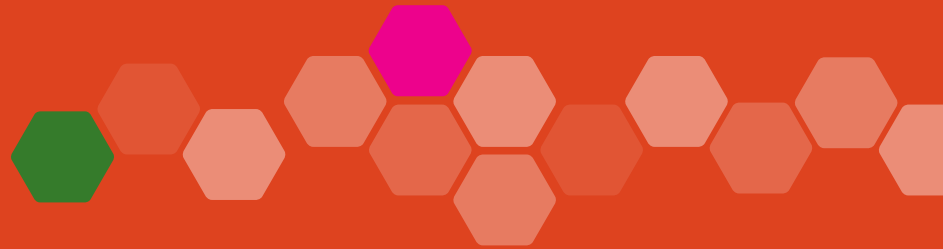


# Child Poverty Pathfinders Early Implementation Process Evaluation Phase one report



**PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES AND PLACES**

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# Executive Summary

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act of 2017 set new legal targets for child poverty in Scotland, including for less than 18% of children to be living in relative poverty by 2023/24 and for less than 10% to be living in relative poverty by 2030. As part of this overarching target, the Scottish Government created the 2018-2022 Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, and in March 2022 released the second stage of the delivery plan for 2022-2026. This second delivery plan includes a commitment to support the work of two Local Pathfinders – one operating in Glasgow and one in Dundee.

These Pathfinders, designed and implemented at a local level, aim to provide person-centred support to families most at risk of poverty. Critically, the Pathfinders seek to make it easier for families to access services as part of a proactive attempt to improve the system as a whole and move away from a disaggregated service provision. As such, they aim to tackle child poverty both by directly supporting families at risk, and also by driving system change in the way in which families are supported.

This early process evaluation was undertaken to explore the early set-up and implementation of the Child Poverty Pathfinder sites, to understand what had been working well, and what had been working less well, during the development stage. The evaluation team engaged with stakeholders and partners at national, strategic and local service delivery levels to examine the extent to which the Pathfinder activities had begun to create systems change. The team also engaged with families to explore their journey through the system, and how their experiences of receiving support may have differed from previous occasions where support had been sought. The overarching aim of the evaluation was to identify lessons which could be used in future to improve the existing Pathfinder sites and to inform decision making for other future sites.

## Summary of key findings

The Pathfinders aim to reduce the barriers that people are facing to accessing services by creating new access routes and stimulating systems change. They aim to create 'joined-up' services, where families experiencing child poverty are no longer affected by disaggregated service provision. They seek to tackle child poverty by directly supporting families who are experiencing poverty while also driving forward systems change to improve the ways that families are supported. The key findings of an early process evaluation of the early implementation of the Pathfinders are presented below.

### How is the Pathfinder developing from the perspectives of partners and stakeholders?

Both Pathfinders had experienced challenges in the early stages of development due to some partners and stakeholders being unclear on how the strategic aims of the Pathfinders would be met at a service delivery level. This appeared to have evolved and stakeholders and partners described the sense that things were now much clearer. Developing the relationships that were required to ensure success and work effectively across organisations took time. Many partners and stakeholders reflected that if Pathfinders are being considered in other areas, time for relationship building and 'bedding in' of the partnerships should be allocated at the beginning.

## **To what extent have the Pathfinders achieved their aim of establishing systems change?**

Participants who took part in the partner, stakeholder and family interviews recounted examples of where systems change had begun to occur. Most partners and stakeholders suggested that while some change had happened, whole systems change at the scale required would take considerable time and should be viewed as a long-term project. Many participants told us that the Pathfinder had begun to initiate change, but that there was a long way to go. The data gathered during this evaluation suggests that Pathfinders may be successful in sparking systems change, but that lasting change would require long-term investment and commitment from multiple sectors including welfare, health and social services, financial advice sectors and the third sector. We learned that the intended approach of working in a holistic, person-centred way was time-consuming and that this could be challenging for some organisations who were required to work to Key Performance Indicators as part of their funding.

## **How are the Pathfinders engaging target audiences, including priority groups?**

The Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan indicates that the Pathfinders will aim to support families where children are experiencing poverty, including the six identified priority families in the plan:

- lone parents/carers;
- ethnic minority families;
- families with a disabled adult or child;
- families with a young mother (under 25);
- families with a child under 1;
- larger families (3+ children).

From the perspectives of partners and stakeholders, the person-centred approach taken within the Pathfinders is managing to target families who are experiencing poverty, including priority groups. Both Pathfinders were still in the process of negotiating data sharing agreements with organisations, such as the DWP and Social Security Scotland, at the time when this evaluation took place. A lack of agreement on data sharing had meant that available data relating to families most in need could not be used to identify or target priority groups who were known to be facing the highest levels of poverty. Despite these challenges, the open access approach used in Glasgow, and the door knocking, outreach approach being used in Dundee, appeared to be capturing families who were experiencing high levels of poverty due to the concentration of poverty within Glasgow and the area of Dundee where the Pathfinder had been established.

## **What impact have the Pathfinders had on the landscape of local service provision?**

According to the partner and stakeholder data, Pathfinder activity appears to be complementing some of the structures, initiatives and services already in place in both Glasgow and Dundee. Several partners expressed that the Pathfinder carried weight, which was adding an enhanced network and increased legitimacy to activities. The sense

of reputation and gravitas appeared to be extending to some services at a local delivery level who had been able to use their involvement in the Pathfinder to encourage others to do things differently, creating new ways to access services. Partners and stakeholders from both Pathfinders, however, reported that they had moved quickly into a delivery phase at the beginning of the Pathfinders.

In Dundee, in particular, this had meant that insufficient time had been taken to scope out services that already existed locally. Initially, there was some duplication of effort, and key stakeholders had not been invited to the table at the earliest point. Once this became apparent, local delivery organisations were invited to attend strategic planning meetings. This had produced a few barriers to partnership working initially, leading to a period that was described by many as 'tricky' to navigate. All partners and stakeholders involved in the evaluation, however, noted that this had now been resolved and concentrated relationship building efforts had led to difficulties having been worked through.

A similar but slightly different situation had occurred in the Glasgow Pathfinder, at a strategic level. In Glasgow, there were already strategic working groups to address child poverty underway at the start of the Pathfinder. Those involved, however, were consulted in the Pathfinder planning process to avoid duplication, and in some ways this was considered to have strengthened the work of the Pathfinder as there was existing expertise to draw upon. In Glasgow, some stakeholders commented that there still needed to be some work done to maximise the involvement of local third sector service providers in strategic discussions surrounding the development of the Pathfinder. This was underway and developing at the time the evaluation took place.

### **How has the support that families have accessed via the Pathfinders differed from their previous experiences of seeking support?**

The families we spoke with during the evaluation gave overwhelmingly positive feedback about the person-centred, holistic approach. Many expressed that the 'no wrong door' model being used in both Pathfinders had helped to reduce barriers to accessing services, and had increased people's awareness of the support they may be eligible for. Many reported that they appreciated the local knowledge of staff, and their ability to link them in with the right services and the right people quickly.

The drop-in hub model, being used as part of the Dundee Pathfinder, appeared to be reducing barriers to accessing support. However, some family members expressed that they did not feel comfortable sharing personal information in a community-based public setting, where confidentiality could not be assured.

In the Glasgow Pathfinder, some families found it unusual to be offered support for a wider range of issues than they had initially requested help for and were initially suspicious of this. Partners and local delivery stakeholders felt that offers of additional support should come with some explanation, and care should be taken to ensure that staff are aligning their activities with a pace that feels right for each person. They felt some public awareness raising of the Pathfinders could help to offset some of these challenges.

### **To what extent has the concept of holistic, person-centred support influenced service design and delivery?**

Almost all partners, stakeholders and families who were involved in the evaluation described examples that demonstrated that the person-centred approach was embedded within Pathfinder service delivery. This appeared to be going well. The ‘no wrong door’ approach was beginning to be used in both Pathfinders. In Glasgow, some of this work was being delivered by a telephone service, ‘Glasgow Helps’. In Dundee, some of this work was being delivered by outreach keyworkers and some by staff working within a newly established hub. However, several partners and stakeholders in both Pathfinders described new ways of working to try to create a broader ‘no wrong door’ approach. For many, this involved asking parents/carers about their broader needs during initial conversations and using the developing relationships within the Pathfinder to create ‘warm introductions’ to other services. This meant that in both Pathfinders, informal and formal ‘no wrong door’ approaches were beginning to form which meant that whoever made initial contact with the person would act in a ‘caseworker/keyworker’ type role, walking alongside the person until the right services or support had been identified and provided. This appeared to be reducing barriers to accessing support. While all partners and stakeholders we spoke with described their commitment to working in this way, some stated that the holistic approach was time consuming and labour intensive. This was easier to manage for some organisations compared to others, depending on funding structures and the organisations primary role.

### **What are the perspectives of stakeholders and partners concerning the replicability, scalability and sustainability of the Pathfinders?**

Most participants expressed the view that the Pathfinders were developing well, but that when it comes to child poverty, the Pathfinders had only begun to scratch the surface of a large scale problem. Partners and stakeholders described concerns that insufficient monitoring data was being collected at a service delivery level, which made it difficult to analyse where gains had been made. Others expressed concern that if performance metrics were being more routinely collected, they may not accurately reflect the gradual process of change that is involved in addressing poverty. Many partners expressed that whole systems change would take at least 5 to 7 years of sustained commitment to embed, before longer term impacts on reducing child poverty would be seen. Several partners and stakeholders did not think that the level of activity required to support the Pathfinder would not be sustainable without a commitment to long-term funding.

## **Recommendations**

Based on these key findings the report provides some key recommendations intended to inform the continued development of Pathfinders both in Glasgow in Dundee as well as in any other areas where the approach may be scaled up:

**Recommendation 1:** The Pathfinder aims and objectives should be co-designed early on and with the right partners and stakeholders locally.

**Recommendation 2:** Data sharing challenges should be worked through from the outset to allow data to be shared and used to identify and reach target families consistently.

**Recommendation 3:** Clear project planning and project management structures should be in place to ensure that there is effective communication, clarity and shared understanding of partnership goals and clear strategic direction.

**Recommendation 4:** Monitoring and evaluation processes should be built into Pathfinder models to support the early identification of delivery issues, improve opportunities for ongoing learning and allow an assessment of impact.

**Recommendation 5:** Strategic and operational commitments to allowing different ways of working and creating spaces for people to build relationships and work collaboratively should be ensured to enable the operational culture for system change.

**Recommendation 6:** Local knowledge should be embedded and shared in the Pathfinder delivery and development process so that support can be tailored effectively to local need.

**Recommendation 7:** Ensuring that a 'No wrong door' model with multiple access points and delivery channels is key to providing support that families feel is easier to navigate and non-judgemental and should continue to be built on as a central part of the Pathfinder model.

**Recommendation 8:** Pathfinders should continue to be built around and commit to providing person-centred support providing the right level and type of support that each family needs at the right time.

**Recommendation 9:** Pathfinders should ensure they are delivering support using appropriate delivery models and locations, that are accessible and have privacy.

**Recommendation 10:** The support offered by the Pathfinders should be more effectively communicated in the areas it is available through a variety of routes.



# Chapter 1: Background and overview

## 1.1 Background to the Child Poverty Pathfinders

The [Child Poverty \(Scotland\) Act of 2017 set new legal targets](#) for child poverty in Scotland, including for less than 18% of children to be living in relative poverty by 2023/24 and for less than 10% to be living in relative poverty by 2030. As part of this overarching target, the Scottish Government created the 2018-2022 Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, and in March 2022 released the second stage of the [delivery plan for 2022-2026](#).

This second delivery plan includes a commitment to support the work of two Local Pathfinders – one [operating in Glasgow and one in Dundee](#). These Pathfinders, designed and implemented at a local level, aim to provide person-centred support to families most at risk of poverty. Critically, they also bring together all the support services that vulnerable families require into one place, in a proactive attempt to improve the system as a whole and move away from a disaggregated service provision. As such, they aim to tackle child poverty both by directly supporting families at risk, and also by driving system change in the way in which families are supported.

As set out above, Scottish Government has enacted an ambitious child poverty strategy, and current projections anticipate that the interim target of 18% of children living in relative poverty by 2023-2024 will be met. However, in the context of continued impacts of Covid-19 on the health, wellbeing and financial security of people and the cost of living crisis, effective approaches to reducing Child Poverty remain of high priority. In 2022, the Scottish Government published its second [Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan](#), *Best Start, Bright Futures* (2022-2026), recognising the need to work differently and focus on outcomes to achieve the transformational change needed to meet the 2030 targets for child poverty reduction.

The plan acknowledges feedback from families that more needs to be done to support parents/carers and families to understand and navigate the often complex and fragmented child poverty support system, and to access the services and support they need to thrive. Specifically, the plan recognises the need to provide integrated and holistic support to parents/carers to drive forward a reduction in child poverty. The plan focuses on three elements intended to directly impact on the drivers of poverty reduction, as outlined below:

- **Providing the opportunities and integrated support that parents/carers need to enter, sustain and progress in work** by increasing investment in employability support and focusing on key enablers and infrastructure (for example childcare and transport).
- **Maximising the support available for families to live dignified lives and meet their basic needs** by delivering public services in a holistic way and supporting parents/carers and families to maximise their income and get access to the benefits, support and services they need.

- **Supporting the next generation to thrive**, focusing on supporting children and young people to get the best start in life, to learn and grow, and progress from school.

To achieve these aims, the plan recognises that transformational change and new ways of working are needed. A key way forward has been to set up Local Pathfinders to deliver “*a new approach to whole system, person-centred support*,” aimed at meeting the specific needs of families in need and most at risk of poverty.

The aims of the Pathfinder approach aligns with the Scottish Government’s overarching [Covid Recovery Strategy](#) which focuses on addressing the systemic inequalities heightened by Covid-19, making progress towards becoming a wellbeing economy, and accelerating inclusive person-centred public services. In addition, the Pathfinders are taking place alongside other interventions aimed at catalysing system-wide and local changes including the [No One Left Behind](#) approach to employability and the implementation of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund.

In this wider child poverty reduction policy context, the Local Pathfinders are specifically aimed at contributing to “*a new approach to whole system change*” focusing on innovation and testing, refining, adapting, and implementing new approaches to delivering person-centred solutions that may be scaled, or replicated in different localities. Critically important then, is the need to gather evidence and learning from the Pathfinders on understanding whether and how they are effective in achieving system change and delivering holistic support which meets the specific needs of people locally, to inform national policy and approaches for transforming the wider child poverty system.

## 1.2 The Glasgow Pathfinder model

The basis of the Glasgow Pathfinder is to test system change through a ‘no wrong door’ model for tackling child poverty – meaning that regardless of where, how, and why a person or family engages in the system, that interaction then becomes the gateway to receiving holistic, consistent, and comprehensive support. The role of the Pathfinder itself is to explore how best a ‘no wrong door’ model can be achieved by identifying and onboarding the right partners, designing and refining based on lessons learned and addressing the identified barriers that get in the way of a no wrong door model.

The Glasgow Pathfinder is a collaboration between Glasgow City Council, Scottish Government, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), and the Improvement Service. The key delivery mode is over the phone but the support can also be accessed in person. Parents/carers are referred to the Pathfinder from sources such as keyworkers in other services, educational staff or health professionals. After an initial discussion, families will have basic information recorded and, if necessary, may receive an immediate intervention, such as a fuel voucher. This is followed-up with a more detailed holistic needs assessment call, with a trained support officer, who acts as the Pathfinder keyworker. The support officer assesses the intensity and frequency of support required depending on their needs and sets up conversations for further referrals. Subsequently, parents/carers will have follow-up touch points through regular phone calls (or in person depending on their preference) to monitor the situation and reassess their needs.

In order to access this service, all that is required is a Glasgow postcode. As such, this model is able to assist a large number of people across the city, for an array of support

needs. However, the target audiences are parents who are in or close to experiencing poverty, and in particular priority families are targeted via outreach and marketing. Between 9th May and 1st August 2022, a total of 5,564 contacts were made, and from May to December 2022, 713 citizens were supported through ongoing case management support.

### **1.3 The Dundee Pathfinder model**

The Dundee Pathfinder model was developed in partnership between Dundee City Council, Scottish Government, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Social Security Scotland, drawing in other partners such as Discover Works, the Brooksbank Centre, and other third sector and grassroots organisations to support effective delivery. A key feature of this Pathfinder is to connect with other services and organisations in Dundee – including local employers – to improve linkages, allowing them to work in a more connected, streamlined and efficient way to provide solutions to families.

The Dundee Pathfinder adopts a keyworker model in the Linlathen area of the city and initially aimed to address child poverty through improving families' income from sustainable employment and/or income from benefits and helping to reduce their cost of living. Early work indicated that the target families face complex barriers, such as childcare, health issues, transport, and a lack of understanding of available support services and benefits. As a result, the Pathfinder provided more support in relation to cost of living (food and fuel) to families in all areas of need, to bring them closer not only to employment but to all services and benefits that enhance their wellbeing and maximise their incomes.

Keyworkers engage families, and Linlathen was targeted, based on a high level of deprivation. Individuals were initially identified as eligible, using council held data, to identify parents who qualified for Housing Benefit and Council Tax reduction and claimed no income from employment. Because many of these people have multiple barriers, they often have not previously accessed any services, or even know they exist, meaning it often requires multiple visits and contacts to encourage people to join the Pathfinder.

Individuals can visit the Brooksbank community centre which serves as an integrated services drop-in hub, with representatives from various organisations and support services who can provide bespoke support and advice to people who attend. The keyworkers carry out follow-up touch points, after the initial visit, to monitor and if necessary reassess support needs. In March 2023, the drop in-hub had been accessed 362 times, although this is not 'unique individuals' and includes adult children in engaged households, so the numbers of parents/carers supported will be less than this.

Although the Dundee Pathfinder originally targeted the Linlathen area, it has been found that as word spread, people from other parts of the city were attending the drop-in hub. While staff do not turn people away, they are aware that the service is being used by those from outside the area.

### **1.4 Commonalities between models**

In both models, there are not fixed lengths of time for which families are enrolled in the Pathfinder, and there are not standard criteria to determine when a case has reached closure. This is in part due to the variety of support needs that the Pathfinders are

intended to meet, meaning the duration and end point will vary between people. Most people enrolled in either Pathfinder will follow a unique journey, with the duration and closure point being a reflection of their journey.

## 1.5 Early evaluation of the process of implementing change

An early implementation process evaluation was undertaken to explore the early development phase of the Pathfinders. The aim of the process evaluation was to capture early learning and understand how systems change was being achieved. The research on which this report is based was not a full process evaluation of a defined delivery model, but rather, was an early process evaluation that was undertaken to inform ongoing learning and improvements to fulfil the aims of the evaluation. These aims are outlined below:

- Engage with Pathfinder partners, at a national and local authority level, as well as local delivery partners to understand what changes are intended; assess the current position with regard to design of the Pathfinders, delivery, collaboration and joint working; and explore what is working well for them at this early stage and what could be improved with regards to how Pathfinders are being designed and implemented at a local level.
- Engage with Pathfinder partners, at a national and local authority level, as well as local delivery partners, to understand how issues of scalability and sustainability are being understood and implemented; explore how learning is being gathered and shared across Pathfinders to support future scale-up and expansion and what is working well and what could be improved in sharing and supporting ongoing learning and scale-up.
- Engage with families experiencing, or eligible for, Pathfinder support to understand how the Pathfinders are engaging participants at this stage, why they are opting to take up support or not, how they are experiencing the Pathfinders and what is working well for them and what could be improved, including whether there are any groups facing additional challenges or barriers accessing support and the reasons for this.
- Engage across stakeholders, including service providers, service users and other families in poverty, to understand how stakeholders and families understand and experience holistic, person-centered support, and how this is influencing service design and delivery.
- Deliver a report detailing key findings, lessons learned and insights from this engagement to inform ongoing design and delivery, outlining what appears to be working well, what needs to be improved and what is needed for this improvement to take place.

The remainder of this report is set out as follows:

- [Chapter 2](#): includes details of the methodology used in this evaluation, methods to recruit parents/carers, as well as a section on the limitations of the research.

Further information on the demographic profile of the parents/carers who took part in the interviews is also provided in [appendix 4](#).

- [Chapter 3](#): covers the partner and stakeholder perspectives concerning the context and background of the Pathfinders, and explores perspectives related to the core aims of the Pathfinders.
- [Chapter 4](#): explores insights into how the Pathfinders have been designed and developed so far. This includes an exploration of the concept of 'person-centred approaches' and how this has been used to shape service design and delivery; a discussion on the extent to which the Pathfinders have been informed by existing evidence and how the Pathfinders have been reaching priority groups. The chapter also discusses the mechanisms in place to gather and share learning, the effectiveness of partnership working and the extent to which trusting relationships have been established.
- [Chapter 5](#): explores the current delivery of the Pathfinders. This includes a discussion of whether their delivery is leading to systems change and the barriers and facilitators partners and stakeholders describe in relation to creating and maintaining a 'joined-up' system. This chapter also explores the current delivery mechanisms that are in place, the strengths and weaknesses of delivery at a local level in terms of what is considered to be working well, and what could be improved as well as the perspectives on the sustainability, replicability and future scalability of the Pathfinders.
- [Chapter 6](#): covers the impact that the Pathfinders have been having on families to date. This includes an exploration of parents/carers experiences of seeking support and how the support received via the Pathfinders has differed from previous experiences of seeking support. The chapter also explores what it is that has made a difference, and the types of support received. The effects experienced and key learning from the perspectives of parents/carers is also discussed in this chapter.
- [Chapter 7](#): Provides a conclusion, which summarises key messages and brings together the findings of the report and learning to inform future Pathfinder development. This chapter also makes a series of recommendations.
- The [appendices](#) to this report contain the evaluation framework, research questions and the research tools used in the process evaluation.

## Chapter 2: Evaluation methodology

This section describes the design of the evaluation and the methods used. The first part explores the methods used to engage with Pathfinder partners and stakeholders. It then outlines the methods used to engage with families and explores the limitations of the research.

### 2.1 Partner and stakeholder interviews

The evaluation team worked with the Scottish Government to identify and define stakeholder groups. Partners were defined as those who work in key strategic roles within organisations who had direct involvement in the strategic board involved in the development of each Pathfinder. Stakeholders were individuals who occupied key roles within local delivery services. While most stakeholders did not have direct involvement in board level decisions, they had high levels of involvement in the development of the Pathfinders at a local level.

Rocket Science then worked with Scottish Government to identify a list of key stakeholders and partners to approach for research interviews. The lists were sent to Pathfinder leadership teams to secure agreement concerning who to approach, to maximise participation. Pathfinder leads were also involved in the identification of key people to include in the partner and stakeholder interviews. Therefore, the participant selection was identified purposively with the people most likely to be able to answer the research questions selected for inclusion. The number of stakeholder and partners who agreed to take part are presented in table 1 below.

**Table 1. Stakeholders and partner interviews**

	Stakeholders		Partners	
	Invited	Completed	Invited	Completed
Dundee	10	9	11	9
Glasgow	7	4	12	8
Total interviews completed		13		17

The Rocket Science team developed interview topic guides for use with Pathfinder partners and stakeholders. The topic guides for each group are provided in [appendix 2](#). The interviews followed a semi-structured design. This meant that while the topic guide was there to ensure that all relevant topics were discussed, there was sufficient flexibility built in, so that both groups (partners and stakeholders) could share their views on what had worked well, and what had not worked so well in the development of the Pathfinders. The interviews explored experiences of developing the programme and examined how learning was being used to influence replicability. The interviews also examined views on the scalability and sustainability of the Pathfinders.

Those identified for interview were contacted by Rocket Science researchers, and invited to attend an online interview. The interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour and took place between November 2022 and February 2023. In total, 38 stakeholders and partners received invitations to participate in interviews. 30 stakeholders and partner interviews were conducted across both Pathfinders. Participation in qualitative interviews was higher in Dundee (n=18) than in Glasgow (n=12). One additional source of data collection occurred as one partner could not find time for interview but expressed a desire to contribute views in writing. In this case, the interview topic guide was provided via email, and the written contributions have been included in the qualitative analysis.

Researchers took detailed notes during all interviews. This included conducting live verbatim transcribing and writing detailed reflective notes immediately after the interviews had taken place, to capture key insights. Transcripts and researcher notes were uploaded into software package MaxQDA. This enabled the evaluation team to engage in line by line thematic coding, which was developed into a coding hierarchy. The evaluation team then met to discuss themes and codes, which supported the refinement and further development of the thematic coding structure.

## 2.2 Partnership Scorecard

Rocket Science developed a bespoke partnership scorecard for the Pathfinder programme (see [appendix 3](#)). Partnership scorecards are online questionnaires that follow a standard framework, to track performance against pre-set, pre-agreed research questions. The partnership scorecard was developed via collaborative discussions with the leads of each Pathfinder. The scorecard was designed to allow partners to rate, reflect on and provide feedback on collaboration and joint working, the aims of the Pathfinder, the aspects that had been working well, key learning and how the Pathfinder could be improved.

The scorecard was scripted and then uploaded onto the online survey platform, SmartSurvey. A link to the Partnership scorecard was sent via email to Pathfinder partners at national and local level on 25 November 2022. Follow-up reminders were sent on two occasions, in December 2022 and January 2023, to those who had not yet responded. The Partnership scorecard received responses from 25th November 2022 to 18th January 2023.

Responses to the partnership scorecard were higher among Glasgow Pathfinder partners than among Dundee Pathfinder partners. Invitations to complete a scorecard were sent to 29 partners across both sites and 16 participants took part in the partnership scorecard as outlined in Table 2, below.

**Table 2. Scorecard participation across both sites**

	Partners	
	Invited	Completed
<b>Dundee</b>	13	5
<b>Glasgow</b>	16	11
<b>Total completed scorecards</b>	29	16

The higher participation in Glasgow, compared to Dundee should be taken into account when reading the results of the partnership scorecard data.

The Partnership scorecards consisted of a series of Likert scales comprising graded statements from which people could select a response based upon their experiences. The aim was to analyse responses as percentages, enabling the provision of charts and other data visualisation methods. However, the scorecards were not sent to large numbers of people, but rather, were sent to specific partners that were identified by Scottish Government and Pathfinder leads.

These participants were purposively sampled and were selected because they were close to the Pathfinder and would have knowledge of the design, set up and delivery phase of the Pathfinders and would be able to share insights on how systems change was occurring. Because of the low numbers of participants, quantitative analysis was not possible, yet the insights shared are valuable to understanding the development of the Pathfinder. To that end, the partnership scorecard data was analysed qualitatively and iteratively to identify how it sits within, and supports, the qualitative findings. The scorecard results have been used in the discussion of strengths and areas for development.

## **2.3 Parent/carer interviews**

As described in chapter 1, the Pathfinders aimed to reduce child poverty, and so the perspectives of parents/carers were crucial to capture. Throughout this report, we use the term 'family' when referring to the household impact of the efforts being made via the Pathfinder. We use the term parent/carer to refer to people who have dependents aged 16 years or under, and conceptualise this broadly to include parents, carers, guardians, kinship carers and foster carers.

At the Dundee site, a researcher visited the Pathfinder hub on two occasions and invited individuals attending to consent to interview. In Glasgow, Pathfinder staff identified and invited engaged individuals to be interviewed.

In both sites, [NIHR Guidance](#) was followed on compensating people with lived experience of services for their time spent taking part in research. This meant that all research



participants received £25 in gift vouchers, to compensate for their time and to thank them for participating in the evaluation.

In total, 36 interviews were completed with parents/carers (n=20 in Dundee, n=16 in Glasgow). Further details on the approach used to recruit parents/carers in the Glasgow and Dundee Pathfinders, as well as the demographics of the parents/carers, is included in [appendix 4](#).

## **2.4 Qualitative analysis**

Researchers took detailed notes during all interviews. This included conducting live verbatim transcribing and writing detailed reflective notes immediately after the interviews had taken place, to capture key insights. Transcripts and researcher notes were uploaded into the software package MaxQDA. This enabled the evaluation team to engage in line by line thematic coding, which was developed into a coding hierarchy. The evaluation team then met to discuss themes and codes, which supported the refinement and further development of the thematic coding structure.

Reflections on limitations to the evaluation are included as [appendix 5](#).

# Chapter 3: Partner and stakeholder perspectives on the context and background of the Pathfinders

This chapter explores the perspectives of partners and stakeholders in relation to the context and background of the Pathfinders. The first section, section 3.1 discusses the partners and stakeholders who have been involved to date, and provides some definitions related to how the terms 'partner' and 'stakeholder' are used throughout the report. Section 3.2 explores what partners and stakeholders conceptualise to be the main aims of the Pathfinder(s).

## Chapter summary: Partner and stakeholder perspectives the Pathfinders

### Who are the partners and stakeholders in the Pathfinder? What roles do they play?

The term partner refers to individuals who have involvement in the Pathfinders at a strategic level, either locally, nationally or both. Both Pathfinders have representation from those in strategic leadership roles within several local authority departments, National Health Service (NHS), Health and Social Care Partnerships, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Social Security Scotland. Partners tend to have been involved in making some of the earliest decisions about the aims of the Pathfinder and how these will be achieved

The term stakeholder refers to people who have involvement in the Pathfinders at a local level, and includes those holding key operational roles and responsibilities for service delivery. Stakeholders vary within each locality, but include representatives from statutory and third sector organisations. Stakeholders tended to have been brought in later, to consult on how the aims might be achieved in each locality.

Decisions regarding operationalising the aims, and deciding workflows appear to have been made by partners as well as stakeholders via meetings and consultative processes.

### What are the current aims and priorities of the Pathfinder from the perspectives of partners and stakeholders?

Almost all partners and stakeholders were clear that the overarching aim of Pathfinder activity was to work together to reduce child poverty. Several expressed that within this, the aim was to create partnerships that would create a more 'joined-up' system to reduce the barriers that families may face when trying to access services.

### What activities do the Pathfinders engage in?

Both Pathfinders are operating slightly different models of delivery so far, but are both beginning to demonstrate a commitment to delivering person-centred holistic support. In

both Pathfinders, this was described as a 'no wrong door' approach and involved some form of triage or keyworker model.

The partners that we spoke to in both Pathfinders tended to focus more on the strategic developments that the Pathfinders were seeking to achieve, to support integration of services and departments, to facilitate enhanced partnership working and create systems level change.

### 3.1 The partners and stakeholders involved

As discussed in chapter 2, the research team met with the Scottish Government to identify a list of partners and stakeholders to include in the evaluation. The term 'partner' was defined at that time and taken to mean people who are involved in the Pathfinder at a strategic level, either locally, nationally or both. 'Stakeholders' were defined as being people who are involved in the delivery of the Pathfinder at a local level. In conducting the research, however, it became evident that several people were involved in Pathfinder development at local and national levels, which meant that they fit the descriptor of both 'partner' and 'stakeholder'. Throughout this report, we refer to 'partners and stakeholders' together and rarely distinguish between the two groups. This way of presenting the data recognises that many individuals were occupying dual roles, where they could be defined as both a partner and stakeholder, as they had strategic involvement at national or local levels and were also involved in overseeing the delivery of the Pathfinders at local levels.

Both Pathfinder sites, Dundee and Glasgow, have national strategic level involvement from within the Scottish Government. Several partners expressed that this has been valuable because it is lending weight to Pathfinder activity, and people are generally keen to be involved due to the high profile nature of the strategic partnerships. Several Scottish Government department leads are involved, including social justice and public sector reform divisions. People occupying senior leadership roles within several departments of Glasgow City Council and Dundee City Council are also involved, as are senior leadership staff within several National Health Service (NHS) departments. Several leaders from within each of the Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCP) are also involved at a strategic planning level. The development of partnerships, including barriers and enablers to effective partnership working, is explored further in [chapter 4, section 5](#).

### 3.2 Perspectives on the aims and priorities of the Pathfinders

In this section, we discuss the perspectives of partners and stakeholders concerning the aims and priorities of the Pathfinders. Almost all partners and stakeholders demonstrated a good understanding of the main aim of the Pathfinders and described this as being to work together to reduce child poverty. While there was a good level of understanding about the overarching aim of the Pathfinders, the interviews suggest that it has not always been clear to partners and stakeholders how their day-to-day activities contribute to achieving this aim.

This finding was not consistent across all interviews, but rather, applied in only a few cases which tended to relate to uncertainty within the Dundee Pathfinder at a service delivery level. For example, in Dundee, a few stakeholders who were involved in delivering

services mentioned that at the start of the Pathfinder, most of the activity was geared towards increasing household income by supporting parents/carers into work. This focus appeared to have changed following a period of consultation with the local community.

The consultation and feedback led to a realisation that many parents/carers would need support to address social, housing, welfare and health needs before employment or education could be considered. Because of this, activities moved toward maximising household income via benefits reviews to ensure that parents/carers were claiming all the benefits that they were entitled to. Income maximisation in this way was used to support parents/carers while they worked through needs related to housing, health and social circumstances. However, the shift in focus and activity appeared to have led to some confusion at a local level for some stakeholders, who queried whether the aims of the Pathfinder had changed. Even those who described being confused, however, remained fairly consistent in their conviction that the aim of all Pathfinder activity was to reduce child poverty.

Another aim described by most partners and stakeholders was to work together to achieve system level change. For most, what this meant was working together to create new access routes into services, and to work out how to reduce the barriers that people were facing to accessing services. A related aim discussed by several was to create a more joined-up approach, thereby enabling a holistic approach to addressing the needs of people experiencing poverty.

In Glasgow, these efforts and aims appeared to be aligning well with existing work being done within Glasgow City Council, where there were efforts being made to introduce strategies and cross-departmental partnerships to begin to address child poverty. When it came to the Pathfinder, several stakeholders and partners suggested that the aim to create a more joined-up system was evident within the 'no wrong door' approach that had been rolled out, which meant that people could be supported to access the services they need no matter where in the system they entered. Several Glasgow Pathfinder partners described this as being an integrated, whole-system, holistic approach. Furthermore, one Glasgow Pathfinder partner described this as being consistent with the [Christie Commission principles](#) on the future of integrated public services in Scotland.

Similarly, in Dundee, most partners and stakeholders felt that the aim of the Pathfinders was to address child poverty by introducing holistic, person-centred support that was tailored to individual need. Several stakeholders in Dundee stated that the establishment of a keyworker model was fundamentally important to being able to support parents/carers with multiple complex needs and was a key part of an aim of the Pathfinder, which was, in their view, to create a more joined-up system. Several partners and stakeholders suggested that the aim to reduce child poverty would be delivered by reducing the barriers people were experiencing to accessing services.

Most stakeholders in Dundee also discussed an aim to reduce child poverty by maximising household income. There were mixed views about how this could, and should, be achieved. Some Dundee Pathfinder stakeholders considered that household income would be improved via welfare benefit checks and income maximisation support, and acknowledged that many parent/carers had a long way to go before they might be in a position to access employment. Others believed that family's primary routes out of poverty should come from parents/carers being supported into paid employment. Most, however, acknowledged that employment would only be possible once people's health, housing and social care needs had been addressed.

Some of the uncertainty about the aims of the Pathfinder and how they would be achieved in Dundee appeared to be because activity had begun rapidly at the start of the Pathfinder development phase. Several partners and stakeholders in the Dundee Pathfinder expressed views that suggested that not enough time had been taken at the start to identify how aims would translate into activities and workstreams. Several told us that they felt as though they had swung into action before they had a clear workplan linked to the Pathfinders aims. For some, this was due to feeling pressure to deliver results.

“...in Dundee we hadn’t really defined the problem. ...there was a real focus on a quick win and what can we do? The intention was ‘we shouldn’t feel restricted by our current organisations’ - we should feel empowered to do things differently but the specific problem beyond poverty? – that was not really defined.” (Dundee partner).

Several partners and stakeholders in both Pathfinder locations expressed the view that the aims of the Pathfinder(s) would not be achieved without having the courage to question the status quo, to innovate, and to do things differently.

The ‘rush to deliver’ change theme that had come through strongly in the Dundee partner and stakeholder interviews was not present in the Glasgow interviews. Instead, many Glasgow Pathfinder partners and stakeholders expressed frustration concerning a lack of initial early activity and a lot of discussion at the beginning. The scale of the problem of child poverty in Glasgow appeared to feed into this, and several partners described a disconnect between the overarching aim of tackling child poverty and the reality of delivering meaningful change on the ground.

“The aims articulated at a very high level are about making a difference to child poverty. I don’t know if that’s feasible, to really make a difference, so the second unspoken aim is identifying the barriers to addressing child poverty. The reality is that it’s still low level. That big picture is way at the top. Operationally, there are early project priorities still, well... we are now a long way into the project, but it still feels very early stage. It’s about navigating what’s different being in the council compared to third sector. What each agency thinks about each other. So the day to day priorities are much lower down than that bigger picture of tackling child poverty.” (Glasgow partner).

The quote above reflects the complexity of the task of addressing child poverty that was discussed by many partners and stakeholders. The quote also points to the challenges that those involved in both Pathfinders described facing when it came to translating the overarching aim of addressing child poverty into practical workstreams, services and tasks that could be delivered locally. When asked what could enable change to happen, many partners and stakeholders in both Pathfinders emphasised the importance of having enough time at the beginning to envision what change could look like and how it would be achieved. Many described the complexity of system level change but considered that a

key aim was to change how services were operating to create new access points, reduce barriers to accessing services and provide enhanced, person-centred, holistic support.

### 3.3 What activities do the Pathfinders engage in?

The findings of this early evaluation of the process of implementing the Pathfinders suggests that both Pathfinders are operating slightly different models of delivery so far, but that both are beginning to demonstrate a commitment to delivering person-centred holistic support.

The Glasgow Pathfinder delivers a 'no wrong door' model for tackling child poverty – meaning that regardless of where, how, and why a person or family engages in the system, that interaction then becomes the gateway to receiving holistic, consistent, and comprehensive support. The role of the Pathfinder itself is then to explore how best a 'no wrong door' model can be achieved by gathering learning from interventions that are in place which operate under the 'no wrong door' approach. In Glasgow, several stakeholders described the Glasgow Helps telephone line as being a good example of the 'no wrong door' approach.

The Dundee Pathfinder adopts a keyworker model in the Linlathen area of the city and initially aimed to address child poverty through improving families' employment opportunities. Early work indicated that the target families face many complex barriers beyond just employment, such as childcare, transport, health barriers and a lack of understanding of available support services and benefits. As a result, the Pathfinder adapted to support people and families in all areas of need, to bring them closer not only to employment but to all services and benefits that enhance their wellbeing and maximise their incomes. In Dundee, several stakeholders described the Linlathen Works drop-in hub as being a good example of co-working to create a 'no wrong door' approach. In both Pathfinders, formal and informal mechanisms were beginning to create a 'no wrong door' approach, where parents/carers would receive support from whoever received their initial enquiry, regardless of what service the staff member belonged to was evident. In both Pathfinders, there was evidence of an emerging cultural shift where partners and stakeholders described feeling able to work together across agencies to create new pathways for families. Many described recognising the importance of sticking with the parent/carer until they began engaging with services they had introduced them to. The developing relationships between staff from different agencies (in both Pathfinders) appeared to be starting to facilitate this new way of working. Notably, however, this came across more strongly in the Dundee data, which may relate to the smaller size of the locality. The findings of this early process evaluation suggest that a triage and keyworker approach has begun to emerge in both Pathfinders (formally and informally) via new ways of working. Here the terms 'triage and keyworker' are used to refer to circumstances where the same person would remain with the family until either their needs had been met, or they had begun to engage with the right service to meet their needs.

In both Pathfinders, parents/carers received a diverse range of crisis support, or minor interventions, and examples of these include receiving gas and electricity grants, food vouchers and food bank referrals, Christmas gift vouchers for their children, funding for winter clothes for their children, laptop grants, help securing free school meals, help switching to a credit meter, and free bus passes. Most parents/carers had received multiple forms of support. Often parents/carers would engage with longer term support,

such as benefit reviews and income maximisation, housing-related support, support to access employment and education, and assistance to access counselling.

The partners that we spoke to in both Pathfinders tended to focus more on the strategic developments that the Pathfinders were seeking to achieve, to support integration of services and departments, to facilitate enhanced partnership working and to create system level change. Partners and stakeholders wanted to create new access routes into services that could be created by individuals from multiple organisations working together to make the system easier to navigate.

Pathfinder partners and stakeholders told us that some progress was being made toward systems change. This activity included taking time to build effective partnerships between services and organisations. Partners and stakeholders, in both sites, felt the process of embedding change had been difficult so far, however, despite some challenges most partners and stakeholders felt there were early signs that systems change was beginning to occur.

This related to new ways of working, shifting from operating as single organisations to being part of a multi-agency team, and working towards a shared aim. Much of the systems change described by partners and stakeholders related to a growing awareness of other organisations, and the people working within them. Some partners and stakeholders felt that now that they could see the benefits of working in partnership way to share resources and create new access routes for people, they could not see themselves returning to previous ways of working, suggesting that some culture change is beginning to occur.

## Chapter 4: Pathfinder design and development

This chapter explores how the Pathfinder has been developing so far. The chapter begins, in section 4.1, by discussing partner and stakeholder's understanding of the concept of 'person-centred' support, and explores the extent to which this has informed the design and development of the Pathfinders. Section 4.2 explores the extent to which partners and stakeholders believe that the Pathfinders have been informed by existing evidence. The mechanisms in place to gather and share learning are then discussed in section 4.3. In sections 4.4 and 4.5, insights into the development of effective partnerships are discussed. Section 4.6 describes progress being made toward developing trust within the partnerships. The final section, section 4.7, presents partner and stakeholder views related to the effectiveness of communication within the Pathfinders.

### Chapter summary: pathfinder design and development

#### How are partners and stakeholders understanding the concepts of 'person-centred support' and how is this influencing service design and delivery?

Most partners and stakeholders demonstrated a good understanding of the concept of 'person-centred' support. For most, this term was understood to mean working in partnership with other organisations to create holistic approaches to providing services where a range of needs could be met through a unified interaction. Many stakeholders who were involved in delivering services expressed that the 'person-centred' approach meant taking time to get to know families, to assess their needs, and to work with other services to address multiple needs.

Some partners and stakeholders, however, discussed the challenges of delivering place-based, person-centred support in a policy environment built around a culture of inflexible funding pots and rigid reporting structures.

#### How are eligible families being identified as being in need of support? How, and why, are these groups being targeted?

Many partners stated that through partnership meetings, it had been identified that some partners held data that could be used to identify those who fit into the six priority family groups outlined in the Scottish Government Tackling Child Poverty Plan and are at higher risk of experiencing child poverty..

It had not yet been possible though to put in place robust data sharing mechanisms to allow data to be shared and used for targeting purposes, and partners and stakeholders were actively attempting to work through these issues.

#### How, and to what extent, have the Pathfinders been informed by existing evidence on what works to create system change and tackle child poverty?



Most partners and stakeholders considered that the most important evidence was locally collated data, and practitioner knowledge related to what could work, why and in what circumstances rather than existing empirical academic evidence. For most, this was about ensuring that the evidence used to inform the Pathfinder was informed by local knowledge and a high level of understanding of the challenges faced by people within the local context.

### **What mechanisms are in place to learn from what is being delivered? How is learning being shared within and across places?**

Partners and stakeholders in both Pathfinder areas expressed the view that, to date, not enough monitoring data had been collected, although monitoring processes were described as being under development at the time when the interviews took place

Most felt that during the next phase of development, more data should be collected at a local level and fed into strategic discussions. Examples of data required but not yet shared on a regular basis was details regarding how many people had been supported and the outcomes each family had achieved.

### **What data do partners collect and share? Is this used to evaluate, inform and learn across the Pathfinder?**

Although several partners and stakeholders expressed concern about a lack of monitoring data and data sharing, some described having set up informal meetings between themselves and people within the other Pathfinder area. This appeared to be creating opportunities for sharing learning across the Pathfinder sites.

## **4.1 Person-centred support**

Developing person-centred approaches to service delivery is a current priority for the Scottish Government, as outlined in the [Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-2026](#). In this section, we discuss partner and stakeholder's conceptualisations of what person-centred support means to them, and how this concept has been used to inform the development and delivery of the Pathfinders.

Partners and stakeholders in both Pathfinder sites tended to have a well-developed understanding of the concept of person-centred support. Most described 'person-centred' service delivery as being where all staff had a shared commitment to working together to develop solutions to people's individual needs. Many spoke eloquently about their understandings of person-centred approaches, and most expressed feeling confident that these concepts were driving change and shaping service design and delivery.

"We most certainly deliver a person-centred approach and probably also place-based. There is a conception that if you are city wide, you can't be place-based...but we feel through our outreach work, we are place-based. It is both, both are implemented." (Glasgow Stakeholder).

The above comment related to the complexity of Glasgow's geography, where some stakeholders felt that it wasn't possible to classify a service as being 'place-based' when it was city wide because Glasgow comprises many different local communities that are all very distinct across its geography. Most stakeholders felt that the approach being taken in Glasgow was person-centred and informed by the local context and evidence of what has worked well previously in the area, but that it wouldn't quite be accurate to call it 'place-based'.

A few stakeholders in each site were less clear on how the concepts of person-centred support were being defined and how they should be understood in relation to the Pathfinder. However, even those who expressed feeling uncertain tended to demonstrate a more developed understanding than they were giving themselves credit for, as the quote below indicates.

"I mean, my understanding isn't great if I'm honest. Just in some of the papers that have come in and that we are involved in. Realistically I'd be hoping it would shape services in a different way that allows more people to get the right support at the right time and that it does affect the lives of children in poverty across Glasgow."  
(Glasgow stakeholder).

One stakeholder in Dundee described the impact of the person-centred support on the services they were delivering as part of the Pathfinder.

"Person-centred is it's up to the person what they get. I give them their options...every person is different. They might have different job goals; they might need different things. I think what is being delivered is in sync with that approach." (Dundee stakeholder).

This quote aligns with a theme that came through strongly in the interviews, where stakeholders and partners alike described the importance of staff embedding person-centred approaches into their daily role. Many told us that for person-centred approaches to be embedded in service delivery, local delivery stakeholders needed to have had time to engage with people, get to know them, and develop a holistic picture of their needs.

Several told us that this type of person-centred service delivery required local delivery staff to have some autonomy and flexibility in how they deliver services, and how they interact with people accessing their service. While all stakeholders described a commitment to creating a person-centred approach to service delivery, some found it more challenging than others to deliver. This was related to the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that several organisations had to evidence as part of their funding arrangements. This tended to affect third sector organisations and charities who had become involved in the Pathfinder activity when it had been recognised that they were already delivering services related to the aims of the Pathfinder.

The KPIs discussed by these stakeholders related to their own funding arrangements, rather than the Pathfinder itself, which was not KPI driven. However, stakeholders told us that they were obligated to demonstrate staff time against KPIs achieved, which was challenging when delivering holistic support and while helping people to access other services, which often took them away from their core business. While this finding was only relevant to a few stakeholders within the Dundee Pathfinder, it is worthy of note, particularly because both Pathfinders expressed that they were aiming to maximise participation of third sector organisations within the future development of the Pathfinder partnerships.

The concept of place-based support, where support was integrated and responsive to local community needs had also been considered important within Pathfinder development. During interviews partner and stakeholders were asked about their understanding of this concept and how it fitted with the person-centred approach. When asked to expand on what factors enabled a place-based approach to be adopted, a Dundee stakeholder spoke about the link between the importance of local knowledge and a place-based approach.

“Place-based is about really truly understanding the needs of that community as a whole – we need that intelligence, that additional information because there’s no point saying, ‘we have a great new service’ that is actually based on what we think rather than what the community thinks.” (Dundee stakeholder)

In this quote, the participant describes a need to gather local monitoring data and evidence and use it to inform the ongoing development of the Pathfinder. For this participant, and others, a place-based approach was one that was informed by the knowledge held by practitioners who were delivering services locally, and by the perspectives of people who use services. Partners and stakeholders discussed the challenges of delivering place-based, person-centred support in a policy environment built around a culture of inflexible funding pots and rigid reporting structures. One Dundee partner noted,

“All governments are very place-based and holistic. That is said over and over again – while they all pump out policies, funding pots and reporting structures that don’t align.” (Dundee partner)

Several partners and stakeholders in both Pathfinders discussed the barriers they had experienced when it came to operating in person-centred ways to provide holistic support. They expressed that in the beginning, people and organisations had tended to be quite protective over their roles and the roles of their organisations. Doing things differently meant that there had to be some flexibility in terms of which organisation took on which work to address the multiple complex needs being faced by families living in poverty. Some partners and stakeholders felt that competitive funding across the sector encouraged people to feel the need to ‘guard’ what they saw as their organisation’s

territory. One Glasgow stakeholder commented on what the challenges were to delivering person-centred and place-based support.

“Challenges? Funding is the main thing - there are lots of projects doing the same thing – if your project is only measured on the number of outputs without looking at where the referral came from – eventually people will say why am I giving a referral to Glasgow Helps instead of to me? The funding cycle – people need to spend budgets – not underspend. The way around that is to not make it needs-based.” (Glasgow stakeholder).

Both the quotes above identify funding systems, and KPIs in particular, as a barrier to delivering person-centred and place-based support. Several partners told us that these barriers were gradually being overcome by the establishment of relationships between organisations, which had enabled people to let their guards down a little. This and people’s commitment to creating systems change had begun to create some changes. Funding challenges, however, remained for many third sector organisations and several suggested that lasting systems change would only be possible if core funding was to be provided to offer freedom from working to KPIs, which constrained the time available to operate in person-centred ways. Resourcing is discussed further in chapter 5, [section 5.4](#) which explores perspectives related to the sustainability of the Pathfinders.

A brief discussion on funding is also required here because some participants described person-centred approaches as being resource heavy insofar as it takes time to engage with, and support people as they journey through a system to address multiple complex needs.

Most respondents within Dundee and Glasgow City Councils reported that they felt both Pathfinders had been resourced well in terms of staff and budgets. However, some expressed concern about what would happen when the funding ended. They were all aware of the cost of the Pathfinders, with many describing the Dundee Pathfinder as ‘resource-intensive’ and ‘expensive’. People spoke about ‘pots not being bottomless’, indicating an anxiety around sustainability and replicability of the Pathfinder models. The resource implications appeared to be highest among third sector delivery stakeholders, and at a delivery level more generally.

“I think it’s quite expensive to run this. and it’s resource intensive... very expensive.” (Dundee partner)

Concerns about funding were also discussed by Glasgow Pathfinder stakeholders.

“There needs to be a lot more investment if it is to work in the longer term. Having something for a short time is okay if it’s a pilot, but

long-term there needs to be a longer-term funding structure.”  
(Glasgow stakeholder)

A point of key learning specific to Dundee emerged, and is worthy of note when planning how replicable the models may be in other areas. Many partners and stakeholders in the Dundee Pathfinder told us that although the Pathfinder was targeted at families living in the Linlathen area, gradually word spread about the type of holistic support that was being offered. We learned that this had resulted in people from other parts of the city starting to turn up at the Linlathen drop-in hub, seeking their services and keyworker support. Several local stakeholders told us that they were not turning people away on the basis of their postcode, but they had become increasingly concerned about the numbers of people travelling to use the service from outside the area. The demand for the one-stop shop model demonstrates the perceived benefits of the approach, from a partners/carers perspective, as well as demonstrating the importance of word of mouth as a communications method. Concerns about increasing use of the Dundee drop-in hub were of concern due to the in-person provision. Findings suggest that there may be a need to ensure that settings have suitable infrastructure to support in-person support if the Pathfinder expands significantly. This issue is explored further in chapter 6, which provides lessons learned from the perspectives of parents/carers.

Some partners who were involved at a strategic level described the early development phase as being beneficial, as it gave an opportunity to envision systems change and then work out how to deliver change at a local service delivery level. Often those at a less senior level of leadership described feeling uncomfortable with the lack of clarity at the start concerning how ‘person-centred’ services would be delivered. Some stated that more direct guidance at the beginning would have been helpful. Of those that felt this way, however, many described now being clearer about the direction of travel.

Some stakeholders, like the person quoted above, suggested that clearer communication with stakeholders at the beginning of Pathfinders, about the concept of person-centred approaches, may have been beneficial. This suggests that if Pathfinders are being developed in other areas, definitions of key concepts should be provided from the outset.

## **4.2 The extent to which Pathfinders are considered to have been informed by existing evidence**

This section explores partner and stakeholder perspectives on the extent to which existing evidence has been used to inform the design and deliver of the Pathfinders. Overall, most partners and stakeholders were of the view that the most important evidence to use to inform Pathfinder development was context-specific, and informed by data, rather than empirical or academic evidence on what works to address child poverty.

Partners and stakeholders were asked to what extent they felt the design of the Pathfinders had been influenced by existing evidence on what works to address child poverty. A few participants queried whether robust empirical or academic evidence on what works to address child poverty exists. Most Glasgow Pathfinder partners expressed that existing local data had influenced the design of Pathfinder activities to date. Most participants expressed the view that local data was more important to understand than overarching empirical evidence drawn from other national contexts.

These participants praised the use of local data within the design of the Pathfinder.

Many partners and stakeholders in both sites described a tension between the Pathfinder's aim to try and test innovative approaches, while using evidence informed practice, since the local evidence base on what works is not yet fully established. Many participants suggested that a core function of each Pathfinder was to explore what works, where and why. Many told us, however, that to date there was not enough data being collected at a local level to be able to say what was working so far. This finding was consistent across both sites, and it relates to some of the data sharing issues that are explored in more detail in [chapter 4](#).

Several partners and stakeholders felt that the issue of child poverty could be conceptualised as having reached crisis level, stimulating a need for the Pathfinders. As the partner in the quote below outlines, some partners and stakeholders felt that one of the aims of the Pathfinder was to try and test new approaches to develop the evidence base for what would work in each locality.

"I don't get a strong sense of an evidence background – it has been more of an evolution – it has been more of a crisis response rather than one that has set out to base itself on an evidence base – recently it is starting to use its data and to drill down into the data now." (Glasgow partner).

We heard from many partners in the Glasgow Pathfinder that while the Pathfinder was distinct, it also fitted in with existing priorities and workstreams in Glasgow City Council that had been set up to reduce child poverty. Some of the existing data in Glasgow that had come out of these other initiatives had been able to be used to inform the development of the Pathfinder. One Dundee Pathfinder partner, quoted below, told us that one of the key benefits of the Pathfinder's activity had been the ability to identify the numbers of people who were eligible for welfare benefits, who had not been claiming them due to not being aware they could. This data had been used as part of the decision to move away from an employment focus in Dundee toward an income maximization focus, which included making sure that families were accessing the right benefits.

The qualitative findings were echoed in the Partnership Scorecard data. For example, when asked about evidence collected via the Pathfinder, eight respondents indicated the view that partners collect and share some data to build an evidence base about what is working within the Pathfinder. A further five felt that partners were collecting some data, but not sharing it to build an evidence base. Three, however, agreed that partners were collecting and sharing relevant data to build an evidence base. As such, the qualitative and scorecard data both suggest that there have been some potential challenges and ambiguities surrounding how data is used to inform the Pathfinder, and how ongoing monitoring data is used to inform the ongoing development of the Pathfinder.

### 4.3 The extent to which Pathfinders are reaching the targeted population

The Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan indicates that key priority groups for policies in the plan, including the Pathfinders include lone parents/carers; ethnic minority families; families with a disabled adult or child; families with a young mother (under 25); families with a child under 1; larger families (3+ children). In this section, we discuss partner and stakeholder perspectives on the priority groups that they are aware of, and the mechanisms in place to target these groups. We also discuss the barriers described in reaching these groups. Further information about the activities the Pathfinders were engaging in with priority groups can be found in chapter 5, which describes the design and development of the Pathfinders. Further information about how priority groups experienced this support is provided in chapter 6, which presents perspectives in relation to the impact on families to date.

Partners and stakeholders in both Pathfinders conveyed that they had identified sources of data that could be used to make targeted offers of support to groups that had been identified as priorities due to being at a higher risk of experiencing child poverty. Several partners and stakeholders, in both sites, told us that it had been challenging to identify and effectively target these priority groups because although there were organisations involved in both Pathfinders that held data, it had not yet been possible to establish a legal basis for data to be shared for the purposes of providing targeted support. Some participants told us that although data sharing remained a contentious issue that they were working through, they had developed new strategies to reach priority groups. One example given was that a campaign had been established to reach the targeted population by engaging with early years establishments such as nurseries and also schools to make universal offers of support. Many expressed that the aim of these campaigns was to encourage families struggling with poverty to come forward, thereby enabling support to be provided.

In Dundee, however, some partners and stakeholders described progress having been made in terms of data sharing and told us that they had been able to use data related to council tax reductions and housing benefits to identify families who may benefit from a targeted offer of additional support. Several partners involved in the Glasgow Pathfinder told us that they now also had sufficient data sharing agreements in place to allow them to use Glasgow City Council data such as council tax reduction data to identify families in greatest need.

Across both Pathfinder sites, partners and stakeholders spoke about their frustrations with delays to data sharing agreements. Many felt that certain organisations, like DWP held information about household income and numbers of people claiming certain benefits, which could be used to target support and make data-driven decisions, informed by existing data. Others felt that data sharing would allow them to demonstrate the impact that the Pathfinder was having on those who had accessed support. Another Glasgow Pathfinder partner describes how they had been able to identify the numbers of people who were eligible for fuel grants who had not claimed them. This partner was of the view that the Pathfinders could help to maximise the number of people claiming the benefits they were entitled to, but also their contact with people accessing services would contain insights to explain why so many benefits were unclaimed when there were families who were experiencing poverty.

The fuel grants described above were to help people to manage the increase in cost of electricity and gas. These were described by partners in both Pathfinders and considered

to be acutely required in the area of Linlathen, Dundee because the houses had been designed in such a way that they had insulation problems. Most partners and stakeholders in both Pathfinders discussed the use of data to inform learning, and also to understand the barriers that people were facing. Many also felt that data sharing agreements were required to enable more targeted support to be offered to those experiencing the most acute levels of poverty.

Often, when asked to describe the extent to which the Pathfinders had been informed by existing evidence on 'what works' to address child poverty, partners who were involved at a strategic level tended to talk about data sharing, and the importance of establishing data sharing agreements to build the evidence base and inform the future development of the Pathfinder.

"We haven't got these systems in place yet – we are working with data, Social Security Scotland and Department of Work and Pensions colleagues – we can't share data at the moment. A client presents that needs Social Security help, we take the client to the Social Security Scotland table – we are looking at a data sharing protocol – we are looking at a system – but can't do this until we have data sharing signed." (Dundee partner).

Although the above example comes from the Dundee Pathfinder, this finding was consistent across both Pathfinder sites. Another Dundee partner, however, reported that they had identified a potential solution.

"We are developing a tool called Huddle that all three agencies think will be able to use it for data sharing. We think if we can get this through it'll be a massive win". (Dundee partner).

This quote demonstrates that solutions are being sought and found, which it is hoped might resolve some of the challenges posed by data sharing.

In both Pathfinders, several partners and stakeholders expressed that they were currently actively working with partner organisations through the Pathfinder via a new workstream dedicated to establishing data sharing agreements to ensure that the targeted population could be more effectively reached. In Glasgow, there were early indicators of progress within the data, where several partners and stakeholders noted that a Data Sharing Framework Agreement had been developed that could be used by third sector organisations. This framework was described as being used to identify and target priority groups, and it was also being used to provide more rapid access to services.



## 4.4 Mechanisms to gather and share learning

This section explores the views of partners and stakeholders in both sites in relation to the mechanisms that have been put in place to gather and share learning. The section also discusses the data being collected by partners, and the extent to which this is being used to evaluate, inform and learn across the Pathfinder(s).

We begin this section by contextualising the more detailed points that will follow with a brief discussion on the partnership scorecard results. As previously noted, the scorecards received a low response rate, and so some caution is required in interpreting the results. However, the 16 responses provide some insights that align with the more detailed qualitative findings. When asked to scale their response to a series of questions about gathering and sharing learning across the Pathfinders, most of the 16 scorecard respondents agreed that partners have had some opportunities to learn from one another and agreed that a learning culture was beginning to develop. This suggests that for some partners and stakeholders there have been opportunities for collaboration and coproduction. Findings were mixed, however, and three scorecard respondents felt that partners had experienced limited opportunities to learn from each other, with limited opportunities for collaboration and coproduction.

Many respondents suggested that the Pathfinder teams were sometimes taking the time to reflect on progress, achievements and lessons. Six respondents described this as 'rarely' occurring and three described this as happening 'often'. Responses to questions related to using learning to refine the approach were mixed, with six respondents stating that the Pathfinder team was sometimes drawing from lessons from the past in developing new initiatives and its programme of work, and a further five describing this as occurring often.

We now present the findings of the qualitative interviews that explore in more detail the mechanisms in place to gather and share learning. Gathering and sharing learning was described as being challenging at the beginning of both Pathfinders. Some partners and stakeholders, in both sites, suggested that there had been an initial reluctance to share monitoring data between partners, where it was being collected. Several partners and stakeholders stated that there had been a gradual willingness from all sides to consider what could be done to facilitate information sharing so that learning could be shared between organisations. When asked what had helped, two partners from the Dundee Pathfinder expressed that establishing a fortnightly meeting to discuss and share learning had been helpful.

“The fortnightly working group set up - oversight board as well – capturing frontline staff attend the fortnightly working group as well as senior managers.” (Dundee partner)

For many, the regular meetings had helped partners to feel more willing to share learning, and several reported feeling less guarded when discussing progress. When prompted to explain what was it about the meetings that was useful, several partners mentioned having a space that captured feedback from the frontline and having a safe space to share experiences of things that had been a success, as well as those that had not worked so well. In both Pathfinder sites though, some partners indicated that the meetings had not always felt like a safe space. Several told us that they had only recently started to feel free

enough to share their views and progress, particularly in circumstances where their views didn't fit with some of the more dominant voices in the meetings. What appeared to have made a difference was that people had started to get to know each other and were then able to read when what they were about to say would upset someone, and could be mindful about how their views and experiences came across. Understanding each other, and the demands of the organisations people were attached to, appeared to be helping in both sites. Several partners stated that as their role in the Pathfinder had become clearer, they had developed a better picture of their contribution and value, which had helped them to feel more confident and able to share views, which had contributed to learning, and a willingness to discuss lessons learned.

Several partners and stakeholders discussed how learning would be used to shape the future development of the Pathfinders. Many felt that there had not been enough time allocated to develop relationships between organisations and between the people who were involved from each organisation. For these partners, it was relationships between people that would be the conduit to doing things differently. They expressed that the ability to openly share perspectives, without fear of recriminations or conflict, was what would bring about lasting systems change.

Several partners and stakeholders told us that if Pathfinders are to be considered for other areas, it would be crucial to understand that relationship building is a core factor, and that time must be built in for this. Although several partners and stakeholders expressed concern about a lack of monitoring data and data sharing, some described having established informal meetings between themselves and people within the other Pathfinder area. This appeared to be giving informal opportunities for sharing learning across the Pathfinder sites. It is recommended that more formal mechanisms are developed to ensure that learning is consistently shared between Pathfinders.

## **4.5 The effectiveness of partnership working**

In this section, we discuss the perspectives of partners and stakeholders on the effectiveness of partnership working. This includes a discussion on what is considered to be going well, barriers and facilitators to effective partnership working and lessons learned to date.

Most partners and stakeholders, in both Pathfinder sites, discussed that it had taken a long time to get partnerships established to the point that they were beginning to work well. Most felt that although they were on a positive trajectory, they weren't quite working optimally. In Dundee, several partners felt that there had been pressure to deliver something overnight, which had led to the establishment of actions that were decided too quickly, and which had not given scope to identify the right people to engage at the start, leading to some initial resentment that had to later be overcome. In Glasgow, several partners told us that it had been difficult to maintain the motivation of talented staff during the period where they were less certain about workstreams and tasks, and more engaged in envisioning what change would look like.

The pace of change, therefore, seemed very different across the sites, but had presented some challenges related to engagement in partnership working, in both sites. The pace of change, however different, had been a factor that inhibited engagement of partners in both sites, where it was difficult to engage people in Pathfinder partnerships before a clear outline of aims and objectives had been decided.

This is illustrated by a Glasgow Pathfinder partner in the quote below.

“It was difficult to get the right people and keep them motivated because sometimes people would ask about what the Pathfinder is, and not everyone could understand or run with the concept of – it is what we make it, and you can help shape that.” (Glasgow partner).

This demonstrates the importance of defining aims early in the development of the Pathfinder and deciding how overarching aims translate into local activities. Reflecting this, several partners and stakeholders used the word ‘journey’ to describe the partnership’s development. They referenced not only the time spent, but also the discussions engaged in at partnership level. Some partners across both sites mentioned that the journey had been painful at times, but that the partner’s ability to work effectively in meaningful collaboration had grown over time. For some, the ability to work through barriers to effective partnership working was a key benefit of the Pathfinder, as described in the quote below.

“That’s a benefit of Pathfinder that’s hard to capture – culture and process shift. Each organisation has a different reputation. Although we were a partnership, initially people kept doing what they’ve always done. Over time, the benefits and wins of collaborative working has been clearer. It has evolved now. Relationships and trust took time to build, but we are getting there now.” (Dundee stakeholder)

As illustrated in the quote below, some partners felt that unclear roles at the very start had had a negative impact on the partnerships.

“I think it has been a bit hokey cokey, but we didn’t have all the necessary skills and resources. So do you get the right people in the room and then develop, or do you develop something and then bring the people? It’s tricky when people are unclear on their roles, particularly as we are working it out as we go. Feels a bit start-stop”. (Glasgow partner)

This quote illustrates the ‘tricky’ balance that the Pathfinders faced when starting up. The tension between needing clear aims to get buy-in, balanced with the innovative approach of the Pathfinders seems to have resulted in a ‘stop-start’ development. This highlights the need mentioned before to allow time for development of clear aims and objectives. This would then lead to buy-in from partners and the development of a clear communications plan.

Across both sites, partners and stakeholders expressed the view that partnerships were evolving and becoming stronger. This is described by a Glasgow Pathfinder partner in the quote below.

“Norming, storming, forming - in that order. I would reflect that the importance of personal relationships – I hadn't taken on board enough.. But if you know each other, you understand how each other works ...Our teams are coming together, challenging each other.. (Name) is helping us come together, makes sure we are clear on our roles, who does what”. (Glasgow partner)

Some of the tensions experienced in both sites appeared to relate to not necessarily having all the right people around the table at the very beginning of Pathfinder development. This finding came across in the perspectives of partners and stakeholders from both sites. When asked if any organisations were missing from the partnership, several respondents from both sites mentioned that they had been expecting the third sector to be more involved.

One Dundee Pathfinder partner reflects that there has been a need to engage people with lived experience of accessing services within the Pathfinders at a strategic level.

“They are not part of the institutional partnership - more of that lived experience and there is no lived experience at board level.” (Dundee partner).

Several partners involved in the Pathfinders, at both sites, stated that people with lived experience of accessing services should have been involved in Pathfinder development to date, and that they should be invited to join the partnerships from now. Some partners in the Glasgow Pathfinder felt that Glasgow City Council were over-represented within the partnership, as discussed in the quote below.

“It's no good council and public sector talking to themselves because citizens are engaging with the third sector. ... Council colleagues don't seem to understand that the most marginalised families don't trust the council.” (Glasgow partner)

Some partners in Dundee discussed not being aware of the involvement of NHS partners and discussed that the NHS and especially mental health colleagues should be on board and involved in the Pathfinders. In Dundee, one partner said:

“There has been a KeepWell Nurse who comes occasionally – we need health support to be able to support these clients – how can we support these clients to manage their health – or even access

routes into MH services? We are starting to have chats with health”  
(Dundee partner).

A Dundee stakeholder also highlighted the need for more engagement with mental health colleagues and explained some of the reasons why they had not been engaged.

“I think we could have done with engaging more of the local mental health organisations who could have been there to explain more fully the services they offer – the problem was that the first place we ran the drop-in sessions was that it was very small. The second venue was much better – but still would have been crowded. Perhaps it would have been better to do more days... Split the sessions up eg, 1 day for housing, 2nd day for employability etc... local organisations are all so busy. - that is the only way that it could work better than it did. Needed everybody to be present for whole session.” (Dundee stakeholder).

There was no discussion on the need to engage NHS colleagues in the Glasgow Pathfinder, which suggests that partners involved in the Glasgow Pathfinder were more aware of there being representation from health services on the board in that area. The above quotes from Dundee partners and stakeholders link to an overall finding about there being a need to understand who should be around the table in the partnership and making sure that all the voices needed to support families holistically are there and able to contribute.

This also highlights a challenge when delivering in-person services of estates and venues that are suitable. For the drop-in hub model to work, the venue needs to be big enough to accommodate all services who need to all be present on the same day. In the Dundee Pathfinder, many stakeholders who were operating at a service delivery level told us that the drop-in hub was playing a key role in strengthening partnership work. Co-location appeared to be assisting with the alignment of services, which was strengthened by developing ease with which they were able to speak to people from other organisations to request help and advice. These stakeholders noted the importance of being able to ‘walk someone round to the DWP’ to ‘hand them over, there and then’ and ensure that people received the help they needed immediately via integrated working practices.

Several front line staff in Dundee stated that at first they didn’t know people from other organisations very well and were unclear on their roles. They noted that after a few weeks of being co-located at the drop-in hub, this had changed, and they reported feeling that they were working as a team. Unity of purpose was often mentioned as defining the collaborative way they worked on-site, and many felt that the shared aim of improving the lives of families who were experiencing poverty and multiple complex needs was motivating them to work together to reduce barriers to accessing support.

Despite many positive reflections, some stakeholders who were delivering services in Dundee felt that there were still some barriers to work through. As one put it,

“I’m here as an employee of a particular agency” (Dundee stakeholder).

The above stakeholder went on to say that improvements to partnership working had been accomplished because of mindset shifts, where each person had begun to embrace a mindset of collaboration and team working, much of which was enabled by working together on the same site on specific days of the week. One stakeholder summarises their perspective on the growing strengths of partnership work in the quote below.

“we’re working to deliver what that person needs now.... We all have the same goal now.” (Dundee Stakeholder)

The Dundee drop-in hub was considered to be a good example of the benefits of co-location and working in partnership to align services. To provide some insight into how this was operating, several stakeholder and partners involved in the Dundee drop-in hub spoke about how they managed the triage of parents/carers. They had recently appointed a member of staff who welcomed people as they arrived and spoke to them about what they needed for that visit. The parent/carer was then directed to the various desks of the relevant services they would need to access on that visit. When asked what made the partnerships that sat beneath this triage approach work, interviewees mentioned the in-person element. Good team working appeared to be made possible because colleagues from other organisations were present, and frontline staff were able to ask informally whether they could offer help or support with cases.

When prompted to identify what facilitated the good team working several stakeholders described the importance of informal moments between colleagues that allowed them to chat and get to know each other. For example, clearing away after a session enabled the staff to get to know the person from Jobcentre Plus. It was only when they chatted that they realised she could help with issues they had not known about. They reported that since then, they sent people to their Jobcentre Plus colleague all the time. They mentioned they all worked together and helped each other.

“At the end of the day we pack everything up when we’re finished – everyone has a chat about the day – and that’s a place for informal learning” (Dundee stakeholder).

In the next section, we explore the evolution of the partnerships and the extent to which trust has formed at a strategic and operational level.

## **4.6 The development of trust between partners**

This section provides a short summary of the key themes noted in the previous section in relation to how trust has been developing through the early implementation of the

Pathfinders. Findings suggest that establishing enough trust to enable stakeholders to try and test new things, to innovate and to work together across several organisations has taken time.

In both sites, establishing relationships from which trust could form was described as being a core part of the earliest phase of Pathfinder development. Most partners felt that not enough time had been allocated to navigating the difficulties of establishing relationships of trust. It was suggested that this should be at the core of early activity, as most partners felt that relationships of trust were the foundation from which lasting change would gradually grow.

Partnership scorecard responses suggest that of the sixteen respondents (largely Glasgow-based), most felt that they could trust the partners involved in the Pathfinder on most issues. Some expressed that they only felt able to trust partners on some issues. In the interviews, partners discussed that there had initially been some confusion about each other's roles. Some partners mentioned that not fully understanding the role they would play, and the role that others would play in the development of the Pathfinder had created barriers to trust in the very initial stages. Some of this was reflected in the partnership scorecard data too, where most of the sixteen respondents agreed with the statement 'partners try to understand each other's role, focus and needs'.

This finding, when considered alongside the interview data, suggests that gradually trust was beginning to develop between partners as relationships formed, which was making effective partnership work feel more achievable to many partners and stakeholders. Despite the sense of optimism however that came through in the interview findings, five out of the sixteen partnership scorecard respondents agreed with the statement 'partners display patchy understanding of each other's role, focus and needs'.

This mixture of findings suggests that while progress is being made toward understanding each other's roles and developing trust, there may still be some distance left to travel. This points to a finding noted above where partners conveyed that more time was needed to work through barriers to effective partnership working, as part of a commitment to creating systems change. Most partners and stakeholders who took part in the interviews, across both sites, described trust as something that was continually building.

Many described the development of trust between partners as an evolving journey. Multiple people in both Pathfinders used the phrase '*we are getting there now*' when discussing the gradual development of trust and partnership working. Most interviews reflected a sense of hope and optimism about the future of the partnership, and this appeared to relate to having worked through the initial phase of partnership formation, to the point where trust was now developing. For many, this had been an important part of the early implementation and development process.

## **4.7 The effectiveness of communication**

The qualitative findings presented in sections 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 have shown that the relationships between the partners appears to have developed to a point where people feel more comfortable sharing lessons learned, progress to date and recommendations for the next steps of Pathfinder development. In each of these sections, trust and relationships have emerged as key themes that relate to the effectiveness of communication. As a result, this section is relatively short.

As previous sections have indicated, most partners and stakeholders were of the view that communication and partnership work had started to become more effective as time went on. An early part of the implementation had been about creating the right foundations for effective partnership work, and this had led to enhanced communication. In both Pathfinders, several partners told us that a dedicated project manager had recently been appointed and this appointment appeared to be valued by many because the project manager had been able to communicate workplans, risk registers and timelines effectively.

Many described this as a key turning point moment where communication and clarity of purpose simultaneously improved. Some participants felt that communication within the Pathfinder was clear. Others felt that there was not always enough time between receiving updates, and meetings taking place, which led to some people feeling unclear about the purposes of meetings when they occurred. These findings are mirrored within the scorecard data where there were mixed responses concerning the extent to which people felt that internal communication within the Pathfinder was clear.



## Chapter 5: Delivery of the Pathfinders

This chapter begins by discussing the progress made toward systems change. Section 5.2 then discusses the barriers and facilitators that partners and stakeholders describe in relation to creating and maintaining a 'joined-up system'. It then discusses the new access routes that have been created via the Pathfinders. Within these two sections (section 5.2 and 5.3), the strengths and weaknesses of delivery at a local level are explored, and insights are provided in terms of what is considered to be working well, and what could be improved. Section 5.4 then discusses perspectives on the sustainability, replicability and future scalability of the Pathfinders.

### Chapter summary: Delivery of the Pathfinders

#### What progress is considered to have been made toward systems change?

The pace of change has differed between Pathfinder sites at the very beginning of early implementation. In Dundee pressure from an initial 'rush to action' created early barriers to partnership working and systems change, although this is reducing over time. In Glasgow initial action on system change has been slower, with more time given on planning project aims and governance arrangements.

In both Pathfinder sites, there is a sense now that systems change is becoming embedded. Activities have begun to align and there was a sense that this collaborative approach was helping to reduce the barriers parents/carers were facing when seeking support. Where these ways of partnership working and partnership alignment were occurring organisational culture change was seen as important in embedding system change outcomes in the longer term.

#### What changes have been made to facilitate the alignment of services, and how has this created new access routes?

Although the approaches taken in each Pathfinder differed, both approaches appeared to be underpinned by a triage and navigation approach where holistic conversations and signposting are key to enabling person centred support.

In both Pathfinders, the continuity of support is seen as important in the alignment of services. This supports a person-centred approach where families have a key contact and do not need to keep repeating their story or go looking in lots of different places for support. This approach enables better alignment between services and faster access to support for service users.

#### What are some of the barriers and facilitators to creating a 'joined up' system?

Many of the barriers faced to creating a 'joined up' system relate to partnership working, which is discussed further in [chapter 4](#). Key barriers included defensiveness from partners and stakeholders about their own role; overcoming silos; having the space to test new

ways of working; a rush to action without adequate time for planning; and apprehension about the scale of the task within such a complex child poverty system.

Factors which enabled better joined-up working included creating opportunities for people from other organisations to build relationships, enhanced awareness of the different support offered, development of clear aims and communications strategy and the development of clear workflows, processes and activities.

### **What are partner and stakeholder's perspectives in relation to the future of the Pathfinders?**

All partners and stakeholders felt that it was too soon in the implementation process to know whether the Pathfinder would be sustainable in the longer term, and whether it would be able to be scaled and replicated in other areas.

Key barriers to sustainability were felt to be around continued funding challenges and having robust monitoring and evaluation in place to be able to evidence impact. It was felt that decisions on continued funding needed to be based around an understanding that systems change is a long term process and it will take a while for any outcomes to be fully realised and evidenced. Scaling up any approaches was also seen as requiring significant additional investment.

While there has been progress toward creating a more joined-up system, much of the change to date appears to have been reliant on the development of enhanced partnership working. While developments to date have been positive, this raises some concern about whether change can be sustained via informal agreements or whether there may be a need for more formal structural change to sustain benefits gained to date.

When asked whether the Pathfinders could be replicated in other areas, several partners and stakeholders mentioned that it was the concept of working together across organisations to deliver person-centred support that would be replicable, where the model itself would need to be adapted to suit the locality.

## **5.1 Progress made toward systems change**

This section explores the extent to which partners and stakeholders felt that systems change was beginning to be achieved during the early development of the Pathfinders.

In both sites, partners and stakeholders conveyed that some progress was being made toward systems change. A few felt that the pace of change had been slow, as it had taken time to build effective partnerships between services and organisations. One partner held the view that some of the barriers to achieving change arose from departments within large councils still tending to work in silos, and so some of the early work of the Pathfinder had been about trying to get multiple council departments to work together. Multiple partners and stakeholders, in both sites, stated that the process of embedding change had been a difficult one so far, as there was a tendency for organisations and individuals to want to do versions of what they had always done. Despite these challenges (outlined in more detail in chapters 4 and 5), most partners and stakeholders were of the view that there were early signs that systems change was beginning to occur. Much of this related to new ways of working, such as the keyworker approach that had begun to be established in

both Glasgow and Dundee, where the first person to triage a family (either by telephone or face-to-face) would assess wider needs and remain alongside the family until they had begun to engage fully in support, or until their needs were met, depending on the circumstances. These new ways of working are described further in section 5.2. The shift from operating as a single organisation to being part of a multi-agency team, working towards a shared aim hints towards the beginnings of change in working behaviours and relationships, which many partners and stakeholders felt would be the foundation for lasting systems change.

Much of the systems change described by partners and stakeholders related to a growing awareness of other organisations, and the people working within them. Many partners and stakeholders felt that it was relationships between people that was contributing to systems change. A few partners expressed concern about relying on the goodwill and motivation of individual people to bring about systems change, since people move to other roles from time to time and connections can be lost. Others, however, felt that working more closely with people from other organisations as colleagues and partners had led to new ways of working that over time, with support, could contribute to broader cultural changes within workplaces and organisations. Some partners and stakeholders felt that now that they could see the benefits of working in this partnership-based way to share resources and create new access routes for people, they could not see themselves returning to previous ways of working. For the stakeholder below, there was the sense that the partnerships formed via the Pathfinder would contribute to systems change.

“When we first came in, we all worked separately. Now we are a partnership, we do what needs to be done. People are working out of their comfort zone. The sense of team has overtaken job titles now. I’m so pleased it’s like that – I’ve never seen it before... proper partnership working.” (Dundee stakeholder)

This quote also speaks to the increased job satisfaction that several stakeholders described having come from ‘proper partnership working’ and seeing the difference this could make in the lives of those seeking support. In the Dundee drop-in hub, co-location of staff from multiple organisations seemed to be helping with this sense of having achieved lasting systems change. The motivation to maintain effective partnerships and an improved system seemed to be increased by the in-person nature of interactions, where the same families would visit regularly, enabling staff to build up relationships, continuity and a sense of contributing something positive to the community. In both sites, however, the journey toward systems change was described as being a process that was still ongoing. A Glasgow Pathfinder partner describes this in the quote below.

“I’m comfortable with where things are at the moment... A couple of months ago we had lots of opportunities, and we were missing them – now we can pick these up and that’s because we now have a team in place and we are clear on the roles and their remits.” (Glasgow Partner).

The above partner went on to say that being clearer on each other's roles and remits had strengthened partnership working, which was beginning to contribute to systems change. This appeared to have been further strengthened by the appointment of a dedicated project manager, who had developed a clearer strategy, work flows and workstreams.

## 5.2 New access routes

In both Pathfinders, partners and stakeholders told us that improving access to services was a key focus of all Pathfinder activity, and core to the aim of joining up the system as part of the overall aim of reducing child poverty.

Partners and stakeholders told us that the Pathfinder had meant that support could be accessed through a growing number of organisations, who were joining together to offer new routes and pathways. For example, people may present themselves through an early learning establishment, Jobcentre Plus, council locations, a healthcare service, or direct and would be given support to access a broad array of services to meet their individual needs.

In both Pathfinders, partners and stakeholders discussed efforts being made to provide new access routes by triaging people and providing keyworker support to navigate systems to reduce the barriers people were facing to accessing and receiving support. We refer to this in the current section as a 'triage and navigation approach'. What we mean by this is that the initial staff member who meets with the family assesses their needs, and stays involved until these needs are either addressed, or until another service begins working with the family. In both sites, partners and stakeholders described the challenges posed by this new way of working. The challenges of providing new access routes were discussed in two ways. First, stakeholders discussed the need to work out what the needs of parents/carers were, to ensure that they made the right referrals. Many described feeling motivated to make a difference in the lives of individuals by being able to connect people quickly and effectively to the right services, developing new access routes based upon each staff member's developing network of local contacts.

The qualitative findings suggest that a key aim of the Glasgow Pathfinder is to ensure that the citizens of Glasgow are offered a holistic needs assessment to gather the support their family needs. Several participants told us that if a family does not want or need ongoing support, they will focus on the immediate support they require and the families will have the option to come back to the service at any time.

One service provider in Glasgow described the 'Glasgow Helps' phonenumber, which was considered to be a good example of the 'no wrong door' approach that Pathfinder partners were trying to establish across the city. The stakeholder quoted below noted that their service had received less referrals than they had initially expected after learning of efforts being made to create new access routes. They queried whether the skill-mix of staff answering phones at the Glasgow Pathfinder was sufficient to identify the needs of families, and identify the most appropriate services to help them.

"...it's about how much do you need to upskill your staff when it's a generalist service? They don't need to know everything, but they need to know something. They have to be able to get to the crux of the matter pretty quickly." (Glasgow stakeholder)

A keyworker approach was also being used in Dundee to create new ways of accessing services. The Dundee drop-in hub was considered by many stakeholders to be a good example of the new access routes being developed. The drop-in hub was considered to be an effective way of enhancing access to services because it was staffed by local people who were developing strong local networks because of their connection to the Pathfinder. Two formal keyworkers had been appointed in Dundee, who's role was to help families to access the services they needed. This was seen as being a new way that services could be accessed. The relationships that were developing through the Pathfinder and through the hub were also seen as strengthening the system, creating new and different access routes, in which people were using the relationships they had with staff in other services to act as informal keyworkers, supporting families to access other services.

Although a drop-in hub model had not been implemented in the same way in Glasgow, there were similarities in terms of the triage and navigation approach described. Several partners and stakeholders involved in the Glasgow Pathfinder noted that they were using a single point of contact approach where no matter what service or staff member received an initial request for support, the same person would stick with families until they had the support they needed. In both Pathfinders, one member of staff taking responsibility and remaining alongside the family as they navigated through the system was seen as being beneficial and a key part of the new approach to accessing services that was being established through the Pathfinders. Many partners and stakeholders in both sites asserted that this was important because it was providing continuity and avoiding the need for people to tell their stories to multiple different staff and organisations when seeking support. One stakeholder, however, expressed some concern about this new way of working and raised questions about whether frontline staff from different organisations would be knowledgeable enough to identify diverse needs, and whether they would be connected enough locally to know how and where to access the right support for people.

In the Glasgow Pathfinder interviews, participants who held senior strategic roles within the Pathfinder tended to focus on steps being taken within Glasgow City Council to enhance inter-agency, multi-professional referral pathways as part of a whole systems approach to reducing child poverty. When asked about the new access routes the Pathfinder was creating, stakeholders who were involved in local service delivery tended to discuss the Glasgow Helps model, and referred to this as a valuable example of how Pathfinder activity was being used to create a 'no wrong door' approach. Most partners and stakeholder interviews, however, reflected that Glasgow Helps was only one aspect of the Pathfinder.

When discussing the Glasgow Helps phone line in more detail, several stakeholders told us that the phone line was open to anyone with a Glasgow postcode. Despite this, most felt the service was successful in reaching many families experiencing child poverty, and reported that the majority of callers did have a child.

### **5.3 Barriers and facilitators to maintaining a 'joined-up' system**

In this section, we discuss the barriers and facilitators that Pathfinder partners and stakeholders have experienced during the early implementation of the Pathfinders in both sites. As explored in previous sections, creating a 'joined-up' system was a key aim of both Pathfinders, and because of this, elements of this section have been touched upon in chapter 2 which discussed perspectives on Pathfinder aims, and in chapter 4 which presented the perspectives of partners and stakeholders in relation to partnership work. To

avoid duplication of points made in previous chapters, the current section is brief, and provides key points to consider in relation to progress made in creating a 'joined-up' system.

The barriers to creating a joined-up system were considered to be:

- Defensiveness from partners and stakeholders about their own role, and the organisational role. As discussed previously, initially some partners had felt unable or unwilling to let go of parts of their own role and there was some initial reluctance to allow lines of responsibility to blur enough to come out of organisational silos and test new ways of doing things.
- A lack of scoping work during the initial phase in the Dundee Pathfinder, where there is a perception activity began before there was a full realization of the services already being provided in the area.
- Apprehension from some partners and stakeholders when faced with the scale of the challenge, with tackling child poverty seen as such a large task within a complex system.

Facilitators to maintaining, and building, a 'joined-up' system include:

- Developing collegiate relationships between people from different organisations.
- Enhanced awareness of what is available, where and how to access support.
- Development of clear aims and a clear communication strategy.
- Development of clear workflows, processes and activities.

The qualitative findings that relate to the above points are explored in greater depth in chapter 4, [Section 4.5](#). We now contextualise these findings with a brief discussion on the partnership scorecard data. Approximately half of those who took part in the partnership scorecard agreed that there had been some success in joining-up actions and resources for greater impact. Some felt that there had been limited success to date. One felt that there had been substantial success in joining-up the system. As stated previously, however, the low scorecard response rate means that these findings cannot be read in isolation as they may not be representative of the views of many. Instead, these findings provide a snap shot that helps to contextualise the more detailed qualitative findings.

In the interviews, partners and stakeholders were asked to outline what factors had been successful in creating a 'joined-up' system. While generally partners and stakeholders in both sites felt that progress was being made, all felt that there was still a long way to go before the system of services and access routes could be considered 'joined-up'. Most felt, however, that there was the sense that Pathfinder aims and activities were beginning to align and this linked to an aforementioned theme where many expressed feeling a sense of hope, optimism and progress. In Glasgow, however, many respondents noted that the scale of child poverty was so large that it was not possible to envisage a day when it had been tackled in full. This points to a potential barrier around creating and maintaining motivation across partners and stakeholders delivering systems change at scale in the face of challenging external circumstances and perceived scale of the challenge. Joining up systems effectively, however, was seen as something that might be more achievable in

time than the overarching aim of making meaningful change to the numbers of children living in poverty. This suggests that ensuring aims seem achievable and realistic to delivery partners and stakeholders in the shorter term is important in making progress towards the longer term strategic goal of reducing child poverty.

## 5.4 The future of the Pathfinders

This section explores the perspectives of partners and stakeholders concerning the potential scalability, replicability and sustainability of the Pathfinders.

When asked about the extent to which they considered the Pathfinders to be scalable and able to be replicated in other areas, all partners and stakeholders shared the view that it was too early in Pathfinder development to be able to answer this question fully.

Foremost in people's responses was the issue of funding commitments. Participants from both sites felt that the Pathfinders were expensive to deliver, and for replication or scale-up to be possible, the Pathfinders would need to be cost efficient. Most expressed that there was a need to ensure that monitoring data was being routinely collected to enable evaluations and to support cost-benefit analysis. Many felt that it would be necessary to examine long-term outcomes before it was possible to say whether the Pathfinders were delivering sufficient results to support a case for them to be sustained in the long-term.

One participant in Glasgow was of the view that a model like the Pathfinder would take a long time to establish, and that it should be given 5 to 7 years, to embed, before its long-term impacts could be evaluated. A few partners in Dundee also expressed their concerns over the timing of the current early process of implementation evaluation, as they felt that it was too soon to be able to identify impacts. This related to the view that for the Pathfinder(s) to be scalable, they would have to evidence being cost-efficient. Many felt that it was too early in the implementation process to be able to assess the costs, compared to the benefits achieved.

For the Pathfinders to be able to be replicated, many felt that there would need to be flexibility in terms of how it was implemented in different areas. Some felt that it was the principles and the vision that could be replicated, rather than the models used. Several partners and stakeholders mentioned that it was the concept of working together across organisations to deliver person-centred support that would be replicable, where the model itself would need to be adapted to suit the locality. Despite the current delivery models of a telephone line in Glasgow and a drop-in hub in Dundee, some partners and stakeholders expressed that a sparsely populated rural area might better suit a telephone service, while an urban area might prefer face-to-face services including drop-in hubs. As such, the actual execution would depend on local needs and resources, and this demonstrates the importance of the local context.

When partnership scorecard respondents were asked about sustainability there were mixed responses as to whether investment had been made in ensuring this across both sites. Six respondents agreed that some partners had made some investment in developing sustainable interventions that aim to reduce child poverty beyond the end of the Pathfinders. A lower number of respondents, four in total, felt that this was only the case for a few partners. Three respondents concurred that across the partnership most partners had made reasonable investment in developing sustainable interventions which aim to reduce child poverty beyond the end of the projects. These responses were mixed across the two Pathfinder sites.

An alternative view was provided by one Dundee Pathfinder partner who suggested that there would need to be formal structures in place to connect services and provide support, at scale. Current barriers and facilitators to the alignment of services in Dundee, in particular, were described as including being reliant on informal relationships between people working within services. While this was creating benefits, the partner expressed some concern about the extent to which this could be sustained via informal agreements, which they described as being 'workarounds' rather than formal structural, or systems, change. As explored in chapter 4, the establishment of relationships via the Pathfinders had taken a considerable amount of time, and it is likely that these relationships would require time to continue to develop and flourish. This has implications when considering scalability, and hints at a need to consider the financial resources and incentives that organisations may require to continue working in this way and avoid 'slippage' back to the way things were before. This suggests that providing person-centred support in this way, at scale, might be challenging.



## Chapter 6: Perceived impact on families to date

This chapter discusses the perceived impact that the Pathfinders have made during the early implementation phase, from the perspectives of partners and stakeholders that have been involved to date. The chapter begins in section 6.1 by exploring parents/carers experiences of seeking support. Section 6.2 discusses family's perspectives of the support they have received via the Pathfinders and how this may have differed from previous experiences of seeking support. Section 6.3 explores the extent to which the system is considered to have become easier to navigate since the start of Pathfinder implementation. Section 6.3 also explores the barriers that family members describe having experienced, and the extent to which the Pathfinder has made a difference to them.

### Chapter summary: impact on families

#### What are the experiences of the families who engaged in the Pathfinder so far?

Parents/carers expressed that the support they had received was different from previous experiences of seeking support. What appeared to be different was that they received support for more than what they'd originally sought support for and the support offered was seen as helpful.

Parents/carers particularly valued the approach taken by the staff they had spoken to who took time, listened fully and expressed empathy, identifying needs and possible services/solutions in non-judgemental ways. There was evidence of person-centred, holistic support being provided within both Pathfinders.

The non-judgemental attitude of the staff they spoke with was also important, and differed from previous times when they had sought support and where they described feeling vulnerable, stigmatised and ashamed.

The ability to provide routes and assistance to access multiple forms of support appeared to be reducing the experience of stigma that had often been felt by families due to long processes and a lack of information having been provided to them in the past. Not having to tell their stories multiple times to different people to obtain different types of support also seemed to be contributing to a positive experience for many parents/carers.

#### Are users of the services able to navigate 'the system'? What are the barriers and how can navigation be improved for people?

Parents/carers found that a triage approach was helping them to navigate 'the system' more easily.

In Dundee, many parents/carers praised the drop-in hub approach and appreciated the local knowledge and trusted support on offer, but some accessibility issues were noted

including specific access issued for disabled parents, limited opening times and worries around stigma and privacy when discussing personal issues in such a busy environment.

In Glasgow, parents/carers appreciated the benefits of having a single access point to support for multiple needs in a single appointment but felt that awareness of the service might be low and that more could be done to promote the service.

### **What have been the effects so far on the lives of parents/carers?**

Most parents/carers had received multiple forms of support (including income maximisation, housing related support, food vouchers, support to access employment and education and access to counselling), and had appreciated being able to obtain this broad range of support through one single interaction, rather than having to go to several different places and work out eligibility criteria.

Most reported feeling better about things, and being more able to manage. Others also valued knowing that there was a service out there that could help if things began to feel overwhelming in the future.

## **6.1 Parent/carers experiences of seeking support**

This section explores the perspectives of parents/carers who have sought and received support through the Pathfinders. Readers of this section should note that in the main, parents/carers were aware that the support they had received was different from other experiences of seeking support. Most, however, had not heard of the term 'Pathfinder' and although they knew that something had changed, most did not know about the work going on, in the background, to create new access routes and systems change.

This section of the report explores the experiences of parents/carers receiving support from the Pathfinders, including how they accessed the Pathfinders and found out about them; what expectations they had of the Pathfinders and whether the Pathfinder service feels 'new' or different to them from previous support they might have received and the identification of any barriers or enabling factors.

Parents/carers tended to hear about Pathfinder-related activities in a variety of ways, suggesting that multiple access routes were beginning to be established. Some examples of how people were referred into services, and how they heard about new initiatives, are provided below.

- Out of the 20 Dundee parents/carers who took part in the interviews:
  - 12 found out about Linlathen Works through the team's door-knocking,
  - 5 through word-of-mouth (friends, neighbours, or colleagues),
  - 1 saw a notice at the local library,
  - 1 was referred from a key service (Jobcentre Plus), and
  - 1 was handed a leaflet at a local centre.
  
- Nine participants, who found out about Linlathen Works through word of mouth and door-knocking, highlighted being given and/or referring to the Pathfinder leaflets. This demonstrates that the combination of door-knocking and receiving a leaflet was effective in engaging with targeted families. While it is not possible to infer that receiving a leaflet was effective in encouraging parents/carers to attend the drop-in

hub, it is of note, that parents/carers mentioned receiving a leaflet when asked about how they heard about the drop-in hub, months later.

- Of 17 Glasgow parents/carers that were interviewed who had accessed Glasgow Helps:
  - most were referred to Glasgow Helps by housing officers, the local authority, or other local services (n=9).
  - some found out about Glasgow Helps through adverts on social media, TV, or at school or nursery (n=4), or through word of mouth (n=3).
  - one respondent skipped this question.

This finding suggests that engaging people requires multiple methods of communication, for example a combination of in-person door knocking with official information in the form of a leaflet to back it up. In addition, Pathfinders need to be adequately resourced to communicate, and raise awareness with parents/carers.

Accessing services via one entry point, rather than multiple, was something that many parents/carers described as being different from other experiences of seeking support. The ability to access support via a school app had also been considered helpful, as the quote below outlines.

“It was on my son’s school app, and it just came up as a notification and it came up as ‘if you need help with your council tax’. I was lucky to catch this on there. ... I phoned the number that was provided and spoke to them. I explained my situation to her. I talked to her about my debt and housing situation. The person was really empathetic and passed me on to everyone. They listened and understood. Everyone that I have dealt with has been helpful and considerate. You feel vulnerable asking for help and they never felt like they were judging me or making me feel like I was a bad person or mother for asking for support.” (parent/carer seeking support)

The quote above demonstrates the value of there being multiple ways of getting information to families in need. The quote also shows that for many, seeking support brings with it a sense of vulnerability and a fear of judgement or stigma. The ability to connect to someone who listened, was empathetic, helpful and considerate was also valued, and appeared to differ from some of the previous experiences that family members described having had. We heard several examples from parents/carers and families who had described that what made a difference when they were seeking support was not being passed on to a variety of services, but rather, receiving support, advice and help from one person.

Therefore, the way that parents/carers heard about support seemed to be making a difference, and then the positive experience of their initial conversation with the Pathfinder employee had also been viewed as being positive. In the quote below, another parent/carer describes an access route that had been unexpected but valuable.

“When filling out the form for my wee girl to go to nursery, I ticked a box about asking for help. Then they called me from that, I hadn’t heard of

them before they don't advertise or anything.... They need to advertise more – I'd not heard of them at all. There should be things on social media and adverts in the area about them.” (parent/carer seeking support).

The participant above described feeling surprised about the support that was available. The route to access support described above relates to the Early Years Initiative that had been established to ensure that the Glasgow Pathfinder was reaching the target population. This participant went on to say that after ticking a box requesting help during the process of registering her child for a nursery place, she received a call from the Glasgow Helps telephone line. She described her experience of receiving support in this way as being very positive. After receiving the call and engaging with the support offered, she was provided with support to move house to more suitable accommodation for her and her child. This parent, like several others, however, wondered why the service had not been promoted more widely.

This finding suggests that there may be a need to review and enhance the marketing and communication strategy for Glasgow to ensure that there is a higher level of awareness about the support being made available.

Parents/carers that we spoke with as part of this early process evaluation were not expected to know about the Pathfinder activity, and so no direct questions were asked about the Pathfinder itself. The focus of the interviews was on parents/carers' experiences of seeking and receiving support. Because parents/carers were recruited to take part in the interviews via the Dundee drop-in hub and Glasgow Helps telephone line staff, many of the responses and insights referred to these two services specifically.

Parents/carers described having received a wide variety of different types of support, and most felt that this had been tailored to meet their individual needs, suggesting that person-centred approaches were being used. For example, at Linlathen Works in Dundee, the most common form of assistance received was help with immediate, or crisis, support. For example:

- fifteen people who took part in the interviews in Dundee told us that they had been able to obtain gas and electricity grants,
- seven interviewees reported having received support with accessing benefits,
- a further seven reported having been given help with housing. This included support with housing applications, moving house and/or house repairs,
- a further three interviewees had received referrals to food banks and/or food parcels,
- another three had received support to access education,
- two had received support with Christmas gifts for their children,
- one interviewee had received support booking health appointments, and
- one had received employment related support.

Of the 20 parents/carers we interviewed in Dundee, only five had received a single form of support. Ten had received two forms of support and five had received three or more forms of support. Alongside financial assistance, many parents/carers reported receiving help with budgeting and household energy management advice. This suggests that a holistic

approach is a successful way of ensuring that people get a wide range of support through the one interaction, rather than having to go to several places.

This holistic approach also appeared to be occurring in Glasgow. Of the 17 interviews that took place with parents/carers in Glasgow:

- ten had received help to secure gas and electricity grants,
- nine had received referrals and support to make appointments with other services,
- five had received food vouchers.

Other support included benefit checks, Christmas gift vouchers, laptop grants, help securing free school meals, help switching to a credit meter, funding for winter clothes, and free bus passes.

Out of 17 interviewees, five reported receiving one form of support only (energy vouchers or benefit support), seven had received two forms of support, and five received three or more kinds of support. One parent/carer receiving support through Glasgow Helps also reported help for fuel bills, which was the reason for her contacting the helpline, but they also added her to a waiting list for counselling because she suffers with poor mental health. Again, this shows evidence that a holistic, tailored and person-centred approach was occurring, suggesting that both Pathfinders were showing evidence of this holistic approach where people were now able to access a wide range of support through one interaction, rather than having to go to several different places. Despite these findings, a waiting list is known to have been in place, which raises some questions about whether services can be accessed more rapidly, and the extent to which they are available for people at the right time.

Furthermore, crisis support, or brief interventions, are an effective way to build a relationship with parents/carers, which may be successful in keeping them engaged with longer term support.

We now present some key quotes that highlight the difference this holistic approach has made to parents/carers, drawing from their own words.

“They helped me budget my money. I suffer from depression, and sometimes I go on blow-outs where I buy everything. But now I have my budget, and it helps me. And I come each week – come in for a blether or whatever.” (Parent/carer accessing Dundee drop-in hub).

This highlights that alongside the immediate assistance, or crisis support, needed by some families accessing the Dundee drop-in hub, support to establish healthy long-term habits is also provided. This may support long-term changes in people’s behaviour around topics such as good financial health. The ability to drop-in for support with long-standing issues when things began to feel overwhelming was also valued by some. Support offered tended to vary and there is some evidence that this was being tailored to individual need, as discussed by the parent/carer in the quote below.

“They also referred me onto somebody else, who’s put me through to counselling. I’m on the list for that now. They weren’t just like

here's a voucher and that's it. They really listened." (parent/carer accessing Glasgow Helps).

As the quote above suggests, parents/carers tended to very much appreciate the way that support was provided. Many felt listened to and cared about while they navigated systems, seeking multiple forms of support. This suggests that for these families, the training of staff was appropriate and helpful. Some limitations must be considered in the interpretation of these findings, however. It was only possible to recruit parents/carers who had engaged with support via the Pathfinders. It was not possible to engage those who made initial calls or visits who did not take up offers of support in the early process evaluation, so their perspectives or reasons for not engaging cannot be known. What is clear, however, is that parents/carers appeared to be benefiting from being offered multiple forms of support from one interaction, rather than many.

Most parents/carers stated that the support had met or exceeded their expectations. A few parents/carers reported not knowing what to expect or not having had any expectations from the services.

"I didn't expect it to be like that, it's really good what they do for people." (Dundee parent/carer)

One parent/carer accessing Glasgow Helps spoke about contacting the telephone line to seek help for fuel payments and receiving help with food vouchers, as well as cost of living support. They said,

"I wasn't expecting any of that, so that was really helpful."  
(Parent/carer accessing Glasgow Helps)

The parents/carers findings demonstrate that holistic, person-centred care is being delivered by the Pathfinders. The above interviewee went on to say that they have since called Glasgow Helps on other occasions when they have realised that they need further support, now that they realise the breadth of help that the telephone line can provide. This parent/carer stated that they really appreciated being given a keyworker. For this parent/carer, one factor that has made a big difference is being able to ask for help without feeling judged, as well as being able to get support for more than the original reason for getting in contact.

Several parents/carers explored the reasons why they thought the support offered was able to be holistic, and person-centred. Many put this down to the way that initial contact had been made. For example, one parent/carer who had been accessing support via the Dundee drop-in hub described how a keyworker had knocked on her door. She stated that she had been struggling with limited space in her house as she was living in a 2-bedroomed house with 4 children, and was struggling to cope with fuel bills. She told us that she had not heard about the drop-in hub before the keyworker had knocked on her door. After engaging with the offer of support, she received help with fuel and had been

placed on a waiting list for a larger home, which she had not known was possible prior to attending the drop-in hub. She also received advice about going back to work and college. This is another example of person-centred support being delivered by the Dundee drop-in hub. As well as receiving immediate support with housing and fuel bills, this parent/carer was now considering longer term changes to her life which she would not have done without accessing the drop-in hub.

These examples show that while parents/carers may access the Dundee drop-in hub or Glasgow Helps for one issue, they receive help for other areas of their lives as a result of the holistic conversations staff they engage with are having with them. Some of these 'other' areas of support may effect long-term change in their lives and include support with returning to work, moving to a larger property, counselling and healthy financial habits. This indicates that at this early implementation stage, the Pathfinder is beginning to show evidence of progress being made toward providing holistic person-centred support. Support received is reported to have included crisis or immediate support, as well as longer term support, for example addressing both mental and physical health needs, and support to access housing, welfare support, education and/or employment.

## 6.2 Extent to which the system has become easier to navigate

In this section, we provide some insights from the interviews conducted with parents/carers who have accessed support via the Dundee drop-in hub or Glasgow Helps. These findings must be read in conjunction with the limitations posed by the sampling approach taken during this early process evaluation of the developmental phase of the Pathfinders. Parent/carers were recruited to take part in the interviews via a member of staff at Glasgow Helps. It is therefore possible that there was some sampling bias as it may be the case that only those who had had a positive experience were selected for interview. In Dundee, however, a researcher spent two full days on site in the Dundee hub, where they approached individuals who came in to introduce themselves and ask whether they would be willing to participate in an interview.

Most of the parents/carers we interviewed stated that they did not experience any uncertainty when accessing the services. Some participants in each site, however, reported feeling some initial anxiety, including a fear of being judged at first. Some described feeling shame and/or embarrassment about needing help and felt that they were experiencing stigma that had come from previous negative experiences of seeking support. Some also reported other barriers to accessing support, which included language barriers and/or feeling as though they would not meet the criteria to be eligible for any support. One parent/carer describes this below.

“It did feel difficult to ask for help. I always thought I would be independent. It takes a lot for someone to turn around and ask for help. You feel embarrassed because you think you should be able to do it yourself.” (Parent/carer accessing Glasgow Helps)

It is worth acknowledging also that shame and embarrassment can be harder to communicate for some, including but not limited to people for whom English is a second

language. Therefore, the theme of experiencing shame when seeking support may be stronger than it is indicated in the current data. Of those who articulated feeling anxious and uncertain when accessing support, several praised the people they had received support from via the Pathfinders. Several parents/carers described the 'human-ness' and the connections they had experienced, and some concluded that this was due to individual staff member's professionalism. Some stated that the barrier to accessing support that they had initially encountered was a fear of anyone knowing that they were struggling, as described by a parent/carer in the quote below.

“For me it was my own barriers that stopped me using it sooner. Saying I'm fine I'm fine. You don't want to admit to anybody that you're struggling. But it was more the unknown, once I was here it was fine.” (Parent/carer accessing Dundee drop-in hub)

The findings in this section align with some of the reflections shared by partners and stakeholders in both sites, but particularly in Dundee, where people had begun to share stories about the way they had been treated at the local drop-in hub and the holistic support they had received. This had led to people travelling long distances to try to access support at the drop-in hub. The word of mouth spreading of knowledge about the new approaches had seemed to reduce the 'fear of the unknown' described by many. While word of mouth seemed to be increasing awareness of the new approaches being taken, the perspectives shared by parents/carers involved in the interviews suggest that perhaps further awareness raising could be beneficial, particularly for people who had had negative experiences when seeking support before, or who had internalised stigma-based messages about their situations or need for support.

### **6.3 Making a difference to families**

This section extends the findings presented above by exploring further what it has been about the support received via the Pathfinders that has made a difference to families.

In both Pathfinders, parents/carers were unanimous in reporting the positive, welcoming atmosphere created by Pathfinder staff. Parents/carers often used the following phrases to describe their experience: “really listened to”, “really good to speak to”, “understanding”, “empathetic”, “made you feel at ease”, “lovely people”, “relaxed, informal atmosphere”, “easy to engage”, “easy to talk to”, “not judgmental”, and “treated like a normal person”.

The informality of the interactions, and the lack of judgement experienced was valued by many, as indicated in the quotes below.

“They treated me like a normal person. It's informal here. If you go to the council, they speak to you like it's an interview.” (Dundee parent/carer)



“They were supportive. They didn’t judge you for being in that position.” (Glasgow parent/carer)

Parents/carers also highlighted the efficiency of the services, often reporting speedier results than they had expected.

“Linlathen Works speeds everything up. And now the council says no more delays.” (Dundee parent/carer)

One parent/carer accessing support through Glasgow Helps said,

“If Glasgow Helps say that they’ll phone you back the next day, they’ll phone you back the next day” (Parent/carer accessing Glasgow Helps)

While another parent/carer commented:

“I have been turned away for help by other places so was trying this. I was not aware of how much they could help me” (Parent/carer accessing Glasgow Helps)

The speed and consistency of support received was reported by parents/carers at both sites and contributed towards building trust between parents/carers accessing support and Glasgow Helps and those staffing the drop-in hub in Dundee.

Parent/carers accessing support from the drop-in hub in Dundee and Glasgow Helps spoke of valuing the way that they were treated by staff, who were described as being knowledgeable, responsive, quick and efficient. Several interviewees noted that they also appreciated having that one, consistent person to speak to. Parent/carers also reported valuing the care with which Pathfinder staff explained processes and paperwork to them, which helped them feel more at ease and in control of their support. One Dundee parent/carer spoke about the reassurance she felt that the staff helped her to do things properly.

“I wouldn’t think of coming to a place like this. I’m not a money grabber or anything, but it’s good to know that I’m doing everything correctly. And they helped me do that. Even did a better off calculation about Universal Credit.” (Parent/carer accessing Dundee drop-in hub)

The above parent/carer described the process of receiving support to review benefits, to ensure that the family was claiming all that they were entitled to. The quote above indicates a theme that came through from the data where many parents/carers described valuing the professionalism and non-judgemental support they had received. This is a good example of providing support in a trauma-informed way.

Parent/carer experiences specific to the Dundee drop-in hub include highly valuing the local, face-to-face, immediate response, and “one-stop-shop” format of the service, reporting that it reduced a range of barriers to access. Parents/carers also valued getting immediate help, and being seen in the *here and now*, rather than having to book appointments for another time.

“You only have to say things once – everything is in one place, cutting out all the roundabouts and getting to the point of what needs to happen.” (Parent/carer accessing Dundee drop-in hub)

As the quote above indicates, having all issues tended to at once meant that people did not have to share their story multiple times, with multiple services. Linked to this is the convenience of not having to make multiple calls or visit multiple offices – so the logistics of the approach reduce barriers to access. These quotes suggest that progress is being made when it comes to offering joined-up support. This also demonstrates that multi-agency support is appreciated by parents/carers.

Some parents/carers also valued that the services in both Pathfinder areas were mostly staffed and accessed by local people, making the service more relatable, though it was also mentioned that the lack of anonymity may discourage others from accessing the service.

“You’re speaking to folk who are like you, not who are looking down on you.” (Parent/carer accessing Dundee drop-in hub)

This quote demonstrates the value and importance of incorporating local knowledge, locally known people and local voices within local drop-in hubs and/or telephone line provision while taking families’ potential need for anonymity into account.

Parents/carers who accessed the Dundee drop-in hub, which was an in-person service, and Glasgow Helps, which was a telephone line, were similarly of the view that they valued the fast referrals, “one-stop-shop” format for information about different services. This suggests that it was the person-centred approach that people liked most, whether it was in-person or on the telephone, and that the person-centred, non-judgemental approach is valued, irrespective of the method of accessing support. However, one parent/carer accessing Glasgow Helps reported that,

“It’s better on the phone because you don’t feel ashamed like you would face-to-face” (Parent/carer accessing Glasgow Helps)

Not all parents/carers preferred the telephone line format, however, and some reported having experienced issues getting through. For example, one parent/carer reported being held in a queue for almost an hour with a poor-quality phone line and being hung-up on, although staff did later call back. The parent/carer reported that they considered giving up on the service but also reported that the staff member called her back and was very apologetic. She stated that this made her feel valued and she continued with the call and received a satisfactory outcome, which involved receiving help for her fuel bills.

This example suggests that the staff of Glasgow Helps may often be able to restore confidence in the service through conveying empathy and showing understanding of the parent/carer's frustration, despite encountering some technical difficulties with the call. As other examples have shown, this indicates that many members of staff who are involved in direct service delivery have the right skills and values to reassure people accessing the services while providing holistic assessments of need.

Most parents/carers who participated in an interview and accessed support via Glasgow Helps reported being pleased with the telephone line format. We did not have the opportunity to speak to people who had accessed the Glasgow Pathfinder via other access routes and may have preferred to engage in a face-to-face model, and so further research may be required to test the suitability of a drop-in hub approach in Glasgow.

Several Glasgow Pathfinder partners and stakeholders, however, expressed that an in-person drop-in hub may not work well in Glasgow, due to the size of the city and the potential costs involved for people having to travel from one part of the city to another seeking support, particularly those experiencing existing poverty. The findings suggest that the provision of advice via telephone line in Glasgow was experienced in positive ways, and that it was the person-centred, holistic, non-judgemental nature of the interactions that was valued. Most parents/carers did not report any issues getting through to the telephone line.

## **6.4 Early perceived impacts and improvements on families' lives**

This section explores some of the early perceived impacts of the Pathfinders on the lives of families who are experiencing poverty. This section should be understood as reporting the views of parents/carers who participated in interviews, and the perceived impacts they felt they had received from the Pathfinders. As part of the early implementation process evaluation, however, it is important to note that some parents/carers were keen to discuss 'early impacts' of the Pathfinders on their lives. Where parents/carers speak about impacts, the comments should be considered in the context of that individual, although it may be that these 'early impacts' are not yet fixed, but rather, are an early indication of future impacts perceived by participants that may stabilise over time.

As stated in previous sections of this chapter, parents/carers who engaged in the interviews from both Pathfinder sites were able to articulate what it was about the support received that felt different when compared to other experiences of seeking support. Parents/carers who had received support via the Dundee Pathfinder described how waiting times had been reduced. Several parents/carers made comparisons with previous experiences of seeking support, where they had not only had to wait longer, but had often experienced a lack of follow-through, where referrals would have been made but no service would have ever materialised. Some told us that in the past, they had not always

felt as though they had been taken seriously when they had sought help and discussed issues.

In some services, the feeling of being embarrassed about seeking support had been compounded by feeling unwelcome, and/or looked down upon. Some described not being kept informed, and not being talked through processes or paperwork. Many hadn't previously understood the paperwork they were asked to complete and, in some cases, they described being sent to different services, having to travel to different parts of town. In each of these cases, parents/carers described having to tell their story over and over to different people before reaching the right person or service, often having to do so in unpleasant or hostile atmospheres. The new approaches being taken in Glasgow and Dundee were considered to be having a positive effect on people's experiences of accessing services, and had reduced the stigma that people described experiencing, as well as streamlining their experiences.

Another effect worthy of note is that parents/carers were reporting being able to access the right support quicker. Many described this as being a higher quality offer of assistance than they had experienced before. Some of this related to being an efficient, responsive, prompt service that could help parents/carers to obtain appointments that they had previously struggled to secure.

Across both Pathfinders, parents/carers reported finding the services and their provision clear, well-explained, and easy to understand. Most parents/carers accessing Glasgow Helps reported valuing the clarity around what the service could and could not provide, and their commitment to helping each person to secure the right support if it could not be provided directly.

Parents/carers accessing Linlathen Works via the Dundee Pathfinder unanimously reported the effective 'onboarding' skills of one staff member, who presented the service to them and invited them to come to the drop-in hub for their first chat. While there are other staff members at the drop-in hub, there is one member of the team who is particularly well-known in the area and is popular with the parents/carers. While a local, friendly face has undoubtedly encouraged engagement in the Dundee drop-in hub, it presents challenges to replicability. The popularity of one key member of staff is a benefit yet also presents risks and challenges when thinking about scale-up of the model. Furthermore, it might be difficult to judge if the success of the model in the Dundee drop-in hub is down to one popular member of staff or down to the model of person-centred, place-based support.

This points to the importance of having skilled staff who parents/carers feel comfortable engaging with, but this is also created by strong partnership working, where staff can share their knowledge and help colleagues to build these skills and capacities.

Most parents/carers reported a positive impact on their life from having access to Linlathen Works, the Dundee drop-in hub. Beneficial impacts perceived by parents/carers so far include being able to put the heating on in winter, an increased ability to take care of one's health, particularly where health issues such as arthritis or fibromyalgia made a cold home a health risk, learning to manage energy consumption, reducing and preventing debt, "*getting back on track*" with their finances, having more disposable income from the energy vouchers to spend on their children which they felt had a positive impact on their children's quality of life, reducing stress, and feeling more in control.

“I’m not stressed now, with that £500 from the Home Heating Fund. I put my heating on now and don’t have to worry. I know that I’m getting back on track now.” (Parent/carer accessing Dundee drop-in hub)

The budgeting and energy management advice provided by the Dundee drop-in hub was also mentioned by most parents/carers, leading to parents/carers feeling better informed and more in control of their spending.

“I’m saving a lot on gas and electric – reducing my usage, not leaving so many lights on, knowing when to put the washer on and on what temperatures. It’s good because I can do more with my son. I can take him out swimming, I can do more with his tea. Before I was struggling with money. And he has to get out because he has his ADHD and his ASD and all that, so it helps a lot.” (Dundee parent/carer)

Most parents/carers also reported feeling more supported, more positive, and more confident asking for support simply knowing that the Pathfinder exists and is available to them.

“...before I never would have asked for help. It makes me feel positive for the future, just knowing that people are there.” (Dundee parent/carer)

The above quotes show that parents/carers received support for immediate crises. However, as the immediacy of their need is managed, through help with fuel bills for example, it is hoped that the parents/carers can start to think about longer term changes to their lives such as employment, childcare and returning to education or training.

The quotes also show that parents/carers are learning that they can get good quality, effective help and support from the Dundee drop-in hub. Parents/carers return weekly to seek support and bring friends and relatives from outside the area. This indicates a change in behaviour that might be seen as the start of system change among the target families. It may also, however, denote a capacity issue if families continue to return weekly, while also increasing the numbers of people engaged. These findings, however, should be considered alongside the data limitations, which are outlined at the start of this section.

However, not all parents/carers reported positive outcomes, at this stage. Several parents/carers reported seeing limited or not seeing any impact on their life from using the service, either due to their claim still being processed or due to the scale and/or structural nature of their needs exceeding the remit of the Dundee drop-in hub.

“Eventually [when our home is fixed] we’ll be able to live our lives.”  
(Dundee parent/carer)

This should not be considered as a negative finding at this stage, but rather be considered as part of the potential time-lag in being able to see impacts.

Likely partly due to the city-wide scope of the service, the impact of Glasgow Helps is more varied. Benefits experienced by parents/carers after accessing Glasgow Helps included reducing or preventing debt, successfully moving house, reducing stress, and access to free digital technology for home administration.

“They let me get back on my feet. If they weren’t there, I’d have had to borrow a lot of money and got in a lot of trouble. It let me get on my feet and prevented getting behind on payments.” (Glasgow parent/carer)

As with the Dundee drop-in hub, some parents/carers reported they felt there had been little or no change in their lives since using the Glasgow Helps service. When asked why this was, they reported that this was because either their claims were still being processed or their needs exceeded the remit of the service. This finding, to some extent, may reflect the early stage families are at in accessing and experiencing Pathfinder support and the length of time we might expect it to take for impacts on household finances to be fully realised.

Most parents/carers, however, reported feeling less worried, less stressed, more informed, and more positive about the future having accessed Glasgow Helps and knowing that the service is available to them.

“They have made me feel better about the future. My position has not changed much but they helped it not get worse. They made me feel like people are out there that they will help me, like reaching out for help is normal.” (Glasgow parent/carer)

This quote demonstrates that at this early stage in the process of implementation, the Pathfinders were starting to show some early signs of having positive impacts. Key among these impacts was the normalisation of seeking help.

## 6.5 Effects on community capacity

One of the research sub-questions that this early process evaluation sought to explore was the effect that the Pathfinders were having on community capacity, meaning supporting people to develop skills and competencies to take greater control of their own lives. Due to the early stage of implementation, the effects on community capacity were not yet clear and there was limited data available to examine effects on community capacity at this stage. What was clear, however, from the findings was that both Pathfinders were providing holistic, targeted, person-centred support to families who were experiencing multiple complex needs.

As explored above, the Dundee Pathfinder had initially sought to reduce child poverty by supporting more parents/carers into work. While some parents/carers had been provided with employment support, there had been a gradual realisation that most parents/carers had underlying health, social, welfare and housing needs that would have to be addressed before employment could begin to be considered. Both Pathfinders appeared to be supporting community capacity in terms of providing access to services that could address the needs that sit beneath the capacities required to secure longer term outcomes such as employment, education and/or skills training.

The early stage of development that the Pathfinders were at during this early process evaluation should be considered in the reading of this section of the report. Again, despite the early stage, one of the key capacities that there were signs of improvement on was the ability to seek support, advocate for needs and to do so in a way that appeared to be reducing the stigma that people had previously experienced. In this way, it is possible to conclude that the Pathfinders were supporting the development of some individuals' capacities to self-advocate.

## 6.6 Learning from project delivery so far

This section extrapolates key learning from the perspectives shared by parents/carers who have received support through the Pathfinders. It was not possible to obtain the views of people who made initial contact with the Pathfinders and disengaged, so reasons for disengagement cannot be known, and these views must be considered as the views of those who engaged in the support offered only. Another point to consider when reading this section is that the views expressed may not be shared by or representative of all families eligible for Pathfinder support.

In both Glasgow and Dundee, most parents/carers who took part in the interviews reported being very satisfied with and grateful for the services provided by the Pathfinders, seeing no obvious areas for improvements.

“I can only praise them. If somebody said to me tomorrow, I'm in a bit of a bad space, I'd say 'phone Glasgow Helps'. They're really good.” (Glasgow parent/carer)

“The way they dealt with me was fabulous, there’s no way they could have done better.” (Dundee parent/carer)

The two quotes above illustrate a broader theme that came through in the parent/carer interviews, where many felt that trust and good relationships that had been established between the staff and the parents/carers accessing the Pathfinders.

The most commonly mentioned improvements for Linlathen Works relate to accessibility. Several parents/carers mentioned that the centre where the Dundee drop-in hub is based was a good, accessible location, particularly for people with mobility impairments. One parent/carer, however, felt that the service could benefit the community by offering home visits for disabled people in circumstances where getting out in the community was challenging. Another parent/carer mentioned that the drop-in hub only being open one day per week meant that it was not accessible to all, and felt that diversifying opening days and times could make it easier for people who had other commitments such as childcare, employment, health appointments, social work appointments, social security appointments to access the drop-in hub.

Another learning point mentioned by several parents/carers was that as word had spread about the drop-in hub, it had begun to get busier. The holistic nature of the support offered meant that people were often asked questions that felt personal, or had to discuss their circumstances. The busyness of the setting meant that often there were several people waiting to be seen. Several parents/carers told us that the location, in a local centre’s large room, meant that the drop-in hub could get very loud and there was very little privacy due to tables being placed very close together.

“When busy, it’s really loud. Some may not cope with this well or not want to disclose information in front of others, especially other locals.” (Dundee parent/carer).

When asked what additional services parents/carers would like to see at the Dundee drop-in hub, people most often mentioned mental health services and healthcare appointments. One parent/carer mentioned needing practical support to move house, and another mentioned advice with financially accessible nutrition for children. The discussions held suggest that many of the parents/carers we spoke to felt comfortable being at the centre and were beginning to see it as somewhere that other services could become co-located, as a community health, social care and welfare oriented hub.

When asked about how the support they’d received could be improved, the parents/carers we spoke to in Glasgow most commonly stated that they had very much appreciated the support they had received but they felt that there needed to be more awareness of what was available so that others could access it. Most felt that there should be advertising campaigns to promote the support available, particularly the support offered by Glasgow Helps. Most mentioned that they had heard about the service by chance, and that many more could benefit from the support offered if there was greater awareness.



“It would be better if it was more out there – that people knew it was there. I didn’t know about all this help. Get it out there. So, people know. I’ve given people the heads-up about it.” (Glasgow parent/carer)

Some parents/carers who had received support via Glasgow Helps expressed that they would have liked the support they’d received to have been longer term. Others expressed that they would have liked support with housing-related issues, and a few said that more help with council tax would be beneficial. When it came to the telephone line itself, some parents/carers expressed that waiting times were too long, and could be improved, and suggested that knowing your position in the queue would also be helpful. Some had experienced issues related to call quality and suggested that this could be improved. Most parents/carers, however, reported positive experiences and expressed their gratitude for the support received.

# Chapter 7: Conclusions and recommendations

In this chapter, we set out the conclusions from the early process evaluation, along with suggested recommendations for future delivery of the existing Pathfinders, as well as for any potential future Pathfinders.

## 7.1 Conclusions

Partner and stakeholder views were relatively consistent when it came to defining the overarching aim of the Pathfinders. All suggested that the overarching aim was to tackle child poverty. The understanding of how this aim would be achieved was relatively consistent across both sites, with almost all partners and stakeholders asserting the view that system change was required to address child poverty. Most suggested that there were early signs of progress being made toward achieving this aim, as there was evidence of enhanced referral routes through the 'system' being provided by partners and stakeholders who were developing new ways of working including providing triage and holistic needs assessments during initial contact with parents/carers.

The emphasis placed on partnership work throughout chapters 4 and 5, however, reflects a key finding, in which systems change was being achieved by people from different organisations and/or departments getting to know each other and committing to working together. The vehicle for change tended to be the relationships that were developing between people. This raises some questions about how sustainable change may be in the longer term, as it appeared that some of the early indicators of the system becoming more 'joined-up' was reliant upon relationships and personal commitment rather than structural, or formal change. It is likely, however, that some of the informality of the changing approaches relates to the early stage of implementation and that some of the learning will be able to be mobilised to create more formal changes at a later stage.

The findings of the early process evaluation suggest that both Pathfinders are operating slightly different models of delivery so far, but that both are underpinned by shared objectives, such as the provision of person-centred, holistic support. Although the models of delivery differ, partners and stakeholders in both discussed efforts being made to establish a 'no wrong door' policy (in both sites) where parents/carers could enter any service locally and receive triage to identify multiple needs, and keyworker-style support to navigate the 'system'. In both approaches we heard examples of this where the initial keyworker would remain with the family, approach relevant services on their behalf and remain involved until they had begun to engage with the support offered, or until their needs had been met. Examples of support received ranged from help to access fuel grants, clothing grants, free school meals, transport, housing, benefit income maximisation, mental health support, education and employment.

In Dundee, co-location of services within the drop-in hub appeared to be supporting relationships between staff from multiple services who described beginning to understand each other's roles more. This appeared to be supporting the development of a more 'joined-up' approach because staff knew where to refer people to, and tended to be able to draw upon the relationships they'd established, which was acting as bridging capital.

Although all local stakeholders described feeling motivated to contribute to systems change, a few third sector organisations noted that operating in this person-centred way was time consuming and not sustainable in the longer term because it was taking staff away from their core business, which meant that they were able to evidence less towards their key performance indicators (KPI) which in turn had implications for their funding arrangements beyond the Pathfinder. For these services to continue operating in this way, they noted that there would be a requirement for core funding to be allocated via the Pathfinders to allow more staff time to be allocated. This was described as being an issue that many third sector organisations may face.

In both Pathfinders, partners and stakeholders suggested that there should be increased involvement of the third sector at a strategic level and so it is recommended that consideration is given to funding arrangements to enable activity to be sustainable for organisations whose funding is dependent on the achievement of KPIs that are not demonstrable when conducting triage and supporting parents/carers to access other services.

When it came to identifying and targeting those most in need of support, several partners who had involvement at a strategic level suggested that targeting priority groups was challenging due to the constraints of data sharing. Many noted that certain organisations who were involved in the Pathfinder held key demographic and income data that could be used to provide targeted offers of support to priority groups. Getting data sharing agreements in place for this purpose remained an ongoing task for those involved in both Pathfinders.

In the Glasgow Pathfinder, several partners and stakeholders noted that they had had some success in targeting young mothers with children under 2, who had been identified as a group experiencing high levels of poverty. Campaigns in early years establishments had helped to target this priority group. Several parents/carers who had received support by ticking a box on the registration form for their child's early years childcare placement noted that they felt as though they'd heard about the support available by chance. These findings suggest that targeted promotional campaigns had begun to have some success in helping the Pathfinder to reach priority groups, but further awareness raising campaigns would potentially be helpful. This may help to provide an additional route to reach those in need, while the work to address data sharing remains ongoing.

Several partners and stakeholders also felt that the Pathfinder partnerships required more detailed information about household income according to demographic group to allow further priority groups to be identified and targeted. Some felt that they had only begun to scratch the surface of knowing who was in the most need during this early stage of Pathfinder development. This affirms the importance of data and being able to use data to inform future Pathfinder development. Most partners and stakeholders were of the view that there was no robust empirical evidence that they were aware of concerning what works to tackle child poverty. Several considered that local data was key to understanding what would work where, for whom and in what circumstances.

Partners and stakeholders in the Glasgow Pathfinder considered that all Pathfinder activity to date had been informed by the detailed data that had been gathered by Glasgow City Council over several years related to child poverty in the area and what had been tried and tested to improve it over time. Partners and stakeholders in Dundee felt similarly about empirical evidence, but were less clear as to whether local data and evidence had been used to inform Pathfinder development. Most expressed that data had been used to identify the area of Dundee to target, and stated that this decision had been based on

evidence that families within this particular locality were facing some of the highest levels of deprivation in the country. In Dundee, most partners and stakeholders held the view that the Pathfinder was in a process of learning and establishing the evidence base for future activity to reduce child poverty, and asserted that there was a need to collect and share robust data about progress made over time.

As such, it is possible to conclude that both Pathfinders were at a slightly different point when it came to developing and/or using evidence. This points to the importance of sharing learning between Pathfinders, and also points to the importance of working through data sharing agreements to enable further data to be used, relating to priority groups.

Some informal arrangements for sharing learning between Pathfinders were described by a few partners, but findings suggest that this could be further strengthened via more formal processes as the Pathfinder develops.

The pace of change appeared to differ between the Pathfinder sites at the beginning of the early implementation, and this may relate to the different stages the two partnerships were at strategically. In Glasgow, the Pathfinder partnership appeared to align with existing strategic activity which meant that it could 'slot in' and benefit from existing working groups, which also appeared to make it easier to use existing evidence on what had worked previously.

In Dundee, partners described feeling a need to 'rush to action' which had caused some tensions in the early stage of relationship building within the partnership, which was described by one partner as a process of working through the 'norming, storming, forming' phases of team development (in that order). The 'rush to action' had also left limited time to scope out local services, which meant that some key local organisations had been missed from being invited to the table at the early stage. Despite these challenges, all partners and stakeholders in the Dundee Pathfinder described a sense of hope and optimism and shared that although the partnerships had felt challenging at the start, they were now beginning to form in a positive way.

Partners and stakeholders in both Pathfinders described Pathfinder meetings as places that had gradually started to feel like 'safe spaces' to discuss views, including those that challenged the status quo. This gradual creation of 'safe spaces' to share learning and discuss progress was linked to a growing awareness of each other's roles, values, experiences and perspectives. Working in partnerships across multiple sectors was still described as having 'sticky moments', but most felt that there was now a sense of shared aims and shared commitment to enacting change, no matter how challenging that could be at times. This played into a theme that came through strongly of 'we are getting there now'.

The key learning from these experiences is that relationships appeared to be what was driving change. This includes relationships at an individual level, as well as relationships between services. Developing those relationships was a core component of arriving at shared aims and achieving a shared vision, and so it is suggested that if future Pathfinders are considered, time should be allocated for the formation of effective relationships and partnerships. Where this time is available, it should be viewed as being part of creating the right conditions and foundations for change, and it should be communicated clearly to partnerships that time is available, to reduce the risk of actions occurring before comprehensive planning and team formation has occurred.

Although the process evaluation was conducted at a very early stage in Pathfinder development, it is possible to conclude that there was some evidence that changes were beginning to occur to align services to facilitate the holistic approach to service provision.

The findings showed that the models being used in each Pathfinder differed. However, it appeared that both were underpinned by what we refer to as a 'triage and navigation' approach. What we mean by this is that, motivated by an attempt to align services, many partners and stakeholders described moves to ensure that the first person a parent/carer approached for support would see the case through. Descriptions of this varied, and were dependent on the situation, but it meant that in both Pathfinders, people from a variety of services were describing conducting calls and appointments in a way that facilitated a holistic, yet brief, assessment of needs. Once needs were identified, the staff member would either address those needs during the call, where possible, or they would walk alongside the parent/carer, link them in to the right services and remain involved until engagement with another service began. This was occurring formally, with the two new key workers in Dundee and via the Glasgow Helps telephone line. However, several partners and stakeholders in both sites expressed that since becoming part of the Pathfinder(s) they had begun thinking about support in new ways and were taking opportunities to link parent/carers into other services. Often, the partnerships within the Pathfinders appeared to be making this easier. In Dundee, the drop-in hub model appeared to hand several stakeholders described the collegiate relationships that were forming between staff from different organisations. This led to informal 'warm' introductions to other services being possible. Several parents/carers conveyed that this made them feel cared about, and it differed from previous experiences of seeking support where interactions had been more process rather than people driven, and where they often described having felt stigmatised.

In both Pathfinders, some of the early indicators of systems change, however, appeared to be reliant on the commitment of the individual staff involved and their relationship to the Pathfinder. Much of the change appeared to have been stimulated by the development of relationships between people. While this is positive, it raises some questions about sustainability, and points to a need to create formal processes at an operational level to support the new referral routes and working practices that are emerging.

Despite the different models of service delivery being used in each Pathfinder, the findings suggest that both could be described as 'outreach'. In Dundee, the outreach activities were more overt, and included door knocking within the community to identify families most in need, to raise awareness of the Pathfinder and to consult with the community regarding what interventions might help. In Glasgow, the outreach component was less overt, but still present. This was evident in the awareness raising campaigns in children's early years establishments and nurseries, and the new 'tick box' on early years childcare registration forms that families could select that would trigger a call from the Glasgow Helps team, leading to a holistic needs assessment. Once needs had been identified via this triage approach, the Glasgow Helps team would provide informal navigation to other services by remaining involved until the family's needs had been met.

This outreach approach was valued by families in both Pathfinders. What appeared to make the biggest difference to the uptake of support, however, was feeling fully listened to and not judged. It was this humanistic, empathetic, understanding approach that parents/carers described as being different to any support they had received in the past.

Having one keyworker that would help them enter other services was also a factor that several parents/carers valued because it made them feel less vulnerable as they did not

have to keep re-telling their story and re-asserting their needs. This approach was described by parents/carers who had received support via both Pathfinders, and these findings suggest that there may be early indicators of cultural change being created by those involved in the Pathfinders. Cultural change tends to be gradual and non-linear, and so, it is crucial that the perspectives of parents/carers continue to be used to inform Pathfinder development.

One of the aims of this early evaluation of the process of change was to identify the effects that the Pathfinders were having on community capacity. The early stage has meant that it is not possible to assert clear or stable findings in relation to this. What the findings do show, however, is that the parents/carers who took part in the interviews were able to feel more confident about seeking help and articulating their needs. It is possible, therefore, that over time, parents/carer's ability to engage in self-advocacy may increase, particularly when systems change fully takes hold and the 'system' becomes easier to navigate. For this to occur, however, the early indicators of cultural change will need to continue alongside systems change, as a key change for parents/carers was being able to access support without feeling judged.

## 7.2 Recommendations

During the interviews, partners and stakeholders were asked to reflect on how things might be done in the future, to ensure that other Pathfinders can be mobilised quickly and efficiently and have maximum impact on child poverty targets locally. This section sets out recommendations and considers next steps for the future of the current Pathfinders, as well as recommendations on for future Pathfinders.

### **Recommendation 1: The Pathfinder aims and objectives should be co-designed early on and with the right partners and stakeholders locally**

Some partners and stakeholders felt that having clear aims and objectives from the outset would have enabled the branding of the Pathfinders, which would have been helpful for encouraging partnership and stakeholder engagement. Others felt that the earliest phase of the Pathfinders had been about working together to arrive at these aims and objectives.

Having clear aims and objectives in place is critical to enable data sharing agreements to be put in place effectively, and a monitoring and evaluation framework to be developed and implemented. If future Pathfinders are to be developed, a suggested recommendation would be to ensure that suitable time is built into the planning stage for the co-design and co-development of the overarching aims and objectives for the Pathfinder, with the right partners and stakeholders involved locally.

Findings indicate that planning time before the 'action' phase is required to also ensure that local scoping work has been done to ensure that the right stakeholders and partners are involved at this early stage. This would ensure that the Pathfinders face fewer early challenges when forming local partnerships, thereby ensuring that they are able to become embedded locally. Time allocated to planning and visioning is likely to reduce duplication of efforts, build ownership, and support with data sharing requests. Following on from having agreed aims and objectives, a locally co-designed action plan would also support data sharing as well as monitoring and evaluation activities. Within this, agreeing definitions of key terms, such as 'systems change' and 'person-centred', would also ensure clarity of the action plan.

## **Recommendation 2: Data sharing challenges should be worked through from the outset to allow data to be shared and used to identify and reach target families consistently**

Partners and stakeholders were asked to reflect on how things might be done in the future, to ensure that other Pathfinders can be mobilised quickly and efficiently. One specific example given was ensuring data sharing agreements were in place prior to the Pathfinder beginning delivery, so that priority groups could be identified and targeted more effectively from the outset. This would also ensure that delays in the Pathfinder 'going live' are not experienced. It is recognised that often getting data sharing agreements in place can be a slow process, to ensure all partners and stakeholders information governance requirements are satisfied, so this should be a key priority during early project mobilisation.

This recommendation is that, for future Pathfinders, data sharing agreements are in place in the early stages of Pathfinder planning and mobilisation. This should include mapping out the data sharing requirements including: understanding what data is needed and for what purpose; the key partners and stakeholders involved in data sharing; the timeframes; and information governance requirements for each of the partners and stakeholders. A challenge here is that an operating model that is sufficiently detailed is required, before a data protection impact assessment (DPIA) can be completed. If possible, partners and stakeholders should undertake a joint DPIA which will support the development of a data sharing agreement. It may be beneficial for Scottish Government to put a series of templates in place, for example data sharing agreements and DPIA templates, that have been agreed by Scottish Government, DWP, and COSLA to reduce duplication and streamline the process.

A further suggested recommendation that could be used to create systems change would be to implement a joint case management system. This would enable streamlining of services, enable targeting of parents/carers and referral pathways, while providing opportunities to feed into monitoring and evaluation.

## **Recommendation 3: Clear project planning and project management structures should be in place to ensure that there is effective communication, clarity and shared understanding of partnership goals and clear strategic direction**

Translating the overarching aim of addressing child poverty into practical workstreams, services and tasks that could be delivered locally was described as a challenging task in both sites, albeit for different reasons. The early phase of inception, planning and implementation was experienced as challenging in both sites, for different reasons.

In Glasgow, challenges were experienced in relation to keeping staff motivated and involved during the period where the strategic direction was being refined and while work was being done to envision what change would look like. Staff retention and turnover played into this. In Dundee, there was a 'rush to action'.

Partners and stakeholders in both Pathfinders stated that they would have benefited from very clear project plans, workstreams, workplans, monitoring frameworks and risk registers. Partners and stakeholders in Glasgow reported that the appointment of an independent project manager had been a key turning point where everything became much clearer.

It is recommended that dedicated project managers are appointed early in the process of implementation of any future Pathfinders, with a remit creating clear project plans, workstreams, workplans, monitoring frameworks and risk registers, as well as leading on communication.

**Recommendation 4: Monitoring and evaluation processes should be built into Pathfinder models to support the early identification of delivery issues, improve opportunities for ongoing learning and allow an assessment of impact**

Linked to the recommendation on data sharing, some stakeholders told us that they found it difficult to know if the Pathfinders were on track and working effectively without monitoring and performance data agreed in advance, and available and accessible to stakeholders. While monitoring via Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) can constrain creativity and innovation, monitoring is an important tool for understanding whether a Pathfinder is achieving its objectives. As such, monitoring processes should be a key discussion point during future Pathfinder inception discussions at the earliest possible time point. This would enable Pathfinder partners to be able to track progress and begin collecting data to use as evidence to inform the gradual development of the workstreams.

Additionally, by tracking progress and collecting data, stakeholders will be able to identify issues early and make necessary course corrections. Data collected through a monitoring framework will support in future evaluation and impact assessment.

In future in Glasgow and Dundee, and for any further Pathfinders, having a locally agreed monitoring and evaluation framework in place at the beginning will give better transparency on what is being achieved, help Pathfinders to stay on track and perform well, enable Pathfinders to identify what has worked less well and to learn from that, enable data and evidence lead decision making. This will help to ensure that future Pathfinders are evidence-based. Ideally monitoring tools, and data collection methods, will be embedded within the delivery of the Pathfinder, to minimise the burden on staff and parents/carers.

Several partners and stakeholders who were consulted during this early process evaluation were of the view that it would take a long time before impacts and outcomes would begin to emerge. Some considered that change on the scale required would take 5 to 7 years to evidence. While monitoring the process of change, and early indicators of success will be important going forward, a suggested recommendation would be that consideration is given to the amount of time that it may take to fully embed systems change and tackle child poverty. A suggested recommendation would be that once the Pathfinders are established in each area, shared outcome frameworks should be developed. This will help in progress monitoring.

**Recommendation 5: Strategic and operational commitments to allowing different ways of working and creating spaces for people to build relationships and work collaboratively should be ensured to enable the operational culture for system change**

Stakeholders and partners told us that new ways of working at partnership and stakeholder levels have been established across both Pathfinders. There was recognition that this has been a journey, but most partners and stakeholders felt that it had been



worthwhile and that both partnerships were in the right place, at the time of interview, to deliver the Pathfinders.

It should be recognised that building successful partnerships takes time and effort. It is not a quick process. In recognition that Pathfinders have been on an intensive journey to build partnerships that work together differently, there are recommendations on partnership development and partnership working for future Pathfinders.

Pathfinders must be willing and committed to develop partnerships that work differently and that are robust enough to handle and resolve difficult discussions locally. For Pathfinders to be successful, all partners need to need to recognise that the child poverty targets are critical and commit their organisations to working together to tackle this.

Structures and processes are very important, but the culture and values are equally important, and it is recognised that cultural change is a gradual, non-linear process that requires considerable time investment. All stakeholders and partners have different ways of working and different objectives. Strong relationships based on trust are critical. This commitment to collaboration needs to take place at strategic as well as operational levels, and at senior as well as front line staffing levels. Having shared aims and objectives, that are co-designed, will support this. A memorandum of understanding between the stakeholders and partners may be an effective way to formalise this commitment to partnership working and set out the expectations of each partner and stakeholder.

Some partners and stakeholders told us that a collaborative approach can make progress faster, with partners and stakeholders having autonomy. Key to enabling this, is operational staff feeling that they have 'permission' to work outside their normal roles and not feeling restricted by their employer's organisational boundaries. A memorandum of understanding would clearly set out the organisational buy-in to operate differently, recognising what this means for each organisation locally, and empowering staff to participate in the new ways of working to achieve the shared objectives. This would mean that operational staff would explicitly have permission to work 'beyond' their daily roles.

To facilitate this, further consideration may have to be given to the involvement of the third sector and charitable organisations who often have to demonstrate their staff member's use of time against the generation of KPIs for external funders. If more time is to be allocated to involvement in the Pathfinders, then funding rules may need to be considered, if staff need to be released from their normal duties to facilitate participation in Pathfinder activities and the new ways of working that are required when delivering holistic, person-centred care, such as triaging and supporting people to access other services when the service they first approach is a third sector organisation.

Delivering system level change requires innovation, and courage to question the status quo. Several partners and stakeholders noted that challenging the way things were currently being done took courage. Many noted that partnership meetings needed to be 'safe spaces' where change could be envisioned and barriers to change could be openly discussed. It is recommended that if future Pathfinders are to be developed, memoranda of understanding are developed at the very earliest point of inception, and within these, people are given the permission to question the status quo and to share ideas. This recommendation, however, should be considered alongside the requirement to build in time for relationships of trust to form, since trust is required in order for people to feel safe entering into discussions about change and innovation.

## **Recommendation 6: Local knowledge should be embedded and shared in the Pathfinder delivery and development process so that support can be tailored effectively to local need**

All partners and stakeholders, as well as parents/carers, mentioned that a critical factor to a Pathfinder's success was having local knowledge in both designing and delivering the service. There are several important operational strands to this. One of these that came through very strongly in the process evaluation was the importance of local knowledge, as this helps in building trust with parents/carers, if they feel that the member of staff understands the geography and challenges locally, as well as helping with signposting and practical issues, such as local public transport routes.

Several partners and stakeholders told us that it was essential that local delivery staff were given some autonomy and flexibility in terms of how they deliver services, and how they interact with people accessing their service, to make sure that their approach was tailored to local need and informed by local knowledge.

A recommendation here is to continue to recruit local staff into the Pathfinders where possible, and to share knowledge and intelligence between staff and across organisations, to ensure that learning is not lost or dependent on key members of staff. A mechanism to do this would be to create an online 'information store' for all Pathfinder partners to use, to capture, share and update information locally. It is acknowledged, however, that due to the local nature of the Pathfinders, some people may be concerned that their data may be accessed by someone who knows them, thereby compromising anonymity. Protocols for use to manage this risk should be agreed as part of information sharing agreements.

## **Recommendation 7: Ensuring that a 'No wrong door' model with multiple access points and delivery channels is key to providing support that families feel is easier to navigate and non-judgemental and should continue to be built on as a central part of the Pathfinder model**

Parent/carers reported valuing easy access to the Pathfinders locally. Parent/carers told us that they appreciated the ease of access of both Pathfinder models. Several parents/carers conveyed that this had helped them to feel listened to, and less like they were being taken through a process that they did not understand, which had been the case in previous experiences of seeking support.

Many told us that this made them feel as though they were being responded to in non-judgemental ways which lessened the experience of stigma. Rapid navigation through multiple services, however, requires that staff have local connections, and local knowledge related to what is available, for whom, where and how to access it. Local faces that people could get to know and visit whenever seeking support also appeared to help reduce barriers that people described having experienced before.

In future, Pathfinders should maintain and continue to deliver support through the 'no wrong door' principle, whether in-person via drop-in hubs, or via telephone helplines. Pathfinder models which are flexible enough to accommodate varied access points and delivery channels including face-to-face via telephone and online will give parents/carers choice and can be adapted to meet the needs of local contexts.

Pathfinders should continue to adapt and evolve in future, to ensure access points and delivery channels respond to the needs of parents/carers. For example, this may include

being able to use platforms such as WhatsApp, which can be accessed via public WiFi for those who do not have access to call plans on mobile telephones. Consultation on accessibility should be conducted and reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that no assumptions are made about accessibility.

**Recommendation 8: Pathfinders should continue to be built around and commit to providing person-centred support providing the right level and type of support that each family needs at the right time**

An overarching finding is that Pathfinders need to be shaped around principles of person-centred support, while having the flexibility to be delivered in ways that are appropriate to and reflect and respond to the local context.

Parent/carers reported receiving help for immediate crises, and reported feeling more positive about the future after an immediate crisis was resolved. Many parents/carers had received support with multiple issues or concerns. A key point is that parents/carers need support to resolve immediate crises before they are able to commit to engaging with support that might lead to longer term benefit for the families, such as advice around routes back to employment, training and education. There were several examples of people returning to the service that had provided them with crisis support, seeking support to address other issues once the immediate crisis was resolved.

Parent/carers reported trusting the services at Dundee drop-in and Glasgow Helps and said they would use it again and would recommend it to friends and family. Pathfinders embed the principles of person-centred and place-based support and have delivered high quality support, that has been valued by parents/carers. It is an important recommendation that this commitment to quality continues.

There are two, linked, recommendations:

Firstly, the Pathfinders have an obvious commitment to high quality delivery. This could be captured in some delivery principles, that clearly articulate these values, are agreed locally, guide staff – particularly when working across organisational boundaries - and embedded in the memorandum of understanding and monitoring and evaluation framework. These could include, for example, delivery being high quality, trust-based, person-centred, non-judgemental and trauma-informed. The trauma-informed component of this relates to a commitment to offer choice, to respond to people where they are at without expectation and to empower people to discuss what their needs are. Clearly articulating these values and developing them locally will ensure that the Pathfinders continue building trust with parents/carers through support delivered in person-centred way, which is of most value and is how parents/carers have experienced the Pathfinders as being different to other support they have accessed in the past.

Linked to this, parents/carers should continue to have the opportunity to engage in brief interventions. As the reason they first contact the Pathfinder may be linked to a crisis, it should be made clear to them that they are welcome to come back for a more holistic needs assessment and further support to address wider needs, once the crisis is resolved.

### **Recommendation 9: Pathfinders should ensure they are delivering support using appropriate delivery models and locations, that are accessible and have privacy**

The drop-in hub model being used as part of the Dundee Pathfinder is a good example of integration and co-location of services. There were some early indicators of this enhancing relationships between staff and members of the local community and of collegiate relationships between services. This can be conceptualized as having had benefits in terms of both creating community bonds and enhancing bridging capital, which, taken together were understood to be facilitating the joining-up of services.

The environment selected for the drop-in hub had initially been suitable, but when word about the services offered had begun to spread, the setting became busier, leading to waiting times. To accommodate the numbers of people accessing the hub, additional tables had been added and some parents/carers felt that there was now less privacy.

It is recommended that careful attention is paid to the environment selected for any future drop-in hubs and that steps are taken to ensure that parents/carers can be afforded privacy to discuss the issues that matter to them. This is likely to enhance engagement and is required as part of a sensitive, trauma-informed approach to service delivery. It is also recommended that the feedback of parents/carers is continually sought to ensure that issues such as this can be raised and responded to promptly. This may take the form of a parent/carer feedback or steering committee.

### **Recommendation 10: The support offered by the Pathfinders should be more effectively communicated in the areas it is available through a variety of routes**

Parents/carers who took part in the interviews described being grateful for having been offered wider support than what they'd originally reached out for. Partners and stakeholders, however, conveyed that in their experience, some parents/carers had expressed feeling suspicious about the broad offer of support and were initially wary about discussing their needs.

It is recommended that a communication strategy is in place, including public awareness campaigns being undertaken so that parents/carers feel less surprised by this. Public awareness campaigns are also recommended as a way to ensure that priority groups are aware of what's on offer and know how to get in touch and benefit from the new approaches that are emerging. A communications strategy will also ensure that key terms, definitions and criteria are used consistently across partners and stakeholders.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Evaluation questions and evaluation framework

The Evaluation Framework was used to guide the Process Evaluation. It breaks down the evaluation into five themes: context and background of the Pathfinder, design and development of the Pathfinder, partnership working in the Pathfinder, delivery so far, and impact so far. Within each of these themes are research questions to help guide the evaluation. The final column outlines the methods we used to gather information for each question.

Themes	Questions	Methods		
		Consultation with local delivery partners and stakeholders	Partnership Scorecard	Consultation with families
Context and background of the Pathfinders	Who are the partners involved in the Pathfinder? What roles do they play?	x		
	Who does the Pathfinder work with? Priority groups? Which communities?	x		
	How well does the Pathfinder fit within the existing local provision?	x		

	<p>What are the current aims and priorities of the Pathfinder?  What changes are the Pathfinders intended to make to the way child poverty support is offered in the area?</p>	x		
	<p>What activities do the Pathfinders engage in?  What new or different forms of support are being delivered at a local level through the two Pathfinders?</p>	x		
	<p>What are the future plans for the Pathfinder?  Specifically, what plans are there for future scale-up and expansion?</p>	x		
Pathfinder design and development	<p>How are local needs being identified, understood and used to</p>			

	inform service design and delivery?			
	How are partners and stakeholders understanding the concepts of 'person-centred support' and 'place-based' approaches and how is this influencing service design and delivery?	x		
	How are eligible families being identified as being in need of support? How and why are these groups being targeted?	x		x
	How and to what extent have the Pathfinders been informed by existing evidence on what works to create system change and tackle child poverty?	x		

	What mechanisms are in place to learn from what is being delivered? How is the learning shared within and across places?	x	x	
	What data do partners collect and share? Is this used to evaluate, inform, and learn across the Pathfinder?	x	x	
Partnership working in the Pathfinder	How effectively are different partners (across public, third and private sectors) working together at the local level and between national local and national level? How can collaboration be improved?	x	x	
	What are the barriers and enablers of the partnership	x	x	



	and system join-up in the development of the Pathfinder?			
	To what extent do the partners share the same vision and objectives?	x	x	
	What is the level of trust between partners in the partnership?	x	x	
	What are the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership in delivery of the Pathfinder?	x	x	
	What has the partnership been able to achieve together so far?	x	x	
	How effective is the communication within the partnership?	x	x	

	What are plans for sustainability and scalability for the Pathfinder?	x	x	
Delivery of Pathfinder	What are the strengths and weaknesses of the delivery at the local level? What is working well and what could be improved in the delivery of the Pathfinders at this early stage?	x		
	What changes have been implemented in local systems to facilitate alignment of services? What has worked well and what are the barriers in creating and maintaining a 'joined-up system' at both a national and local level?	x		
	Through what routes are service users becoming involved with			

	the service?			
	Access and engagement with the Pathfinder- is it reaching its targeted population? Have all eligible families been reached? Who has not been reached and why?	x		
	Who has taken up support offers? Have priority families received support?			
	What are the barriers and enablers for families to engage with the Pathfinder?			x
	What are the aspirations / expectations of families who engage?	x		x
Impact so far	What has been the impact on the connections /	x		

	partnership between services in the local area? Are the Pathfinders contributing to system change?			
	What are the experiences of the families who engaged in the Pathfinder so far? Are users of the services able to navigate 'the system'? What are the barriers and how can navigation be improved for people?	x		
	What have been the effects so far on lives of participants?	x		x
	What have been the effects of the Pathfinder on community capacity?	x		
	What has been the learning from project delivery so	x		

	far?			
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## Appendix 2: Interview topic guides

### Partner interview topic guide

#### About the interviewee

- Can you tell me your job title and where you currently work?

#### Section 1: Context

- What are the current aims and priorities of the Pathfinder? Prompts: What changes are the Pathfinders intended to make to the way child poverty support is offered in the area? -
- What activities do the Pathfinders engage in? Prompts: What new or different forms of support are being delivered at a local level through the two Pathfinders?
- Who does the Pathfinder work with? Prompts: Priority groups? Which communities?

#### Section 2: Development of Pathfinders

- How do you feel the partnership is working and developing so far? Prompts: Is everyone on the same page, sharing the same commitment, committed to the success of the Pathfinder? -
- How did the Pathfinder decide on its focus and activities? Prompts: How did you find that development/decision making process? Do partners share the same visions and objectives?
- To what extent do you feel that the Pathfinder has been informed by existing evidence of what works on tackling child poverty? Prompts: What key evidence was influential? How was evidence identified and fed into the development of the Pathfinder?
- Are there any obvious gaps in existing evidence about what works in tackling child poverty that you have identified through this process? -
- How do you understand the concept of person-centred support and place-based approaches? Is this influencing service design and delivery?
- How did you find the development of the Pathfinder so far in terms of the way the partnership was set up? Prompts: What do you feel worked well and less well about its development/establishment? Why was that?
- Do you feel the Pathfinder has been adequately resourced through? Has it been adequately funded? Has there been adequate contribution of time from staff? Has there been adequate contribution from senior staff within the partnership organisations?

#### Section 3: Engagement with Partners and Stakeholders

- To what extent do you feel that the necessary stakeholders are engaged and informed in the Pathfinder? Prompts: If the right stakeholders aren't engaged why do you feel that is? Is there anything that needs to be done differently to engage those stakeholders?
- To what extent do you feel that the required partners are around the table? Are there any missing that you feel it would be important to consider as a partner instead of a stakeholder?

- Who are the partners involved in the Pathfinder? Prompts: What roles do they play? What does the staffing structure look like, and who does what?

#### **Section 4: Governance arrangements**

- Could you describe to me a bit about how the governance of the Pathfinder works at the moment? Prompts: How do you find this? How do you expect it to evolve over time?
- How well do you think the governance arrangements work? Prompts: do you think the governance arrangements allow for identifying and implementing the direction of the Pathfinders?

#### **Section 5: The Future and Sustainability**

- What would you say are the key success criteria for making a Pathfinder work?
- What are the key challenges to overcome for making a Pathfinder work? Prompts: What advice would you have for other areas looking to develop a Pathfinder? -
- Do you feel that the Pathfinder has been adequately resourced? Prompts: Has there been adequate contribution of time from staff? Has there been adequate contribution from senior staff within the partnership organisations? -

#### **Section 6: Pathfinders fit within the broader service landscape**

- What has been helpful in creating a joined-up system? -
- What has been challenging about creating a joined-up system?
- What changes have been implemented within local systems to facilitate the alignment of services as part of the Pathfinder? What changes have worked well in creating this join-up and why? What has worked less well and why?
- To what extent is there a clear understanding in Dundee/Glasgow about the efforts to tackle child poverty and the various stakeholders/services/support available? Prompts: Why do you think that?
- Are there any obvious gaps in provision with tackling child poverty in Dundee/Glasgow?
- Are there any obvious challenges in provision with tackling child poverty in Dundee/Glasgow?
- How do you feel the Pathfinder activity fits within existing provision in the area/city? Do you feel the Pathfinder is contributing to systems change? What has been the impacts so far on the connections between services in the local area?
- How important do you think the Pathfinder is for tackling child poverty in Dundee/Glasgow? Prompts: To what extent is it able to contribute to filling the gaps/addressing the challenges to tackling child poverty in Dundee/Glasgow? To what extent do you feel that the Pathfinder activity complements or competes with other organisations trying to address child poverty in the area/city?

#### **Section 7: Support offered to families**

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of delivery at the local level? Prompts: What is working well and what could be improved in the delivery of the Pathfinders at this early stage?
- Do you feel that the Pathfinder is reaching eligible families/families in poverty? Who has and hasn't been reached? Have priority family groups received support? Why and why not?

- How does the Pathfinder identify families in need of support? Prompts: To what extent is the service targeting particular families and how?
- What new or different forms of support are being delivered at the local level through the Pathfinders? Prompts: How do these differ to, or build on, what was being offered before?
- What routes are families taking to become involved with the system? Prompts: Are these routes working well? Are there any gaps or sticking points?
- What are the aspirations / expectations of families who engage?
- What has been the impact on the families supported by the Pathfinder so far?

### **Section 8: Learning and Sharing**

- What data do partners collect and share? How is this used to evaluate, inform, and learn across the Pathfinder?
- What have been your key learnings from the development of the Pathfinder so far? What advice would you have for other areas looking to develop a Pathfinder? -
- What would you say are the key success criteria for making a Pathfinder work?
- What mechanisms do you have in place to gather learning? Prompts: Reflect on learning? Disseminate/share learning? What feels to be working well and less well about these mechanisms?
- How is data sharing being used to improve the reach and delivery of the service?

### **Section 9: Closing**

- Is there anything else that you feel it would be helpful for us to know about that we have not spoken about today?



## Stakeholder interview topic guide

### Section 1: About the interviewee

- First, I'd like to get to know a bit more about you and your role. Can you tell me:
- What is your role?
- How does your work and your organisation link with the Pathfinder?
- To what extent have you been involved in the Pathfinder's development and delivery to date?
- What role would you like to play in the Pathfinder? What do you feel would need to happen to make that work?

### Section 2: About the Pathfinder

- What is your understanding of what the Pathfinder is and what it is trying to achieve?
- What are your expectations for the Pathfinder and what it will do?
- How did you find the development of the Pathfinder so far in terms of how the activities and focus was decided?
- What do you feel the focus should be of the Pathfinder?
- To what extent do you feel that the required partners are around the table? Are there any missing that you feel it would be important to consider as a partner instead of a stakeholder?
- To what extent do you feel that the necessary stakeholders are engaged and informed in the Pathfinder? Prompts: Are there any missing that you feel it would be important to include? If the right stakeholders aren't engaged, why do you feel that is? Is there anything that needs to be done differently to engage those stakeholders?
- What changes have been implemented within local systems to facilitate the alignment of services as part of the Pathfinder? What is working well and less well, and why?
- How do you understand the concepts of 'person-centred support' and 'place-based' approaches? Is this influencing service design and delivery?
- Do you feel the Pathfinder has been adequately resourced through? Has it been adequately funded? Has there been adequate contribution of time from staff? Has there been adequate contribution from senior staff within the partnership organisations?

### Section 3: Fit within local provision

- To what extent is there a clear understanding in Dundee/Glasgow about the efforts to tackle child poverty and the various stakeholders/services/support available?
- Are there any obvious gaps in provision associated with tackling child poverty in Dundee/Glasgow?

- How does the Pathfinder activity fit within the existing provision in the area/city? Does Pathfinder activity compete with or complement other organisations trying to address child poverty in the area/city?
- How important do you think the Pathfinder is for tackling child poverty in Dundee/Glasgow?
- To what extent is it able to contribute to filling the gaps in tackling child poverty in Dundee/Glasgow?
- To what extent is it able to contribute to address the challenges of tackling child poverty in Dundee/Glasgow?
- To what extent do you feel that the support offered through the Pathfinder activity is joining up service provision in the area? Have any specific changes taken place to facilitate this join-up? What has worked well and what has worked less well, and why?

#### Section 4: Using evidence

- How do you feel that the Pathfinder is underpinned by existing evidence around need and what works?

#### Section 5: Sharing learning

- What is your understanding of the mechanisms in place to share learning?
- In what ways do you feel you and other stakeholders should be involved in sharing learning about the Pathfinder?

#### Section 6: Early impacts

- To what extent do you feel that the work of the Pathfinder is meeting the local needs of families?
- What has been the impact so far on connections between services in the local area? Do you feel that the Pathfinder is contributing to systems change?
- How are families experiencing the Pathfinder so far? Prompts: How do families find 'navigating the system'? What are the barriers, and could access be improved?
- What has been the impact on the families supported by the Pathfinder? How has the Pathfinder impacted participants lives?
- Have there been any effects on community capacity?

#### Section 7: Future Development and Sustainability

- What do you think the key opportunities are for the Pathfinder? What should its future development focus on?
- What do you think the key challenges are for the Pathfinder?
- What do you feel needs to happen to help overcome these challenges?
- Do you feel that the Pathfinder has been adequately resourced throughout? Has it been adequately funded? Has there been adequate contribution of time from staff? Has there been adequate contribution from senior staff within the partnership organisations?

## Section 8: Other

Is there anything else that you feel would be useful for us to know at this stage that we have not spoken about today?

### Appendix 3: Partnership scorecard questionnaire

	1	2	3	4	5
Shared vision	Partners have no shared vision of what they are trying to achieve	Partners show some signs of sharing a vision	Partners share a vision, but this does not influence the way in which they work together.	Partners share a vision, and this influences the way in which they work together.	Partners have invested time to develop a clear shared vision, and this always guides their actions and contribution.
Objectives	The partnership has no clear objectives	The partnership has a set of objectives but not everyone in the partnership understands or agrees to them	The partnership has a set of objectives that everyone in the partnership understands but not all partners agree with them.	The partnership has a set of objectives that everyone in the partnership understands and agrees to.	The partnership has a set of objectives that everyone in the partnership understands and agrees to.  Objectives have been well communicated to stakeholders not in the partnership.
Trust	Partners do not trust each other	Partners have trust in each other on some issues	Partners have trust in each other on most issues	Partners have trust in each other on almost all issues	There is a strongly developed sense of trust amongst partners across all issues

	1	2	3	4	5
Mutual understanding	Partners don't really understand each other's role, focus and needs	Partners display patchy understanding of each other's role, focus and needs	Partners try to understand each other's role, focus and needs	Some mutual understanding established between partners on each other's role, focus and need.	Strong mutual understanding between partners on each other's role, focus and need.
Ownership and accountability	Partners do not feel that they are responsible for the success of the partnership.	Some of the partners feel that they are responsible for the success of the partnership.	Most of the partners feel that they are responsible for the success of the partnership.	Nearly all the partners feel that they are responsible for the success of the partnership	All the partners feel a strong sense of shared responsibility for the success of the partnership
Development	Partners have made no investment in the development of the partnership.	A few partners have made some investment in the development of the partnership	Most partners have made some investment in the development of the partnership	Most partners have made some investment in the development of the partnership, and this has improved its effectiveness	All partners have invested considerable time and effort in the development of the partnership and this has significantly improved its effectiveness.
Joining up	We have had no success in joining up actions and	We have had limited success in joining up actions and	We have had some success in joining up actions and	We have had quite a lot of success in joining up	We have had substantial success in joining up actions and

	1	2	3	4	5
	resources for greater impact	resources for greater impact	resources for greater impact	actions and resources for greater impact	resources for greater impact
Communications - internal	The partnership has not developed any systematic approach to internal communication	The partnership has a few elements of an internal communications system, but it is not often used	The partnership has some elements of an internal communications system that are used but not regularly	The partnership has most of the elements of an internal communications system and it is used regularly	The partnership has developed very effective ways of communicating between members and uses this actively
Leadership	The partnership is never led in a clear and focused way which facilitates effective contribution and achievement	The partnership is occasionally led in a clear and focused way which facilitates effective contribution and achievement	The partnership is sometimes led in a clear and focused way which facilitates effective contribution and achievement	The partnership is usually led in a clear and focused way which facilitates effective contribution and achievement	The partnership is always led in a clear and focused way which facilitates effective contribution and achievement
Sustainability and longevity	Partners have made no investment in developing sustainable interventions which aim to reduce	A few partners have made limited investment in developing sustainable interventions which aim to reduce child	Some partners have made some investment in developing sustainable interventions which aim to reduce child	Across the partnership, most partners have made reasonable investment in developing sustainable interventions	Across the partnership, all partners have made consistent investment in developing sustainable interventions which aim to reduce child

	1	2	3	4	5
	child poverty beyond the end of the projects	poverty beyond the end of the projects	poverty beyond the end of the projects	which aim to reduce child poverty beyond the end of the projects	poverty beyond the end of the projects
Collecting evidence	Partners do not collect or share data that can build an evidence base	Partners collect some data but do not share it to build an evidence base	Partners collect and share some data to build an evidence base	Partners collect and share the relevant data to build an evidence base	Partners collect and share the relevant data to build an evidence base that will enable the model to be compared with other approaches
Learning culture	Partners have no culture of learning from one another about preventative approaches to reduce child poverty. There are no opportunities for collaboration and coproduction across the partnership	Partners have limited opportunities to learn from one another about preventative approaches to reduce child poverty. There are limited opportunities for collaboration and coproduction across the partnership	Partners have some opportunities to learn from one another, and a learning culture is developing about preventative approaches to reduce child poverty. There are some opportunities for collaboration and coproduction across the partnership	Partners have regular opportunities to learn from one another, with a developed culture of learning about preventative approaches to reduce child poverty. There are consistent opportunities for collaboration and coproduction across the	Partners have frequent opportunities to learn from one another with a strong established culture of learning from one another about preventative approaches to reduce child poverty. There are widespread opportunities for collaboration and coproduction

	1	2	3	4	5
				partnership	
Spreading of partnership working	No discernible indication of the Pathfinder influencing wider partnership working	Little indication of the Pathfinder influencing wider partnership working	Some indication of the Pathfinder influencing wider partnership working	Notable indication of the Pathfinder influencing wider partnership working	The Pathfinder strongly influences more widespread partnership working
Impact	We don't really know what difference we are making	We have a limited view of the difference we are making and how to show this	We have identified ways of describing our impact, but we could do a lot more	We are able to assess our impact using a range of indicators	We can describe our impact clearly and persuasively using a range of quantitative and qualitative indicators
Review and reflect	The Pathfinder team never takes time to reflect on progress, achievements and lessons	The Pathfinder team rarely takes time to reflect on progress, achievements and lessons	The Pathfinder team sometimes takes time to reflect on progress, achievements and lessons	The Pathfinder team often takes time to reflect on progress, achievements and lessons	The Pathfinder team always takes time to reflect on progress, achievements and lessons
Learn and refine	The Pathfinder team doesn't draw on lessons from the past in developing	The Pathfinder team rarely draws on lessons from the past in developing new initiatives	The Pathfinder team sometimes draws on lessons from the past in developing new	The Pathfinder team often draws on lessons from the past in developing new initiatives	The Pathfinder team always draws on lessons from the past in developing new initiatives and its



	1	2	3	4	5
	new initiatives and its programme of work	and its programme of work	initiatives and its programme of work	and its programme of work	programme of work

## Appendix 4: Recruitment and demographics of parents/carers involved in qualitative interviews

This section contains more details on the recruitment methods used to engage parents/carers in qualitative interviews.

### Dundee

In Dundee, the evaluation team were invited to spend two days on-site at the Dundee drop-in hub, a service linked to the Pathfinder. Researchers spent the day engaging with parents/carers as they came in. The researchers provided each person with information about the research, and made sure that each participant was aware of their rights to anonymity and that involvement was voluntary. The research was conducted in a trauma-informed way, which means that choice and flexibility were offered. For example, in Dundee, one researcher attended the drop-in hub for a full day on two occasions, which were one week apart. Parents/carers who were attending the drop-in hub had previously been offered information about the research being conducted. When the researcher attended, she made herself known to staff, and was available to speak to potential participants about the research. Those who expressed an interest in taking part were then offered further information, including consent processes. Potential participants were given the option to take part in research face-to-face in a private space at the drop-in hub, or to take part later, via telephone. All parents/carers who agreed to take part in Dundee opted to do so in-person. The researcher who conducted the interviews had been briefed and was trained to read both verbal and non-verbal indicators of people's willingness to take part, and their understanding of consent and how the data they provided would be used.

In total, 20 interviews took place with parents/carers at the Dundee drop-in hub. In some of the interviews, parents/carers brought friends and/or relatives to the interview for support. In these cases, friends and relatives were welcomed, as this helped some interviewees to feel more comfortable. In such cases, although others were present, only the parent/carer answered the interview questions, which means that the total number of participants who took part in the parent/carer interviews in Dundee was 20, although the numbers present in the interviews was higher. All parents/carers who took part in the interviews had dependents aged 16 years or under.

Most of the people who were invited to take part in the interviews in Dundee agreed to do so. The only exceptions to this occurred on three occasions where young mothers, who were defined as being under 25 years of age attended the interview, learned more about what would be involved and then decided not to continue. On these occasions, the young women expressed that they did not feel comfortable sharing their views, and that they were too shy to continue. In these instances, the researcher provided reassurance about the voluntary nature of participation and the right to withdraw and thanked them for their time. Mothers under the age of 25 with children under the age of two have been identified as a key priority group for the Pathfinders. Consenting and then withdrawing consent, due to feeling uncomfortable or too shy to proceed, did not occur with any other demographic group, which suggests that a different approach may be required to increase participation among this group in future studies.

## Glasgow

The research team consulted with the Glasgow Pathfinder leadership team to discuss the most effective/appropriate methods to use for the parent/carer interviews within the Glasgow site. The leadership team conveyed that because the most client facing aspects of the Glasgow Pathfinder took place via telephone, it would be appropriate to conduct the parent/carer interviews via telephone. It was agreed that a dedicated member of the Glasgow Helps team would support the evaluation by conducting participant recruitment on behalf of Rocket Science. The member of the Glasgow Helps team discussed the study with parents/carers in circumstances where it was deemed appropriate and ethical to do so. Resultantly, it is not possible to eliminate the possibility of sampling bias and it is possible that those who took part in the interviews were those who had had positive experiences of using the service. In total, 16 interviews were conducted in the Glasgow site, and all were conducted via telephone. One participant required a translation service to enable participation and this was arranged.

Figure 1, below, presents the demographic breakdown of the families involved in the qualitative interviews.

	Glasgow	Dundee
<b>Number of children:</b>		
• 1-2 children	7	5
• 3 or more children	9	15
<b>Family:</b>		
• Single parent/carer	12	14
• Living with partner	4	6
<b>Employment:</b>		
• In work	5	2
• Not in work	11	17
• Retired	-	1
<b>Ethnicity:</b>		
• White- Scottish / British	12	18
• White- Other	1	2
• British- Pakistani	1	-
• Syrian	1	-

• Iraqi	1	-
<b>Disability:</b>		
• Parent/carer with one or more disability	7	10
• Partner or children with a disability	4	6
• Both (Parent/carer and partner or child)	2	3
• No disabilities	3	1
<b>Total</b>	16	20

It should be noted that although demographic data on the participants in the family interviews is presented above, the families interviewed were not intended to be a representative sample of the families receiving support from the Glasgow and Dundee Pathfinders. Rather, the characteristics detailed above represent priority groups which have been identified as being at a higher risk of poverty. No data is currently available on the demographic profile of Pathfinder participants who did not participate in the research to allow a comparison.

## Appendix 5: Limitations to the evaluation

There are several limitations of the data which should be noted when interpreting the findings in this report. As the Pathfinder activity developed in both sites, new access routes began to emerge. The 'no wrong door' approach meant that families could be referred to services from multiple organisations. However, because this early implementation process evaluation was designed during the very early stages of Pathfinder development, the Dundee drop-in hub and the Glasgow Helps phone line were identified as access points for family member recruitment. This meant that staff in both services were able to support with participant recruitment. In Dundee, a researcher approached family members who were attending the drop-in hub directly, in-person. In Glasgow, a dedicated member of the Glasgow Helps team conducted participant recruitment and provided the research team with contact details for those who had agreed to participate. The approaches taken in both sites differed slightly. The variation in participation methods, however, introduce some limitations to consider in the reading of the family member findings that are presented in chapter 6.

A further limitation of note is that it was not possible to eliminate the potential for sampling bias in the Glasgow parent/carer interviews, and so caution is required in the reading of results. A further consideration relevant to both sites is that because Pathfinders did not retain information related to the identity of those who had accessed services via the Pathfinders and then disengaged, it was not possible to gather the views of parents/carers who had made initial contact with the Pathfinders, and then refused the support offered. The views presented in chapter 6, therefore, are of those who chose to engage in the support offered.

Participants who took part in the parent/carer interviews were offered a voucher to thank them for their time supporting the research. While this was intended as compensation for time, rather than as an incentive, it is possible that the vouchers offered may have encouraged participation. Mothers aged under 25, with children under two, and families who have disabilities within the household had been identified as priority groups within both Pathfinders, as these are groups known to experience higher than average levels of poverty. Unfortunately, the convenience sampling approach and the reliance on referrals from the Dundee drop-in hub and Glasgow Helps staff, and the voluntary nature of participation, meant that it was not possible to specifically target recruitment to ensure the inclusion of people from these priority groups in the family member interviews. Despite the efforts of the evaluation team and the staff at both sites, these priority groups remain under-represented in the evaluation findings.

The participation of partners and stakeholders from the Glasgow and Dundee Pathfinders were not evenly spread, and there was slightly higher participation in Dundee (n=21) than Glasgow (n=16). Therefore the results should be interpreted in light of this limitation.



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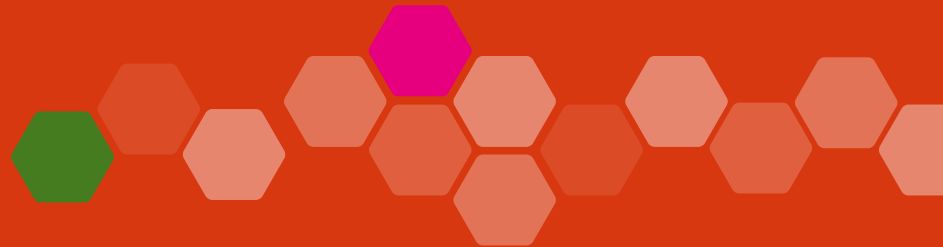
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