

4in10: The London End Child Poverty Project: Campaigners Toolkit 2 (Summary)

This toolkit is aimed at **employees & volunteers** from **community and voluntary organisations** across the city who are passionate about the injustice of child poverty and who want to do something about this. **Concerned citizens** are of course also welcome to make use of the toolkit and get involved!

If you want to start your own campaign please get in touch with **London Campaigns Officer, Natasha Adams**, who will be happy to offer support and can also point you in the direction of other aspiring campaigners in your area. Further resources can also be found on our website, including Toolkit 1 which goes into greater depth than this summary.

The Facts

4 in 10 (or 650,000) London children live in poverty, 12% above the national average. However, child poverty is more than just statistics. **Hundreds of thousands of London children cannot do nor have the everyday things that their friends take for granted.** For more information, or specific data on child poverty in your area please visit our website: www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/london

The Opportunity

Whilst standards have been raised nationally, with over 500,000 children living in the UK having been lifted out of poverty, child poverty in London has remained stubbornly at this level since 2000. Some key things to bear in mind are:

- London Councils and the Government Office for London (GOL) have recently launched the country's first London Child Poverty Network.
- Local authorities across the UK have signed up to Local Area Agreements (LAAs) with central Government in which they agree to set and achieve targets in specific areas. NI116 is the national indicator that commits local authorities to reducing the proportion of children living in poverty in the borough. 11 London borough authorities have already signed up to this indicator, find out if yours is one of them.

The Strategy

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has” Margaret Mead

You don't need to be worthy, serious or an expert on the issues to campaign – you just need to care enough to take action, however small and insignificant it may seem.

At 4in10 we believe that it will be thanks to the individual actions of people like you, that child poverty in London will ultimately become a scandal of the past.

How can I run a campaign?

1. Identify the Problem & Potential Solutions

For your campaign to have focus you need to answer the following key questions. We have used an example campaign focussing on the lack of social housing in Hackney, which has obvious affects for children living in poverty in the borough.

1. What is the nature of the problem/s you wish to solve?

2,420 children and expected children in Hackney live in temporary accommodation; living in temporary accommodation has been shown to have a profound impact on the life chances of children.

2. What are the causes and consequences of the problem/s? E.g. A cause may be that there is not enough social housing in Hackney, and the consequence of this may be that children's health and educational outcomes are suffering.

3. What is the range of possible solutions available to you? E.g. The solutions may be; To build more social housing; To improve quality of existing housing etc

2. Research into the Political, Economic, Social and Technical issues which will affect your campaign (PEST Analysis)

To return to the example of looking at overcrowded homes in Hackney, some examples PEST analysis are as follows:

Political – Hackney Council have adopted a range of national indicators relating to housing in the borough:

NI 116 Proportion of children living in poverty

NI 154 Net additional homes provided

NI 155 Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)

NI 158 % non-decent council homes

Economic – The Government's comprehensive spending review in 2010 is likely to have a negative impact on local authorities as a result of the economic downturn. As a result, Hackney will be looking for areas where they can save money in order to manage their restricted budgets.

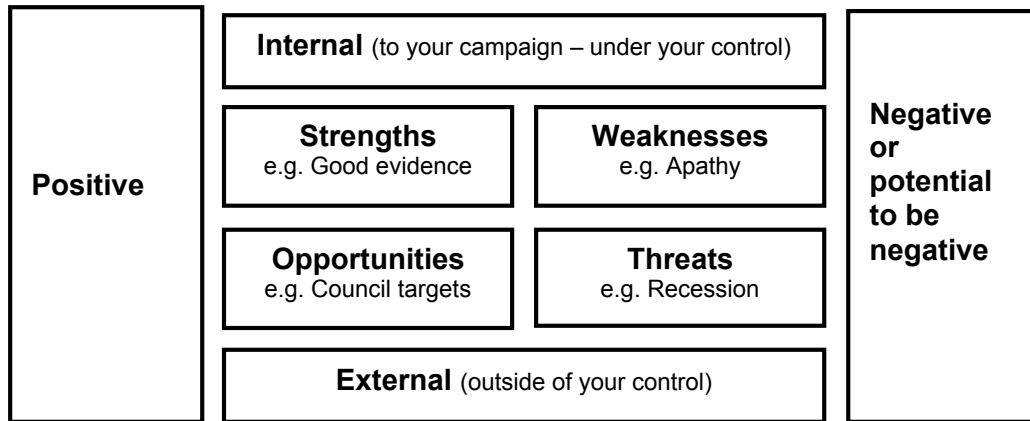
Social – Local awareness is high regarding housing issues in Hackney, but there is a huge amount of apathy that nothing can be done as the problem is perceived as too big to solve.

Technical – National housing charity Shelter have produced good evidence about the damage suffered by children in overcrowded and poor housing conditions.

3. Analyse your Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

With the research you have collated, using the methods above, it is now important to conduct a SWOT analysis weighing up the pros and cons that will affect your

campaign. These can be categorised as strengths & weaknesses (internal to your campaign) and opportunities & threats (external to your campaign).



4: Deciding the Campaign Theme & Writing Your Aim

For your campaign to have focus, you need to be able to answer the following key questions.

- Which solution offers the greatest opportunity to **make a difference**?
- Given the SWOT summary, which solution appears most **winnable**?

There is likely to be a trade off between these two. In most cases, it is likely that the solutions that deliver the greatest benefits will be the most difficult to achieve. You will need to make a judgement and get as close to the ideal as possible.

You should now be in a position to write your campaign aim, which should be:

- **Succinct**, able to be summed up in one sentence
- **Compelling** and **inspiring**
- **Easily communicated**
- **Targeted** – identifying who needs to change, and how they should change.
- **Impact focussed** – Changes that will lead to an improvement in actual lives

5: Identifying Routes of Influence / Lobbying

It is important to bear in mind that councillors and MPs are elected and they want to remain in their jobs! They are likely to support you if you can show that potential voters or other influential groups back you. You can lobby decision makers directly or indirectly in various ways, for example:

- You may approach councillors directly who in turn speak with the Head of Housing Policy in Hackney.
- You may hold a large rally to mobilise public opinion, which leads participants to visit their local councillors who in turn influence the Head of Housing Policy.

6: Setting Objectives, Action & Work Planning

Identifying the **milestones of change** – the **campaign objectives** – will help you focus and coordinate your campaigning effort to achieve maximum impact. E.g.:

Objective 1: To mobilise public support for alleviation of overcrowding

Having set objectives, the next stage is to develop work plans to **show how activity will be managed to achieve the objectives:**

- Identifying the tasks that are necessary to deliver the objectives
- Identifying the resources needed for this task and ensuring these are accessible
- Timetabling the tasks

The outputs of the campaign measure these activities. Each output measured should be associated with one of the campaign objectives identified. For the example above, these could include the following:

Outputs: number of people attending the rally. To achieve this output it is likely you will have undertaken a number of other activities, each of which will produce outputs of their own: Leaflet drops, stalls run at local festivals, talks given.

You will need to review outputs on an ongoing basis as to *how much impact* you are achieving, as this is the point of your campaign!

7: Delivering the Campaign

Now for the action! At this stage, you should have a clear aim and objectives; you should know who your main target is and what your routes of influence are going to be. Now you need to get your message across to those who matter – working through your identified influence routes to reach your target, preferably from as many sides as possible. A campaign will usually be comprised of some or all of the following: **Lobbying, Media Work, Policy Work & Public Campaigning**. See **Toolkits 3, 4 & 5** for tips on actions you can take.

8: Developing a Campaign Message

Once you have analysed your audiences and decided on a mix of actions you will need to adapt the campaign messages to fit the appropriate audience sophistication level and the medium.

- **Keep the messages simple-** The campaign demands need to be communicated in clear, unambiguous language.
- **Repetition-** You need consistency and persistence to penetrate.

9: Evaluate and Adapt

Your objectives should have measurable outputs which in turn can be analysed in terms of their impact. Your campaign should be regularly (for example at quarterly meetings) asking the following questions and reacting accordingly:

- Are you **benefiting** those you set out to help?
- Has your campaign had any **impact** at all?
- What could you change to be more **effective**?

10: Keep Close Contact with the London Campaigns Officer!