Social Justice

...a Scotland where everyone matters

Annual Report 2000: Summary
Within the first months of the new Scottish Parliament, Donald Dewar set out our commitment to delivering social justice in Scotland. In an ambitious, long-term vision he signalled his determination to lift Scots out of poverty and to confront social exclusion. And he charted a course to a 21st century Scotland characterised by shared prosperity and social justice for all our citizens.

With an emphasis on action, he established a powerful Ministerial Taskforce on Poverty and Inclusion to set out a coherent, strategic framework for action. Chaired by Wendy Alexander, the Taskforce published its report *Social Justice - a Scotland where everyone matters*. We put in place overarching targets and milestones focused on people and on changing their lives. We committed to:

- ending child poverty within a generation
- full employment by providing opportunities for all those who can work
- securing dignity for older people

I now have the privilege to carry forward this commitment.
On behalf of the Taskforce, I am pleased to present our first Social Justice Annual Report. Anybody reading the report will see both the scale of the challenge and the seriousness of our response. Although we cannot right the wrongs of the past overnight, the evidence shows the beginnings of change. Achieving social justice will take many years but here we have made the start.

Tackling old problems in new ways and with hard-headed solutions was the theme behind this year's Spending Review. With our commitment to social justice to the fore, an extra £6 billion is being injected into Scottish services over the next three years, targeted to help tackle inequalities. Health spending will increase by 15%, education by 17% and the social justice and housing budget by 20%. And others, including enterprise, transport, justice and rural, will all make direct contributions to our milestones.

The responsibility of leading the campaign against poverty and exclusion now passes to Jackie Baillie as Minister for Social Justice. With her colleagues across the Executive, she will continue the drive to deliver the commitment made by Donald Dewar a year ago. Revitalised and new partnerships with Government, with local authorities, public bodies, voluntary organisations and the private sector are all contributing towards this shared ambition.

Donald aspired to a Scotland where social justice is the hallmark of society. My pledge is to do all that we can to build on the prosperity created by a modern economy and construct a new Scotland where there is social justice and opportunity for all. With our first Annual Report, I am pleased to present the first evidence of this as a reality.

Henry McLeish MSP
First Minister
Introduction

Social justice is at the heart of the work of the Scottish Executive. Last year, we set out in ‘Social justice... a Scotland where everyone matters’ our long-term strategy for tackling poverty and injustice.

We committed ourselves to ambitious goals:

› the elimination of child poverty
› full employment by providing opportunities for all those who can work
› securing dignity in old age
› building strong, inclusive communities

We are determined to break the cycle of deprivation and disadvantage. Because we know that the factors contributing to poverty, deprivation and social exclusion are wide-ranging, our strategy covers economic, education, health, justice and communities issues.

We made a commitment to monitor progress towards our goals and to report against targets and milestones set in our strategy. In our first annual report on social justice in Scotland, we review progress, consider what has been achieved and look forward to the next steps. In some instances it is too early to see an impact but over time we will be able to see what is happening and where extra effort is required.
The scale of the challenge

The problems of poverty and deprivation have built up over many years and are complex and deep-rooted. They are experienced at every stage in life and affect communities across Scotland. Although Scotland is a wealthy nation, we have some of the most deprived communities in Europe. In extreme cases, they suffer from complex, interlinked problems of poor health and educational achievements, high unemployment, crime and drug problems.

- Despite a reduction since 1997, one in three Scottish children, some 310,000, are growing up in low-income households. All the evidence is that these children have lower aspirations and are less likely to achieve as adults.
- Over 4,300 young people left school with no SCE qualifications in 1996-97. Attainment is improving, but young people who do not do well at school can have problems making a successful transition to adulthood and sustaining employment.
- Although there have been substantial recent improvements in employment in Scotland, 355,000 households (21%) with adults of working age have no one in work in 2000.
- People living in our most deprived areas are more likely to suffer from heart disease, and their children cannot expect to live as long as those from less deprived areas.
- Although life expectancy has continued to rise year on year, the average life expectancy at birth in Scotland remains 2 years less than in England and Wales.

All this amounts to a shocking waste of human potential, which no civilised nation can afford to tolerate. Bringing about real and lasting change needs a long-term strategy.

Combining economic and social progress

Our commitment is to a fair and prosperous Scotland, where everyone matters. Social progress must be founded on a strong economy, but equally a successful economy depends on people achieving their full potential.

In June this year, the Executive published *The Way forward: Framework for the Economic Development of Scotland*. In it, we set out our vision of economic development raising the quality of life of the Scottish people through increasing economic opportunities for all, on a socially and environmentally sustainable basis.

Our social justice indicators track progress in a complex and dynamic environment. External factors, including the economic cycle, will affect progress towards the achievement of our targets. But the fiscal and monetary policies of the UK Government are delivering the necessary platform of macro-economic stability to provide high levels of growth, high employment and higher living standards.

The building of a new and modernised welfare state is helping to achieve full employment in Scotland. It promotes work, makes work pay and gives people the skills they need to get better jobs, in addition to its traditional and necessary role of giving security for those who cannot work. The numbers of people in employment and employment rates are on an increasing trend.

The Scottish Executive's policies focus on the micro-economic levers for economic development and prosperity for all. Enterprise, education, health and justice policies are beginning to remove the barriers that stop people accessing opportunities, particularly the employment opportunities, created by economic stability.
**Working together**
Achieving social justice in Scotland requires new ways of working across each area of policy and practice. The shared commitment to tackling poverty provides the basis for the partnership between the Scottish Executive and the UK Government.

But partnership at this level is not enough. Many organisations – local government, the voluntary sector, business, communities – have worked to tackle poverty and exclusion for years. The clear commitment to social justice from government means that this effort is now supported and encouraged. Our Social Justice Strategy provides a new focus for all organisations and whilst each has a particular role to play, it is only by working together that we will achieve social justice for all.

**Community empowerment**
Building strong, thriving communities is central to our social justice strategy. We need to work together to plan for greater inclusion and to support communities to be able to take ownership of their own futures.

We have designated 48 Social Inclusion Partnerships to focus special effort. Core funding of £150 million for the partnerships for three years will help to concentrate the resources of other partners in these areas, developing local solutions to local problems.

*Community empowerment* policies are all about listening to what communities want, by providing the where-with-all for them to be heard and by devolving decision-making for services right down to the people who want them. We are:

- giving power to communities to make decisions and to influence others
- building skills, confidence and capacity
- getting high quality and affordable services to communities
- closing the digital divide
- developing community control of assets, of organisations, and of enterprises.

**Equality for all**
In a fair and just Scotland, the diversity of our people will be acknowledged and celebrated. We recognise that there are groups within Scottish society that experience exclusion by discrimination – on the grounds of, for example, race, religion, gender, ability, age, or sexual orientation. Some individuals may experience discrimination on several grounds. Not only does discrimination lead to exclusion, but it also limits opportunities for employment and can restrict access to goods and services. Those who are discriminated against also often face abuse and violence.

We will tackle discrimination and prejudice, and the systems, behaviours and attitudes which contribute to or sustain them. The thematic Social Inclusion Partnerships will help identify practical ways in which we can mainstream equalities and overcome the barriers faced by too many Scots.

The Executive’s new *Equality Strategy* will give shape to our efforts to integrate an equality perspective throughout our work and activity. Not only in our policy and programme development, legislation and budgets, service design and delivery, but also in the pursuit of policies and programmes that deal with the inequalities and exclusion resulting from discrimination. The Equality Action Plan will be published in 2001.

**Looking forward**
The framework is now in place, and over the Executive’s first year there are welcome signs of progress. But this is only the start. Progress will need to continue year on year. We will be implementing new policies to overcome the problems we face and to tackle poverty and social injustice.
Our vision
A Scotland in which every child matters, where every child, regardless of their family background, has the best possible start in life

Scotland has some of the highest rates of relative child poverty in the developed world. Poverty of income and of opportunity as a child are more likely to lead to poverty of experience as a young person and adult. We have to lift our children out of poverty and make sure every child is able to reach their full potential in an inclusive Scotland.

Our long-term targets are to:
› defeat child poverty in Scotland within this generation
› ensure that all children in Scotland are able to read, write and count to a level appropriate for their ability on leaving primary school

We will do this by:
› investing in the crucial early years and in the education of children to break the cycle of deprivation
› improving health and quality of life for the most disadvantaged young children and providing more support to their parents
› supporting parents who want to provide for their families by moving into work

All this will be underpinned by the UK Government’s reforms of the tax and benefit system to improve family incomes and to make work pay.
Our milestones are:

- reducing the proportion of our children living in workless households
- reducing the proportion of children living in low income households
- increasing the proportions of our children who attain the appropriate levels in reading, writing and maths by the end of Primary 2 and Primary 7
- all of our children will have access to quality care and early learning before entering school
- improving the well-being of our young children through reductions in the proportion of women smoking during pregnancy, the percentage of low birth-weight babies, dental decay among 5 year olds, and by increasing the proportion of women breastfeeding
- reducing the number of households and particularly households with children, living in temporary accommodation

Progress so far

The proportion of children in income poverty in Scotland is beginning to fall. The UK Government’s budget announcements on children and families will lift 100,000 Scottish children out of poverty. We are making good progress – since 1997, the proportion of children in low-income households has dropped from 34% to 30%.

We have transformed the pre-school education provided for children in Scotland. We now fund nursery places for around 100,000 children a year – 97% of 4 year olds and 68% of 3 year olds. We are investing more resources in education than ever before and we are implementing key new initiatives under the Excellence Fund, including New Community Schools and Alternatives to Exclusion, to focus effort and resource where it is most needed.

Childcare is essential for parents wanting to work and already fewer Scottish children are in non-working households; the percentage of children living in workless households has fallen from 19% in 1997 to 16%. Through the childcare strategy we are investing £13.75 million a year to ensure good quality affordable childcare across Scotland.

Families with young children from our more deprived areas can access broad based support including childcare, health advice and specialist services through the Sure Start Scotland programme.

Action to tackle child poverty

The UK Government is:

- guaranteeing over 100,000 Scottish families with a parent in work an income of at least £208 each week, through the Working Families' Tax Credit
- significantly increasing child benefit – £15/week for the eldest and £10/week for other children – a real increase of 26% since 1997
- making sure single parent families gain from tax and benefit budget measures – a single parent in work on the minimum wage and dealing with childcare cost for two children under five will be over £100 a week better off
- delivering £20 million to pay for childcare in Scotland through the Childcare Tax Credit
- administering the Sure Start Maternity Grant of £200 linked to early health care, check-ups and expert support
The Scottish Executive is:

- making sure that there is free part-time nursery education for all 4 year olds
- investing £19 million in services for families with young children through the Sure Start Scotland programme
- securing the healthiest start to life by delivering health initiatives for expectant mothers, babies and toddlers including Starting Well – one of 4 national health demonstration projects
- working towards a 50% reduction in fatal and serious injuries among children by 2010
- training 5,000 new childcare workers to help meet the demand for childcare
- giving young children the attention they need by reducing class sizes to 30 and fewer and appointing 5,000 classroom assistants for primary schools
- providing £8 million over this year and next for childcare infrastructure and training
- tackling the scandal of families with children living in bed and breakfast accommodation and have allocated over £5 million in 2000

But more needs to be done.

We are going to:

- continue to extend the Sure Start programme, providing early care and family support for vulnerable children under three years old
- increase support for pre-school education, extending the provision of free part-time nursery places to all 3 year olds whose parents want one by 2002
- invest £26 million in a Health Improvement Fund to tackle health inequalities. Promoting the well-being of children is a priority and action will include the provision of fruit for infants in pre-school, and breakfast clubs and fruit/salad bars for children at school
- develop an action plan for better integrated services for children. The Plan will be produced in 2001 with the help of an action team seconded from local government, health and the voluntary sector
- introduce a new £70 million Change Fund to promote better joined-up services for Children and Young People from 2002. Health bodies, local authorities and voluntary organisations will work together to provide priority services for the most vulnerable children and young people. These will include more and better early years support for vulnerable families, joint assessments and integrated care packages for children with disabilities and support packages for child carers

The UK Government will continue to reform the tax and benefit system, including:

- increasing the Sure Start Maternity Grant to £300 from December 2000
- a new Children's Tax Credit system from 2001 which will be worth up to £442 a year for low to middle income tax-paying parents
- a new Integrated Child Credit from 2003 which will be paid to the main carer and provide a portable source of income, helping families both in and out of work
- more help to get lone parents into work from 2001 through the New Deal for Lone Parents. This will include help with childcare costs and a £15 training premium for lone parents who join an approved training course
- reform of Child Support for lone parents which will let lone parents on income support keep up to £10 pounds per week of their child maintenance
Our vision

A Scotland in which every young person has the opportunities, skills and support to make a successful transition to working life and active citizenship

Every young Scot matters and deserves to have the chance to fulfil their potential. Many teenagers move into adult life with relative ease. Others find it much more of a struggle – and a significant minority experience a range of problems including drug abuse, youth crime, school failure, mental health problems and homelessness. Scotland needs the full contribution of all our young people, stemming the waste of underachievement, isolation and exclusion which blights many young lives.

Our long-term targets are to make sure that:

- every young person leaves school with the maximum level of skills and qualifications possible
- every 19 year old is engaged in education, training or work

We will do this by:

- encouraging young people to continue in education or training and gain further qualifications, and providing incentives to encourage those from poorer backgrounds to stay on at school or college
- improving support for the most vulnerable young people, in particular children who have been looked after by local authorities
- tackling homelessness – nearly half of rough sleepers in Glasgow are under 25
- listening to young people's views
Our milestones are:

> halving the proportion of 16-19 year olds who are not in education, training or employment
> all our young people leaving local authority care will have achieved at least English and Maths Standard Grades and have access to appropriate housing options
> bringing the poorest-performing 20% of pupils, in terms of Standard Grade achievement, closer to the performance of all pupils
> reducing by a third the days lost every year through exclusion from school and truancy
> improving the health of young people through reductions in smoking by 12-15 year olds, teenage pregnancies among 13-15 year olds, and the rate of suicides among young people
> no one has to sleep rough

Progress so far

Young Scots are enthusiastically taking up increased educational opportunities. Participation by young people in Scotland (aged 16-21) in full or part-time education is at an all-time high (at 64%).

Through the New Deal we have slashed long-term youth unemployment by 70% (since 1997) and helped 27,000 young people into jobs.

We have provided special programmes for the most disadvantaged young people, including the New Futures Fund to improve their employability.

Services for rough sleepers have been substantially increased in Glasgow and Edinburgh, and in authorities across Scotland under the Rough Sleeper’s Initiative; services are increasingly focussed on prevention.

It is important that our policies are informed by the views of young people themselves. We are looking at ways of boosting direct consultation and heightening the profile of work with young people.

We have helped to establish a Youth Parliament to let young people give their views on their needs and their aspirations. And we held a Youth Summit in June to give over 1,000 young people a voice on their top priorities to Ministers from across the Executive.
**Action for young people**

Together with the UK Government we are:

- delivering the **New Deal** for 18-24 year olds. Since January 1998 over 28,000 are already into a job and **long-term youth unemployment is down 70%**

- encouraging more young people from low-income families to stay in education and achieve qualifications through the **Educational Maintenance Allowance**. 900 young people are taking part in an East Ayrshire pilot

The Scottish Executive is:

- on track to deliver 20,000 **Modern Apprenticeships** by 2003 to help young people make a successful transition to working life

- supporting our most disadvantaged young people to help them move towards employability through the **New Futures Fund**. Over 100 projects have been funded across Scotland and have already involved around 2,400 people. £15 million will be invested by 2001/02

- consulting on a strategic framework for **looked after children** and **vulnerable families** and providing an extra £3.3 million to local authorities to develop services

- supporting initiatives to improve the health and well-being of our teenagers – tackling **teenage pregnancy** through, for example, the national health demonstration project **Healthy Respect** to provide a test-bed for integrated action to improve sexual health nationally

- investing an extra £21 million to provide effective **drug education** in Scottish schools in 1999/00. The Schools Drug Safety Team are working to improve the handling of drug misuse incidents and the effectiveness of current drug education in school

- breaking the ‘no-home no-job’ cycle by making sure no-one has to sleep rough. The **Rough Sleepers Initiative** is investing £40 million over 5 years to meet needs across Scotland, including rural areas

**But more needs to be done.**

**We are going to:**

- improve support for young people who require additional support to make the transitions to post-school education, training or employment backed by £22.6 million to take forward action in response to the **Beattie Report**. This will include £9 million to establish key worker support for vulnerable young people

- encourage more young people from low income families to stay in education and achieve qualifications by providing an extra £4 million to establish additional pilots of **Educational Maintenance Allowances**

- provide increased resources (£20 million over the next 3 years) for challenging programmes to reduce persistent offending by young people

- look at improving services available to children and **young people with special educational needs** through a new National Special Educational Needs Forum, led by the Deputy Minister for Children and Education. A £12 million Inclusion Programme will assist local authorities to include those with special educational needs in mainstream provision

- tackle homelessness among young people by bringing forward proposals to give homeless people not in priority need, a right to advice and assistance, and temporary accommodation while it is being provided
every family matters

Our vision
A Scotland in which every family is able to support itself – with work for those who can and security for those who cannot

Every family in Scotland should be able to contribute to and engage in Scotland's life and economy. Everyone should have a chance to succeed, be able to fulfil their potential and support their families. We want to build a more inclusive society, making work pay and providing support for those who cannot work. We want to break down the barriers of discrimination and disadvantage for those at the margins of society.

Our long-term targets are to:
› achieve full employment in Scotland in the modern sense of opportunity for all
› ensure that everyone has the opportunity to undertake some form of learning to widen their knowledge and skills

We will do this by:
› supporting the delivery of the welfare to work agenda, along with innovative approaches to deliver economic opportunity
› supporting vulnerable groups, especially people at risk of exclusion and discrimination and improving their health and quality of life
› encouraging lifelong learning so that people have the skills and education to respond to the modern labour market

The UK Government's tax and benefit reforms are making work pay – and removing one of the barriers to work – with measures such as the Working Families' Tax Credit, Disabled Person's Tax Credit and the National Minimum Wage.
Our milestones are:

- reducing the proportion of unemployed working age people
- reducing the proportion of working age people with low incomes
- increasing the employment rates of disadvantaged groups, such as lone parents and ethnic minorities, that are relatively disadvantaged in the labour market
- increasing the proportion of students from under represented, disadvantaged groups and areas in higher education compared with the overall student population in higher education
- increasing the proportion of people with learning disabilities able to live at home or in a ‘homely’ environment
- improving the health of families by reducing smoking, alcohol misuse, poor diet and mortality rates from coronary heart disease

Progress so far

**Unemployment is at its lowest for a generation** and now stands at around half the level that it was in the mid-1980’s. Since Spring 1997, unemployment is down by 25% overall, and long term male unemployment is down by 48%.

Employment opportunities are increasing – around 75,000 new jobs have been created since **Spring 1997**. Employment rates for disadvantaged groups, including lone parents and people with a disability, are also increasing.

We have abolished the student contribution to tuition fees for full-time students. Nearly half of all our young people now go on to higher education and Individual Learning Accounts are encouraging people to invest in their own learning.

Action for families

**The UK Government is:**

- making work pay and smoothing the transition from benefits into work:
  - through UK budget measures, including the Working Families’ Tax Credit, **families with children** will not pay income tax until their earnings exceed **£255 per week**
  - a **family with 2 children** on half-average earnings will be **£2,600 a year better off** than in 1997
- **100,000 people in Scotland will benefit from the national minimum wage**
- piloting ONE, the single point of entry to the benefits system, in the Clyde Coast and Renfrew area
Together with the UK Government we are:

› delivering the **New Deal programmes** so that everyone has a fair chance to get and keep work.

**The Scottish Executive is:**

› **abolishing the student contribution to tuition fees** for eligible full-time students from 2000/01.

› delivering and reviewing **Training for Work**, our national training programme for long term unemployed adults. 14,000 starts are planned for 2000-01, each person gaining skills and experience to become more employable. The revised programme is planned from April 2001

› supporting **lifelong learning**. Equipping our workforce for a modern, knowledge economy is a key objective. **Individual Learning Accounts** are encouraging people of all ages to invest in their own learning – 100,000 will be delivered by 2002. Guidance is being prepared to help those working in Social Inclusion Partnerships and social economy organisations to better access ILA funding

**But more needs to be done.**

**The UK Government will:**

› extend the **New Deal for the long-term unemployed** to provide a more intensive gateway to work from April 2001

› introduce a new **job grant of £100** to ease the transfer back to work

**We are going to:**

› launch a network of **learndirect scotland** learning centres to help bring learning closer to people's daily lives, whether at home, at work or in their local community. Promoted by the Scottish University for Industry, these will boost competitiveness and employability

› spend an extra **£25 million** on the **careers service**, and making its advice available to a wider age range

› establish a network of **Healthy Living Centres** to improve the health and life chances of families in deprived areas
Our vision
A Scotland in which every person beyond working age has a decent quality of life

The contribution made by Scotland’s older people has helped to lay the foundations for today’s society. They deserve to be valued and included. We want to provide dignity and security in old age.

With improving health and support, increasing numbers of older people are continuing to make a vital contribution to community life once their working days are at an end. Many of our senior citizens are involved in voluntary activities, providing family support/childcare and supporting our communities in other ways.

Our long-term targets are to:

- make sure older people are financially secure
- increase the number of older people who enjoy active, independent and healthy lives

We will do this by:

- improving access to care and health services, especially those that can be delivered in older people’s own homes
- tackling fuel poverty – making homes warmer will reduce illness and improve health for older people
- improving opportunities for older people to take part in community life, including encouraging volunteering and lifelong learning

All this will be reinforced by UK Government measures to tackle the problems of low income among our poorest pensioners and the introduction of new pension schemes to ensure that more of tomorrow’s pensioners can retire on a decent income.
Our milestones are:

- reducing the proportion of older people with low incomes
- increasing the proportion of working age people contributing to a non-state pension
- increasing the proportion of older people able to live independently by doubling the proportion of older people receiving respite care at home and increasing home care opportunities
- increasing the number of older people taking exercise and reducing the rates of mortality from coronary heart disease and the prevalence of respiratory disease
- reducing the fear of crime among older people

Progress so far

The introduction of the Minimum Income Guarantee, by the UK Government has helped 188,000 pensioners in Scotland, guaranteeing a pensioner couple an income of £121.95 per week, increasing to £140.55 in April 2001.

There are signs of improvements in national health; mortality rates from coronary heart disease are falling steadily. Quality of life is also improving for older people – older people are less worried about crime than they were four years ago.

Action for older people

The UK Government is:

- increasing the basic state pension by £5 per week for a single pensioner and by £8 per week for pensioner couples; by 2003 MIG entitlement for single pensioners will have risen to at least £100 per week and to at least £154 per week for pensioner couples.
- implementing a UK wide MIG take-up campaign to encourage eligible pensioners to claim their entitlement.
- increasing Winter Fuel Payments to £200 to households with someone aged 60 and over
- increasing support to carers through Invalid Care Allowance (ICA), extending entitlement to ICA to carers over 65, and increasing the carer’s premium paid with income-related benefits.

The Scottish Executive is:

- improving the provision of secondary prevention, treatment and rehabilitation for coronary heart disease and cancer to build on progress to date (40% and 15% reductions in CHD and cancer respectively over last 14 years)
- developing a National Physical Activity Strategy, taking account of the needs of older people
- reducing the fear of crime felt by older people by delivering Community Safety Partnerships, investing £3 million in CCTV and building Secured by Design principles into new houses developed for social rent and affordable homes

But more needs to be done.
The UK Government will:
- introduce Second State Pensions to increase the pensions of those who have been on low earnings over their lives – and to make sure carers and disabled people with broken work records can build up a pension for when they retire. It is estimated that this will benefit around 2 million people in Scotland
- create a reward for saving through the new Pension Credit which will help those with modest savings and incomes

We are going to:
- tackle fuel poverty and make sure that every Scottish pensioner has central heating by 2006. Some 70,000 pensioners are expected to benefit from a package of insulation measures and central heating systems which will be worth up to £2,500. The scheme will typically result in heating bills of about £10 a week.
- improve opportunities for older people to travel without worry by making sure that there is free off-peak bus travel for all pensioners by October 2002 and investing in rural transport to support people in isolated communities
- invest over £120 million in social care to provide: an extra 1,000 older people with extended care at home rather than in residential homes; 15,000 older people with free home care when they first leave hospital and a home maintenance programme for 10,000 older people.
every community matters

Our vision
A Scotland in which every person both contributes to, and benefits from the community in which they live

Scotland has some of the most disadvantaged communities in the UK. These are not restricted to our urban areas where concentrations of deprivation are all too obvious. Our rural communities also face many obstacles because of isolation, lack of opportunities or difficulty in accessing the opportunities that are available. Our challenge is to tackle the problems in the worst of these areas and prevent others from becoming disadvantaged.

We are also giving special attention to the needs of disadvantaged groups including ethnic minorities, women and people with disabilities.

Our long-term targets are to:
- reduce inequalities between communities
- increase residents’ satisfaction with their neighbourhoods and communities

We will do this by:
- devoting dedicated resources to initiatives that drive up standards in priority areas and for particular groups facing disadvantage
- making sure that services are organised around the needs of individuals rather than for the convenience of the agencies that deliver them
- involving communities in the renewal of their own neighbourhoods
- ensuring that mainstream programmes are directed at reducing inequalities

1 Scottish Executive, November 2000.
Our milestones are:

- reducing the gap in unemployment rates between the worst areas and the average rate for Scotland
- reducing the incidence of drug misuse in general and of injections and sharing of needles in particular
- reducing crime rates in disadvantaged areas
- increasing the quality and variety of homes in our most disadvantaged communities
- increasing the number of people from across all communities taking part in voluntary activities
- accelerating the number of households in disadvantaged areas with access to the Internet

Progress so far

In the Spending Review 2000, the social justice and housing budget was increased by 20% in real terms over the next three years. 80% of that budget is spent within the poorest fifth of Scottish neighbourhoods.

We plan to generate over £2 billion of new investment for housing renewal across Scotland, mainly in the most disadvantaged areas, by investing £350 million in New Housing Partnerships up to 2002.

Our policies are designed to empower disadvantaged communities. We have piloted People's Juries to increase the public’s say over decision-making in their areas. We are strengthening community representation on Social Inclusion Partnership boards and over £1 million is being invested in a major new programme of training to improve participation in decision-making. Under the Working for Communities Pathfinder programme we are exploring new ways of giving local people a stronger voice in ensuring services meet their needs.

In the Executive, and in our partner agencies, mainstream programmes are being examined to see what more can be done to tackle inequalities. We have produced an overarching equality strategy which provides a framework for tackling inequality and discrimination. We are putting equality issues at the centre of our policy-making, our legislation and our spending decisions.

Action for communities

Together with the UK Government we are:

- tackling unemployment in deprived areas with the highest unemployment through Action Teams to help match unemployed people to job vacancies, and an Employment Zone in Glasgow
The Scottish Executive is:

- funding 48 Social Inclusion Partnerships to tackle injustice and exclusion at a local level, in urban and rural areas. Core funding of £150 million for area and thematic Partnerships over 3 years helps to concentrate the resources of other partners in these areas.
- providing new support for enterprise and business start-ups in deprived areas and for disadvantaged groups including £1.5 million support targeted at enterprise awareness and micro-credit schemes for women.
- tackling financial exclusion by working with Scotland’s major clearing banks to provide Basic Bank Accounts that offer full direct debit and standing order capability, and by working with Money Advice Scotland to provide good quality advice and support through the Scottish Debtline.
- investing over £1 million in Working Together, Learning Together, Britain’s first comprehensive community participation skills programme for over 900 community leaders, partnership officers and agency officials.
- developing our processes for consultation with the different equality interests. We have supported the Women In Scotland Consultative Forum, and we established the Race Equality Advisory Forum as a short life group to help us shape our programme of action to tackle racism.
- increasing the number of people from all communities taking part in voluntary activities by promoting the Active Communities initiative.

But more needs to be done.

We are going to:

- help local authorities across Scotland to improve services to communities suffering deprivation with £90 million from the new Better Neighbourhoods Fund.
- improve communities by delivering measures to cut both supply and demand for illegal drugs. An extra £100 million funding over the next three years to implement the Executive’s Drug Action Plan, includes an additional £5 million for Social Inclusion Partnerships to work with Drug Action Teams on joint action to tackle drugs in disadvantaged areas.
- empower local government to serve their communities better through a new power of community initiative.
- through Scottish Homes, provide at least 18,000 new houses for social rent and low cost home ownership over 3 years, and, backed by £45 million, tackle shortfalls in socially rented housing in rural areas.
- introduce new housing legislation to attract large scale investment into homes for rent, and to put tenants at the heart of rebuilding communities.
- boost Internet access in disadvantaged areas with public ICT access and learning points.
measuring progress

By committing to measure what matters, we have the best opportunity for delivering social justice in Scotland. But it is clear that we must develop our ability to measure across all facets of poverty and deprivation – not just the ones we can measure now.

We inherited a situation in which there was very little data available for Scotland on poverty. We are tackling the most significant data gaps:

› The Scottish Household Survey was commissioned to provide reliable, up-to-date information on the composition, characteristics and behaviour of Scottish households. The sample size permits analysis of results both nationally and at a sub-Scotland level, and by 2001, analysis at local authority level will be possible. Quarterly bulletins give updates on the key elements, and the first Annual Report issued in September 2000.

› Income data. We have taken steps to extend coverage of the Family Resources Survey – which gives us the base data for the Households Below Average Income analysis – to the full Scottish mainland, and the Islands.

› Small area data. We are developing a range of data at sub-postcode sector level, including poverty, unemployment, education and population data. We are establishing a working group, inviting local authorities, Social Inclusion Partnerships, Scottish Homes, enterprise networks and health boards – as big users and generators of information – to work with us to develop Neighbourhood Statistics for the whole of Scotland.

› Disaggregated data on equality issues is limited. Wherever possible, breakdowns by gender, ethnicity and disability are included in the report and the technical volume. We have begun work on a major survey of ethnic minorities in Scotland, where we have scarcely any recent or comprehensive information. And a full research programme to support our Equality Strategy will help improve information on other aspects of equality.

› Rural poverty is a distinctive feature of exclusion in Scotland and again data is limited. A working group set up by the Minister for Rural Affairs, Ross Finnie, will, as part of a wider remit, address this data deficiency. Some of this work will link to the more general development of local data.

Further details about data availability for each milestone are in the technical volume that accompanies the main report. It is available at www.scotland.gov.uk
Conclusion

The scope of this programme of action is enormous – but so is the scale of the challenge. Our first annual report shows we are starting to make in-roads into some of the accumulated problems facing individuals, families and communities. It provides details of the key new initiatives we have put in place to offer help and support to individuals and families experiencing poverty and social exclusion today, and to prevent problems for the future.

We are starting to make progress in turning round the legacy of poverty we inherited. We are pursuing policies that will bring real and lasting improvements to the lives of people everywhere in Scotland. Our targets and milestones are our means of tracking progress year by year.

This is the first year’s data and there is still much to be done to build the responsive services we need to make the difference for those most disadvantaged. We are determined to deliver social justice in Scotland by providing opportunity for all.

Across the Executive, a wide-ranging set of policies have been developed and put in place to address social exclusion. Over time, and together with the measures being promoted by the UK Government, they amount to the most concerted attack on poverty and inequality for generations.