

Open letter to all MPs, MSPs and MSs,

Please, act now to end poverty for Britain's carers.

Carers were already facing a poverty crisis, and our organisations are seeing this exacerbated by Covid-19. Whether paid or unpaid, carers have faced a social security system that has not always protected them from poverty while paid carers have had to survive on poverty wages and insecure contracts.

All of us depend on someone to care for us at some point in our life – as a child, in older age, or due to ill health or additional needs. More than ever, this pandemic has made us all appreciate the incredible value and dedication of carers – both those who are paid and those who provide unpaid care for family or friends. Many are facing unprecedented levels of danger to protect us all. Failing to ensure carers are protected from poverty would be truly unforgivable.

The vast majority of carers are women, many of whom also face age, disability and race inequality. There has been insufficient action to share care more evenly, and carers have been under-valued for too long.

While governments have tried to cushion the immediate impact of this crisis, more needs to be done to alleviate the intolerable pressure carers face. The measures needed include: increasing Carer's Allowance and Child Benefit; fixing Universal Credit by removing the five-week wait, the two-child limit and the benefit cap; ending the 'no recourse to public funds' policy which limits the support available to carers who are not UK citizens; and injecting cash into social care so employers can pay their workers at least the Real Living Wage.

Right now, the focus is rightly on saving lives but we urge you to use your influence to ensure governments across the UK use every tool they have to protect people from poverty.

They should also build back better by ensuring the decisions they take now and in the future tackle existing inequalities.

By ensuring no carer faces poverty, we will honour those doing so much to care for so many.

Yours sincerely,

Danny Sriskandarajah, Chief Executive, Oxfam GB

Alison Garnham, Chief Executive, Child Poverty Action Group

Helen Walker, Chief Executive, Carers UK

Matthew Bolton, Executive Director, Citizens UK

Dr Mary-Ann Stephenson, Director, UK Women's Budget Group

Victoria Benson, Chief Executive Officer, Gingerbread

Dave Prentis, General Secretary, UNISON

Barbara Plant, National President, GMB

Paddy Lillis, General Secretary, Usdaw

Dr. Mary Bousted and Kevin Courtney, Joint General Secretaries of the National Education Union

Jesika Parmar, Regional Officer for South East and Siobhan Endean, National Officer for Community Youth and Not for Profit Sector, Unite

Graham Whitham, Director, Greater Manchester Poverty Action

Jane van Zyl, Chief Executive, Working Families

Katy Styles, We Care Campaign

Sam Smethers, Chief Executive, The Fawcett Society

Dr. Nick Owen MBE, CEO, The Mighty Creatives

Laura Payne, Project Manager, 4in10 London Child Poverty Network

Vic Rayner, Executive Director, National Care Forum

Jane Williams, Chief Executive, The Magpie Project

Thomas Croft and Diana Skelton, National Coordination Team, ATD Fourth World

Thomas Lawson, Chief Executive Officer, Turn2us

Anna Feuchtwang, Chief Executive, National Children's Bureau / Chair, End Child Poverty Coalition

Sabine Goodwin, Coordinator, Independent Food Aid Network

Carys Roberts, Executive Director, Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR)

Peter Grigg, Chief Executive, Home-Start UK

Dr Hilda Hayo, Chief Admiral Nurse and CEO, Dementia UK

Miatta Fahnbulleh, Chief Executive, New Economics Foundation

Amanda Mackenzie, Chief Executive Officer, Business in the Community

June O'Sullivan MBE, Chief Executive, London Early Years Foundation

Edel Harris, Chief Executive Officer, Royal Mencap Society

Sally Light, Chief Executive, Motor Neurone Disease Association

Sarah-Jayne Clifton, Director, Jubilee Debt Campaign

Caroline Abrahams, Emily Holzhausen and Jackie O'Sullivan, Chairs of the Care and Support Alliance

Nick Moberly, Chief Executive, MS Society

Joe Levenson, Director of Communications and Campaigns, Young Women's Trust

Sally Bonnie and Diane Baxter, Inspire Women

Steve Ford, Chief Executive, Parkinson's UK

Caroline Stevens, Chief Executive, National Autistic Society

Deborah Alsina MBE, Chief Executive, Independent Age

Joeli Brearley, Founder, Pregnant Then Screwed

Niall Cooper, Director, Church Action on Poverty

John, The Lord Bird MBE; Founder, The Big Issue

Kathy Evans, Chief Executive, Children England

Marc Francis, Policy and Campaigns Director, Z2K Trust

Cerys Furlong, Chief Executive, Chwarae Teg

Jemima Olchawski, Chief Executive, Agenda: Alliance for Women and Girls at Risk

Mark Winstanley, Chief Executive Officer, Rethink Mental Illness

Iqbal Nasim MBE, Chief Executive, National Zakat Foundation (NZF)

Sabina Kelly RN, CEO, The National Association of Care & Support Workers (NACAS)

Eleanor Lisney, Co-founder, Sisters of Frida

Dr Omar Khan, Director, Runnymede Trust

Sarb Bajwa, Chief Executive, The British Psychological Society

Laurence Guinness, Chief Executive, The Childhood Trust

Mark Lee, Chief Executive of the Together Trust

Mark Davis, Chief Executive, Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency (MVDA)

David Ramsden, CEO, Cystic Fibrosis Trust

Anne Meikle, Convenor, The Scottish Women's Budget Group

John Dickie, Director of Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland

Rozanne Foyer, General Secretary, Scottish Trades Union Congress

Mike Kirby, Scottish Secretary, UNISON Scotland

Claire Cairns, Coalition of Carers in Scotland

Irene Audain MBE, Chief Executive, Scottish Out of School Care Network

Ghizala Avan & Dilraj Sokhi Watson, Co-Chief Executive Officers, Amina Muslim Women Resource Centre

Sally Ann Kelly, Chief Executive, Aberlour Child Care Trust

Ewan Aitken, Chief Executive, Cyrenians

Mary Glasgow, Chief Executive, Children 1st

Billy Watson, Chief Executive, Scottish Association for Mental Health

Ian Bruce, Chief Executive Officer, Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector

Satwat Rehman, Director, One Parent Families Scotland

David Liddell, OBE, Chief Executive, Scottish Drugs Forum

Susan Paxton, Head of Programmes, Community Health Exchange (CHEX)

Claire Stevens, Chief Executive, Voluntary Health Scotland

Alan Thornburrow, Director, Business in the Community Scotland

Marie Ward, Chief Executive, Cranhill Development Trust

Simon Hodgson, Director, Carers Scotland

Peter Kelly, Director, The Poverty Alliance

Derek Mitchell, Chief Executive Officer, Citizens Advice Scotland

Professor Ian Welsh OBE, Chief Executive, Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE)

Dr Donald Macaskill, Chief Executive, Scottish Care

Anna Fowlie, Chief Executive, The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations

Shaben Begum, Director, Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance

Betty Stevenson, Convenor, Edinburgh Tenants Federation

Shruti Jain, Chair, Saheliya

Russell Gunson, Director, Institute for Public Policy Research Scotland (IPPR Scotland)

Talat Yaqoob, Chair of Women 50:50

Sinéad Butters, Chief Executive, Aspire Housing Group, Chair PlaceShapers

Craig Samuel, Scotland representative, The National Association of Welfare Rights Advisers (NAWRA)

Dr Angela O'Hagan, WISE Centre for Economic Justice at Glasgow Caledonian University

Fiona Garven, Director, Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC)

Joanna Murphy, Chair, The National Parent Forum of Scotland

Don Williamson, Chief Executive, Shared Care Scotland

Gemma Bone Dodds, Trustee, on behalf of the Wellbeing Economy Alliance Scotland

Ellie Harwood, Wales Development Manager, Child Poverty Action Group

Dr Victoria Winckler, Director, Bevan Foundation

Alicja Zalesinka, Director, Tai Pawb

Claire Morgan, Director, Carers Wales

Catherine Fookes, Director, Women's Equality Network Wales

Allison Hulmes, National Director, The British Association of Social Workers, Wales

Bethan Webber, Chief Executive, Home-Start Cymru

Bill Freeman, Chief Executive, CTA

Dr Sally Rees, Chair, Fair Treatment for the Women of Wales

Jim Barnaville, Coordinator, Caritas Archdiocese of Cardiff

Mark Russell, Chief Executive, The Children's Society

Sean O'Neill, Policy Director, Children in Wales

Sue Husband, Director, Business in the Community Cymru

Shavanah Taj, General Secretary, Wales Trade Union Congress

Derek Walker, Chief Executive, Wales Co-operative Centre

Rocio Cifuentes, Chief Executive, Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team Wales (EYST Wales)

Professor Laura McAllister

Ruth Marks, Chief Executive, Wales Council for Voluntary Action

Kay Polley and Sam Rex-Edwards, Co-directors, TCC (Trefnu Cymunedol Cymru / Together Creating Communities)

John Puzey, Director, Shelter Cymru

Mutale Merrill, Chief Executive Officer, Bawso