,
- Building capacity to address child poverty.

The first monitoring data was provided by the LAIP authorities in April and May 2010. Some of the pilots had difficulties in providing comprehensive data and some basic analysis is included in this report. The evaluation team is working with CPU and the ten LAIP programmes to ensure that more complete data is provided for our next report to CPU (November 2010) and for our final report (March 2011).

The data is also used within the evaluation ‘local area mapping’ analysis (undertaken by Newcastle University). This analysis uses the postcodes of beneficiaries engaged by each LAIP programme to explore targeting and to explore the ways in which beneficiaries and their outcomes compare to what local area data tells us about their local context. Accurate postcode data was provided by each pilot for our mapping analysis and maps showing beneficiary location against levels of child poverty are included in Section 3 as part of the overview of each local programme³. This analysis begins to explore the targeting achieved by each LAIP programme. In the stage of analysis reported here, beneficiaries are mapped against local area child poverty data.

With more comprehensive data, this analysis can contribute to a more sophisticated and detailed evaluation. The analysis will be able to explore, for instance, how the activities and support accessed, and the characteristics of the beneficiaries targeted and engaged, compare between the different strands within an LAIP programme and, in addition, how the outcomes achieved by beneficiaries of the different strands compare. One key question will be whether there are different outcomes for beneficiaries in different types of area: ‘what works where?’

³ The mapping analysis presented in this report for each local Pilot programme uses data for the national child poverty indicator (NI116) provided by DWP for lower super output areas (LSOA). This dataset offers a more complete picture of child poverty than its predecessor, as it includes children whose families are affected by in-work poverty. For more information see http://data.gov.uk/dataset/ni_116_proportion_of_children_in_poverty.

The maps do not use the same scale, in order that an overview of the whole pilot area can be presented. The maps are shaded to show each LSOA according to the concentration of child poverty in that area.

For clarity, we have organised the child poverty data into five categories around national average, ranking the LSOAs from the highest to lowest fifth of child poverty rates.

The mapping analysis will explore both the spatial targeting – where in the LAIP area beneficiaries are from – and the social targeting – how the beneficiaries engaged relate to the average characteristics of their local and neighbourhood areas. The analysis will contribute to our evaluation of the reach of local pilot targeting strategies. This report includes illustrative maps from this evaluation component, which will not be complete until our final report in March 2011.

1.3 The Structure of this Report

The remainder of this report is structured by the following sections:

- Pilot Context – presents a brief overview of the policy context for the LAIP, including the priorities of the Coalition Government and the duties of the Child Poverty Act 2010;
- Pilot Overview – presents a summary of each of the ten local LAIP programmes and their progress;
- Pilot Learning: Emerging Messages – presents the learning that is identified by the synthesis of the ten local evaluation reports provided to the LAIP programmes at the mid-point of their two year funding; and,
- Conclusion – presents the learning for the Child Poverty Unit and for local authorities against the Coalition Government priorities and under the four child poverty ‘building blocks’.

2 Pilot Context

This section provides an update to the policy context provided in the previous synthesis evaluation report⁴. That report also set out key developments in child poverty policy and welfare reform and the themes from research in this area. This section outlines the priorities of the new Coalition Government. It also outlines the Child Poverty Act 2010 passed by Parliament since our last report.

2.1 The Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot

The Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot (LAIP) is one of a suite of national pilots established by the previous government (in office until May 2010) that is intended to provide learning for local areas and for national policy about the most effective ways to understand and address child poverty. The Innovation Pilot was established to explore:

- How employment can be promoted and delivered as the best route out of poverty;
- How family relationships can be supported;
- How early intervention can promote children's life chances; and,
- How local authorities can use resources to assess the scale of child poverty in their area and lead effective local and community action to address it.

By developing local solutions to the goal of reducing child poverty, including involving local communities, supporting parents into employment and strengthening families, the Innovation Pilot will provide valuable learning for the priorities of the new Coalition Government.

2.2 Coalition Government Priorities

The Coalition Government's *'Programme for Government'* (2010) states their commitment to maintain the goal of eradicating child poverty by 2020⁵. A comprehensive assessment of poverty in the UK published at the start of the new Government will provide the background and context for the policy decisions taken by the administration. This *'State of the Nation Report'*⁶ is clear that *'poverty is a multifaceted and wide-reaching problem'* (p.6) that requires an *'holistic approach... that tackles the drivers'* (p.14) of disadvantage. In response, an independent *'Review of Poverty and Life Chances'* has been commissioned⁷ to advise the government on policy.

In the Secretary of State for Work and Pension's introduction to the report, employment is recognised as key to addressing child poverty:

'Addressing poverty and inequality in Britain is at the heart of our agenda for government... at the heart of this fight against poverty must be work' (p.3)

In support of this aim, the Coalition Government is planning to reform the welfare-to-work system to help all unemployed people get back into work⁸.

A further central theme of the Coalition Government agenda is the *'Big Society'*: that communities should be given the power, information and resources they need to come together and to take an active role in addressing local issues through local provision⁹.

⁴ GHK (2010) op.cit.

⁵ HM Government (2010a) *The Coalition: our programme for government*, London: Cabinet Office. p.19

⁶ HM Government (2010b) *State of the nation report: poverty, worklessness and welfare dependency in the UK*, London: Cabinet Office

⁷ The review will be conducted by Frank Field MP and is expected to report by the end of 2010
<http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/latest-news/2010/06/review-on-poverty-and-life-chances-51396>

⁸ HM Government (2010a) p.24

⁹ Adapted from *Building the Big Society* policy programme, launched by the Cabinet Office 18th May 2010
<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/407789/building-big-society.pdf> accessed 12th July 2010.

This theme of community involvement and empowerment is closely interrelated to the Coalition's third central theme of 'localism': the movement of power away from central to local government and the growth of public accountability:

*'We will promote the radical devolution of power and greater financial autonomy to local government'*¹⁰

Finally, the Deputy Prime Minister has announced a 'Children and Families Taskforce'¹¹ that will explore how local communities and the local services within them can be empowered to strengthen families and ensure that *'every child can have the best chance to flourish'*.

2.3 The Child Poverty Act 2010

2.3.1 The national context

The Child Poverty Act became law on 25th May 2010. The Act creates a framework for national and local action to address child poverty, and to monitor progress. There are four complementary national targets contained in the Act:

- **Relative poverty** – to reduce the proportion of children who live in relative low income (in families with income below 60 per cent of the median) to less than 10 per cent;
- **Combined low income and material deprivation** – to reduce the proportion of children who live in material deprivation and have a low income to less than 5 per cent;
- **Persistent poverty** – to reduce the proportion of children that experience long periods of relative poverty; and,
- **Absolute poverty** – to reduce the proportion of children who live in absolute low income to less than 5 per cent.

2.3.2 Local action to address child poverty

The Act requires local authorities and named partners to:

- **Cooperate** to put in place arrangements to work to reduce, and mitigate the effects of, child poverty in their area;
- Prepare and publish a **local child poverty needs assessment** to understand the drivers of child poverty in their local area and the characteristics of those living in poverty; and,
- Prepare a **joint child poverty strategy** setting out measures that the local authority and each named partner propose to take to reduce, and mitigate the effects of, child poverty in their local area.

It is expected that local and national activity will be structured by the child poverty 'building blocks' developed by CPU:

- **Life Chances and Families:** to ensure that 'poverty in childhood does not translate into poor experiences and outcomes';
- **Employment and Skills:** to ensure that 'more families are in work that pays and have the support they need to progress';
- **Financial Support:** to ensure that 'financial support is responsive to families' situations'; and,
- **Place and Delivery:** to ensure that each 'child's environment supports them to thrive'.

¹⁰ Ibid. p.2

¹¹ Announced on 18th June 2010: http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/newsroom/news_releases/2010/100617-children.aspx

Local authority needs assessments and their resultant strategies require joint action across these areas. The local authority partners that are named in the Act as having a duty to cooperate are:

- District authorities (with the duty of the Act applying to top tier local authorities);
- The police, youth offending teams, and probation service;
- Transport authorities;
- Primary Care Trusts and Strategic Health Authorities; and,
- Jobcentre Plus.

Other partners, such as voluntary and community sector organisations, are also expected to be involved and consultations on the needs assessment and the local strategy should take place with a wide range of partners and with children and families.

The evaluation of each LAIP programme explores its role in addressing these themes under the four 'building blocks' and these are used to structure the emerging findings in the 'Conclusion' of this synthesis report.

2.4 Research Evidence

The first synthesis report provided an overview of research exploring dimensions of child poverty, the issues that they pose and how they can be addressed effectively. This review will be further developed to provide context for the findings presented in our final evaluation report (March 2011). Revisiting them here provides some further context for our interim findings. The analysis showed that:

- there is an increasing recognition of the need to provide a family-based approach across social welfare, co-ordinating support for children, young people and families as a unit rather than in isolation¹²;
- children from large families and from minority ethnic groups are at a higher risk of poverty than their peers;
- personalised, flexible and holistic approaches are required to support those out of work into employment, with progression incentivised and access to childcare essential;
- there are large numbers of parents in low paid work failing to access the benefits to which they are entitled, resulting in high levels of in-work poverty; and,
- poverty has a geographical dimension; disadvantaged and vulnerable groups tend to be concentrated in deprived neighbourhoods, which are expected to suffer more than other areas from the effects of the economic downturn.

2.5 Summary

This section has outlined the priorities of the Coalition Government: to move parents into employment; to promote the 'Big Society'; and, to promote greater freedom for local authorities in using resources to address their priorities. The discussion has shown how the Child Poverty Act 2010 requires local authorities to work with their partners to understand and address child poverty in locally appropriate ways. The Innovation Pilot provides valuable learning about how the priorities of the Coalition Government and the duties of the Act can be delivered. Finally, an outline of research highlights the features of effective employment support and activity to address child poverty. This overview provides the context for the evaluation of the Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot.

¹² Morris, K., et al. (2008) *Think Family: A Literature Review of Whole Family Approaches*, London: Cabinet Office Social Exclusion Task Force

3 Pilot Overview

In this chapter a short summary of each local LAIP programme is provided, including an overview of their progress and performance to date and initial mapping of the beneficiaries. These summaries are based on fieldwork conducted in March 2010 and the monitoring data LAIP authorities were able to provide. The maps are provided as illustrations of the local area mapping activity that is developing as part of our analysis of targeting and outcomes (for more information see Annex 1).

Cornwall

Budget (2009-2011)

£438,957

Context

The Cornwall pilot builds on previous activities trialled locally, and is set in an environment of significant change. This includes Cornwall becoming a unitary authority in April 2009, and an associated and ongoing programme to transform the local authority children and families workforce. This entails the formation of integrated multi-agency teams in a series of 'locality' areas.

Activities

The pilot has three main strands of activity:

- **The Enabling Fund** – is open to all families living in poverty in Cornwall. It provides discretionary funding (where no other is available) for families to prevent or address crises or exploit opportunities to escape poverty, including securing employment. A total of 244 applications had been received between December 2009 and March 2010, the vast majority of which were approved (although this has reportedly since increased to around 600 applications).
- **Workforce Development** – this strand aims to trial a programme of training: to raise awareness of child poverty as 'everybody's business' across the children, young people and families workforce; and, to build capacity of the workforce to identify and address family poverty. The initial programme has been revised and will deliver training to 300 individuals across three months followed by a period of evaluation. The first training sessions were held in May 2010.
- **The Debt Care Pathway** – will target families entering social housing for the first time and existing tenants. This strand will provide awareness raising/training on child poverty for Housing Managers and staff in both the local authority and social housing sector. It will develop support packages for tenants moving into social housing, including training and advice on financial/debt management, and the production of new starter packs. Finally, the strand will explore the role that social housing providers can play in identifying and engaging with families experiencing or at risk of poverty. Following delays, this strand has made positive progress with a revised approach being agreed and a delivery plan in place.

Monitoring data

At the time of the fieldwork data was available for the Enabling Fund, which in summary shows that:

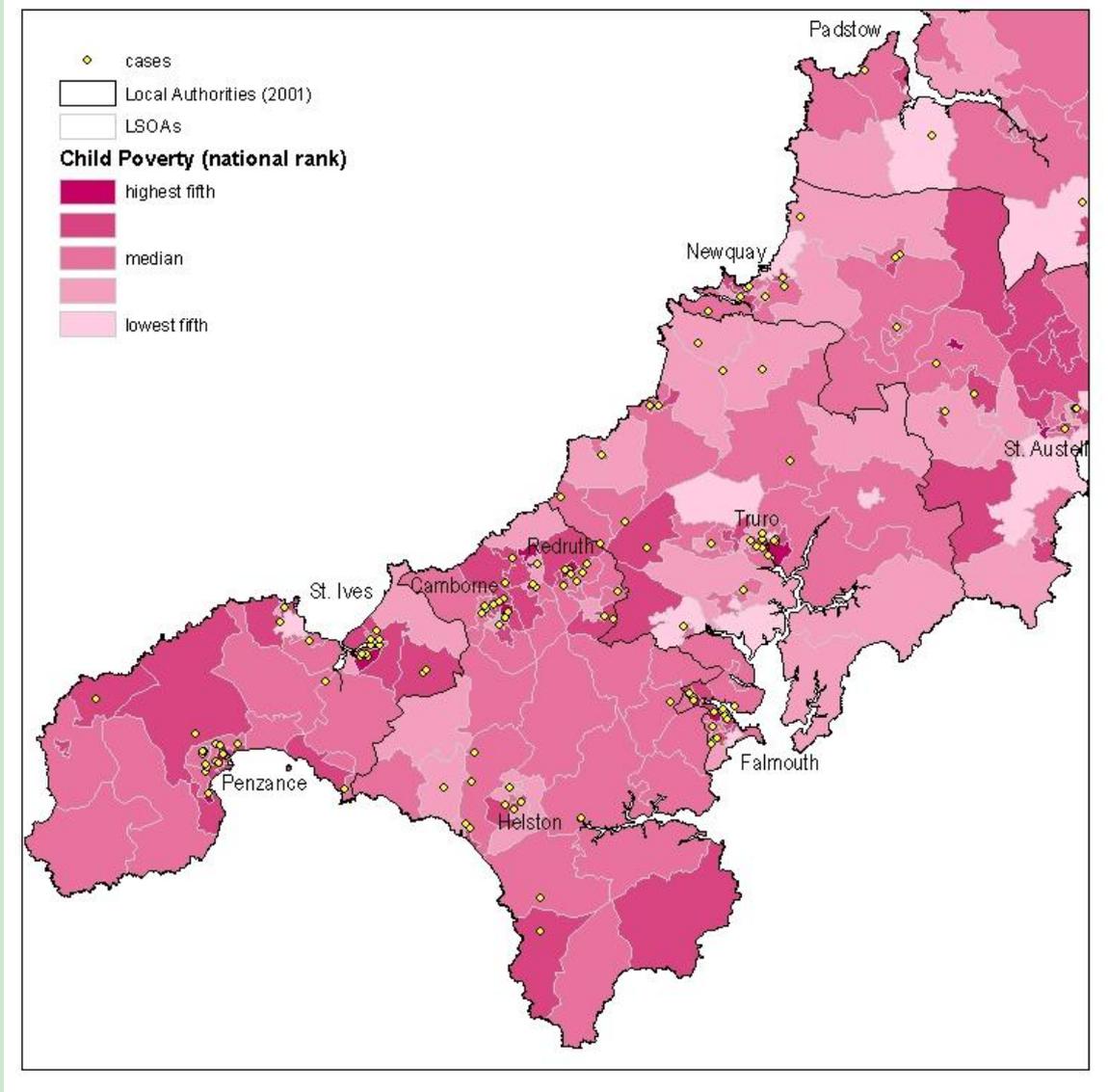
- 60% of applicants to the Fund were female. There was a near equal split between those living in two parent (42%) and female lone parent families (39%), with a small number of male lone parents (6%). The family status of the remaining 13% was 'unknown'.
- The majority were from families living in workless households, with almost two thirds (64%) relying on a range of benefits.
- Over half (55%) were received from families where parents or children reported having disabilities or limiting health conditions.
- Referrals to the Fund were mainly from local authority staff (37%), Citizen's Advice Bureaux (CAB), voluntary and community sector partners and Jobcentre Plus.
- Individual awards ranged from £9 to over £7,000, with a mean award size of £522 and awards most often being between £100 and £600. Applications were most commonly related to helping progress individuals towards, or helping them sustain existing, employment. Support to address crises or to increase protective factors included: the provision of gap funding for those moving from benefits to work; paying for training and work related equipment; providing funding for driving lessons; and providing respite and childcare services.

Pilot targeting

The Enabling Fund is not spatially targeted; the mapping analysis indicates that the distribution of beneficiaries reflects the overall distribution of the population of Cornwall. Beneficiaries of the fund come from across Cornwall's towns and the larger rural areas, and are not confined to the areas with the highest levels of overall child poverty. Map 3.1 below shows the distribution of Enabling Fund beneficiaries across part of Cornwall (the

full county maps being too large to include here; future reporting will focus on particular areas, according to the analyses undertaken).

Map 3.1 Cornwall Enabling Fund Beneficiaries by Local Area Child Poverty Data



As further monitoring data becomes available, the future mapping of beneficiaries could explore the outcomes achieved in different locales, or by the new children, young people and family workforce 'locality areas'.

Hammersmith and Fulham

Budget (2009-2011)

£1,046.913

Context

Hammersmith and Fulham can be described as a borough of contrasts where some of the wealthiest households sit alongside people living on low incomes. There are many 'pockets' of extreme deprivation in and around a number of large and small estates. Previous initiatives have shown that high quality, affordable childcare is a prerequisite for many benefit-dependent lone parents being able to gain and sustain employment. This is particularly relevant in London, where childcare costs are very high.

Activities

The Innovation Pilot targets 18 estates that, in contrast to other areas of the borough, did not have targeted employability interventions. The pilot targets parents with at least one child under the age of 12 years and with an income of £20,000 or less.

The main component of the programme is a new service, '**Family Solutions**'. Family Solutions aims to bring together family support and employability services within a well-resourced umbrella and, provide a parent-focused approach. A single key or case-worker (a Family Facilitator) brings together a package of personalised support through tailored action planning, that identifies and addresses the barriers that parents can face in accessing employment and employability support. The support is flexible and open-ended, with parents being able to access the service intensively or less so according to need, and once they return to employment. Parents engaging with Family Solutions can access a range of support – including both formal and informal training (e.g. confidence-building activities and job search) – that moves them towards the goal of employment.

Family Facilitators can also use a **flexible fund** to support parents' needs and their engagement in an action plan towards employment. Family Facilitators also give access to **free childcare** funded by the pilot, which is brokered by the childcare places coordinator at the Council's Early Years and Childcare Service. An individualised package of childcare is provided throughout the journey to employment (for those engaging in job searching, training, work experience and volunteering opportunities) and for up to three months once a parent has returned to work. Family Solutions is provided by a **local social enterprise** (Tendis Ltd), which has been involved in the development and the design of the Pilot from the beginning.

An online '**Child Passport**' is also in development, which is intended to allow parents and childcare settings to hold a record of a child's development in early years settings. It will ensure that any developmental issues can be quickly picked up by any provider that the parent chooses to use, facilitating multi-agency working. In the longer term, the aim is to ensure that the children of the most disadvantaged parents have the best opportunities to develop throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage and beyond, contributing to reducing the gaps in attainment and other outcomes between this group and their peers. This is expected to be in place for piloting in September 2010 (in line with their delivery plan).

The pilot has engaged over 100 parents in an action plan, against a target for March 2011 of 225. Six parents have entered employment (against a target for 2011 of 35).

Monitoring data

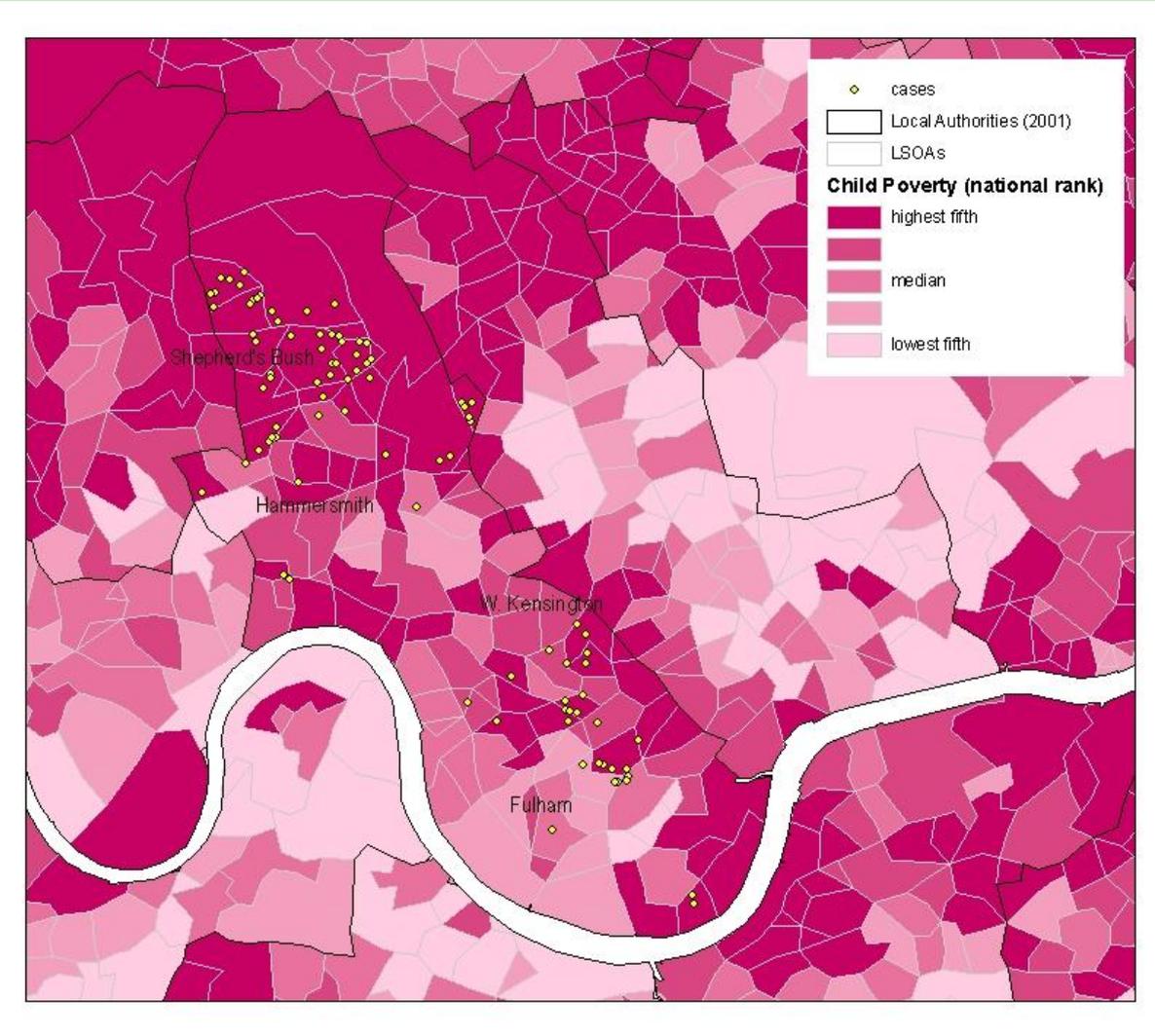
Data provided by the pilot shows that of the 109 beneficiaries engaged in March 2010:

- Lone parents make up three quarters of the parents supported;
- A quarter lack basic skills (level 1 qualification or below);
- Just over 50% are in receipt of income support; and,
- The vast majority (86%) are out of work.

Pilot targeting

Our local area mapping analysis shows that child poverty is much higher in Hammersmith and Fulham than the national average. The analysis shows that the pilot has been successful in targeting the areas with the highest child poverty, within the context of high rates overall.

Map 3.2 Hammersmith and Fulham Beneficiaries by Local Area Child Poverty Data



Future mapping, exploiting the data collected by the pilot, could focus on target estates. One possibility is to compare characteristics and outcomes of the beneficiaries from different target estates.

Islington

Budget (2009-2011)

£1,346,255

Context

The Islington Strategic Partnership (ISP) has a history of addressing child poverty through strategic objectives within the Local Area Agreement. Tackling worklessness is a central strategic theme. The LAIP programme itself is seen as part of a step change towards an integrated model of service delivery for children and families and builds on previous initiatives aiming to understand and target communities. More than four in ten of children in Islington are living in poverty, the second highest level of child poverty in England.

Activities

The pilot offers tailored support to disadvantaged families, developing an intelligence-led approach that builds casework capacity and embeds organisational change in family-based service provision across the local authority. Parents of children aged 5 years and under who are in receipt of benefit or on a low income (calculated as 60% of the median) are eligible for support.

The delivery of the pilot is composed of three interlinked strands:

Database development – A children's services database of families and their service use is being supplemented with housing and council tax benefit data to identify families to target for income maximisation and employment pathway support. Following technical and legal challenges (see Box 4.2), the database was expected to be available from May 2010.

Building casework capacity – an 'Islington Working for Parents' team has been established to supplement the existing 'Islington Working' employment service. Following some delays in recruitment, eight 'Parental Officers' are based in the borough's 16 children's centres and offer three levels of support:

- **Level One** support of IAG (information, advice and guidance) provided by Islington Working or Islington Working for Parents. In March 2010, 239 parents had received this against a target for March 2011 of 2,300 families (drawn largely from the 3,000 parents in receipt of housing benefit that their work to bring data sources together has identified). Numbers were expected to increase rapidly with the launch of the database.
- **Level Two** support of a face-to-face appointment and income maximisation check. The meeting will identify whether the parent requires Level Three support in addition to that provided at Level One. No data has been provided about progress towards the target of 1,100 parents to receive this support.
- **Level Three** support to 800 parents, providing tailored and intensive employability support supported by the 'Workstar' soft outcomes and action planning tool. In March 2010 129 parents were in receipt of this support, again with numbers expected to increase.

Until the database is 'live' for targeting, Parent Officers engage parents through their presence in children's centres and by encouraging referral from a range of local authority and partner agencies. Receipt of income support or housing and council tax benefit is used to establish eligibility.

Training and workforce development. The pilot aims to build capacity over the longer term and embed it across service provision, achieving a cultural shift in working practices. Initial 'process mapping' with services suggested that greater capacity than the programme had included was required of these changes were to be achieved. As a result, a new 'Sustainability Team' has been created to deliver an enhanced workforce development strand. The directorates and departments represented on the Pilot Board (Children's Services; Chief Executive's Office; Corporate Resources; Environment and Regeneration; Financial Operations; Housing and Adult Social Services); have agreed to embed child poverty objectives within their 'Service Plans' and within the appraisal objectives of staff. The Sustainability Team will support the identification of appropriate objectives and of effective action to address them, with training and process mapping to help achieve this.

Monitoring data

Data provided by the Islington pilot shows that of 385 beneficiaries engaged in March 2010:

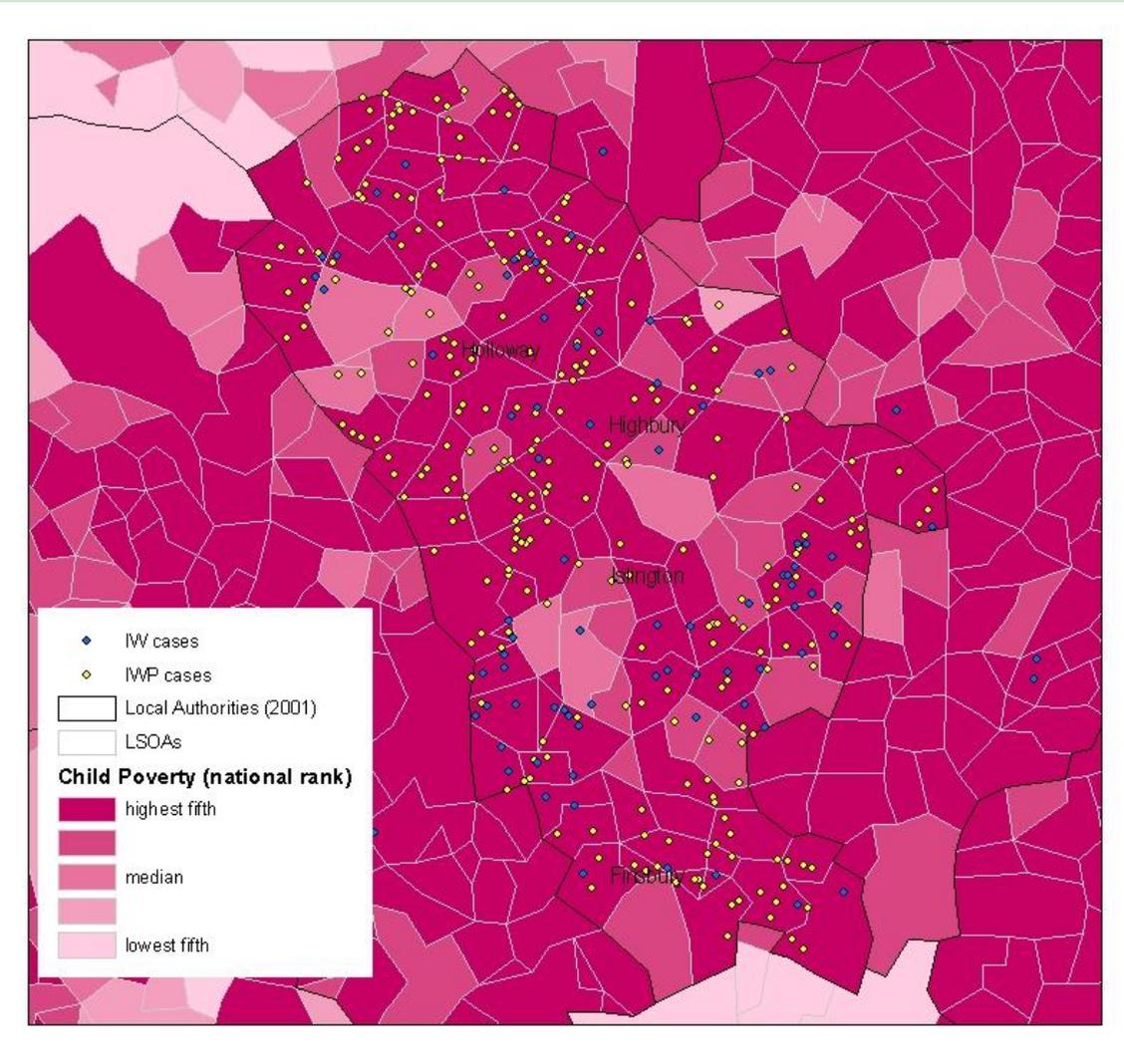
- 84% are women, and 50% are aged 17-30;

- 69% are lone parents; and,
- The majority are 'black or black British' (42%) or 'white' (37%).

Pilot targeting

The mapping shows beneficiaries supported at Level One by 'Islington Working' (IW) and at Level Three by 'Islington Working for Parent' (IWP). The targeting undertaken by the pilot by working from the authority children's centres (with targeting from the database yet to begin) has been successful in reaching beneficiaries from the areas with the highest incidences of child poverty. The pilot is also achieving a good spread across the whole of the borough. This suggests that the pilot is reaching parents who are eligible but who do not live in the most deprived areas.

Map 3.3 Islington Beneficiaries by Local Area Child Poverty Data



The mapping analysis will become more complex once more data about the beneficiaries is available in terms of the support they have received and the outcomes they have achieved. The clustering of parents identified as eligible for support through the HB/CBT data around children's centres and in relation to the different concentrations of child poverty from locality data is one possible analysis that will help us explore this targeting approach.

Kent

Budget (2009-2011)

£1,550,729

Context

Previous to the award of LAIP funding, Kent Children's Trust had included tackling child poverty as one of the key aims in its Children and Young People's Plan. Kent is a large County Council with a devolved structure for service delivery and partnership working. Over the last few years, the Council has developed a network of 23 Local Children's Service Partnerships (LCSPs) covering the entire county. The LCSPs have partnership boards made up of all the key service providers in the area, and are led by a partnership manager who oversees a team of co-located children's and families' services staff working in the area.

Activities

Kent's pilot targets families on low incomes that are living in four LCSP areas in Kent. The target families are expected to include at risk groups such as lone parents, those likely to be affected by welfare reforms and those claiming out of work benefits. It aims to support these families to access services and benefits in order to improve both material and non-material family resources and build family resilience. The pilot activities are also expected to add value by providing the basis for the development of such support in other areas and provide opportunities for creating links between service providers to deliver more family-focused activity.

In order to achieve this, the pilot programme has a menu of activities for three target areas (the Parkwood area of Maidstone, the urban areas of the district of Swale, and the whole of the district of Thanet). These are:

Capacity building and training for around 70 front-line professionals working with families on low incomes in these areas in order to improve referral routes and signposting to services supported by access to newly created **hardship funds**. 141 Hardship Fund grants had been awarded and 70 staff have received some information, advice and training;

New services commissioned to address non-material aspects of poverty (social, emotional and cultural) providing family mediation, peer mentoring and family group conferencing (FGC) for families with more complex needs. These services have taken time to develop and establish, although a few small projects aimed at specific groups of individuals had been completed. Family Group Conferencing had nine referrals (although this was reported to have increased to 20 at the time of writing) against a target of 120;

Locally tailored family learning programmes for 400 families to supplement mainstream provision and focus on skills which could increase their confidence and aspirations as well as their material wellbeing. Over 270 families had engaged in this by March 2010;

New modules for the Personal, Social and Health Education (**PSHE**) curriculum for children in secondary and primary schools to build the resilience of young people. The Kent LAIP is trialling this in one secondary and one primary school, with secondary school pupils mentoring primary school pupils. The modules won an Innovation Award from the Royal Bank of Scotland.

It has also developed **local projects**, which are expected to respond to needs within the LCSP target areas and add value to existing local provision. There are over 20 of these, including a project in Thanet to raise literacy in a primary school through secondary school pupil mentors; and, a community-led bulk buying project on an estate in Maidstone where residents run a shop from a school building for local families to buy household goods at discounted rates.

Monitoring data

The programme has faced challenges in providing the evaluation team with data from across their range of activity. Data provided for the Hardship Fund shows that:

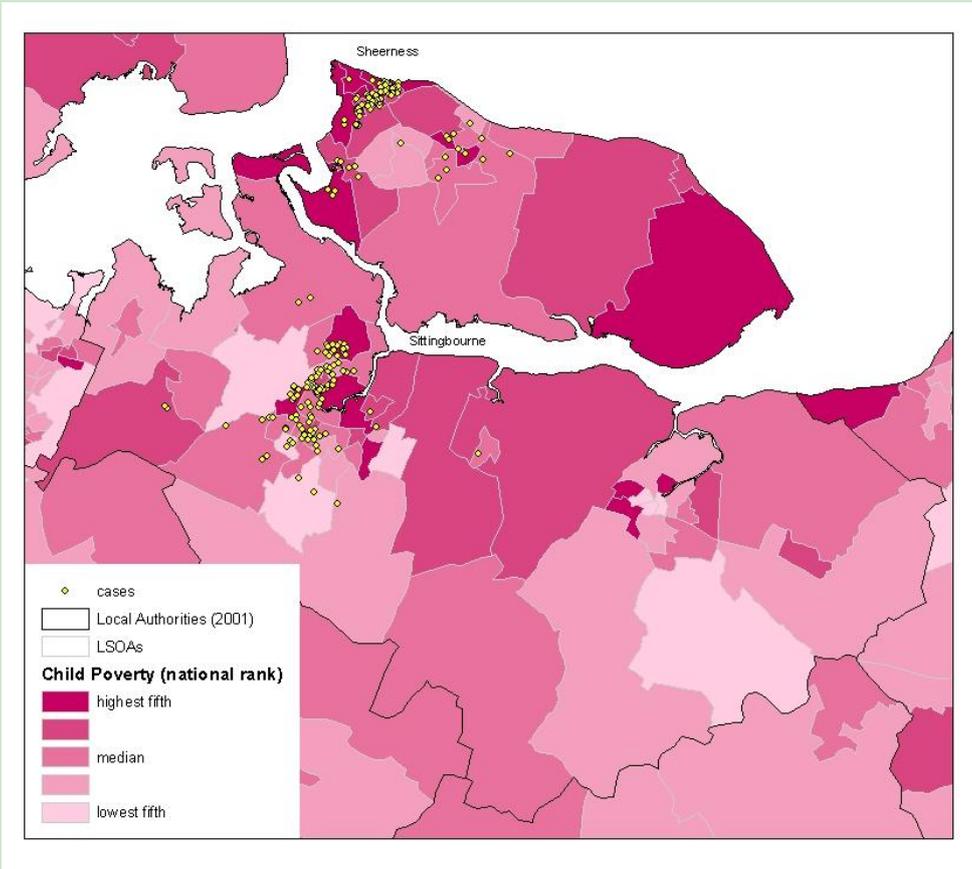
- 141 grants have been made with an average value of £216; 17 were second grants so the grants have gone to 123 families;
- 30% have been for essential household goods (42% of funding); 28% have been for uniform and other clothes (19% of funding); 25% to enable participation in learning (27% of funding) and 10% for transport (8% of funding);

- 111 grants were made to families with no adults in employment;
- 125 of the grants went to White British families (89%); and,
- 59% of grants were made to families with one adult member and 31% to families with two adults (including grandparents and partners).

Pilot targeting

Data provided for hardship funds and family learning show that they have been successful in selecting beneficiaries from the areas targeted and from areas with a higher incidence of child poverty. An example from the family learning programme in Swale is included here.

Map 3.4 Kent (Swale) Family Learning Beneficiaries by Local Area Child Poverty Data



Future mapping analysis will explore the different targeting and outcomes of the different locality based programmes.

Knowsley

Budget (2009-2011)

£297,220

Context

Knowsley lead on child poverty in the Merseyside City Strategy and it was a strategic priority for the authority before the submission of their LAIP bid. Child poverty activity brings together a partnership of the Regeneration, Economy and Skills Directorate and the Directorate for Children and Family Services. The Borough has a history of partnership working in children and family services, with joint strategic appointments made by the Department for Children and Family Services and the Knowsley Primary Care Trust.

The Innovation Pilot is embedded within a strategic 'Child Poverty Programme', which provides a programme team for this and other related programmes across the borough. This structure is intended to ensure operational capacity to deliver the LAIP and strategic capacity to learn across the authority. The Child Poverty Programme theme groups mirror the 'building blocks'. Knowsley is working with the Innovation Unit – formerly part of the Cabinet Office and now an independent social enterprise supporting the development of innovation in public services – to develop an 'innovation function' in the authority; child poverty is an early focus of this work.

Activities

Knowsley's pilot – '**Opportunities for Families**' – aims to create a team of 20 **Volunteer Family Mentors** to support families to access services that support them as a family and address their family's needs. They will work towards engaging parents in labour market opportunities, empowering families to change their material circumstances and thus will tackle the underlying causes of deprivation. Mentors will provide a range of support for families based on a close supportive relationship. Mentors will work to understand the needs and aspirations of families and work with them to help them address the consequences of poverty in the short term and the causes of poverty in the longer term. They will provide holistic, flexible support with incentives rather than sanctions.

Each volunteer mentor will work with one or more 'just coping' families, over a period of up to 12 months, and the volunteers will be drawn from the target area of North Huyton. Volunteers will benefit from their involvement and their employability will be increased – and are therefore beneficiaries of the programme – and it is hoped that adults from families supported by the pilot will themselves become mentors.

Volunteer Family Mentors (VFMs) began training in November 2009 and in March 2010 the Pilot had exceeded its target of 20. One cohort of 14 had completed their training; a second cohort of six was completing their training and had been accepted for the role; and, a third cohort of eleven was engaged in training. No families had been engaged at the time of our fieldwork, although at the time of writing it is reported that over 30 families are in receipt of support.

Monitoring data

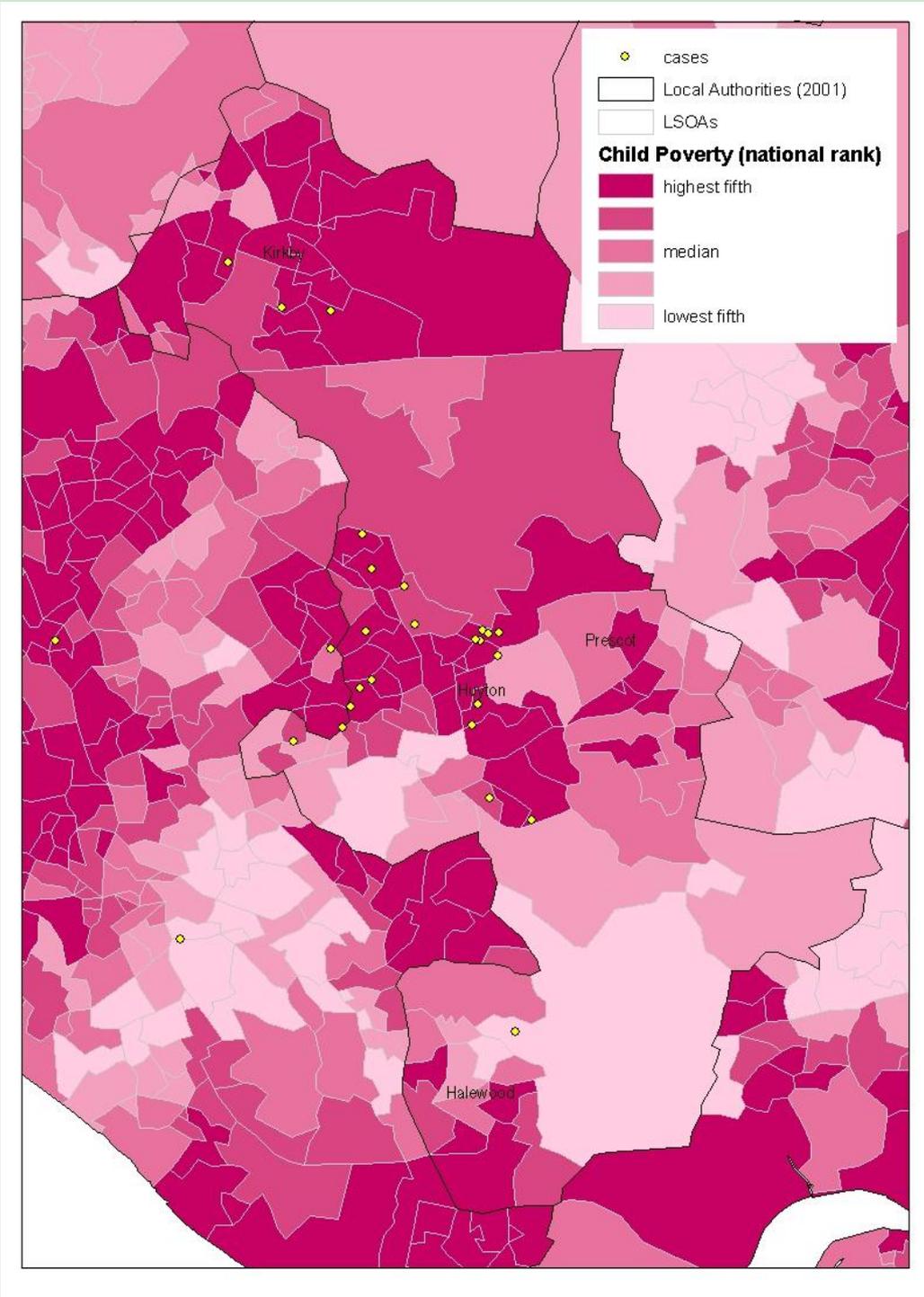
Data provided for the end of March 2010 shows that:

- 67% (18) of the volunteers are unemployed (an equal split between those seeking work and those caring for their family), with four of the 28 volunteers employed full-time (14%) and four part-time (14%);
- Half of the volunteers come from households where no-one is working;
- 89% are women, with an almost equal split between lone and couple parent households; and,
- There was consistent improvement across the 11 domains of a 'pre and post' training questionnaire that all cohort one volunteers had completed. This included self-confidence and increased skills.

Pilot targeting

The mapping so far is based on the VFMs and not the families they are supporting. It shows that almost all the VFMs come from North Huyton and the immediate area, reflecting the effective targeting of the recruitment of VFMs as well as the flexibility of eligibility criteria that requires VFMs to be able to volunteer in North Huyton if they do not live there. The analysis also confirms that North Huyton is an appropriate locale for the LAIP to target, as it has some of the highest rates of child poverty in the Knowsley Borough (which is itself characterised by high rates).

Map 3.5 Knowsley Volunteer Family Mentors by Local Area Child Poverty Data



The mapping analysis will become more complex once there is data from families who are receiving support. It will be possible to compare the outcomes achieved by the pilot with what is known about the characteristics of those living in the areas; for example, according to skill level, health, and child wellbeing.

North Warwickshire

Budget (2009-2011)

£218,457

Context

The LAIP operates in a former mining area that is sparsely populated with pockets of deprivation. North Warwickshire Borough Council (NWBC) has undertaken financial inclusion events in target areas in the past that were thought to be poorly attended due to stigma. The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) had also undertaken some outreach work but was forced to withdraw because of a lack of resources for this work. The pilot works under the strategic umbrella of the county-wide Child Poverty Strategy. The Pilot Board has recently had its remit expanded to become the District's Financial Inclusion Partnership, bringing a partnership together to take a strategic and comprehensive approach to financial inclusion.

Activities

The North Warwickshire LAIP has developed a mobile one-stop-shop - **the Branching Out Bus (BOB)**. It has a core team of two Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and one CDA adviser (Coventry and Warwickshire Co-operative Development Agency – an organisation supporting social enterprise and delivering social and financial inclusion support) who primarily works with schools. In order to maximise capacity, since our last report the driver has been trained to deliver adviser support. In addition, staff from North Warwickshire, Hinckley College (NWHC) and Jobcentre Plus also provide advice on a less regular basis. The Bus visits the same places at the same time each week, aiming to provide a non-stigmatising service as a general information source, as well as attending *ad hoc* community events. The advisers provide advice primarily on benefits and income maximisation and signposting to a broad range of specialist support.

The main objective is to engage with residents in isolated rural areas who do not access partners' (CAB, Jobcentre Plus, CDA and NWBC) services. The concept of the BOB was primarily about developing a relationship with these communities. BOB visits specific locales identified through street-level **mapping of MOSAIC data** (a comprehensive database of 400 data sources) and North Warwickshire Borough Council (NWBC) benefits data to identify families with children, in receipt of benefit and living on a low income. Where clusters were identified, they were included as target locations. By March 2010, 450 people had accessed BOB for the advice, initial support and signposting.

Work with schools aims to promote financial literacy and inclusion and is the focus of the CDA adviser's time. There are two key elements:

- Heart of England Credit Union bank accounts. To date 276 bank accounts have been opened across 16 primary schools and one secondary school. Children will be trained to administer the bank accounts in these schools.
- Financial literacy workshops. The CDA adviser runs financial literacy workshops for pupils in six primary schools closest to where BOB is parked. The workshops take place in 'My Money Week', a national initiative focusing on financial capability for young people in primary and secondary schools throughout England. The workshops are run with all primary school children from nursery to Year 6. For nursery to Year 4 pupils there is a one hour session, and for Years 5 and 6 there are two one hour sessions run on consecutive days. The CDA also attends parents evenings in the schools to promote the school bank and there are plans to support the development of financial literacy workshops for parents.

Since our first report in December 2009, the model has developed to include '**BOB without the bus**'. BOB is a promotional as well as a delivery tool and can serve as an independent umbrella for a range of initiatives. Partners in the pilot have begun to provide services from permanent community locations, providing outreach from these settings to complement or in place of the bus. BOB promotional activities are used to promote this service so it comes under the BOB brand but without the physical presence of the bus.

Monitoring data

Data provided for the end of March 2010 shows that for the 500 people who accessed the bus and who had their details recorded:

- Half of those accessing BOB advice are aged 30-59;
- Just over one in five (21%) were in employment;

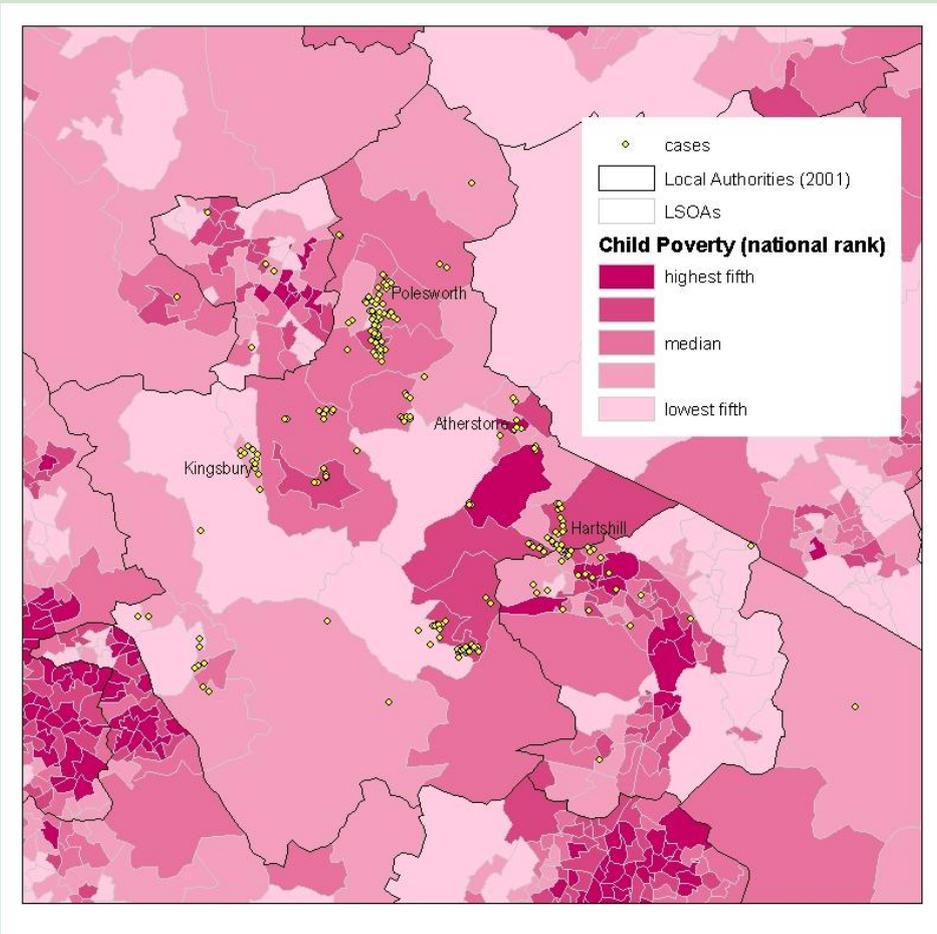
- One in five queries related to benefits followed by training courses (9%) and debt (8%); and,
- 83% of clients are new to CAB.

Pilot targeting

In the case of North Warwickshire, the geographical areas on which the mapping analysis is based currently are not as fine-grained as is the focus for the pilot. Although this map reveals that beneficiaries do not always come from the areas of highest poverty, the MOSAIC and NWBC data analysis that informed the LAIP suggested pockets of deprivation within these areas.

One potential avenue may be to map the postcodes of intended recipients of the BOB’s services (based on NWBC benefit data) against those of its clients.

Map 3.6 North Warwickshire Beneficiaries by Local Area Child Poverty Data



Sefton

Budget (2009-2011)

£1,048,816

Context

The Sefton LAIP builds on a history of joint working between the authority and the local CVS (Council for Voluntary Service) to deliver employment programmes; and, on an emerging recognition of the need to reflect parents' caring and family responsibilities through a flexible and personalised approach when addressing employment and employability.

The pilot targets working and non-working households with an income below £19,900 in Southport, a seaside town with pockets of disadvantage and a distinct visitor economy.

Activities

Sefton's LAIP is led by the Planning and Economic Regeneration Department. The pilot has two core elements and is known as '**Promoting Parents**'. The pilot aims to: raise income; improve access to services; promote family wellbeing; and, address the barriers that prevent progress to sustainable, prosperous employment.

A team of **Family Coaches** provide a holistic and whole-family approach that aims to improve employment and employability through tailored 'family progression plans'. A flexible package of incentives and rewards enables Family Coaches to work outside of traditional structures and reward progression through an explicit 'something for something' approach.

At the time of our fieldwork in March 2010, 43 parents were engaged in Family Coach support against a target for March 2011 and thus for the whole of the pilot period of 40.

The Family Coaches are hosted by Sefton CVS's 'Workzone' service, which provides employment and employability support in partnership with the local authority's 'Sefton@work' service. The pilot funds an additional Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) officer at Workzone in order to increase IAG capacity and provide a referral route from Workzone support to the Family Coaches. A Money Advisor provides specialist money and debt advice.

The pilot also intended to target parents who had approached Workzone and Sefton@work in the past for support. There were 220 parents from these records. After delays to recruiting to the IAG post, and a high demand for this support reported by Workzone, the officer will now provide parent-focused advice to all parents who engage with Workzone. At the time of our fieldwork, 112 parents had been engaged in IAG support.

The second element is the development of a Promoting Parents '**Employer Award**', commissioned from external experts. Developed from an initial notion of a 'kitemark', the Employer Award will incentivise and reward employers who develop and implement policies and procedures that are 'family friendly' and value the employment of parents. Employers progress through a workbook, with support, and their achievement of family-friendly practice results in the award.

The award is supported by an Employer Liaison Officer; an additional post created by the pilot within the existing Sefton@work service. At the launch of the award in March 2010, nine employers from the public, private and voluntary sectors were committed to participation.

Since our first report a third element has been added to the pilot. A Pilot Innovation Fund had been established, utilising year one (2009/10) under-spend, in order to support the wider aims of the LAIP to reduce the family impacts of poverty and increase the employability and employment of parents. Local organisations were invited to submit tenders for funding of innovative provision building on their experience and expertise. The successful tenders offer a range of services, for instance: additional capacity in a housing support service; employment support capacity for a local carers' project; and, food and fuel poverty projects.

Monitoring data

Data provided for 36 parents engaged in Family Coach support at the end of March 2010 shows that:

- The majority were female (61%) and aged under 40 (72%); and,
- The majority had been unemployed for more than 6 months (55%).

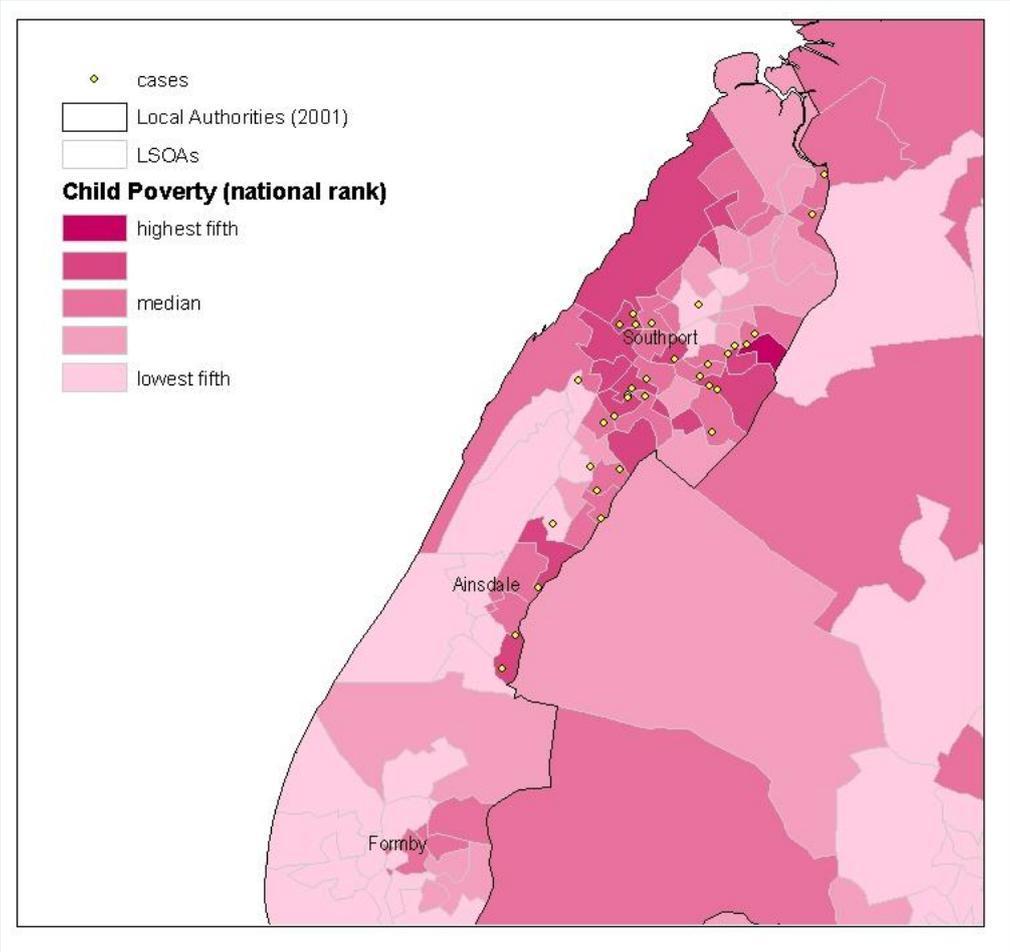
A new data collection system was due to be in place for the authority and CVS services and this should provide

the evaluation with more and higher quality data (for example, providing the family as the unit of analysis).

Pilot targeting

The mapping shows that all of the beneficiaries come from Southport and broadly from the more deprived areas within the town, suggesting that targeting has been effective. The local area mapping will be developed from an overall Sefton context to reflect more detail about Southport. The mapping analysis indicates that families being supported are not always from the most deprived neighbourhoods. Nonetheless, as the Pilot uses an income measure for eligibility it suggests that the pilot is effectively targeting families in poverty across the town and not just in the neighbourhoods identifiable from national data.

Map 3.7 Sefton Beneficiaries by Local Area Child Poverty Data



The mapping analysis will become more complex when data relating to the different activities of the LAIP (IAG and perhaps the Employer Award) can be included.

Tyne Gateway

Budget (2009-2011)

£1,537,500

Context

The Tyne Gateway LAIP is a joint programme between North and South Tyneside Council, the only one of the ten programmes to involve the partnership of two local authorities. Together, the boroughs are characterised by considerable diversity between neighbourhoods in terms of levels of deprivation and poverty, with some of the most deprived communities nationally sitting in close proximity to some of the least deprived.

The pilot is informed by the 'barefoot professional' model from primarily developing countries, whereby local people are trained and empowered to undertake developmental work in their own communities. The pilot draws on the content, and the recent history, of various related activities in Tyneside including work on emotional resilience, life journeys and inspiring communities.

The pilot is targeting families who are at risk of poverty, including characteristics such as: households experiencing worklessness or where only one adult works part time; lone parents; households with a disabled family member; minority ethnic parents; young offenders; and large families of four or more children.

Activities

There are two main strands to the pilot. Phase 1 involved the recruitment and training of 20 '**Community Entrepreneurs**' (CEs), recruited from within targeted disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and who will subsequently work in one of those neighbourhoods to **develop community projects** (Phase 2). Projects will be designed by the CEs in collaboration with sponsoring partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors (who have made a commitment to provide a number of guaranteed employment opportunities), and act as pathways into sustainable employment for parents in poverty. Each Community Entrepreneur will work with an additional 10 parents each, therefore helping a total of 200 families out of poverty in the two Boroughs. The final aim of the pilot is the expectation that Community Entrepreneur posts will be mainstreamed into the local authorities at the end of the pilot.

Training was provided through an eight week training course developed through the pilot. This 'Awareness Raising Course (ARC)' included basic skills and pre-employment support as well as addressing the key themes of the CE role in developing community projects. Of the 26 participants who successfully completed the course, 25 applied to become CEs and, of those 25, 20 were appointed to the 20 posts available. CEs will complete a Foundation Degree in Community Entrepreneurship whilst in post. All of those who completed the ARC have developed a 'Personal Action Plan (PAP)', including the potential for non-CE's to attend one module of the Foundation Degree. Feedback and 'soft' outcomes (for instance raised skills and confidence) evidence from the ARC was very positive, and participants highlighted the benefits to them of the course regardless of possible CE positions. Given this positive outcome, the Pilot successfully applied to CPU for additional funding and a second ARC has been delivered to 14 participants. Although no CE posts were available, these participants were recruited for the opportunity to work with appointed CEs on a voluntary basis and thus gain work experience. The cohort also offers a resource should any of the appointed CEs drop out of the programme.

The appointed CEs have been working to identify and develop projects in the communities where their role is based with the support of Senior Mentors. In March 2010 the Steering Group approved four initial projects for funding and development with the remainder to be approved in July 2010. The approved projects are:

Blossom Forth – Childcare and Support Workers for Disabled Children: the project will recruit, support and train parents and carers to become childminders/support workers for families with disabled children, with the aim of becoming a social enterprise.

Crystal Clear – Interpreting Services: the training of local members of ethnic minority communities to become Community Interpreters given a shortage of such skills in the region.

Home Buddies – Supporting Young Tenants: young people who have sustained a housing tenancy will be trained to support other young people/families to achieve a secure tenancy both through accessing all the relevant services available and emotional support at key, often 'out of hours', times; and,

The Piggy Bank – Financial Inclusion in South Tyneside: to reduce the use of doorstep lending and increase financial literacy by developing an embedded credit union service in schools, children's centres and colleges.

The pilot was presented with the 'Award for Supporting Parents and Families' at the 2010 4Children National Children's Stars Awards in June 2010 in recognition of its innovative approach.

Monitoring data

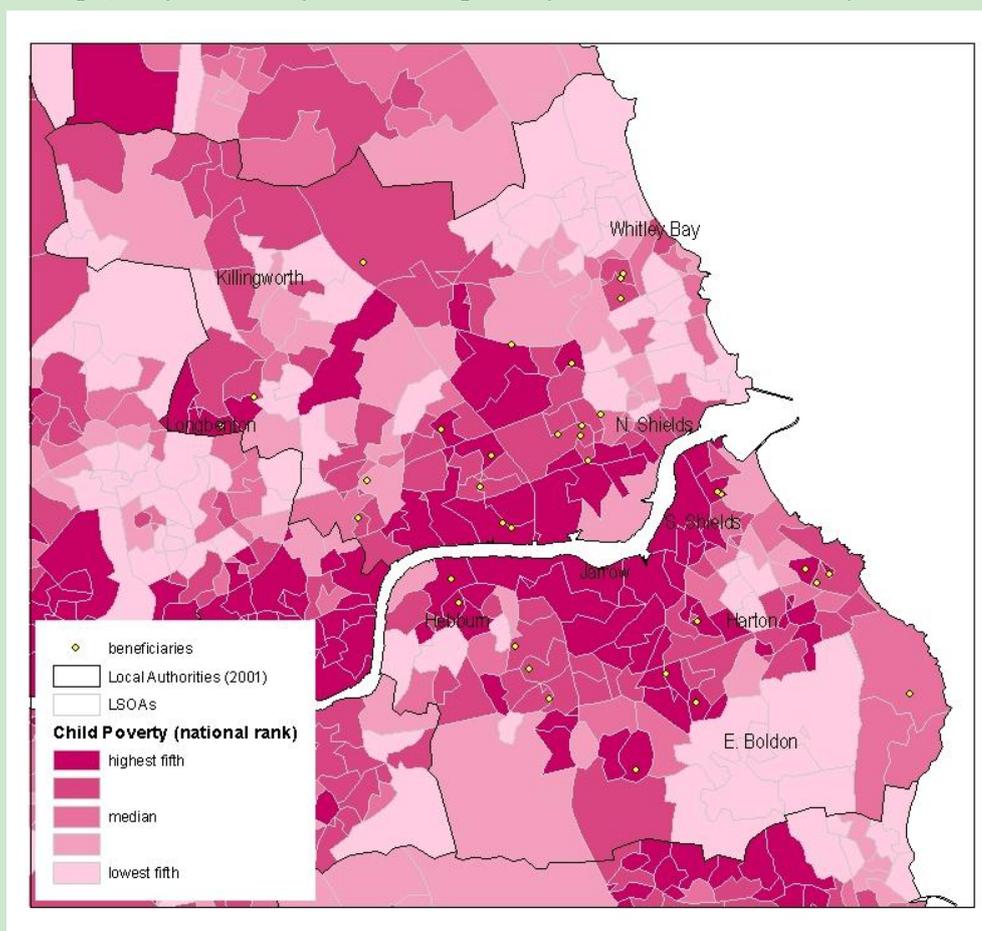
Data has been provided regarding beneficiary characteristics for 38 of the 40 ARC participants.

- All the participants were parents except for two who were grandparents with caring responsibilities, and 17 (45%) of the participants were lone parents.
- 34 (89%) were female participants. The age-range of all participants ran from 25 to 57, with the majority (65%) in their thirties. A total of 11% identified themselves as minority ethnic groups and 9% reported a form of disability.
- In terms of economic position, 2 of the participants were in full time employment and a further 6 in part time employment. Of the remaining 30, 3 were undertaking part-time study and 6 were volunteering.

Pilot targeting

Mapping the home location of the ARC participants shows that they are relatively evenly spaced across the Tyne Gateway programme area (North and South Tyneside). Most are from the more deprived areas (and none from more affluent areas), although none are resident in the highly deprived riverside LSOA of Jarrow and South Shields (Tyne Dock). Looking at the new data on the local incidence of child poverty, the ARC participants can be seen to be resident in areas with a higher incidence of child poverty.

Map 3.8 Tyne Gateway ARC Participants by Local Area Child Poverty Data



The Community Entrepreneurs' activities will not necessarily be based in their residential area and additional mapping process will be undertaken as to the location of their projects (alongside mapping of the beneficiaries engaged).

Waltham Forest

Budget (2009-2011)

£966,063

Context

Before the government's invitation to local authorities to bid for an Innovation Pilot, the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in Waltham Forest had set out tackling child poverty as one of its key aims. The authority is characterised by: long term unemployment with high levels of inter-generational unemployment and relatively low employment rates; low average incomes of residents, the lowest in London, which are being adversely affected by the recession and the high levels of benefits take up; evidence of low aspirations about learning, skills, jobs, and working outside the area; and, the difficulties faced in changing behaviours, creating less dependence, and reducing the attainment gap.

Waltham Forest's pilot targets families on low incomes – those in receipt of benefits and eligible for free school meals – with young children aged 2-5 years in the most deprived wards of the borough. The Pilot targets five primary school and children centre catchment areas, and the families whose children attend a special school. The pilot targets minority ethnic families, including Gypsies, Roma and Travellers who live in these areas.

Activities

The pilot aims to support families to access services and benefits in order to improve their financial, social and emotional wellbeing. It is expected that 500 families, identified by a range of partner organisations, will receive a **joint visit from a benefits adviser and family support adviser** (FSA). The purpose of these visits is to identify families' needs and to offer information, advice and guidance about available services. 100 families, with more complex needs, will receive continued intensive personalised support from a team comprising housing, health, family and benefits experts. There is an emphasis on building a trusting and collaborative relationship between services and families to ensure that families' needs are met effectively **using a Family Partnership Model (FPM) approach**. 104 parents have received an assessment visit; almost all of these (96) have gone on to receive the intensive and personalised support provided by the pilot. As a result of this high demand for pilot support, the target of 500 families for assessment is being revised down and the target for families to receive more intensive support increased to 200.

The pilot also aims to improve Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) results in the borough by helping families to access the **Free Early Education Entitlement** (FEEE) Grant and to be more involved in their children's learning. While the Pilot has enabled take up of the FEEE and encouraged parents to play and learn with their children, it is intending to do more to contribute to foundation stage attainment. Children's centres play a key role in promoting early play and supporting parents to be involved in early education. Therefore, the pilot also has a focus on **building the capacity of children's centres** to engage the families it is working with. To inform this capacity building work, the pilot has funded a piece of research about the reach of the authority's children's centres to assess the extent to which centres are successfully engaging the most marginalised families; strategic planning to address the findings is now beginning.

All activity within the pilot is underpinned by a commitment to involve parents in the design and delivery of services and the pilot developed a **Parent Advisory Group** (PAG) with six parents recruited (against a target of 15). Due to low attendance the PAG is being reviewed with alternative methods of involving parents being considered.

Monitoring data

The pilot has comprehensive monitoring data available. Highlights from this include:

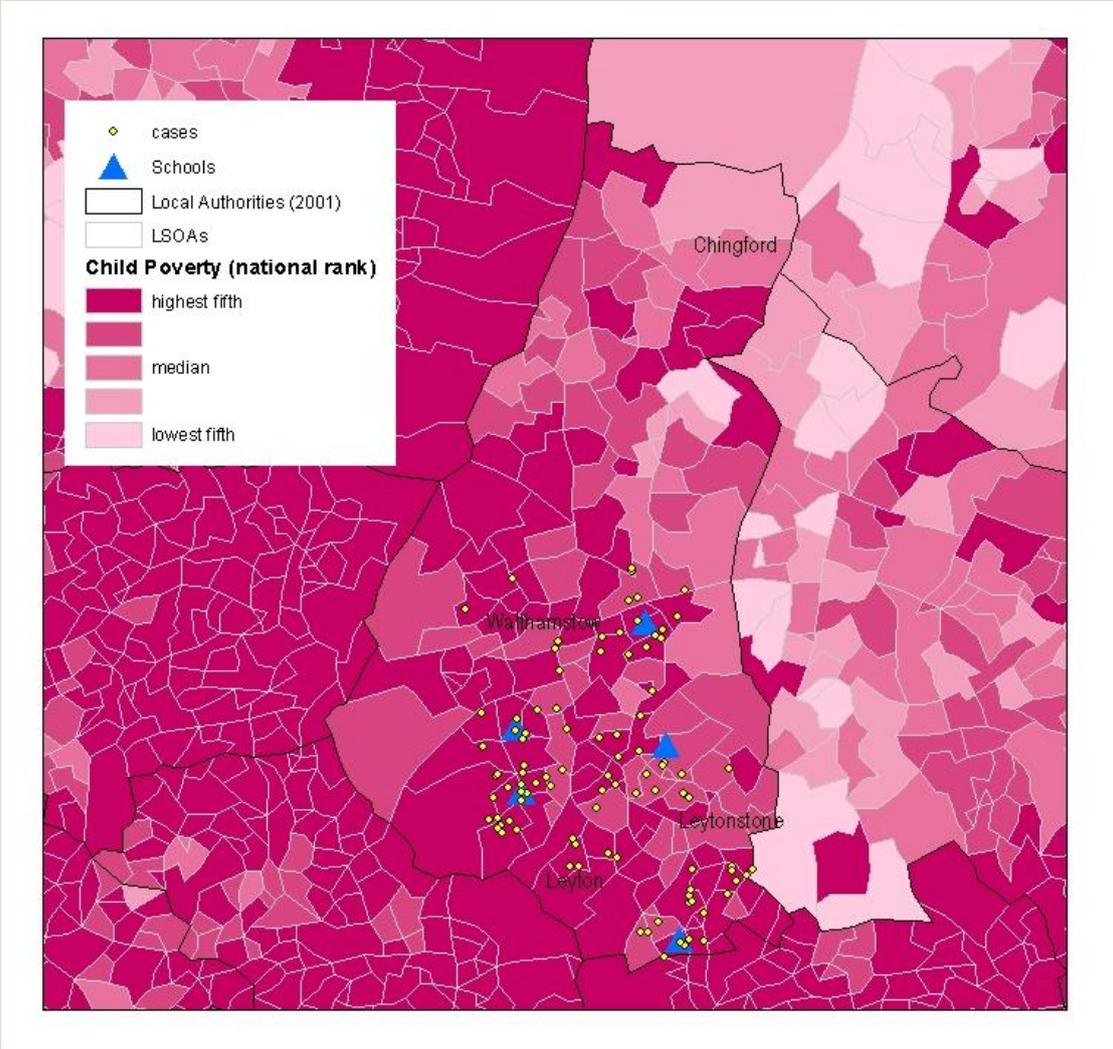
- Over a third of families supported by the project were Asian, and of those nearly half were Pakistani. This is reflective of the fact that the wider Waltham Forest population has a high proportion of people of Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin.
- Most of the parents that the pilot has engaged are female (85%), and a high proportion of all parents engaged are lone parents (46%).
- Approximately a fifth of all carers and children engaged in the programme have a disability or impairment.

Pilot targeting

The mapping shows that the beneficiaries are clustered around the selected schools and that they are in areas that are more likely to be experiencing higher levels of child poverty. This demonstrates that the pilot's targeting

and checking processes have worked and that the target areas selected are appropriate.

Map 3.9 Waltham Forest Beneficiaries by Local Area Child Poverty Data



Future mapping analysis could analyse the characteristics of beneficiaries by target locale. It could also compare those who receive the initial assessment visit and those who receive the intensive support available.

Westminster

Budget (2009-2011)

£1,191,255

Context

Westminster has extremes of wealth and poverty. 'Westminster Works' is the local partnership structure for the commissioning and delivery of employment and economic development, which this pilot builds upon to provide '**Westminster Works for Families**'. Their local strategic partnership included reducing child poverty as a strategic priority. The LAIP funding proposal built on an emerging partnership between Children's Services and economic development (Regeneration) services who had been working together to examine how local residents, and disadvantaged parents in particular, could have better access to local jobs. The LAIP is closely linked to the Work Focused Services in Children's Centres (WFSCC) Child Poverty Pilot, where Jobcentre Plus (JCP) advisers work with parents and families in Children's Centres, and many parents will benefit from the support of both pilots.

The LAIP aims to support 300 parents with families living in poverty, working with them to: lift 200 children out of poverty; and, support 100 parents into sustainable employment over the course of 2010-11. The parents and carers must be over the age of 19, be either workless or recently returned to work, be eligible to work in the UK, and meet one of the following criteria for poverty: have an annual family income of less than £20,000 per annum; have children in receipt of free school meals; or, be in receipt of workless benefits.

Activities

The pilot model is based on a '**keyworking**' approach, where existing frontline staff in partner agencies (such as Jobcentre Plus, voluntary and community sector partners and others) engage parents in a personalised, flexible package of support to prepare for the return to work, and long-term in-work support to facilitate the transition to sustainable employment. Keyworkers access and utilise resources provided by the LAIP's **four 'workstreams'**. A common approach to registering, assessing, action planning and supporting parents has been developed. A central team help to coordinate support packages, referral pathways and Keyworker activity across both the LAIP and WFSCC pilots.

Identifying Keyworkers, raising awareness of available resources and agreeing keyworking processes has all taken considerable time. The pilot Keyworkers have sometimes struggled to identify parents who are ready to return to work and can benefit from the work-related support on offer.

The four strands of support ('workstreams'), are:

Workstream 1 - A personalised package of intensive support for parents, including financial support:

Keyworkers provide advice and support and referral to financial support services, with the offer of specialist careers advice and guidance through the local 'nextstep' provider. 100 parents were engaged by March 2010, with recruitment increasing quite rapidly each month. 11 parents have entered employment.

Workstream 2 - Access to affordable and flexible childcare: providing support with the full childcare costs for the first six months for parents in work or training, via the Family Information Service (FIS). This has developed from an initial plan to subsidise the cost that parents are required to meet to supplement the Childcare Tax Credit (CTC) contribution. However, during the planning stage of the pilot it emerged that this subsidy would itself be taken into consideration as income when calculating CTC. Following discussion with HMRC about this tax implication, the provision has been amended to meet the full cost of childcare for six months. 38 parents were accessing childcare: eight of these for employment and the remainder for job preparation activities, training and volunteering.

Workstream 3 - Help with in-work housing costs: using the discretionary housing payment (DHP) available to the Council to provide a six month "fixed term award" to remove disincentives/income uncertainties in the transition to employment. Eight parents have accessed this support, reflecting the numbers entering employment (11).

Workstream 4 - Engaging and supporting local employers: supporting the development of 'family friendly' work opportunities and enabling job brokers to pass on vacancies for which local parents could apply. The pilot brings additional capacity to existing job brokerage, and by March 2010 15 employers had been engaged by pilot capacity (against a target of 40) since delivery began in late 2009. As parents supported by the pilot are ready to enter employment, the brokerage service will liaise with employer to identify and promote local vacancies.

The four workstreams form part of a six month 'transition period' to help people returning to work, after which the support tapers off, aiming to provide parents with a smooth transition into work.

Monitoring data

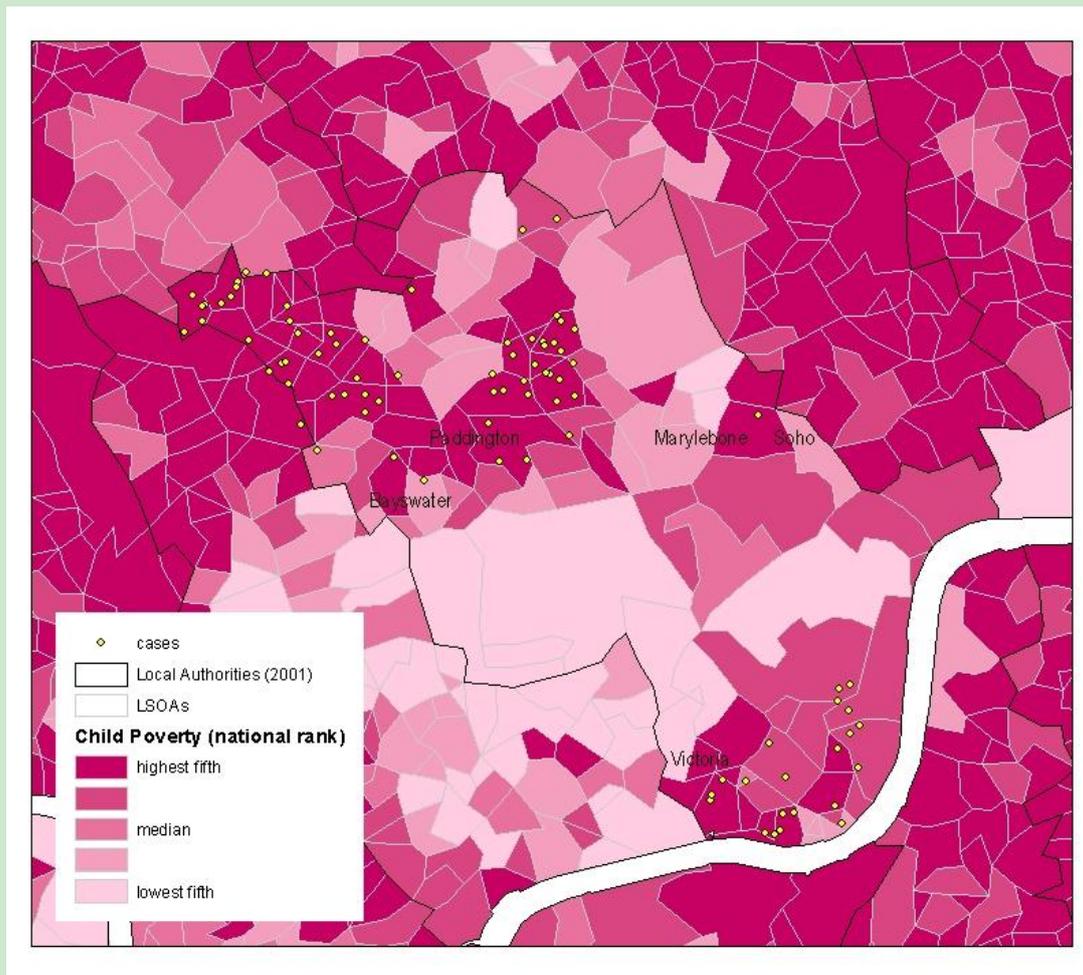
Monitoring data to the end of March 2010 provided for 99 beneficiaries tells us that:

- Almost all are female (97%) and aged between 19 and 25 years (93%);
- The majority are lone parents (65%), with one or two children;
- The largest ethnic groups of parents participating in the Pilot are either 'black or black British' (31%) or 'Asian or Asian British' (29%). The remaining beneficiaries gave their ethnicity as 'white' (23%) and 12% as 'mixed';
- The majority of beneficiaries (67%) were found to live in workless households, with 26% living in households where at least one adult is working.

Pilot targeting

The contextual analysis shows that the child poverty rate in Westminster is much higher than the England average. It also shows that the beneficiary households are located in those LSOAs where child poverty is higher than the average for all children in the borough. The pilot has been successful in engaging with disadvantaged families in those areas where child poverty is likely to be highest.

Map 3.10 Westminster Beneficiaries by Local Area Child Poverty Data



The mapping analysis will aim to compare the outcomes achieved by the pilot with what is known about the characteristics of those living in the areas. It may also be possible to distinguish between those parents that have received different types of support or that received support from different agencies, to compare the outcomes achieved.

3.1 Summary

This Section has provided a summary each local Innovation Pilot programme. As the outlines show, good progress has been made with implementation and each pilot is now delivering activity. In the small number of cases where elements have yet to begin, firm plans are now in place. A summary table of each of the ten LAIP programmes and their key features is included in Annex 2.

The pilots have continued to face challenges. In the spirit of a true ‘pilot’ programme they have learnt from their early experiences and made changes to their approaches accordingly. The pilots have shown many examples of responses to their delivery experiences, which include:

- Amending targets and timescales where implementation has been delayed, to allow for the robust testing of approaches within the funding period;
- Amending pilot delivery models where early implementation identified issues with intended approaches or techniques, to explore effective practice;
- Strengthening partnership arrangements both to provide a broader range of support and to embed learning from new practice; and,
- The use of voluntary and community sector organisations to deliver flexibility – for example with staffing issues and the provision of discretionary funding.

While addressing local issues has provided valuable learning for the pilots individually, the expectations set in the first interim report for learning across the programme are also beginning to be realised. The following section describes the learning emerging from our second round of qualitative evaluation activity.

4 Pilot Learning: Emerging Messages

This section of the report presents learning that is emerging from the synthesis evaluation of the ten Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot (LAIP) programmes as they reach the mid-point of their two-year funding. Each local LAIP programme receives a local evaluation, with the learning presented here being based on an analysis of the ten local reports produced in June 2010. In total, these reports drew on evidence from 357 qualitative interviews with local Pilot stakeholders and beneficiaries (167)¹³.

The learning is organised into five core themes, which reflect those that emerged from our analysis of the local LAIP programme aims, objectives and models of provision that was presented in our first synthesis report¹⁴. The five themes are:

- Targeting and engaging parents and families;
- Increasing employment and employability;
- Alleviating the impacts of poverty;
- Addressing barriers; and,
- Innovation and sustainability.

4.1 Targeting and Engaging Parents and Families

This theme concerns learning about two key and interrelated issues: how diverse parents can be identified for assessment for, and engagement in, support; and, how whole family approaches can be used and where they are effective.

4.1.1 Targeting parents and families

Section 3 demonstrates how a range of target groups are included by the LAIP programmes. Where an income target is used, this is commonly set at household income that is less than £20,000, the median income in the UK (Hammersmith and Fulham, Sefton, Tyne Gateway, Westminster). Examples of other criteria included are: families with children of a particular age (for instance, Hammersmith and Fulham and Waltham Forest); families in receipt of benefits (Islington); those ready to return to work (Sefton); and, those 'at risk of poverty' using a range of quite open criteria (Tyne Gateway).

However they are defined, **LAIP programmes have found that a combination of approaches is needed to identify their target groups**. Then, once parents and families have been identified, they can be assessed to establish or confirm their eligibility for support. Whilst local programmes often have a core method of identifying parents and families who may be eligible for support, in practice a range of approaches are used together.

Box 4.1: North Warwickshire's targeted outreach

North Warwickshire's pilot provides a mobile and targeted outreach service. Advice and signposting services are taken to identified and quite specific geographic areas – to specific streets for example – and through the 'Branching Out Bus' (BOB) branding and mobile bus approach aims to provide an open, independent and non-stigmatising service.

The BOB visits the same places at the same time each week. But it is also advertised through a dedicated website, which includes the BOB timetable, and through promotional literature. For example, leaflets are delivered to localities visited by the bus, posters are placed in community settings such as doctors surgeries and adverts are included in local authority publicity.

BOB itself is now used to promote a range of initiatives, and in turn BOB is promoted by a range of partners.

¹³ More detail is provided in Annex 1.

¹⁴ GHK (2010) op.cit.

Raising awareness in this way is intended to encourage parents and families to access BOB for advice. As an open access service it is open to all residents. This means that although provision is targeted geographically, the pilot is not targeting to establish eligibility in the way that other local programmes are.

Two of the parents interviewed explained how BOB was helping them engage with financial advice locally, that they would have had difficulty accessing otherwise:

"I work full time so I can't get to the Council Offices, this, that and the other, and we're supposed to go to Atherstone [the administrative centre for North Warwickshire]... it's a good couple of bus journeys; well, I wouldn't even know where to begin. So to be able to just walk up the road and speak to somebody was a great benefit to me. Without the bus I would have had to make a couple of phone calls. And to be honest with you, I always think you get a better service when you actually sit down with somebody".

"They've been very, very useful. It's handy to have the actual bus because they know where to direct you. If you go in and say well I need help with this, this and this and if you just phone the free phone number for the CAB then you're a bit vague whereas this is the direct route which is much more helpful, much more productive and much more helpful."

Analysis of monitoring information shows that:

- 83% of those receiving CAB advice are new clients; and,
- 56% used BOB because it was more convenient than travelling to a provider's office.

Pilot programmes delivering parent- and family-based employability support use a range of techniques to promote their provision to parents and via partner agencies that might provide referrals. Leaflets and publicity are commonly used, but in combination with other methods in order to maximise awareness. In Hammersmith and Fulham an initial focus on using leaflets and local publicity to target families in specific estates has been supplemented by work with partners to encourage referral. A new outreach post has been created to work with partners and beneficiaries in a range of settings. In Islington, Parent Advisers work from children's centres to target families using centre-based provision. Similarly, Sefton's Money Adviser provides appointments and drop-in sessions at local centres. In addition, one strand of activity of the Cornwall pilot will include exploring the potential role of social housing providers in identifying, and engaging with, tenant families suffering or at risk of poverty.

Box 4.2: Learning from Islington's development of a 'Data Warehouse'

The Islington Innovation Pilot is building upon work by the local authority's Children's Services Directorate to expand a 'Data Warehouse', which draws on information about children and their families held on ten of the council's databases. The LAIP has undertaken activity to include housing benefit and council tax benefit data in the 'Warehouse'.

This is intended to act as a resource for the whole of the authority in mapping child poverty and targeting interventions. For pilot purposes, the database will identify disadvantaged families by using housing and council tax benefit data (HB/CTB) to identify children in workless families and those in households below 60% of national median income. The database can be used to identify which families are in receipt of workless benefits. It can also use the income information supplied for HB/CBT eligibility to calculate the 60% indicator. In addition the database will also be used to identify which of these families are not accessing children's centres.

The database is now fully operational. All of the technical problems involved in bringing together a wide range of data into a single database have been resolved. This has resulted in an intelligence system with a single line for each child in Islington, with information drawn from birth, social care, housing, children's services and schools data. It also includes important socio-economic data from the housing benefit and council tax benefit (HB/CTB) system. A legal issue has emerged, however, relating to offences under the Social Security Administration Act 1992. This has introduced delays into the use of data planned as part of the pilot and, more fundamentally, has reduced the utility of the innovative Data Warehouse.

Legal advice taken by the pilot in its earliest stages stated that the council was able to bring together the data which it held for internal purposes, within the duties of the Data Protection Act 1998 and under the terms of the council's Fair Processing Notice and use of consents.

More detailed analysis of changes to the HB/CTB claims process, undertaken to ensure the legal basis of the database, has disclosed that some claims bypass the local authority's claiming process (by using central government forms) and are subject to restrictions under the 1992 Act.

The distinction for legal purposes is whether the claims for benefit are made using the council's own form, which includes the appropriate provisions for consent, or central government's form, which does not.

This means that data resulting from claims that are not made using the council's forms cannot be used by the local authority. Data from claims using the Council forms is the Authority's and thus can be used by it in line with the requirements of the 1998 Act. Data from claims that do not use these forms is the property of the Secretary of State at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) under the terms of the 1992 Act and cannot be used.

Following the legal advice received, the council (and Pilot) will distinguish between which forms those on the database have used. Those who have not used the council form will be excluded. This means that a small number of eligible parents cannot be targeted for support using the database.

The barriers imposed by the Social Security Administration Act 1992 can therefore restrict local authorities' use of housing and council tax benefit data.

As well as providing outreach from established settings, pilot programme staff are **working with partners to raise awareness and encourage referral**. This might be to encourage self-referrals from parents, to encourage partners to make referrals directly, or to develop 'mediated referrals'. Mediated referral is a process whereby an organisation contacts the pilot to discuss a potential referral to establish whether that parent or family is likely to be eligible. Evidence from local evaluations suggests that services working with vulnerable families are reluctant to refer them to other support without having confidence in the potential support offered. Nonetheless, those working with less marginalised groups still require time to develop confidence in new provision. Open and flexible referral criteria can create uncertainty for referring organisations, who may be unsure about who they can and cannot refer. Literature and other promotional activity may not embed messages with partners and stakeholders who are busy, may not take the time to read material, or may have existing demands on their time. These factors can limit their capacity to build on any initial awareness that may be created. Working with partners and establishing communication routes so that potential referrals can be discussed emerges from the local evaluations as an important, yet time-consuming, task for those managing and delivering new provision.

Local pilot programmes have found that how services are publicised to both partners and parents themselves is important. For example, many parents do not regard themselves as ready for 'back-to-work' schemes, which they see as being for those prepared for an immediate return. A lack of confidence, skills and experience as well as wider concerns about a range of barriers and disincentives – all feature among the parents the LAIPs are supporting. Softer marketing – such as help for families, help with training and help with thinking about a return to work – are all ways in which providers work to engage families.

Box 4.3: The Westminster pilot's use of 'Keyworkers'

The Westminster LAIP involves 'Keyworkers', who are existing staff in front-line roles across a range of employment and employability services operating in the borough. It was intended that Keyworkers could coordinate a package of support for the work-ready parents on their caseload that utilises the provision funded by the pilot. The support associated with the pilot is designed to enable a smooth transition into sustained employment by: providing employment and employability advice and support ('Workstream 1'); addressing specific barriers associated with childcare costs ('Workstream 2'); and, addressing reductions in housing benefit entitlement ('Workstream 3').

In addition to working with existing staff, a voluntary and community sector partner was commissioned to provide referrals to the pilot, but they have struggled to meet the initial target. Both the voluntary and community sector partner and existing Keyworkers have found that many of the parents seeking to return to

work, and whose circumstances place them within the LAIP eligibility criteria, are some distance from the labour market. They are reported to require a higher level of support at the pre-work stage than some Keyworkers and the LAIP model are able to provide.

In response, the pilot has commissioned packages of basic skills and other training that supports those further away from the labour market. This enhances the 'Workstream 1: intensive support' element of the pilot that provides: 'better off in work calculations'; debt and money management support; and careers support and guidance. A Training Coordinator has been appointed using funds from the 'Work Focussed Services in Children's Centres Pilot' to provide a package of training for parents from both that and the Innovation Pilot. This reflects the close working between the two (see summary in Section 3). In this way the LAIP is increasing its initial capacity for improving the employability of parents who wish to return to work.

The pilot's fourth 'Workstream' includes additional funding for an existing job brokerage service. Through this and close work with the borough's economic development service, activity is taking place with local employers to identify part-time and flexible-working vacancies that might be appropriate for the work-ready parents that Keyworkers support.

The evidence from the local evaluations of the LAIP programmes suggests that **there is a high demand for the more intensive family or parent-focused pre-employment and pathway support that many provide**. Although some pilots are behind on their targets, this reflects the long lead-in time many of them faced (and described in our first report). Once local pilots have begun to deliver their services, on the whole they have found a high demand. Waltham Forest and Sefton have met their targets for the intensive support that they are offering with a year of delivery remaining. Hammersmith and Fulham are behind on their target, but demand for their provision is illustrated by self-referrals and referrals from local partners that continue to increase. Demand for the lower level of support that some pilots envisaged is less clear. In North Warwickshire more than 500 people have accessed 'BOB' over 12 months, many of whom have not accessed similar services before. For example, the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) representatives described how over 80% of the clients seen by them to date were new to the CAB. The mobile service is clearly meeting a demand in isolated rural areas, where provision is lacking. But in Waltham Forest they have found that almost all families they assess are suitable for the higher level of support. In Sefton, careful case-management is now required to ensure that referrals made by the Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) officer, who has recently come into post with a remit to identify parents suitable for more intensive support, can be engaged. In Islington, although targeting using housing and council tax benefit data has yet to begin, Parent Adviser caseloads have reached near capacity for level three support.

4.1.2 Assessing parents and families

The local pilot programmes assess eligibility, and then strengths and needs, in a variety of ways. **A common method of eligibility assessment requires parents to provide proof of income or benefit receipt**. The income level is set at £20,000, to reflect the median income in England (slightly less in Sefton to account for regional differences). This means that families on low incomes and at risk of poverty are included. A focus on receipt of workless benefit only would not include this group. Yet, the current indicator of poverty for national purposes is 60% of equivalised median income. Equivalised means that it takes account of different family size¹⁵. In Tyne Gateway, an attempt was made to calculate participants' equivalised income in order to establish whether or not they were in poverty. They found that such a measure was difficult to utilise. A very accurate measure of income was required, which was difficult to establish for some parents. It also raised questions about the arbitrary nature of the thresholds; and often revealed that some people were just a

¹⁵ 'Equivalisation' is the process whereby disposable incomes are adjusted to reflect household composition and size and thus put them on a like-for-like basis. This is because a large family need a higher income than a smaller one to enjoy the same standard of living. It uses an internationally agreed set of scales called 'OECD equivalisation scales'. It is used by DWP through the Households Below Average Income (HBAI) survey to establish a national picture of household income and of poverty. For more information see <http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/hbai.asp>

few pounds or pence under or over the specified income for their family size. Their experience suggests that using this measure is impractical for targeting families in or at risk of poverty. However, none of the LAIP programmes who are using the £20,000 level equalise this to take account of different family sizes. They may have flexibility in applying this, so that front-line workers can take account of family size or issues in the family such as a disabled adult or child, but this may result in inconsistency. It may be that receipt of workless or income supplementary benefit (Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance, housing and council tax benefit, or Working Tax Credit) is a more appropriate measure. The use of data in Islington will bring additional learning to this issue.

In working with parents to identify strengths and needs, it is clear from the local evaluation evidence that **needs assessment is an ongoing process**. Parents take time to develop trust with service providers. As relationships and trust develops, parents disclose more information and further support can be provided. This is the case in work with both the most marginalised families and those initially assessed as close to the labour market. Parents that participated in local evaluation identified the features of effective support as based on one-on-one relationships that: build trust; develop rapport; are non-judgemental; and, are flexible and personalised. These features are identified for both employment focused support (Islington, Hammersmith and Fulham, Westminster) and broader family support (Waltham Forest, Sefton). These features are identified in previous research on effective family and parent services¹⁶. Delivering this support requires skilled caseworkers. As a strong relationship is established, more barriers are disclosed and support is more likely to be holistic and comprehensive.

Box 4.4: Two frontline workers talk about the importance of developing a relationship over time

'sometimes they are very timid and don't really want to actually answer [questions], but [the parent] will prepare gradually to tell me once it comes out why I'm doing it, especially when we come to the point at the bottom with the debts... it gradually comes out towards the end' (Westminster Financial Adviser)

'I've benefited...from working over a greater time with the clients, because it...allows them to actually tell me...about what they want and how they want to get there...the time factor is a big thing' (Hammersmith and Fulham Family Facilitator)

There is some early learning about particular tools for assessing and engaging parents and families. Most often, parents are the focus of assessment and support, with children and young people being accessed by proxy through parents and parental perspectives. The Workstar tool is well regarded by both practitioners and parents in Islington as enabling them to identify and agree pathways to work. Waltham Forest use an adapted 'Pre-CAF' form to take a whole family approach to assessment and action planning. Sefton take a whole family approach, but their 'family soft outcomes tool' has been under-utilised so far. The pilot's Family Coaches have been cautious about using it too early in their relationship with parents and families. There have been concerns that it would work against the trust that they take time to build. Plans are now in place to pilot the tool with families to learn about how it can be used to support these relationships and to amend it in light of this.

The Waltham Forest pilot works with some of the most marginalised families in local communities, including Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families. They have found that overcoming the suspicion that many of these families hold of local authority services – and caution in discussing benefits in particular – means that **time and persistence is required to engage families who are often defined as 'hard-to-reach'**. But, once engaged they can work together. Very few have refused or dropped out once engaged by the pilot.

¹⁶ Moran P. Ghate, D. and van der Merwe, A. (2004) *What Works in Parenting Support? A Review of the International Evidence*, London: DfES

Another feature of their provision that is identified by the pilot as important is that engagement takes place at the families' own pace. Support is provided in community languages here and in Hammersmith and Fulham, to ensure an inclusive approach where there are large populations who don't have English as a home language.

4.1.3 Engaging parents and families in support

We saw above the features of effective provision that are identified by parents. The evidence from the evaluation suggests that **non-mainstream services are well received** and that these are the features of pilot provision that engage parents and families. Both stakeholders and parents commonly report that the flexibility of pilot provision is unusual and different to their previous experiences of employment and family support. Whether pilot support is being delivered by a local authority or a partner, this non-mainstream approach is valued and welcomed. Parents highlight the difference between pilot employment support and previous experiences, in particular experiences of Jobcentre Plus. They describe this support as less understanding of family demands and issues facing parents than pilot provision, and less able to provide flexible approaches and resources to address them.

Evidence from beneficiaries as well as those delivering support highlights how **'quick wins' and demonstrable progress support engagement**. Where parents who are engaged in support can see the outcome of the services that are working with them, this encourages their ongoing engagement. Parents can see that their engagement is helping them make progress, and that those working with them are true to their word and are making the effort to help them. Being able to provide immediate assistance demonstrates to parents the support that is available, which encourages participation. These features of support and the use of flexible resources are returned to in 'Barriers' below.

Box 4.5: Parents describe the importance of demonstrable progress

'Some people that go to the Jobcentre don't really like their advisors. I like going to [my Family Facilitator] because he's interested, and trying to help. Down the Jobcentre, some of them aren't trying to help you' (Hammersmith and Fulham Parent)

'[Workstar] was really to find out whereabouts I am education-wise, what I wanted to get done...areas that I felt confident, in which levels, and we looked at areas that are not as high, and what can I do to improve them areas, and that's where we did a start from.' (Islington Parent)

'We did a written statement of where we are and where we want to be... It was quite nice to sit down and write a letter of where you are and what you plan to achieve. There's your action plan, your writing it yourself, you can see it clearly, and it's nice to then have someone else's input.' (Sefton Parent)

'So far I think it's good 'cause I keep seeing [Keyworker] all the time and to be honest, if I didn't think it was any help to me I probably wouldn't even turn up to speak to her... [Keyworker] out there pushing a lot of buttons for me to try and get me where I want to go.' (Westminster Parent)

'[Keyworker] keeps me updated with everything and that's something that I do actually appreciate... she told me straight away, 'I spoke to this person, I'm still waiting to hear from this person, as soon as I hear I'll give you a call.' (Westminster Parent)

LAIP programmes that deliver family and employment support aim to take a **family-based approach**. This **does not always mean that the whole family is engaged**. In Hammersmith and Fulham, Islington and Westminster the support provided understands beneficiaries as parents rather than adults (who may or may not have children). In Sefton and Waltham Forest, although parents are the primary beneficiaries who are engaged the front-line staff also meet with the whole family and seek to take a 'whole family approach'. Sefton's pilot employs 'Family Coaches' who work with the whole family to address issues for the children as well as the parents, and understand both as part of a family unit. In Waltham Forest a 'Family Partnership Model' is used to deliver a multi-agency approach for the whole family and similarly understand issues for parents, children and the family as a

whole. For both the parents who receive more 'parent-focused' and for those who receive 'whole family' support, the key feature to emerge is that they are understood as parents with children and families.

In Kent the pilot is providing locally tailored 'Family Learning' programmes, that focus on parenting and basic skills for adults and on family interaction to improve children's wellbeing. They have engaged a total of 273 families so far, with 239 of these in the Swale target area. In Swale the Adult Education Service has targeted small areas where adults are known to have low basic skills and take-up of family learning has been low. All of the sessions were 'taster' or 'hook' sessions to promote take-up of more comprehensive programmes. Events were promoted as fun family activities enabling parents to learn with their children. Demand was so strong for some of the activities that families were turned away. The activities were promoted through a range of routes but primarily through family workers in schools and children's centres. Many sessions were based around cheap and accessible materials so that they could be easily repeated by families at home. Parents contributing to the evaluation were very positive about the impact of the sessions, for example: *'it has helped me know how to do quality time. When I get home from the school run it's all routine...now I'm thinking of different things to do with children'*. Staff identified the following features as important to the success of the programme: activities were sensitively targeted and promoted; transport was provided, so that activities were accessible; childcare was provided for very young children who could not engage in the activities; and, refreshments were provided so that activities were completely free.

4.2 Increasing Employment and Employability

Many of the local pilot programmes have increasing parental employment and employability as central outcomes. The exceptions to this are North Warwickshire (sign-posting and advice), Kent (a range of family supports), Knowsley and Waltham Forest (family support to increase readiness for employability support). This theme explores the ways in which local pilot programmes are working with parents to improve their employability and support them into work.

4.2.1 Parent and family-focused approaches

Following the delayed delivery across the LAIP, few local programmes have achieved employment outcomes to date. In light of those delays and the economic climate, which has worsened since the local bids for LAIP funding were submitted, many of these targets have been revised downwards. However the qualitative research undertaken with parents in the last round of fieldwork identified that employment outcomes are being achieved by the pilots; as service development and delivery continues valuable learning from employment outcomes is expected to be available for our next report.

As outlined above, there appears to be a high demand for the parent and family-focused approaches to increasing employment and employability. **Flexible and holistic approaches understand the issues that parents can face in returning to or entering the labour market.** These approaches require responsive resources that support those with low incomes to access and participate in employment and employability provision (see 'Barriers'). An illustration of this approach is provided by an example from Sefton in Box 4.7.

Evidence from the local evaluations indicates that an important motivation for parents in engaging with employment support is the benefits that they expect it to bring for their children. Parents want to provide a role model for their child(ren) that is education- and employment-based. But there are also financial incentives, both in the immediate and longer term. In addition, parents have their own, individual, motivations linked to self-improvement and their own wellbeing. Notwithstanding this, **an important consideration for parents is their work-life balance.** Parents will balance the benefits of work with the longer term benefits they expect to result from it, both financial and social/familial. There remain a range of disincentives to a return to work for many (again, these issues are returned to below when exploring 'Barriers').

Box 4.6: Parents describe the benefits to them and their families of progress towards, and returning to, work

'[I joined] to progress and for my own improvement really... For me to get more knowledge and also with a view to getting back in to the workplace... one of my daughters said I don't want you to go back to work but I said I want to go back to work for me.' (Knowsley Volunteer Family Mentor)

'[My children] can look back and not just say 'well my mum was not just laid back so I can do the same', because obviously some people do that... [without Family Solutions] I would still be laid back, just trying to do it in my own time.' (Hammersmith and Fulham Parent)

'It can help my child have a better life – better organised and more income for my child. And, she is learning about hard work from me.' (Islington Parent)

'I could have been sat at home with not much options. Now I have options and that makes me feel delighted and that rubs off then on the kids.' (Sefton Parent)

'The weirdest thing was when I went to pay the rent for the first time in years. I was like 'I've paid the rent instead of the social paying the rent', it makes you feel so tall.' (Tyne Gateway Community Entrepreneur)

'I'm more happier, a bit more confident, I'm doing something I enjoy which makes a big difference" and, "even in March when this post doesn't carry on I still want to carry on working full time...it's been a positive change for us.' (Tyne Gateway Community Entrepreneur)

'Personally I've never set foot in a college in my life, I actually left secondary school to be a full time mum... [but now] I want to be able to support my kids and give them everything they want...and everything that they need, 'cause obviously I didn't get that good of an upbringing myself...every parent wants to give their child a better life than what they had... I would give everything off my benefits back to them, and I'd say you know what mate, I'm off to work, I would work any day... but it's because of everything that comes behind it, it's impossible.' (Westminster Parent)

'I am now willing to do anything – just to be employed. If I am not employed then what am I? I am not dedicated to a little child anymore. I want to earn some money and have some savings so that my girl has a better future. So I can buy her stuff and go on holidays you know. I want to get a job, I want to get a car, I want to do normal things like normal people. I don't want to carry on my life like this.' (Westminster Parent)

'I've been unemployed for 5 years, that's a long time. I've been looking around to find work. I went to so many agencies looking to find something... Now my son is old enough to do things on his own. Before I used to pick him up from school, cook dinner, do the homework together, all that. Now he doesn't really need me – we still do some homework together – but it is time for me to carry on with my life.' (Westminster Parent)

4.2.2 Raising employability

Across the local evaluations there is a wealth of qualitative evidence about the increased employability that pilots' support (where it is working towards this) is achieving. It suggests that **carefully tailored support based on an action plan that is 'owned' by the parent engaged, raises their confidence and supports increases in employability as they progress**. Effective action plans and support make aims, activity and then progress explicit. Raising employability is linked to the ability to address barriers (see below), by both providers and the parents that they are working with. Evidence from Hammersmith and Fulham, Cornwall, Knowsley, Islington, Sefton, Waltham Forest and Westminster suggests that raising participants' confidence empowers them to access employability provision and raises their aspirations for their future progression through pathways to employment.

Box 4.7: Supporting a family-based approach through flexible incentives and resources (Sefton)

The Sefton pilot, 'Promoting Parents', includes a team of 'Family Coaches' who provide a holistic and whole-family approach to supporting parents to increase their employability and into work through tailored 'family progression plans'. A flexible package of incentives and rewards enables Family Coaches to work outside of traditional structures and will support as well as reward progression through an explicit 'something for

something' approach.

We can summarise the way that they work with families:

- Once a referral is received, a meeting is held with the parent(s) at the centre where the Family Coach team is based or at a venue where the parent(s) feels comfortable, such as a children's centre.
- The Family Coach model is discussed with the parent(s) and their eligibility is confirmed. The Family Coach strand will support parent(s) and their families where they are motivated to commit to a developmental change programme – a family progression plan – and this commitment is highly important.
- Following the initial meeting, if the parent(s) are willing to commit to the pilot a meeting with the whole family takes place. At this meeting issues within the family are identified and an initial progression plan developed.
- Resources are provided for immediate impact. Steps are taken to implement the progression plan.
- Ongoing meetings review progress, releasing further resources to enable, incentivise and reward progression for parents and their family.
- The progression plan is reviewed on an ongoing basis.

'It's kept the family as a unit, made the family interact more. It's allowed the family to continue as a family unit properly.' (Parent)

Examples of the resources the package has been used to provide include:

- The fees for training courses that support (both) parents' employment aims;
- Parent, young person and family travel passes – for travel to work, school or family leisure;
- Childcare to enable parents to attend training and employment support;
- Before- and after-school club fees for children;
- Help with the costs of school dinners; and,
- Leisure passes for parents, young people and families.

It was clear from our fieldwork that the Family Coach team have taken great care in explaining the resource on offer through the pilot. Parents that participated in the evaluation were mindful of the pilot nature of the service and were grateful for the high level of personalised support available. There was a concern amongst parents that they were seen to be accessing the 'Incentives and Rewards' resources responsibly. Parents described how, particularly initially, they were reluctant to request resources or to identify issues that required resource(s) of a high monetary value. Parents had found it difficult to ask for support and then for financial support, and this had taken time to overcome. As relationships developed parents were more comfortable, but remained careful to ensure that all resources provided to them were appropriate to them and their families' needs.

'I'm not one for asking, it was the way [FC] approached it... She's not made me feel like a rubbish mum because I'm having to ask.' (Parent)

Local pilots are accessing a range of provision to help engaged parents progress towards employment. Where the pilots are following a 'caseworker' approach, the qualitative evidence from providers and beneficiaries suggests that **the ability to tailor a package of support to individual need is more important than the specific training offered**. Examples of the range of provision that is brokered for participants in these models of support are:

- Work and volunteering opportunities;
- Help with CVs and interview skills;
- Basic skills and 'English as a second language' (ESOL) courses;
- Short confidence-building courses; and,
- Longer full-time courses.

Evidence from local evaluations suggests that many of the parents engaged are some distance away from the labour market. In the Tyne Gateway and Knowsley LAIPs, local people who are active in their communities and who complete preliminary training are supported into roles which themselves deliver support to families. In Tyne Gateway, they will provide support through the community projects and social enterprises they develop as council-employed Community Entrepreneurs. In Knowsley, Volunteer Family Mentors will support parents facing barriers to engaging with employability support. In both LAIPs, the groups of parents that they are working with in these roles were deemed closer to the labour market at the time of their recruitment. Both LAIPs have found that despite this, both groups of parents have required support with a range of issues including confidence and basic skills. Their evaluations suggest that **even where people have been volunteers prior to successful application for new (paid and unpaid) roles, confidence and horizons can be low.**

When available, outcome data will enable the synthesis evaluation to draw more learning from the features of effective employability provision.

4.2.3 Work with employers

Working directly with employers is a feature of the Tyne Gateway, Sefton and Westminster pilots. **In Sefton, there has been a high level of interest amongst local employers in the 'Employer Award'**. The award supports and recognises the achievement of family-friendly employment policy and practice. Employers complete a workbook that enables them to identify their good practice and areas for development. They then identify an action plan to address those areas. When they have taken this action and there is evidence of family-friendly policy and practice in place, they receive the Award.

The process is supported by the consultancy delivering the award, working in partnership with the Pilot's Employer Liaison Officer (ELO; see Section 3 summary), who will independently assess the employer's achievement. The Award has been developed with local businesses through engagement events. This engagement altered an initial idea of having 'bronze, silver and gold' awards. Employers raised concerns that only larger businesses, with greater resources, would be able to achieve the higher standards. They also suggested that some employers would choose not to progress beyond the lowest level (bronze) of award. As a result, the workbook approach was agreed. This provides greater flexibility for employers.

The employers committed to participating at the time of our fieldwork included private, public and voluntary and community sector employers. The ELO employed by the LAIP is intended to support parents exiting Family Coach provision into vacancies across Award participants, as well as vacancies more widely available. The delivery of the Employer Award should provide valuable learning for our next report.

In the Westminster LAIP, work with employers focuses on additional job brokerage capacity provided by two voluntary and community sector partners. The role of job brokers is to develop partnerships with employers in order to secure jobs for local people and to expand opportunities for work placements or volunteer roles. They are working to identify part-time and flexible employment vacancies that might be appropriate for parents who are ready to return to work and are being supported by Keyworkers. They are also intended to feed back intelligence about the kind of skills that local employers require to inform the development of local employability programmes. The job brokerage service is being offered as a service to employers and in these respects is similar to the ELO service in Sefton. Although it is hard to disentangle LAIP capacity from ongoing core organisational delivery, according to stakeholders participating in local evaluation activity this activity is progressing well. At the time of our fieldwork, the pilot reported having 15 employers engaged, with 14 vacancies being provided to Westminster Works, the employment service that is the umbrella service for the LAIP 'Westminster Works for Families'.

In the Tyne Gateway pilot, local public and private sector employers have been engaged since the outset through commitments to provide vacancies for parents supported towards employment by the projects the Community Entrepreneurs develop. **In the current**

economic climate, work to engage employers directly in employment programmes for parents may provide particularly valuable learning.

4.3 Alleviating the Impacts of Poverty

Common across the LAIP programmes is activity to alleviate the impacts of poverty for parents, children and families. This is often part of the holistic employment and employability, or family-focused, support that local pilot programmes provide. It is also an aim in itself across them, reflecting the core objective of the LAIP.

4.3.1 Providing resources

Evidence from across the evaluation illustrates how the immediate provision of resources makes an immediate impact on poverty. Families engaged by the LAIP are by definition living on low income and the provision of practical items, access to leisure activities, and resources to support education and employment make an immediate and material impact upon child and family poverty. These impacts achieve positive outcomes for the family unit and for the individuals within it. The resources that local pilots provide are universally welcomed by parents.

A common feature of local pilot programmes is the availability of a flexible fund to provide immediate relief from the impacts of poverty (Cornwall, Kent), but also to link this to family or parent progression pathways (Hammersmith and Fulham, Islington, Knowsley, Sefton, Waltham Forest). Waltham Forest have developed this resource as a result of learning from their Pilot delivery, where they were unable to access funds to address some of the material issues faced by the families they are supporting. Cornwall and Kent provide this resource as a fund for professionals working across their counties (the four target areas in Kent) to access, in the absence of mainstream alternatives. Both the Cornwall Enabling Fund and the Kent Hardship Fund provide one-off payments for the alleviation of crisis and exceptional circumstances, and so have both 'preventative' and 'restorative' elements. In both LAIPs it can also be linked to employment, although this is a more central aim in Cornwall.

Box 4.8: Cornwall's Enabling Fund

The Cornwall pilot Enabling Fund began delivery in April 2009, and to the end of March 2010 had received 244 applications for funding, the majority of which had been successful, and leading to over £116,000 being distributed to support families in need. As a discretionary fund, with few eligibility criteria and designed to process payments rapidly through their third sector partners, referrals to the Fund, and the range of organisations making them, had grown consistently over time.

The Fund provided support in a range of areas, including:

- Helping secure/ exploit employment opportunities - including providing funding for childcare, gap funding between benefits and first salaries, providing tools and equipment. and help with transport in a rural area;
- Improving employability – including supporting training and skills development activities, and providing driving lessons and other support to remove transport barriers; and
- Addressing crises and improving child and family wellbeing – through the provision of furniture, supporting activity and respite care for children and young people, funding debt relief orders.

Interviews with a sample of beneficiaries of the Fund identified that a series of benefits had resulted to each of the families receiving support. Importantly, the immediate benefits were often followed by subsequent benefits – for example helping a parent secure employment being followed by the downstream effects on child and family wellbeing. However not all cases were expected to lead to employment immediately, with several examples showing how funding to address an immediate need could start an individual, and their family, on a journey which could end in employment or a substantial improvement in their overall life chances.

Interestingly, a common message from the practitioners involved in administering the Fund was how small amounts of money could have a disproportionate impact on the individual recipients. While individual awards of up to £7,000 were reported, the smallest award of just £9 emphasised this point. In this case an individual was able to purchase a copy of their birth certificate, which allowed them access to both opportunities and services

they had been unable to access previously. This led to a series of positive steps, including applying for a driving license, with the individual passing her test and progressing into employment soon afterwards.

Parents benefiting from the Enabling Fund described their experiences as part of the latest evaluation fieldwork. All described how payments were made quickly with a fast turnaround – for example “...everything was sorted out there and then, and about a week or two later, I was told I had the funding and everything was in place.”

Each were able to describe the benefits that resulted for them:

“As opposed to being unemployed I was now doing 2 days a week training and practical training, and that at the end of it I was pretty much guaranteed work doing what I’d been trained to do. Without the funding I wouldn’t have been able to do it, and at the time there weren’t a lot of other jobs around that I would have been suitable for”.

One female lone parent who had received funding for initial training to prepare for work described how “...it’s given me hope, rather than thinking I am stuck, I worked a couple of years ago and it feels like the right time to be looking for work again”.

Finally, one mother recovering from mental illness described how the fund had provided positive benefits for her children as well as herself “*They are (now) very happy, and happy that they’ve got their mum back, because when I was ill I just wasn’t there for them, it was like they had lost their mum in that respect ... before I was just trying to keep things together. Now I’m able to enjoy them more and we’re like a proper family, it’s had such a great effect on them, I’m very proud of them, they’re happy, buzzy children!*”

In Kent, parents participating in the evaluation described how they have accessed the Hardship Fund as an alternative to applications to the nationally available (but strictly limited) Social Fund or the use of credit cards. Social Fund awards can be in the form of grants but also loans. Loans, as with the use of credit cards, mean that families will incur debt.

Both the Cornwall and Kent funds are accessed by frontline professionals in statutory and non-statutory settings. In Waltham Forest, Hammersmith and Fulham and Sefton, flexible resources are available to the new roles created by the local Pilot to support work with parents and families. **To be effective the evaluation evidence collected thus far suggests that these funds must be flexible, both in terms of the range of issues that can be addressed through the resource and in their availability**¹⁷. In Sefton and Cornwall, the funds are administered by voluntary and community sector infrastructure organisations (CVS), in order to process claims and provide payments quickly and in contrast to local authority administered funds and their associated bureaucracy. In Sefton this is a recent development, as claims were taking a long time to be awarded due to local authority processes. In Knowsley, a flexible fund supports the Volunteer Mentors in two ways: it provides resources to support them in their role, for example by providing for expenses incurred; it also provides a resource for them to access when supporting families. This fund too is administered by the local CVS for reasons of flexibility. In Kent the fund is administered by the local authority, but it is still welcomed as providing greater flexibility than existing, mainstream funds.

Providing resources prevents families entering or increasing debt. It can provide the alleviation of crisis or meet an immediate need. But, **resources that are linked to engagement and progression appear more likely to build long-term, sustainable change.**

¹⁷ The 2008 Gregg Review for DWP suggested that as part of an approach to personalised conditionality (rewards and sanctions in job seeking and employment support), discretionary funding for Jobcentre Plus Advisers to support those seeking to enter employment during the 6-12 month period of their Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claim would improve outcomes. The review suggested that a trial is undertaken to explore this. Other messages from the review (DWP (2008) *Realising Potential: A Vision for Personalised Conditionality and Support. An independent report to the Department for Work and Pensions by Professor Paul Gregg*, London: DWP) are included in our first report.

4.3.2 Debt and financial inclusion

Evidence from the local evaluations suggests that there is a high demand for debt relief and money management advice. This includes financial inclusion activity with children and young people as well as benefit checks to maximise income.

In North Warwickshire, CAB enquiries via BOB break-down as 51% for benefits advice followed by 22% for debt. In Westminster, support with addressing debt as a barrier to returning to work is a key element of their approach. The Keyworkers and stakeholders who participated in our evaluation described how demand for this support is even higher than expected. They describe how there is a high incidence of debt – more than half of all parents engaged have required this support – and that cases are complex. Local services providing this support have high demands on their provision, meaning there are waiting lists that pilot referrals add to. As a result the pilot is exploring ways of increasing local capacity to provide debt support, for instance by providing additional funding to their voluntary and community sector partners specialising in this provision.

Debt is a barrier to returning to work as increases in income trigger higher repayments and thus wages are reduced. Parents require support in ensuring that debt repayments remain manageable should they enter employment. Hammersmith and Fulham and Westminster also report high levels of demand for debt advice, with similar demands on local partners. When parents are provided with support to manage their debt, there are benefits for them and their families.

Box 4.9: Parents describe the impact of support to address their debt

'I'm definitely happier at home now... my mood is better...and [the children] pick up on these things.' (Islington Parent)

'It's not just about financial things, its relieving the stress that it's caused.' (Sefton Parent)

'Financially I'm not having to worry about having to pay for bus fare [now that we have a family bus pass] so that's taken a lot of the pressure off, I can think more about myself.' (Sefton Parent)

'Before coming here me and my husband were close to splitting up, and it just took the pressure off... just having something else positive to talk about, different conversations about things that we can do.' (Sefton Parent)

'It interferes in your relationship. It stresses your relationship. I wanted to go back to [my country]. But now I'm very happy.' (Waltham Forest Parent)

A stark example was described by the Money Adviser in the Sefton LAIP evaluation. A couple family was in arrears for their council tax and the debt had been passed from the local authority to bailiffs for collection. Neither of the parents was in employment and they were paying £70 each fortnight from their benefits to service their debts. At current rates this is approximately half of the benefits they received. Within 15 minutes of the parents visiting the Money Adviser for the first time, one phone call had been made and arrangements were in place for the debt to be transferred back to Sefton Council and to be recovered at a rate of £3.50 a week. Such a huge difference in the family's outgoings has made an immediate impact upon the money resources available to them, with associated practical consequences. It has also brought improvements in parental and familial wellbeing as the stress associated with the management of the debt is relieved.

In Kent, a financial capability programme for primary and secondary school pupils has been developed by the Pilot with schools in one target area. From the outset, the Kent pilot intended to develop PSHE materials to build young people's 'resilience' to the impacts of poverty. Discussion with pupils identified a demand for a greater understanding of financial capability at younger ages. Modules from a financial capability qualification course for Year 11 pupils have been developed to engage primary school pupils and also broadened for the PSHE secondary school curriculum. Some of the secondary school pupils

studying for the qualification have been supported to mentor pupils in a local primary school (Year Five). The six module programme also encourages the pupils to engage their parents through family packs that include games to play at home, with positive feedback received from parents as well as the pupils. This piloting activity has subsequently won a Royal Bank of Scotland Financial Innovation Award, and there is interest from a number of schools in the other target areas in Kent. **In North Warwickshire financial literacy workshops are delivered in primary schools** by a local 'Cooperative Development Agency'. There has also been a programme to provide Credit Union bank accounts across 16 primary schools and, so far, one secondary school. This is outlined in the summary in Section 3 and will be further explored in our next round of fieldwork.

Evidence from the evaluation indicates that **pilot support is identifying mistakes in the award of benefits and incidences of families failing to claim the benefits to which they are entitled**¹⁸. Monitoring data provided for later reports will enable us to establish the extent of this. The latest Waltham Forest data shows that errors or unclaimed benefits were identified in more than 10% of all cases assessed. The Hammersmith and Fulham, Islington, North Warwickshire, Sefton, Waltham Forest and Westminster Pilots all include benefit eligibility checks in their models of pilot support. All report a high take-up for the provision. As with support that reduces debt and promotes better money management, parents participating in the evaluation described practical impacts from increased family resources, but also impacts for personal and family wellbeing as a result of reduced stress and improvements in quality of life.

Box 4.10: How benefits checks have raised family income in Waltham Forest

In Waltham Forest, the Family Partnership Model of the Pilot involves joint home visits to families by a benefits adviser and a family support worker. Analysis of data collected about increased take up of benefits and tax credits shows that of the 103 families visited by March 2010:

- 13 families (13%) were found not to be in full receipt of their entitlement to housing benefit, council tax credit, child benefit, disability living allowance or child tax credit.
- They were supported to access benefits and tax credits reaching a combined total of £429 a week (£22,285 per annum). The average increase in income for these 13 families was £33 per week, although this ranged from £5 to £135 per week.
- Two families received one off payments through the social fund (including maternity grant, community care grant, crisis loan, budgeting loan). Between them, they received £1350.
- Three families received refunds for tax overpayments, with a combined total of £274.

4.3.3 Addressing child poverty

In terms of child poverty, the evaluation evidence suggests that **work with parents can impact upon their family's children and young people**. The discussion above described how increasing the money resources available to parents and how the reduction of stress through debt advice brings benefits for the whole family. A central theme across all ten of the Pilots is promoting engagement, for the first time or on a more frequent basis, with the range of local services available to them. Evidence from parents engaged in case work support towards this highlights the benefits for children accessing local services and children's centres in particular. Pilot programmes in Islington and Waltham Forest both include explicit

¹⁸ The 'Take Up The Challenge' report from the Take Up Taskforce established by CPU suggested that benefit and tax credit advice is part of a personalised and integrated package of support provided to parents; the report found that between 2006-7, for example, between 100,000 and 180,000 entitled couples with children were not claiming housing benefit and estimated that there are 400,000 children living in poverty as a result of families not claiming the benefits and tax credits that they are entitled to (CPU (2009) *Take Up The Challenge: The role of local services in increasing take up of benefits and tax credits to reduce child poverty. A report by the take up task force*. Online publication, http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/_download/?id=6089)

activity to increase the capacity of children's centres to target and engage disadvantaged families.

4.11: Parents describe the benefits to their children from pilot support

'He gets to be in a nursery environment and experience it, because the state doesn't give you a nursery placement until [your child is] 3, and my son is ready to go out and do some stuff. It's benefited him, being able to interact with kids.' (Hammersmith and Fulham Parent)

'I can definitely see him [my son] getting a good education, especially through his nursery... I look at him when he comes home from nursery and he's always been a happy child but [now] he's interacting with other children all the time, whereas before he didn't know how to mix with the other children, but now he's so calm' (Hammersmith and Fulham Parent) *'The element of childcare is fantastic because it has given my son access as well [as enabling me to join the Pilot] and so it's improved his social outgoing... the benefit of him going to a crèche facility is that it's getting him ready for school. It's moving him away from me whilst still giving him access to services... if I'd carried on with no childcare then he'd only have known life with me.'* (Knowsley Volunteer Family Mentor)

'[Family Coach has] put me in touch with a youth worker for my eldest who has learning difficulties and because of it he's started going skateboarding in the evening now and my other daughter has started doing cheerleading, and they're paying for swimming and gym membership...everyone in the house just seems a lot happier, there's more out there than just going home.' (Sefton Parent)

'We can just hop on a bus and do stuff together. Before we were just in the house, and that's where you stayed, it was getting us all down.' (Sefton Parent)

'He was really by himself before but now he socialises and has many friends. I'm really glad because at least the children can interact with other children and I can interact with other parents.' (Waltham Forest Parent)

'Since [the FSA] contacted me, my son goes to school (nursery) and he is so happy now. He was crying to begin with, but now I don't even have to go in with him...I notice a difference now, he is happy now, when he comes back from school he just keeps playing.' (Waltham Forest Parent)

'Our children don't feel left out, they've got the latest kits, they've got a year's membership which the other kids don't even have, she feels proud to go now, to see the smile on her face, it's wonderful.' (Sefton Parent)

'It sounds like I'm being very materialistic, but those things have helped... keep [daughter] normal and given her something to focus on.' (Sefton Parent)

Work with parents to support them and their families is the approach that characterises most of the local pilots. **Where children and young people themselves are the focus of support, evidence of the benefits for them reminds us that direct work brings immediate impacts that alleviate the effects of poverty.**

Kent's local projects include two new services supporting young parents. One project is a nursery at a school so that up to 12 young parents can continue their education. All of the five current parents using the service had been NEETs: *'I would not have been able to return to learning so soon without this provision on site during the school day'*. The second is the Pinnacle project, which provides 'Young Parent Support Groups' (YAPs) that support 40 young parents. Referrals have been made by midwives and Connexions. On the whole, participants in the local evaluation had positive views of YAP: *'tell the government that we like YAP'; 'I like seeing the other girls here and having a chat'; and, 'my boy loves to play with his friends on the toys outside'*. The targeting of the service appears particularly important: *'I wouldn't go to the group for adults, I went to one once and I wouldn't go again'*.

In Sefton the whole-family approach taken by Family Coaches provides resources for children and young people as part of the family's package of support. The parents that participated in the evaluation described how this had benefited their children. Supporting access to local youth provision, and providing resources such as fees and equipment to enable participation, was described by parents as ensuring that children and young people could maintain existing or establish new peer groups and networks. Existing networks were jeopardised where parents had been made redundant or suffered significant drops in income

due to changes in circumstance. Children from families with a history of managing on a low income had long been excluded from the opportunity to engage in the activities their peers took for granted.

4.4 Addressing Barriers

This theme explores the barriers that parents can face in accessing family support, employability provision and employment. Whilst particular barriers can be identified, two different although often related approaches characterise local pilot provision: information and signposting to local provision; and, holistic personalised packages of support.

4.4.1 Providing packages of support

Wrap around, holistic ‘family-focused’ provision, that is flexible and tailored to individual strengths and needs is a common feature of pilot approaches. Qualitative evidence gathered across the local evaluations suggests that these are effective at engaging and supporting parents on low incomes and in poverty. These approaches are delivered by the local pilot programmes in Hammersmith and Fulham, Islington, Sefton, Waltham Forest and Westminster. This model of support will be provided by the Volunteer Family Mentors in Knowsley (and just starting to be delivered at the time of our fieldwork). The Tyne Gateway Pilot provides personalised support to the Community Entrepreneurs that the pilot has created.

A personalised approach means that it is tailored to the particular parent or family’s strengths and needs. Flexible approaches are responsive to issues as they arise and are not limited by, for example, traditional boundaries between or limits on provision. Taking a holistic parent or family-based approach means that multi-agency support can be provided by a multi-agency team or co-ordinated by a caseworker.

This approach characterises the effective support identified in the themes explored so far in this section: it engages parents and families; it support parents effectively, by understanding them as parents with families and not only as adults; and, it enables resources to be provided or co-ordinated in order to support employment and employability as well as alleviate the impacts of poverty. It also means that the barriers that parents face in accessing services, employability provision and employment itself can be addressed in a co-ordinated way. By providing a package of support, barriers are not addressed in isolation.

Parents who participated in our evaluation activity highlighted how the one-on-one support they receive from a caseworker provides them with emotional support as well as the practical support that has been described here thus far. **Parents value having the support of a single worker who brokers a range of provision and supports them as they access it and progress along a pathway to employment and family wellbeing.**

Box 4.12: Parents describe the importance of a supportive caseworker

‘If I hadn’t met [the Family Facilitator], who knows what I would be doing now? I would love to be able to make someone feel how [the Family Facilitator] has made me feel.’ (Hammersmith and Fulham Parent)

‘IWP has had a big impact on me ... I couldn’t discuss problems with my family. My parent officer and his team have provided me with a lot of support’. (Islington Parent)

‘A couple of months ago I didn’t expect any help at all. My Parent Officer has helped a lot ... providing a safety net and shadow for me. I now know I need to go to children’s centres ... I have direct contact with my Parent Officer and speak to him when I need to’. (Islington Parent)

‘They help you but they push you as well. It’s like they say, they’re promoting, you know you’re not alone.’ (Sefton Parent)

‘I never thought I’d get that support, you know thinking that there is someone out there for you, you’re not on your own... it’s given me the incentive to get up and go, they’ve given me something for free so I’m thinking ‘right, I’m going to utilise it.’ (Sefton Parent)

'[The Family Coaches] are nice, down-to-earth, not 'we've been sitting in an office for 20 years we've no idea of what family life is like, and here's our expectations', pinpointing like that, and as blunt as that. They're not like that. They're friendly and supportive.' (Sefton Parent)

'When I was ringing the housing association they weren't ringing back. [the housing officer] sent an email and then gave me a list of actions to do. She would phone me and say, 'now do this, And I find that a little bit easier' (Waltham Forest Parent)

4.4.2 Partnership working

Delivering effective packages of support requires partnership working. There is a wealth of evidence from previous evaluations across public policy that effective partnerships take time to develop¹⁹. The local LAIP evaluations provide further evidence of this and that the pilot is driving partnership working locally. As well as partnerships for referral routes, outlined in Section 4.1.1 above, time is required for those pilot staff supporting families to map and access local provision. As with those referring to pilot support, pilot staff themselves require time to learn about and trust local provision that is effective. Evidence suggests that **developing effective partnerships takes an ongoing commitment of time, resources and effective communication.**

Staff who come together from different agencies take time to learn about each other. The Waltham Forest 'Family Partnership Model' is a multi-agency approach with a team including housing, health, family and benefits specialists. Training was developed for all staff to develop shared understandings, and whilst time was required to establish joint working relationships, these are now reported as highly effective. In Westminster, the 'Keyworker' approach of drawing together existing posts from a range of agencies has required a great deal of time to establish. Keyworkers were unsure as to how the pilot could support them in their own organisation's or agency's aims and therefore of the incentive for them to engage in pilot activity. Different organisations and agencies have different administration systems, making information sharing difficult and new LAIP systems may have initially been perceived as adding to an existing bureaucratic burden on both staff and parents. An ongoing programme of training and awareness raising activity is now in place.

The local LAIP programmes commonly involve a partnership between 'children's services' and 'economic regeneration and employment' directorates. As well as bringing front-line provision together as discussed here, strategic partnerships are being developed by local LAIP programmes. Evidence from the local evaluations indicates that learning is taking place between local authority directorates. Strategic engagement is important for ensuring that the learning from pilot provision is taken forward, although this is returned to under 'sustainability' below.

4.4.3 Childcare

Pilot staff, partner providers and parents participating in the local evaluations stated that childcare was the most important barrier to parents engaging with employment and employability support. Awareness of and confidence in childcare was one dimension to this. But, of reportedly greater significance is access to affordable childcare. This has two dimensions: the cost of childcare being prohibitive for those entering employment; and, the availability of childcare that is local and flexible to employability and employment activity.

Providing support for childcare was a key element of the rationale for the model of pilot support in Hammersmith and Fulham and Westminster, which both include dedicated funds for childcare provision. In both these pilots the provision of funding for childcare has become recognised as an effective 'hook' for engaging parents. In Islington, the focus is on supporting parents to access children's centre provision and on brokering access to affordable childcare on behalf of parents engaged. In Sefton, the flexible fund that supports

¹⁹ For a comprehensive discussion of the background and practice of strategic and operational partnerships in public policy see: Sullivan, H. and Skelcher, C. (2002) *Working Across Boundaries: Collaboration in Public Services*, London: Palgrave Macmillan

the work of Family Coaches can meet childcare costs that parents incur. It is also one of the main areas of support under the Cornwall Enabling Fund. Childcare is important for employment, but also for employability and family activity. For example in Hammersmith and Fulham and Sefton, parents and stakeholders identified how childcare is required for parents to attend parent-focused support for instance with debt or housing as well as for job interviews and job search activities.

Box 4.13: Hammersmith and Fulham provide access to childcare to support employment and employability activity.

In the Hammersmith and Fulham pilot, it was recognised from the outset that the most 'hard-to-reach' parents struggled to engage with employability and employment services because they had difficulties in accessing, and paying for, quality childcare. Therefore, a flexible offer was built into the pilot model, which frontline workers in Family Solutions (the pilot-funded service) could use to help parents who were ready to improve their skills and employability.

The pilot funds pay for childcare places with affordable local providers so that: parents can attend basic skills or vocational training for the duration of their course; and, do work experience, work trials or volunteering to build up their skills. There is also an eight week offer of half a day of childcare in each week that parents can use to search for jobs, work trials and volunteering placements. Once parents find work, the pilot covers the cost of childcare for the first three months of employment as a transition period. The childcare is brokered by the Hammersmith and Fulham Early Years and Childcare Service on behalf of Family Solutions.

Family Solutions workers have found that this flexibility helps to encourage parents to take up training and job search, allowing barriers to employment to be removed quickly and helping to persuade parents that engagement with the pilot service is valuable. The ability to source quality childcare quickly is seen as a major step forward by local stakeholders; they consider that the most innovative aspect of the pilot is the 'folding in' of a number of previously discrete services into one holistic service. The offer of free childcare is probably the most important aspect of this:

'The main issue for parents getting back to work is childcare. If this isn't offered then parents won't engage in training... free childcare is a huge selling point and very, very innovative.' Children's centre worker

Parents also held this view, and thought that the Family Solutions offer in Hammersmith and Fulham enabled them to look for work, learn new skills, and make faster progress back to employment – whilst being reassured their child was being taken care of:

'[childcare is] really really important, because I try to do most of the job search when he's at school, but I often have to rush to school to pick up the kid, and this often coincides with interviews or meetings with job agencies.' Parent

It was intended by pilot staff that childcare should also make a positive contribution to the child's development, helping parents to see childcare as a positive investment in their families as they return to work. In the eyes of parents, childcare has also led to wider improvements in children's and families' wellbeing, because it enables children to learn in a safe setting and socialise with others.

'It's been brilliant because [my daughter] has come on a hell of a lot since she's gone to nursery... She's more confident, she's saying a lot more words, she's just more happy, she's got friends in nursery now. She's more happy, more running around screaming, eating a lot more, her sleep pattern's a lot better as well.' Parent

Evidence from the Knowsley and Tyne Gateway LAIPs indicates that support with childcare was essential for the engagement of the parents in the training for, and delivery of, their community-based models. These parents told us that without childcare provision they would not have accessed, or would have been unlikely to access, the training provided and would not have taken the roles these two pilots create.

In Westminster, childcare costs are met for the first six months of employment. At the time of our fieldwork no parent had reached the end of this period. When pilot support is withdrawn, parents will move to receipt of Tax Credits, which they will be required to top-up from their salary. Although no parent had yet to reach this stage, there were concerns

emerging through our local evaluation that parents may not have sufficient funds to pay the advance fees that childcare providers require (commonly a month in advance).

Pilot evaluations suggest that **parents supported to increase their employability and enter employment require flexible childcare that is available at short notice and that does not stick to rigid morning or afternoon sessions.** Pilots have developed working relationships with childcare brokers, primarily their local Family Information Service (FIS) but also with providers in order to achieve this. The clear message emerging from the local LAIP evaluations is that a resource to enable access to flexible childcare provision is essential for parents returning to work. There are therefore concerns about how parents will be supported in this way once pilot funding comes to an end.

There is some evidence that although once their children access childcare parents are broadly positive, some are concerned about 'work-life balance'. In considering a return to work parents take into account not just the cost of childcare and how this will impact upon the wage that they take home, but also how this will impact upon the time they spend with their children and their familial relationships. As parents move into part and full-time employment this can be explored by the evaluation in more detail.

Box 4.14: Parents in Tyne Gateway talk about balancing childcare with employment

'It makes us feel a bit, a bit sad... when me kids have got things going on at school, you know I used to go to all their assemblies and things like that but again I can't attend them because I'm working and it does, it makes us feel a bit awful and awkward but there's got to be a compromise hasn't there because you either don't work and you can do them things with your kids or you work and you go out and provide for your family but then something's got to give hasn't it. So you've got to balance it up to what's priority and what's important and maybe how you can make it up in other ways.'

'The older ones are loving it because they get the house to themselves, the younger ones are finding it hard time wise because I'm not seeing them much...but they'll have to learn to cope won't they?'

4.4.4 Local provision: awareness and access

In North Warwickshire the mobile BOB service takes provision to local rural communities. High levels of access suggest that this is an effective technique for engaging people in these areas, with more than eighty per cent of those accessing CAB services in this way being new to the organisation. Evidence from the parents interviewed as part of the evaluation emphasised the importance of local delivery, especially when they are at some distance from previous service points and transportation options are limited.

Where pilots are providing more intensive support, the local evaluations suggest that there is a low level of awareness of local provision, and suspicion of some mainstream provision, amongst the families that are engaged. Overcoming these barriers requires a flexible approach that is able to move beyond signposting to supporting access for the most marginalised families. This is not to suggest that all families require this 'hand holding' approach, but in this way the most marginalised families can build confidence to access services independently. Evidence from Waltham Forest indicates that minority ethnic families can be isolated in dense, urban settings.

Box 4.15: Waltham Forest parents explain how casework support builds confidence

'Before I was very scared to come out of the house but a lot of confidence has been built now because I'm aware if I need anything the confidence is there. Now, I'm finding out a lot about things about things that are available and accessible. Before I wasn't aware of them.'

'Before I wouldn't speak up, I didn't take my rights but 'I've been made confident by [FSA]. She has taught me, showed me how to be confident. She told me what my rights are and how to go and get those rights.'

'When I was ringing the housing association they weren't ringing back. [the housing officer] sent an email and

then gave me a list of actions to do. She would phone me and say, 'now do this, and I find that a little bit easier.'

In Knowsley the Volunteer Family Mentors who contributed to the evaluation described how they had learnt about local provision through the training provided. They felt that this increased awareness would be beneficial to them and their families, as well as the families that they will go on to support. The Workforce Development aspect of the Cornwall pilot, which was beginning delivery at the end of the fieldwork period, also seeks to raise awareness of child poverty, and the resources in place to address it, with members of the children and families workforce and their partners across the county. This includes presentations from different providers and the opportunity to make links with different agencies as part of the training provision.

4.4.5 Housing

Housing is an issue that is being addressed by pilot programmes in Cornwall, Hammersmith and Fulham, Islington, Sefton, Waltham Forest and Westminster. **Housing acts as a barrier in a number of ways: when living in unsuitable accommodation, parents can feel unable to work towards other goals; the costs associated with housing that are incurred when moving from benefits into employment can be a barrier; and, poor housing is a barrier to child and family wellbeing.** In Cornwall delivery is about to begin on the 'Debt Care Pathway', which seeks to enhance the role of social landlords in both identifying families suffering or at risk of poverty and helping address their needs. This will provide valuable learning on how social housing landlords can help their tenants address issues of debt, which often accompany moves to new housing particularly when at short notice. In Westminster, funds are provided to those entering employment in order to counter the reduction in housing benefit that applies and thus easing the transition to work. Only a small number of parents had accessed this support at the time of our fieldwork and as parents move into work valuable learning is expected to emerge.

Private rented housing costs are particularly acute in London. In Hammersmith and Fulham and in Waltham Forest, caseworkers support families by ensuring that problems relating to poor housing conditions are addressed with landlords and support families to explore re-housing options where this appropriate. Re-housing may be about identifying housing that is more affordable, and not only about housing that is in a proper state of repair and that is suitable for family size. In Waltham Forest a housing adviser is a member of the Pilot multi-agency team, and monitoring data indicates that over a third of all families supported have received assistance with housing issues. For families where housing is identified as an issue the housing adviser visits them in their home to assess their accommodation and find out about any issues with landlords, disrepair or contracts. Disrepair is the most common problem. Many of the families engaged by the pilot reportedly lack awareness of the housing system and their rights and entitlements. The pilot emphasises supporting parents to take action for themselves by providing them with information and guidance to build confidence.

In Sefton, planning for the pilot identified that some families may require support with rent deposits and housing-related costs. At the time of our fieldwork, none of the families engaged by the pilot had yet required this resource. But there were families who were in unsuitable accommodation and who required specialist support from partner agencies. The pilot 'Innovation Fund' has awarded funding to a local voluntary and community sector housing support organisation to provide an additional post to focus support for families. The worker will also provide referrals to the pilot Family Coaches for broader support.

Housing, like benefits, is a complex area. The evidence from the local LAIP evaluations that are addressing housing issues indicates that specialist support is required. This is achieved by including housing expertise within pilot teams or through establishing referral and partnership arrangements with specialist agencies.

4.5 Innovation and Sustainability

This final theme explores what stakeholders consider to be the innovative features of local pilot programmes. It also explores how local areas will learn from innovation and how sustainability is being explored.

4.5.1 Innovative practice

Where it is being delivered, provision that centres on support that is parent or family-focused, flexible and supported by resources is identified by stakeholders in local pilot programmes as innovative. In Hammersmith and Fulham, Islington, Sefton, Waltham Forest and Westminster, stakeholders consistently identify these features (and identified above as emerging as themes of effective support) as innovative. As this report has described, in Cornwall and Kent the provision of flexible and accessible funds available to support the work of mainstream agencies is identified as meeting a need that mainstream and existing funding cannot address.

The local evaluations suggest that there is not a ready workforce for the provision of the family-focused employment support that many of the local pilots provide. Those who have traditionally provided employment support find that they need to learn about family and parent support; those working in family services find they need to learn about employment and employability provision. Few have experience of true family-based models²⁰.

The pilot programmes in Tyne Gateway and Knowsley offer innovative approaches to community capacity building and involving local people in delivering services.

Knowsley is supporting local parents through a training programme into new Volunteer Family Mentor roles, which will support local families address their barriers to learning, employment and family wellbeing. They have access to resources and are managed by a coordinator, who matches referred families to Volunteer Mentors. In Tyne Gateway local parents have completed training to access 20 full-time employment Community Entrepreneur roles. Each Community Entrepreneur will develop a local project (which in some cases may become a social enterprise).

Box 4.16: Community Entrepreneur projects in Tyne Gateway

The Community Entrepreneurs trained, employed and supported by the Tyne Gateway pilot have been working since the beginning of the year to explore opportunities in the communities where they work to develop projects that will support employment.

At the end of March 2010, a number of projects were taken forward to a sub-group of the Steering Group for initial consideration. The sub-group also comprised a range of additional stakeholders and its remit was to provide an early feasibility review prior to approval by the full Steering Group. In retrospect, it was felt that the sub-group provided an additional hurdle and process of review which had the potential to slow momentum and future plans are for projects to be submitted directly to the Steering Group.

A total of four projects were approved by the sub-group to commence at end of March 2010:

- **Blossom Forth – Childcare and Support Workers for Disabled Children:** there exists an identified gap in support to families with disabled children, and which acts as a barrier to child wellbeing and parental employment. The Project will recruit, support and train parents and carers to become childminders/support workers, and with the aim of becoming a social enterprise. Core to expected funding will be public service contracts with the local councils, Primary Care Trusts, adult learning providers, and others in response to national policy guidance on greater provision of support to families with disabled children.
- **Crystal Clear – Interpreting Services:** training of local members of ethnic minority communities to become Community Interpreters. There remains a shortage of interpreters in the locality with services bought in from other localities and even regions by the council, local health and justice systems, for example. The project will be developed as a social enterprise and seek to win locally commissioned

²⁰ A review of family-based approaches across welfare provision found that there are few examples of mainstream practice (Morris, K., et al. (2008) *op. cit.*).

contracts.

- **Home Buddies – Supporting Young Tenants:** Young people who have sustained a housing tenancy will be trained to support other young people/families to achieve a secure tenancy both through accessing all the relevant services available and emotional support at key, often 'out of hours', times. Within this target group around 40% of introductory tenancies are broken in the first year leading to increased vulnerability and related poor experiences and outcomes (alongside greater costs of provision). South Tyneside Homes are the initial key employer.
- **The Piggy Bank – Financial Inclusion in South Tyneside:** to reduce the use of doorstep lending and increase financial literacy by developing an embedded credit union service in schools, children's centres and colleges, and as the basis for further expanding family-friendly financial inclusion projects. Support sources include the local credit union, the council illegal money lending team and DWP Financial Inclusion project.

The pilot was presented with the 'Award for Supporting Parents and Families' at the 2010 4Children National Children's Stars Awards in June 2010 in recognition of its innovative approach.

In Kent, a programme of locally developed projects has been supported by the pilot. These have been commissioned through four of Kent's 'Local Children's Services Partnerships'. This includes a combination of locally tailored versions of key pilot activity (see summary in Section 3) as well as locally-led projects. These 20 local projects include the two targeting young parents that were outlined at 4.3.3. Other examples include a 'Bulk Buying' project (RShop) where local residents have come together to open a shop in a local school that will provide basic and family essentials at discounted prices, purchased in bulk from supermarkets and other sources. Many of these projects are still in development and our local evaluation is supporting the pilot team in evidencing their outcomes. The Kent evaluation indicates that whilst this approach has resulted in a wide ranging programme of local projects in support of the overall aims of the pilot, it has been time-consuming to develop and administer. Small community projects can lack the infrastructure to develop robust administrative systems. Working through local partnerships requires clear processes and support in working within a county-wide programme approach. Meeting these demands has required significant pilot management resources.

In North Warwickshire the BOB service uses a mobile bus, which has been used before in other initiatives for different purposes across the country. Stakeholders identify the innovation in this programme as being the careful and sophisticated street level targeting, and the partnership of different agencies that deliver their services through the 'Branching Out Bus'. By developing to reflect a '*BOB without the bus*' approach, the financial inclusion agenda is being promoted through outreach across a range of settings. Indeed, **partnership to promote financial inclusion and address child poverty itself is an innovative feature the local Pilot programmes are developing** (see also 4.4.2).

4.5.2 Changing mainstream practice

All of the local pilot programmes are committed to learning from their provision in order to inform mainstream practice. In Westminster, the pilot aims to achieve cultural change in the way that providers deliver employment support in order to address child and family poverty. As discussed earlier, they have found barriers in engaging busy front-line staff. In Cornwall, following some delays in implementing the Workforce Development strand, this programme is now underway. The pilot has faced challenging barriers in developing this service as the local authority undergoes a period of considerable change, after becoming a unitary authority in 2009 and the development of multi-agency 'locality' teams, which as described previously offered both opportunities and challenges. In Kent, training and awareness-raising has been delivered to 70 front-line professionals working with families on low incomes to raise awareness of both new pilot and existing provision. This aims to improve referral routes and promote access to the pilot Hardship Fund. What these three local evaluations have suggested is that **workforce development needs to be well structured, well planned and well resourced**. It requires dedicated activity so that awareness raising and discussion of new and innovative practice is not experienced or perceived as an 'add on'.

In addition to the innovation of developing a database for targeting through the use of housing and council tax benefit data (see 4.1.1), the Islington pilot aims to change the mainstream practice of employment services and other authority provision that targets or supports disadvantaged parents and their families. As outlined in the summary presented in Section 3, early learning from 'process mapping' with services indicated that affecting mainstream change was demanding in both its scope – the number of services that need to be engaged – and its scale – the change required to achieve best practice. As a result, a new 'Workforce Development Team' has been created. They will support local authority directorates in achieving their required child poverty outcomes, and in developing new practice towards this, as the result of strategic change achieved by the pilot. The pilot Board is chaired by the council's Chief Executive, who took recommendations about the high degree of change required to achieve best practice to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). It was subsequently agreed at the LSP that all directorates across the council will be required to include child poverty targets, linked to those within the Local Area Agreement, in the 'Service Plans' that they develop this year (2010-11). Child poverty priorities must also be included in staff performance reviews, embedding child poverty as equalities targets have been across the Council. The Workforce Development Team will also work with the authority's partners.

Evidence from these LAIP programmes indicates that **innovative practice can cause tension as it challenges established practice**. This echoes findings from evaluations of previous change programmes²¹. The emerging learning from the examples outlined here is that changing mainstream practice requires high level leadership and commitment. Achieving new ways of working requires dedicated project management resources. Both of these outcomes require resources of time as well as money.

The delays that almost all of the local pilot programmes experienced in implementing their provision also illustrate how **new and innovative practice takes time to develop and deliver**. Project and pilot management teams have been required to spend a great deal of time working with partners at strategic and front-line levels to raise awareness, develop partnerships, and embed new practice.

Box 4.17: Developing new Family Group Conferencing provision in Kent

The Kent LAIP is developing Family Group Conferencing as a technique to engage families in a process that helps them to develop a family action plan and the resources to achieve it. The process is expected to enable families to address problems they can tackle within the resources they have available in the wider family and from the local and Pilot services that are available to them.

Family group conferencing was developed to support families to address problems associated with children at risk of going into care. In Kent it has been trialled in one area to facilitate a few families to resolve problems over school attendance. The pilot is exploring how it might be used to help families on low income and with complex needs to address their situation and progress towards improved family outcomes.

A comprehensive training programme was developed and delivered by the pilot team, targeting Family Liaison Officers, Parent Support Assistants and other frontline staff in schools, children's centres and community services. The training established: which families might be suitable for referral; the referral process; how to prepare families for a conference; and, the conference process itself.

In the first months of delivery, few referrals were made and the progress is far behind the initial target of 120 families to be engaged during the life of the pilot. Frontline staff were invited to a workshop to explore why this might be the case. It was established that these staff were unsure of the provision and its appropriateness for families they were working with. This was linked primarily to the use of the approach for child protection. The participating staff saw conferencing as a social work technique that they were ill-equipped to recommend or support. They also saw the process as resource intensive and requiring a great deal of paperwork.

As a result, the pilot team have undertaken discussions with agencies and staff across the target areas to revisit the themes of the training, raise awareness and address directly these concerns. They have attended multi-

²¹ Examples include the national evaluations of Health Action Zones (DoH, 2002), Children's Fund (DfES, 2006), and Guide Neighbourhoods (DCLG, 2007).

agency meetings, staff meetings in front-line services and worked with a range of stakeholders from statutory and non-statutory settings. Referrals have now started to increase from nine by March to 20 by June 2010. They are also exploring setting targets for referrals in the service level agreements held by the local authority with local services supporting vulnerable families.

4.5.3 Sustainability

As the first interim report described, each of the pilots had invested time and effort in positioning themselves and establishing locally appropriate arrangements for the mainstreaming of new practice found to be effective. Across the pilots activities have continued to evolve, with the involvement of both previous and new partners helping to 'embed' aspects of provision on a wider basis. In both of these areas the pilots are progressing well, although of course their successes in this area will only be evidenced later in the programme.

In several cases the **pilots have contributed to the embedding of child poverty as a shared priority for the authorities and their partners**. The achievement of the Islington pilot in embedding child poverty priorities across the authority illustrates how the themes from the LAIP programme can be sustained. Yet this does not mean that the 'Islington Working for Parents' or the 'Workforce Development' teams, funded by Pilot resources, themselves will continue. In this pilot and others, stakeholders who participated in the local evaluations raised questions about the sustainability of local programmes. Although evaluation evidence thus far suggests that they are effective, there are concerns that in the current economic climate, with budgets being reduced for local authorities, the resource intensive models implemented by some pilot programmes may not be supported. To counter this, there is a commitment to learn from effective practice by the strategic boards that oversee each of the pilot programmes. Where these Boards and strategic engagement is underdeveloped (in a very small minority or areas), pilot teams recognise this and work programmes are underway to build engagement and commitment.

It will be important that the structures developed by local pilots are exploited to promote learning and promote new practice. The Knowsley pilot is embedded within a structural approach to learning about effective ways to address child poverty and to learning from pilots and innovation. The final evaluation report will explore how strategic commitment to learning – across the partners engaged in LAIP programme boards – translates into sustained and mainstreamed new practice. Discussion earlier in this section suggests that there may be resistance to embedding new practice within mainstream services. The themes of opportunities for the pilot to engage with the emerging agenda for local authorities are returned to in our 'Conclusion'.

Box 4.18: Knowsley's 'Child Poverty Programme' approach

Knowsley's Innovation Pilot is part of a structured 'Child Poverty Programme', which has been further developed since our first synthesis report. The programme approach is intended to ensure that learning from different child poverty activities is brought together and managed in Knowsley; and, to provide a structure through which to deliver the duties of the Child Poverty Act 2010.

The Programme Board membership has been agreed and includes representatives from: Health; Regeneration; Early Years; Crime and Disorder; Policy; Further Education; the City Strategy; CVS; Jobcentre Plus; and, community representation is to be developed. There are four theme groups ('Work Streams') that mirror the 'building blocks' suggested by the CPU to structure strategy to address child poverty. The theme groups are:

- Employment and Adult Skills;
- Education, Health and Families;
- Housing and Neighbours; and,
- Financial Support.

This structure has been agreed to conduct the child poverty needs assessment and develop the child poverty

strategy. It will be open to review:

'It may not work, we may only need this for us to do the strategy. We don't know; we're going to see' (Board Member)

The Innovation Pilot is within the 'Education, Health and Families' group. Each group is chaired by a member of the Board. Each group also has its own Steering Group. The Steering Group will work with the Chair to gather intelligence from across the theme area and then inform the Board, who will assemble the strategy. Each group has Terms of Reference. The aims for 'Education, Health and Family' (and mirrored across the different groups) include:

- To monitor projects within the theme group;
- To review all relevant existing provision and to map gaps in provision;
- To identify projects/services to address the gaps;
- To deliver a needs assessment for the theme;
- To develop a child poverty strategy for the theme; and,
- To consult with children and families.

The theme Steering Group meet quarterly and involves a range of local authority Directorates and local agencies and organisations, including:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| PCT; | Teenage Pregnancy; |
| Schools; | Play Service; |
| Children's Centres; | Youth Service; |
| Childcare providers; | Home Start; |
| Family Support Services; | Knowsley Young Carers; |
| Disability Services; | Knowsley Parent Forum; and, |
| Domestic Violence Support Teams; | Substance Misuse Team. |

4.6 Summary

This section has discussed the emerging learning that is identified from the synthesis of the ten Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot programme evaluations. The discussion has shown that although there are common themes, there is a variety of approaches as local areas explore innovative ways of: supporting parents into employment; and, supporting parents and families to access a range of local provision to increase wellbeing.

The findings in this section draw on analysis of primarily qualitative data. This analysis suggests that:

- Combinations of approaches are required to identify targeted parents and families and to promote referral and self-referral. Techniques include: publicity; outreach; data-led approaches; persistence; and, work with partners. Although it is time consuming, developing relationships with partners is important as they can take time to develop confidence in new provision.
- When working with parents and families to provide support beyond signposting, needs assessment is an ongoing process. Family-based approaches do not necessarily engage the whole family, but they do take each of the individuals and the family as a unit into account. It is important to understand the responsibilities and perspectives that parents have and not to see them as adults who may or may not have children.
- There is a high demand for the flexible and holistic approaches to supporting parents towards employment that many of the pilot programmes provide. Effective approaches are delivered by a caseworker who can access resources and co-ordinate multi-agency responses to an action plan that is 'owned' by a parent or family and that demonstrates

progress. These coordinated approaches mean that the barriers faced by parents can be addressed together.

- The provision of resources to parents and families brings immediate alleviation of poverty. Including these within a package of support is more likely to lead to sustainable impacts. Signposting and supporting access to local provision can enable families to engage with services for the first time and also build longer-term impacts. This includes support with debt and money management.
- Addressing the circumstances of low-income families and engaging them in pathways of progression towards employment and family wellbeing brings benefits for the family as a unit as well as the individuals within it. Children and young people can benefit from support that their parents receive to achieve individual and family change, but there remains a need for direct support. This support can enable children and young people to sustain existing and develop new friendship and peer networks. It can enable them to engage in activities that their peers may take for granted.
- Three of the pilots focus upon community capacity building approaches, supporting local people to take action to address their own and their community's disadvantage. Their experiences so far illustrate how supporting this activity is time and resource intensive.
- All of the pilots have developed locally appropriate strategic structures, involving a range of local partners and key stakeholders, in order to influence mainstream practice and embed the effective features of the pilot provision. New and innovative practice can create tension by challenging established procedures. Exploiting strategic structures and partnership arrangements will be key to influencing long-term change.

5 Conclusion

This report has presented interim findings from the national evaluation of the Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot (LAIP). The report presents an outline of each of the ten local pilots, describing their key activities and the progress that they have made in responding to challenges and implementing delivery. The report has also discussed the key learning that emerges from our synthesis of the ten local evaluation reports.

5.1 Synthesis Evaluation Key Findings

- The ten LAIP programmes are now all well developed and in their delivery stage, but the monitoring data that they have been able to supply to date has been inconsistent;
- The pilot reflects a true *pilot* ethos and local programmes have been able to be flexible and responsive to the issues that they have encountered;
- The local pilot programmes are delivered by local authorities in both strategic and operational partnerships, involving a wide range of local providers and including voluntary and community sector organisations;
- The pilot programmes provide learning about how low income and disadvantaged parents can be identified and engaged in support that addresses family barriers to support progression to employment;
- Packages of support appear to be effective when they are coordinated by a caseworker and supported with flexible resources that address family barriers and are linked to progression pathways;
- The programmes demonstrate how outreach and supported signposting can promote access to local provision that promotes financial inclusion and family wellbeing;
- Community capacity building approaches appear to be well supported by local communities and the professionals that work with them, but they can be resource intensive;
- Management and strategic structures developed for pilot purposes need to be well positioned within broader local arrangements in order for learning to be promoted and new practice embedded; and,
- Across our findings, *time* emerges as an important dimension: time taken to explore and develop pilot provision; time to identify, engage and support parents and families towards outcome; and, time to identify and build relationships with partners. Our next report will explore how these elements relate to the time required to achieve different outcomes with different groups.

5.2 The Innovation Pilot and the Coalition Government Priorities

Section 2 outlined the background to, and context for, the LAIP, including the priorities of the Coalition Government. Now that the interim findings from the ten local evaluation reports and their synthesis have been discussed, the ways in which the learning from the LAIP can inform these priorities can be identified.

The Coalition Government has begun to take action to reduce expenditure across government departments in order to address the deficit. As local authority budgets are reduced, the removal of ring fenced funding and the emphasis on effective provision that can demonstrate outcomes offers opportunities for LAIP provision to influence local priorities and action. The learning from each of the local LAIP programmes and from the synthesis evaluation should provide a valuable resource for government nationally and locally as child poverty needs assessments and strategies are produced.

5.2.1 Addressing poverty and increasing parental employment.

The ten local pilot programmes demonstrate how immediate impacts can be made on poverty and inequality by providing parents and families with resources to alleviate the effects of living on a low income. They also demonstrate how parents and families can be signposted and supported to access local provision, which can be expected to address inequality of outcomes in the longer-term. The interim evaluation suggests that the provision of resources that support parents and families to engage with progression or action plans towards employment will address the causes of child poverty and thus build long-term outcomes.

5.2.2 The Big Society

Involving and engaging local people in activity to build community capacity to address child poverty and family disadvantage is a theme of pilot programmes in Knowsley and Tyne Gateway. Knowsley have exceeded their target for local parents engaged as Volunteer Family Mentors. Tyne Gateway have provided a second round of Community Entrepreneur training to meet local demand, even though there are no more paid posts available. These two pilot programmes indicate a high level of local interest in community action and will provide valuable learning for the Big Society agenda as they progress.

5.2.3 Local delivery

Although not all of the pilot programmes involve local communities in delivery, they do all involve the delivery of a locally developed understanding of, and response to, child poverty. Each of the pilots involves working with local services to develop responsive provision and to support parents to access that which is new as well as that which is already established. The programme has a true *pilot* ethos, with local authorities and their partners exploring and adapting their strategies and learning about ways of establishing and reaching local targets.

5.2.4 Strengthening families

Supporting and strengthening families is a theme across the ten pilot programmes. There is evidence of the ways in which families can be supported to address the problems that cause strain on relationships between parents and within the family as a unit. Accessing local services, adapting services so that they are responsive to family-based issues and take a family perspective, and supporting families to take action to address their needs by building on their strengths are all themes that the findings from the evaluation contribute to.

5.3 Pilot Learning: the Four 'Child Poverty Building Blocks'

In Section 2 the four child poverty 'building blocks' were outlined. Here the conclusions from the synthesis evaluation interim findings that are presented in the report are identified as learning about each of the four themes.

5.3.1 Employment and skills

- It is important to understand the responsibilities and perspectives that parents have and not to see them as adults who may or may not have children. There is a demand for employment support that is delivered from this perspective. It enables the range of barriers that parents can face in engaging with employment and employability support to be recognised and thus addressed.
- Flexible packages that facilitate demonstrable progression, and provide incentives and resources to support this, are effective at engaging parents in pathways to employment.
- Flexible funds can provide immediate alleviation of the impacts of poverty. But without being part of a package of support or activity to address the causes of poverty this alleviation may not be sustained in the longer-term.
- There are many families who are some distance from the labour market and face multiple barriers before the parents can begin to engage with employment support. When these barriers are addressed, parents are more able to consider and engage with employment pathways.

- Packages of training and support should be bespoke and tailored to parents' strengths and needs.
- Volunteering is attractive to parents who are out of work, wish to gain new skills and move into or closer to the labour market.
- Access to affordable childcare that is flexible and available is described by stakeholders and parents as a key barrier to parental engagement in employability activity as well as employment itself.

5.3.2 Life chances and families

- Parent- and family-based approaches are effective in engaging parents and families in pathways to employment and action to address the causes and consequences of poverty.
- A flexible 'caseworker' approach enables support to be tailored to parent and family strengths and needs. This means that those in need of the most intensive support can receive it.
- Packages of support bring a range of benefits for individual and family wellbeing. As these links are often inherent, a single intervention with an individual can also bring a range of individual and familial benefits.
- Work with parents brings impacts for children and young people but there remains the need for direct work with them. Support for children and young people that alleviates the immediate impacts of income poverty can enable their inclusion in school and peer groups, bringing positive impacts for their wellbeing.
- Parents are motivated to engage in pathways towards employment so that they can benefit from increased income and raised aspirations, increasing their and their children's life chances.

5.3.3 Financial support

- Benefit checks can raise family income; the pilots have identified cases of mistakes in the award of benefits and the claims made by families.
- There are high levels of debt amongst low income parents, with a range of associated problems including impacts on family wellbeing and disincentives to (re)enter the labour market.
- The provision of financial resources can make an immediate impact on poverty and can support sustainable impacts. There is a lack of accessible mainstream funds that can be used for this purpose.
- Outreach can promote financial inclusion. There is a large unmet need for specialist advice, which can reduce debt and make more resources available to low income families.
- Financial inclusion activity with children and young people is well received by schools and parents as well as children and young people themselves.

5.3.4 Place and delivery

- Data can be brought together to understand and target neighbourhoods and families. Although child poverty exists in geographically bounded areas, it can be diffuse and a range of techniques are required to reach it.
- Effective targeting of low-income families requires a range of techniques and approaches. Work to raise awareness with local partners can be effective but must be a dedicated activity that is well structured and resourced.
- Families in inadequate housing will benefit from specialist support to address this, with outcomes for family wellbeing. Addressing housing need can address a barrier to parents entering employment.
- Community-based models of support, that aim to involve local people and build community capacity, are well supported by the target communities and the stakeholders that know and work with them.

- Outreach that is targeted at particular locales or through existing sites of provision working with low-income families can increase take-up of services.
- Family provision will be well attended and accessed where it is well designed, well resourced and is thus accessible and not stigmatising. Resources – money or practical – are required to support many parents and their families to access provision.

5.4 Evaluation Next Steps

The national evaluation of the Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot has two more phases to complete.

There will be a third (short) fieldwork visit and data analysis phase in September and October 2010, which will focus upon establishing the outcomes that are evidenced within local pilot monitoring data. Longitudinal work will be undertaken with beneficiaries who have participated in the activity reported here. This outcome evidence will be aligned with the emerging messages of effective practice that are presented in this report (and the detailed findings of each local evaluation report). Logic models will be used to map in detail the local pilot programme approach.

This phase will include activity to identify the costs of, and in-kind contributions to, each of the LAIP programmes, building towards the cost effectiveness analysis of our final phase. The evaluation team will also continue to work with pilot monitoring data to ensure a full and comprehensive set is maintained by local programmes.

The final and comprehensive phase of fieldwork will be undertaken in January 2011. This will include final longitudinal work with beneficiaries as well as identification of learning from the pilot programmes' final stages, when the delivery models that have been developed are well established. This will explore how learning about effective practice is expected to be mainstreamed and provision itself sustained, and how progress towards this provides learning for other local authorities. The evaluation's cost-effectiveness analysis will be undertaken, and the local area mapping developed in full.

The final synthesis report (March 2011) will provide evidence from the local evaluations of effective provision to address child poverty and increase parental employment and employability, and the learning for national and local government in achieving these outcomes will be presented.

Annex 1 Evaluation Methodology

5.5 Evaluation Outline

The first synthesis evaluation report²² described the research design and methods. As described there and in the 'Introduction' to this report, the national evaluation of the Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot (LAIP) is structured to provide: a local evaluation to each of the ten pilot authorities; and, a synthesis evaluation report that draws evidence and analysis from across these reports to provide learning for the Child Poverty Unit (CPU) and for local authorities and their partners.

The evaluation methodology comprises two phases:

- A developmental 'scoping phase', which included supporting the LAIP authorities to establish output and outcome measures and appropriate data collection approaches; and,
- A main 'evaluation phase', which contains four distinct and complementary components.

The components of the evaluation data collection and analysis are:

- **Component 1: Monitoring and Outcome Data Analysis** – this component relates to the collection, review and analysis of pilot monitoring and outcomes ('MI') data;
- **Component 2: Local Area Mapping** – this component provides maps of local area data to provide context for beneficiary outcomes and understanding of pilot targeting and reach;
- **Component 3: Qualitative Research** – this component is a programme of qualitative research with each pilot authority, their partners and the parents and children engaged in support;
- **Component 4: Cost Effectiveness Analysis** – this component features an assessment of the cost effectiveness of each pilot, including direct and in-kind costs and will be provided at the end of the evaluation.

There are four stages of qualitative evaluation activity, which structure our reporting and analysis:

- **Stage One** – developing a detailed understanding of the LAIP (undertaken in October and November 2009 and reported in our first report²³);
- **Stage Two** – exploring progress with delivery and early impacts and outcomes (March 2010 and reported here)
- **Stage Three** – exploring impact and effectiveness and progress towards sustainability (planned for October 2010); and
- **Stage Four** – exploring outcomes, impact, sustainability and mainstreaming (planned for January 2011).

Further reports will be provided to CPU: in November 2010, linking evidence of outcomes to the emerging messages of effective practice that are identified and discussed in this report; and, in March 2011 when the cost-effectiveness analysis and full local area mapping analysis will be reported.

5.6 This Report

This second synthesis report is based primarily upon our 'Stage Two' qualitative fieldwork, with some illustrative material from the developing local area mapping analysis.

²² GHK (2010) *op.cit*

²³ *Ibid.*

5.6.1 Monitoring and outcome data

As described in the 'Introduction', there was limited monitoring and outcome data available from pilot programmes at the time of our analysis and reporting. The evaluation team is working with CPU and the ten local programmes to ensure that more complete data is available for our next report.

The evaluation was commissioned at the outset of the Innovation Pilot and began with a 'scoping phase' that developed an evaluation plan with each of the LAIP authorities, as they finalised their delivery plans. As part of this activity the evaluation team reviewed the outputs and outcomes that were identified for each of the programmes.

The Innovation Pilot was established without a single prescribed monitoring dataset, and local programmes were expected to develop their own locally appropriate systems. The evaluation team provided each of the pilot management teams with guidance on tools for assessing strengths and needs and for evidencing soft-outcomes. We also provided advice on how outputs and outcomes could be evidenced and captured. A set of core 'basic characteristics' was suggested for all of the programmes, including: age; ethnicity; family structure; and, equalities information. This activity is described and discussed in our first national report²⁴.

The activity undertaken was intended to support the development of ten robust and useful sets of monitoring and outcome data, that reflect the diversity of the ten pilot programmes. The national evaluation developed five overarching outcomes, and placed local outcomes and their indicators within this framework. The five national outcomes are:

- Increasing parental employment;
- Increasing parental employability and wellbeing;
- Increasing family wellbeing;
- Increasing children's wellbeing;
- Building capacity to address child poverty.

This approach enabled local areas to use the local data and case management systems, and the different tools and indicators, that they had planned to and that they had already begun to put in place as the evaluation began.

All of the pilot programmes have monitoring and case management systems in place. Nonetheless, at the time of our fieldwork in March 2010:

- Delays to pilot delivery meant that for many of the programmes, outcomes had only just started to be achieved;
- Some of the pilots had experienced technical difficulties in implementing new data recording systems, or adapting existing ones, so that databases were incomplete – for instance, although details of beneficiaries' characteristics were held, data about the support they had been engaged in was incomplete; and,
- Some of the pilots' systems focused upon case-management rather than outcome evidence, making it difficult to export outcome data to the evaluation team or meaning that data was held in different places (for instance, on a mix of paper and online systems).

Pilot programmes provided their monitoring data to the evaluation team for the first time in April and May 2010. Work to support the development of robust and quality data is continuing and the evaluation team are confident that pilot programme will be able to provide useful data for our next report to CPU (November 2010) and our final evaluation report (March 2011).

²⁴ Ibid.

5.6.2 Qualitative fieldwork

This report draws primarily upon the qualitative data analysed and presented in each of the ten local Innovation Pilot evaluation reports. The evaluation fieldwork is structured around activity with four broad groupings of participants:

- **Strategic level stakeholders** – those involved in steering groups related both directly and indirectly to the pilot programmes as well as the stakeholders outside of these groups that pilots need to influence for effective delivery and long-term sustainability;
- **Programme team** – those who are directly involved in the management of pilot staff or activities and those involved in front line delivery either as directly employed staff or employed within commissioned organisations (for example, third sector delivery partners);
- **Partners** – involved in delivering the pilot activities and either referring to, or taking referrals from, pilot activities; and,
- **Beneficiaries** – including parents, children and families from different strands, and with differing levels of engagement with pilot activities.

A table included in the ‘Introduction’ gives the overall number of participants in the second fieldwork stage from each broad group. A table is provided below of the number of participants from each group in each local evaluation. The different emphases across the local evaluations reflect local structures and stages of delivery.

Table 5.1 Stage Two Fieldwork Participants by Group and Locality

Pilot	Strategic stakeholders	Programme team	Partners	Beneficiaries
Cornwall	1	3	15	10
Hammersmith and Fulham	3	8	4	12
Islington	4	10	0	8
Kent		7	46	66 ²⁵
Knowsley	6	4	1	18
North Warwickshire	3	4	3	16
Sefton	4	7	4	8
Tyne Gateway		2		4
Waltham Forest	4	10	19	18
Westminster	5	9	4	7
Total: 357	30	64	96	167

5.6.3 Local area mapping

Component 2 of the evaluation is developing local area maps that draw on a range of socio-economic data to provide an analysis and a visual representation of pilot targeting. It explores this in two ways:

- The spatial dimension concerns not only where within the pilot area beneficiaries are from – north or south, for example – but also whether they are in a large urban area or

²⁵ The local evaluation also drew on data from evaluation activity undertaken by the Kent pilot team with 22 further beneficiaries, guided by the national evaluation team.

more rural circumstances, and whether or not the cases are clustered (for example within a locality the pilot had decided from the outset to target).

- The social dimension relates to the level of deprivation in the neighbourhood where the beneficiary lives and, in particular, whether this level is above the average for the pilot area as a whole, thereby indicating a degree of 'social targeting' (in that the average beneficiary lives in a more deprived area than the average non-beneficiary).

Our first report provided an overview and comparison of the ten local pilots and provided a baseline analysis of the child poverty problem in each area. In the second stage of the research, this has been developed to include newly available national child poverty indicator (NI116) data provided by DWP for lower-layer super output areas (LSOAs) and which takes account of in-work poverty, unlike its predecessor statistics²⁶. The development stage has also included exploring the extent to which local pilots were able to provide accurate postcode data. All were able to provide this to a reasonable, or higher, degree of accuracy

This, second, evaluation report includes the maps and the spatial targeting analysis provided to pilot programmes in their local evaluation reports. The maps do not use the same scale, in order that an overview of the whole pilot area can be presented. The maps are shaded to show each LSOA according to the concentration of child poverty in that area. For clarity, we have organised the child poverty data into five categories around national average, ranking the LSOAs from the highest to lowest fifth of child poverty rates.

For reasons of brevity, the local area analysis included here does not include the social targeting analysis that each local pilot evaluation contained. This social analysis showed that for the clear majority of pilots the beneficiaries so far have, on average, come from neighbourhoods where the deprivation level is higher than that for the average child in the whole pilot area. It should be noted that, as yet, for several pilots this analysis has been based on too few cases for the results to be very robust.

For our final report, the mapping will be further developed to explore targeting in spatial and social terms in a range of ways. There will be common and locally appropriate analyses undertaken. Some suggestions for these are included in the summary provided for each local pilot in section 3 ('Pilot Overview') of the report. The extent to which these aspirations can be realised depends upon the MI data provided by the pilot programmes capturing the characteristics of beneficiaries, the activities they are engaged in and the support that they received, as well as the outcomes that they achieve.

Comprehensive data will enable the local area mapping to explore issues such as:

- Whether the aims of geographical targeting strategies are being achieved;
- Whether the targeting of 'pockets' within areas with apparently low child poverty levels is being achieved;
- How the support needs, the activities and support accessed, and the characteristics of the beneficiaries targeted and engaged compare across local areas;
- How the outcomes achieved by beneficiaries compare across local areas; and,
- How the outcomes achieved by beneficiaries relate to the issues that characterise their local area – for example, have pilots been able to achieve employment outcomes for beneficiaries in areas with long standing unemployment and disadvantage?

²⁶ The mapping analysis presented in this report for each local Pilot programme uses data for the national child poverty indicator (NI116) provided by DWP for lower super output areas (LSOA). This dataset offers a more complete picture of child poverty than its predecessor, as it includes children whose families are affected by in-work poverty. For more information see http://data.gov.uk/dataset/ni_116_proportion_of_children_in_poverty.



Annex 2 Local Pilot Programmes: Summary Table

Pilot (& CPU Funding 2009-2011)	Strand	Target Group	Description of Activity	Innovative Features	Achieved (March 2010)
Cornwall (£438,957)	Enabling Fund	All 'families living in, or at risk of, poverty' in Cornwall.	Provides discretionary funding to both: address crisis; and, exploit opportunities to secure or sustain employment.	Flexible criteria. Supporting crisis as well as employment.	244 families
	Workforce Development	Staff working with children and families across Cornwall	A programme of training to raise awareness of child poverty and the ways in which it can be addressed through Innovation Pilot and mainstream resources, and through joint working.	Embedding child poverty in newly configured children and families workforce, through multi-disciplinary training sessions.	53 staff
	Debt Care Pathway	Families entering social housing for first time; existing social housing tenants.	Training for housing managers and staff in local authority housing and social housing sector. Training and advice for tenants on finance and debt management. Starter packs providing new tenants with resources.	New local authority and housing provider partnership. Targeting new housing tenants with financial awareness support. Development of new social housing pathway.	Staff training completed. Delivery from September 2010
Hammersmith and Fulham (£1,046,913)	Family Solutions	Parents with at least one child under 12 years of age, with an income of £20,000 or less, from 18 particular estates.	'Family Solutions' employability service: team of 4 staff provided personalised, flexible case-work support. A flexible fund supports parents engagement in an action plan towards employment. Free childcare is provided, including during the first three months of employment.	New parent-focused, flexible and holistic employment support. Flexible fund. Free childcare for employability activity and upon entering employment.	109 parents
	Child Passport	Early years and childcare settings; and, children's parents.	To provide a record for early years and childcare settings and the parents of children who attend them, of children's progress and development.	New database recording progress in early years and childcare settings.	Expected September 2010
Islington	Intensive Support	Parents of children	8 Parent Officers work from the borough's	New parent-focused, flexible and	365 parents

(£1,346,255)		aged 5 years and under who are: in receipt of benefit; or, with an equivalised income of less than 60% of the national median.	16 children's centres to provide intensive and tailored employment and employability support. A package of support is co-ordinated through a case-work approach. Benefit checks maximise income. Parents are supported for up to 6 months.	holistic employment support. Targeting through new uses of data.	
	IAG support	As above	This initial support level provides information, advice and guidance. Where appropriate, parents are referred to higher level support.	Targeting through new uses of data.	365 parents
	Data Warehouse developed	As above	Builds on activity undertaken by Children's Services Directorate, to expand their 'Data Warehouse'. The warehouse brings together data about families and their use of services. The Innovation Pilot is adding data about housing and council tax benefit (HB/CTB) to this. The resultant new database will then be used to identify parents with a low income (using an equivalised measure), calculated from the data held. It will also identify families who are not using services. Parents will be approached by the pilot Parent Officers and children's centre staff and introduced to the support on offer.	Bringing data together to identify families on a low income through the use of HB/CTB data held by the local authority. Adding this HB/CTB data to children's services innovative 'Data Warehouse' on families' characteristics, service use and outcomes. Using this data to target families on a low income for support.	Expected June 2010
	Workforce Development	Local authority services	'Process mapping' to understand how services engage and support low income families in order to address disadvantage and reduce child poverty. Inclusion of child poverty objectives in local authority directorates' 'Service Plans' and staff appraisal objectives. Dedicated 'Sustainability Team' to support this and to provide training to staff.	Process mapping of local authority services that work with parents, children and families. Including child poverty objectives in local authority directorates' 'Service Plans'. A dedicated 'Sustainability Team' to support and embed new practice.	Underway for March 2011 completion

Kent <i>(Key activities only)</i> (£1,550,729)	Family Group Conferencing	Families on low incomes with wide ranging needs in the target areas	Developing the FGC model away from one addressing child protection issues to one supporting families to address broader issues that are impacting upon their wellbeing.	Developing the FGC model away from one addressing child protection issues to one supporting families to address broader issues that are impacting upon their wellbeing.	59 professionals trained / 4 families engages
	'Personal, Social and Health Education' (PSHE)	Primary and secondary school pupils in the four target areas	Modules from a financial capability qualification course for Year 11 pupils have been developed to engage primary school pupils and also broadened the PSHE secondary curriculum. Initially targeting one primary and one secondary school, to pilot materials and activity.	Working with schools to build children's capacity and financial awareness.	45 pupils
	Family Learning	Parents of children at targeted schools, in areas with high levels of disadvantage within the four target areas	A programme of 'family learning' events that focus on parenting and basic skills for adults, and on family interaction to improve children's wellbeing with the aim of encouraging the take up of further family learning to develop such skills. Fun, family activities are provided for free, with transport and refreshments also provided.	Using fun, accessible and family-based activities to build parent and family capacity to improve wellbeing.	273 parents
	Capacity Building	Front-line professionals working with children and families in the pilot's four target areas.	Training for staff that aims to raise awareness of child poverty, the resources available and the ways of working with families to address it. A Hardship Fund has been created to address crisis and hardship and thus alleviate some of the impacts of poverty.	Embedding awareness of child poverty across the children and families workforce. An accessible and flexible fund to provide resources that address crisis and hardship.	70 staff
Knowsley (£279,220)	Volunteer Family Mentors	Parents from the target neighbourhood.	A team of 'Volunteer Family Mentors' identified and trained through a core 8-week programme and additional, personalised support. The role will provide skills and experience and help parents find paid employment.	Volunteers trained and supported to provide family mentor support. Structure in place to learn from innovation.	29 parents
	Families Supported	Parents from the target neighbourhood who	Family Mentors will work towards engaging parents in employment by providing a	Volunteers providing family mentor	First families engaged April 2010

		are out of work.	range of support that aims to raise family aspirations and empower them to address the consequences of poverty in the shorter term and the causes of poverty in the longer term. Families will be supported for 12 months. Supported parents will be encouraged to become mentors, where appropriate.	support. Structure in place to learn from innovation.	
North Warwickshire (218,457)	The 'Branching Out Bus': BOB	Families in isolated rural communities who do not access financial inclusion services.	A mobile one-stop-shop, the 'Branching Out Bus' has been created, staffed by the Citizens Advice Bureau and other advisors to provide initial financial inclusion information, advice and support, and where this is not sufficient to signpost to other organisations and sources. The bus targets particular geographical areas, identified through sophisticated local area data as containing concentrations of families on low income. This is adapted in light of learning from delivery. A consistent, timetabled service is provided as well as <i>ad hoc</i> attendance at community events. A range of partners have come together to utilise BOB, broadening the range of support beyond financial inclusion. 'BOB without the bus' has developed as regular outreach sessions in community venues.	Broad range of partners brought together to provide advice and services under independent 'BOB' brand. Detailed local level targeting of rural areas through sophisticated use of data. 'BOB without the bus' developed to provide broader range of services through outreach in (rural) community venues.	500 adults
	Financial inclusion in schools	Primary schools in target villages	Financial literacy workshops are provided for primary school pupils, as well as Credit Union school bank accounts.	Credit Union providing financial services in schools to increase access and build capacity, through BOB.	6 schools
Sefton (£1,048,816)	Family-focused employment support	Parents that live in Southport with a household income of less than £20,000	A team of 3 Family Coaches provide intensive, tailored packages of support for parents. A holistic and whole-family approach aims to improve employment and employability through 'family progression plans'. Resources are provided to the	A new holistic and whole-family approach aims to improve employment and employability. 'Family progression plans' supported by whole family soft outcomes toolkit.	40 families

			whole family, to incentivise and reward their engagement and progression.	Incentives and rewards package.	
	Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)	Parents in Southport who are seeking employment.	An IAG Officer has been employed to bring additional capacity to the existing 'Workzone' service, provided by Sefton CVS who are a partner in the Innovation Pilot. The Officer provides a parent-focused service, seeking to understand and identify parents' barriers to employment and signpost to support (including to the pilot).	New parent-focused IAG.	112 parents
	Employer Award	Employers in Southport.	The Employer Award incentivises and rewards employers who develop and implement policies and procedures that are family friendly.	New Employer Award engages employers, promoting and rewarding family-friendly policy and practice.	9 employers
Tyne Gateway (£1,537,500)	Awareness Raising Course (ARC)	Parents and families 'at risk of poverty' across the North Tyneside and South Tyneside authority areas.	Parents from target communities who were active in neighbourhood activity were identified and invited to train as Community Entrepreneurs (CEs). Two cohorts have been trained successfully (with additional funds from CPU supporting delivery of the course a second time).	Identifying parents active in their communities through a range of networks. Developing a Community Entrepreneur introductory training course, with Sunderland University.	39 parents
	Community Entrepreneurs (CEs)	ARC participants.	Successful ARC participants were invited to apply for paid employment as Community Entrepreneurs (CEs). CEs will be supported to each develop a community project that simultaneously provides opportunities for community employment and addresses community need and issues related to child poverty. A final CE commenced employment in April 2010.	Developing a Community Entrepreneur model; creating CE posts. Developing a Community Entrepreneur Foundation Degree with Sunderland University.	19 parents
	Community Projects	Parents and families 'at risk of poverty' across the North Tyneside and	CEs will develop and implement community projects incorporating members of target families.	Supporting CEs to develop community projects that simultaneously provide opportunities for community	0

		South Tyneside authority areas accessed through CEs.	Initial 20 projects revised to 17 as some joint and one CE may not achieve target project. As of March 2010, four projects had been approved with remainder to be taken to July 2010 approval meeting	employment and address community need and issues related to child poverty.	
Waltham Forest (£966,063)	Family Assessment	Families with at least one child aged 2-5 years, in receipt of benefits and eligible for free school meals, who live in five school and children's centre catchment areas or attend a special school. Includes a focus on Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families.	A range of partners from the catchment areas are encouraged to identify families eligible for support. A joint visit is undertaken by a Family Support Adviser (FSA) and a benefit adviser from the pilot's multi-agency team. Their needs are assessed and they are referred to local services and to the pilot's intensive support if appropriate.	Targeting families living in school and children centre pair catchment areas. New multi-agency approach to engaging and assessing families.	104 families
	Family Support	Families with at least one child aged 2-5 years, in receipt of benefits and eligible for free school meals, who live in five school and children's centre catchment areas or attend a special school. Includes a focus on Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families.	Following initial assessment, families with more complex needs receive intensive, tailored support that addresses child and family wellbeing: benefits, housing, health, participation in education and learning, social activities. The barriers to parents engaging with employment opportunities and employability activities are identified and addressed.	New multi-agency approach to engaging and assessing families. Family Partnership Model. Holistic family-based provision to address barriers to employment and wellbeing. Flexible and accessible resource fund created in light of learning.	96 families
Westminster (£1,191,255)	Packages of employment support	Parents with a household income of less than £20,000, who are in receipt of free school meals or in receipt of workless benefits.	The pilot is based on a 'Keyworker' approach: Keyworkers are existing frontline staff working with parents seeking employment. Keyworkers are encouraged to refer parents to financial advice services, careers advice and basic skills and other training for those further away from the labour market.	'Keyworker' model using existing frontline staff to target and engage parents.	99 parents

Childcare provision	Parents supported by Keyworkers into employment.	Providing for the costs of childcare for the first 6 months of employment. Initial plan to 'top up' tax credits was amended as discussions with HMRC identified difficulties with the approach (see our first evaluation report).	Free childcare provision for the first six months when parents enter employment. Learning from earlier attempt to supplement tax credits.	36 parents
Housing costs support	Parents supported by Keyworkers into employment.	Using the discretionary housing payment (DHP) available to the local authority in order to provide a six month 'fixed term award' to address the shortfall in housing benefit that is experienced upon entering employment.	Providing support for housing costs to supplement reduction in benefits when parents enter work.	8 parents
Parents in employment	Parents supported by Keyworkers	Parents supported by Keyworkers into employment.	Parents supported through new pilot provision.	11 parents

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