

## Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.



### How-to Guide

This guide offers more detailed information and advice for those who may be interested in adopting or adapting the initiative in their local area.

This document comprises the following sections (click hyperlink to skip to that section)

- [Initial Idea](#)
- [Early Development of the Project](#)
- [Accessing the Service and Engaging with Service Users](#)
- [Working with People with Lived Experience of Poverty](#)
- [Leadership, Governance and Partnership Working](#)
- [Links to Wider Policies, Strategies and Statutory Requirements](#)
- [Funding](#)
- [Staffing and Resources](#)
- [Monitoring and Evaluation](#)
- [Reach and Impact](#)
- [Learning from Experience](#)

## Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.



<b>Title</b>	Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	South Ayrshire Council.
<b>All Organisations</b>	South Ayrshire Council.
<b>Category</b>	Emerging.
<b>Poverty Impact</b>	Mitigation. Awareness-raising.
<b>Introduction to the Project</b>	
<p>Wallacetown Child Poverty Research maps family support services and develops a parental wellbeing monitoring system for families with additional support needs (ASN). The team has connected with 26 services, two early years centres, and regularly attends food banks and community events. Engagement includes sessions, wellbeing and carers events, and family learning activities. Parenting workstream efforts include distributing a new flyer, attending multiple local drop-ins and toddler groups, and progressing Solihull/Togetherness and PEEP training. The team is exploring parental wellbeing models, meeting East Lothian’s Families Together to learn from their Blossom approach for future collaborative development work.</p>	

## Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.



### Initial Idea

<b>Who had the initial idea?</b>	Gillian Carroll, Children’s Service and Planning Lead Officer.	
<b>How did the idea for the project come about?</b>		
<p>The number of children in early years with an ASN has increased year upon year, with children from the most deprived areas more likely to have an ASN. The project was developed to offer targeted support to ASN students and their families.</p> <p>Parenting an infant or child with an ASN is demanding. Through consultations with families, it became clear that families that had children with an ASN were also more likely to experience high levels of economic strain (impacting on unemployed parents in particular). The Council developed a Child Poverty Strategy in 2024 within South Ayrshire, which seeks to find solutions which support families experiencing poverty. The Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN project, is part of the Councils effort to tackle child poverty.</p>		
<b>Were plans informed by any published reports / papers / research evidence or practice from elsewhere?</b>		Yes.
ASN data from South Ayrshire Council (not publicly available).		
<b>Was anyone else involved in developing the initial idea of the project?</b>		No
<b>Were those with lived experience of poverty involved in developing the initial idea of the project?</b>		No
Not a lived experience of poverty, but Sheena is a parent of two children with ASN.		

**Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.**



<b>Was funding required to support the development of the initial idea of the project?</b>	No
<b>Were specific resources – other than funding - needed when developing the initial idea of the project?</b>	Yes
<b>Staff/Volunteer Time</b>	The Research and Implementation Officer developed the proposal for CPAF funding.
<b>Facilities / Workspace</b>	No.
<b>Equipment</b>	No.
<b>Local Knowledge</b>	Sheena has local knowledge, having been in the area for 20+ years.
<b>Food and Drink</b>	No.
<b>Did any barriers have to be overcome when developing the initial idea of the project?</b>	No
<b>Did anything in particular enable development of the initial idea of the project?</b>	No
<b>How long did it take between having the initial idea and starting the project?</b>	Not specified.
<b>Who made the decision to introduce the project?</b>	The Joint Improvement Group made the decision to progress with the project. As part of the recruitment process the job description had to go through HR for quality checks. This was an entirely new post and had to go through a grading process.

[Return to Introduction](#)

## Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.



### Early Development

Was there a pilot project or feasibility study or test of change?	No.
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[Return to Introduction](#)

## Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.



### Accessing the Service and Engaging with Service Users

<b>Are potential users referred to your Project.?</b>	No
<b>Are there ways, other than referral, that are used to make potential users aware of your Project.?</b>	No.
<p>Project presence at local food banks, at the community hub, and through stalls at local family engagement events.</p> <p>Posters are displayed in community noticeboards and local venues accessed by families. Information is shared on the South Ayrshire Connects website, housing tenants' newsletter, and on family services social media channels.</p> <p>Local schools and early years centres also share information.</p> <p>The team also connected with various professional meetings to share the project and raise awareness.</p>	
<b>What is the most common way through which users typically access your Project.?</b>	
Through relational routes such as the food bank.	
<b>Do you take steps to keep in touch / reach out to users?</b>	Yes.
By text, email and phone. We also use the GOV.TEXT bulk text messaging system.	

[Return to Introduction](#)

## Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.



### Working with People with Lived Experience of Poverty

Are those with lived experience of poverty involved in <u>delivering</u> the project?	No
Are people with lived experience of poverty involved in <u>managing</u> the project or in project <u>governance</u> ?	No
Are people with lived experience of poverty involved <u>in any other aspect</u> of the project?	Yes
Their voices are central to work of this project.	

[Return to Introduction](#)

## Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.



### Leadership, Governance and Partnership Working

<b>Who is responsible for managing the project?</b>	
Gillian Carroll.	
<b>Is this the only responsibility of the person managing the project?</b>	No.
Gillian is Children's Service Planning and Policy Lead Officer in South Ayrshire Council.	
<b>What proportion of the manager's overall workload is given over to this project?</b>	
Just a small proportion of it.	
<b>Is there a Project Steering or Advisory Group?</b>	Yes.
<b>Who is involved?</b>	Partners from Education, Early Years, Social Work, Thriving Communities and Third Sector.
<b>How does it work?</b>	This group will look at findings from Jan-April 2026 and consider actionable next steps.
<b>Are any other governance arrangements in place to review strategy and performance?</b>	Not specified.

[Return to Introduction](#)

## Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.



### Links to Wider Policies, Strategies and Statutory Requirements

<b>To the best of your knowledge, is the project aligned with national and/or local anti-poverty strategies and priorities (e.g., local authority or health board priorities)?</b>	Yes
<p>South Ayrshire Council's Local Child Poverty Strategy:  <a href="https://south-ayrshire.gov.uk/media/11829/SACPP-Child-Poverty-Strategy-2024-2029/pdf/Child_Poverty_Strategy_2024_29_final_April_digital_2024.pdf?m=1756744499190">south-ayrshire.gov.uk/media/11829/SACPP-Child-Poverty-Strategy-2024-2029/pdf/Child_Poverty_Strategy_2024_29_final_April_digital_2024.pdf?m=1756744499190</a></p> <p>Getting it Right for Every Child / UNCRC .                  South Ayrshire Local Outcomes Improvement Strategy.</p>	
<b>In your opinion, has the project benefitted from being part of this anti-poverty strategy?</b>	Yes.
<p>The project is integral to wider work being carried out in Wallacetown related to tackling child poverty which in turn, is central to the Local Child Poverty Strategy.</p>	
<b>Is the project part of any other strategy?</b>	Yes.
<p>South Ayrshire Council Children's Service Plan:  <a href="#">South_Ayrshire_Children_and_Young_Peoples_Services_Plan_2023-2026.pdf</a></p>	
<b>In your opinion, has the project benefitted from being part of this anti-poverty strategy?</b>	Yes.
<p>This work is supporting to inform the high level ambitions of our next Children's Services Plan, therefore it is currently not possible to determine the impact, but it is hoped it will be of benefit.</p>	
<b>Is the project delivering a service that is a statutory commitment?</b>	No.

[Return to Introduction](#)

**Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.**



**Funding**

<b>Is funding used to support the work?</b>	Yes.
<b>Has external funding been secured to support the work?</b>	Yes.
<b>Which organisation provided funding?</b>	Child Poverty Accelerator Fund (CPAF).
<b>What was the specific funding stream/source/scheme?</b>	Scottish Government.
<b>How much funding was secured?</b>	Scottish Government.
<b>For how long has funding been secured?</b>	£96.000.
<b>Is future funding from the same external source a possibility?</b>	No.
<b>Is future funding dependent on achieving pre-agreed outcomes or outputs?</b>	No.
<b>Has a specific sum been secured from your organisation to support this work?</b>	No.
<b>Is future funding from your organisation a possibility?</b>	No.
<b>What are the future - longer-term - prospects for this work if existing funding sources were no longer available?</b>	
Not specified.	

[Return to Introduction](#)

## Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.



### Staffing and Resources

<b>Do existing staff from your organisation contribute toward the work of this project?</b>	Yes.
<b>Role:</b> Gillian oversees the project as part of her role.	
<b>Are existing staff from the host organisation paid extra (for example, taking on extra hours) to contribute toward the work of this project?</b>	No.
<b>Have additional paid staff been employed to contribute toward the work of this project?</b>	Yes.
<b>Role:</b> Sheena Christie – Research and Implementation Officer. 12 month temporary post.	
<b>Is the post permanent or fixed term?</b>	Yes.
<b>Duration:</b> Deborah Quaey – Clerical Assistant. 12 month temporary post.	
<b>Are volunteers involved in delivering the project?</b>	No.
<b>Are specific resources – other than staff/volunteer time and money - needed to support the delivery of the project?</b>	Yes.
<b>Facilities / Workspace</b>	A community space in Newton Primary School.
<b>Equipment</b>	Two new laptops and mobile phones.
<b>Local Knowledge</b>	Sheena has local knowledge, having been in the area for 20+ years.
<b>Food and Drink</b>	Foods and drinks are covered by CPAF funding.
<b>Are any of the resources needed to deliver the project provided in-kind, rather than budgeted from project funds?</b>	No.
<b>Were new IT systems, additional software, or upgrades existing software (databases, Apps) required to deliver this project?</b>	No.
<b>Was additional training – for staff or volunteers - required to deliver this project?</b>	No.

[Return to Introduction](#)

## Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.



### Monitoring and Evaluation

<b>Do you – or other organisations - collect data on the project for monitoring or evaluation purposes?</b>		Yes.
<b>Is there baseline data to describe what things were like before the start of the project?</b>		Yes.
We have data that demonstrated that ASNs are more prevalent in areas of high deprivation and contextual data from parents that indicates that being a parent where ASN are present increases the complexity of parenting and can impact wellbeing, childcare, and employment opportunities.		
<b>Is the difference that the project is making measured or monitored by the host organisation?</b>		Yes.
<b>Who within the host organisation is responsible for monitoring the impact of the project</b>	The project is monitored by the Scottish Government (CPAF funding managers) and also through South Ayrshire Council's Children's Services Plan's Joint Improvement Group.	
<b>How often is the impact of the project monitored or measured by the host organisation</b>	Quarterly.	
<b>What methods, techniques or strategies are used by the host organisation to impact of the project</b>	Surveys and interviews.	
<b>What information is collected by the host organisation about the project?</b>		
	<b>Number of users</b>	Yes.
	<b>Profile of users</b>	Yes.
	<b>Experience of users</b>	Yes.
	<b>Outcomes for users</b>	Yes.
	<b>Anything else</b>	Yes.
Impact will be measured by the creation of tangible improvements led by families to take into our next Children's Services Plan.		

## Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.



<b>Has the data that has been collected by the host organisation been used to adapt the way the project works?</b>		No.
However, it is the intention of the project to improve practice as a result of the research findings.		
<b>Has an external organisation been employed to formally evaluate the project?</b>		Yes.
<b>Who conducted the evaluation</b>	Jamie Hamilton – A Place in Childhood.	
<b>Details of the evaluation</b>	No report yet as project is still ongoing.	
<b>What were the key findings from the evaluation</b>	N/A	
<b>Has the data that has been collected from this evaluation been used to adapt the way the project works?</b>		Yes.
Jamie has been valuable in driving the focus and ensuring that it is based on families – although hearing from practitioners has been useful, families are at the heart of the work.		
<b>Is there an intention to employ an external organisation to evaluate the impact of the project in the future?</b>		No.
<b>Is there an intention to undertake your own formal evaluation in the future to estimate the impact of the project?</b>		Yes.

[Return to Introduction](#)

**Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.**



**Impact**

<b>To what extent have the aims of the project been achieved?</b>	Making progress toward meeting Aims.
<b>What difference has the project made?</b>	
Not specified.	
<b>Have conditions or demand changed since the project was introduced?</b>	No.
<b>Has the project had the capacity to meet these changing conditions and demand?</b>	No.
<b>Has the project changed through time?</b>	No.
<b>Has the project had any unexpected or unintended outcomes?</b>	Yes.
<p>There have been referrals to key services as a result of project participation:</p> <p>Food bank and energy vouchers have been issued.</p> <p>6 referrals to information and advice hub for income maximisation.</p> <p>1 school clothing bank referral.</p> <p>1 baby bank referral.</p> <p>1 family from Girvan connected with local support.</p> <p>1 referral to 'Night Before Christmas'.</p> <p>2 data inclusion sim cards issued.</p> <p>Referral to PEEP and toddlers.</p> <p>1 young mum joined antenatal PEEP.</p>	
<b>In your opinion, is the project having an impact on tackling poverty?</b>	Yes.
<p>The project is assisting families with the support they need to improve their wellbeing and tailoring existing services to meet those family needs.</p>	

[Return to Introduction](#)

## Wallacetown Child Poverty Research for Families with a Child with ASN.



### Learning from Experience

<b>What is working well?</b>	
High level of engagement from families, local services, schools and practitioners.	
<b>What, if anything, is working less well?</b>	
N/A	
<b>What are the key learning points that you'd like to share with other practitioners?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-location of research work and community support is beneficial.</li> <li>• Focusing on relationships with families and being led by families. Formal outcome targets are not of primary importance to the work.</li> <li>• Ensure work has a lasting impact, informing the next Children's Services Plan and the Parental Wellbeing Monitoring Tool.</li> <li>• Vouchers for families to ensure their time was respected and they are partners in this work demonstrates impact. All families were given a £20 voucher for participating in the interview, questionnaire, or focus group.</li> </ul>	
<b>Are there plans to develop or expand the project in the future?</b>	Yes.
The learning will inform the parenting aspect of South Ayrshire Council's next Children's Services Plan. Families in Wallacetown have told us what impacts most on their wellbeing. They identified 10 areas and from this information we have developed a tool based on the family star model for practitioners to assess, track and support parental wellbeing. A practitioner guide has also been developed.	
<b>How easily do you think this project could be replicated in another setting?</b>	
Easily.	

[Return to Introduction](#)