

APPG on Poverty and Inequality

Annual Report

Reporting period: 27 November 2024 – 26 November 2025

Reporting date: 27 March 2026

Secretariat: Equality Trust

Purpose and focus

Following the 2024 General Election, the Group reconvened and formally changed its name from the *APPG on Poverty* to the APPG on Poverty and Inequality. This reflected a shared view among Officers that inequality is a central driver of socio-economic disadvantage, and that poverty cannot be meaningfully understood or addressed without examining the distribution of income, wealth, and power.

During the reporting year, the APPG provided a cross-party forum for parliamentarians to explore the structural causes and consequences of poverty and inequality in the UK, and to consider policy responses informed by evidence, lived experience, and expert insight.

In light of changes to parliamentary rules on the reporting of services and donations in kind, this is the first year in which the Group has produced a short annual report.

Governance and organisation

The APPG held its inaugural meeting under its new name on 27 November 2024, at which Sian Berry MP and Baroness Lister were elected as Co-Chairs. Baroness Stroud and Mark Ferguson MP were elected as Officers.

An Extraordinary General Meeting was held on 2 April 2025 following the resignation of Mark Ferguson MP as an Officer, after his appointment as a Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. In line with parliamentary rules, PPSs cannot hold officer roles in All-Party Parliamentary Groups. The EGM confirmed the election of Neil Duncan-Jordan MP as an Officer.

Throughout the year, the Officers and Secretariat met online to discuss the Group's priorities, workplan, and opportunities to support effective parliamentary engagement.

Meetings and parliamentary engagement

The APPG convened a programme of meetings focused on both immediate policy challenges and longer-term structural issues:

- In May 2025, the APPG hosted a joint meeting with the APPG for Ending the Need for Food Banks titled *Beyond sticking plasters: the future of discretionary crisis support*. The session examined the limits of crisis responses and the need for more sustainable approaches at both local and national level. Speakers included Alison McGovern MP, Minister for Employment; Jo Rowlands from Leeds City Council; and Zoe Nixon from Newquay Food Bank.
- In July 2025, the Group held a meeting on the commencement of the Socio-Economic Duty (SED), exploring its potential role in shaping public decision-making. The session included expert input from Vanessa Boon of the Equality Trust.
- In November 2025, ahead of the Budget, the APPG convened a discussion around the provocation “*Growing wealth inequality is the biggest threat facing the UK today.*” The meeting featured Gary Stevenson and enabled parliamentarians to reflect on the implications of widening wealth inequality for economic stability and democratic trust.

Call for Evidence and report publication

A central strand of the APPG’s work during the year was the Inquiry on the Disproportionate Impact of Poverty and Inequality on Disabled People. The Call for Evidence was launched on 10 March 2025, with a submission deadline of 14 April 2025. The inquiry aimed to inform debate around the government’s Pathways to Work Green Paper and to bring together pre-existing evidence alongside people’s lived and living experience of poverty and inequality resulting from disability.

The APPG received 78 submissions overall, including 28 from individuals with lived or living experience. Recognising that responding to a Call for Evidence involves a transactional commitment, the Secretariat ensured all contributors were kept informed: everyone who submitted evidence received a thank you email outlining when the report would be published and to whom it would be sent. Once published, all contributors were sent a copy of the final report.

The report received coverage across multiple media outlets, including Big Issue, Independent, Disability Rights UK, Benefits and Work, Birmingham Live, The Canary, GB News, and the Fairness Foundation’s weekly blog - Fair Comment. Feedback from contributors highlighted the value of the process and the report’s impact: individuals expressed appreciation for being treated with dignity and for receiving updates, while organisations and academics commended the report as clear, thoughtful, and impactful. For example, Leeds City Council’s Financial

Inclusion Partnership referenced the APPG report in their response to the Pathways to Work Green Paper consultation.

The inquiry and report therefore not only gathered and synthesised evidence on the disproportionate impact of poverty and inequality on Disabled people, but also ensured contributors were heard and informed, and achieved notable public and parliamentary traction.

Correspondence

During the reporting period, the APPG issued a small number of letters as part of its role in facilitating parliamentary scrutiny and contributing to policy discussion on poverty and inequality.

The APPG wrote to the national press, with the letter signed by Officers, setting out concerns about the potential impact of the government's proposed social security reforms on people experiencing poverty and inequality.

The APPG also wrote to the Minister of State for Social Security and Disability, Stephen Timms MP, calling on the Department for Work and Pensions to ensure that people with lived experience are meaningfully involved in the department's ongoing review of Universal Credit.

In addition, the APPG wrote to Secretary of State for Education & Minister for Women and Equalities, Bridget Phillipson MP, to request a commencement order for the Socio-Economic Duty (SED). The letter highlighted delays following significant personnel changes within the Cabinet Office's Office for Equality and Opportunity, and emphasised the importance of timely commencement.

Secretariat support

The Equality Trust provided Secretariat services to the APPG throughout the reporting period. This included organising and administering meetings, coordinating speakers and agendas, supporting the Call for Evidence and report publication, and assisting Officers with planning and coordination.

Looking ahead

The APPG will continue to provide a cross-party forum for parliamentarians to explore drivers, impacts and solutions to poverty and inequality, building on the work and evidence gathered during this inaugural reporting year; and will continue to look for more chances to work collaboratively with other APPGs with similar goals.