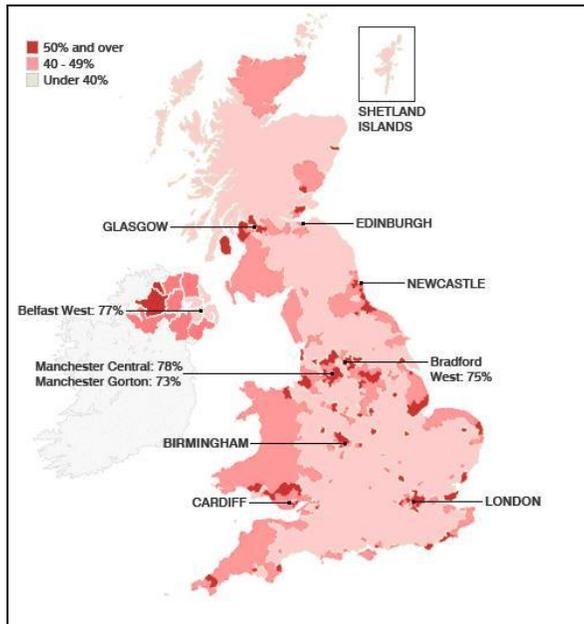


Persistent poverty in Britain – Lesson 2 Resources

Starter

Show students the map below without revealing what the data is. Ask them to identify what the map is showing and then describe the pattern shown.



Map of UK showing the percentage of children living in low income families

Source: BBC <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7642689.stm>

Main activity

Design a campaign to solve poverty in Britain.

Step 1 – Read and annotate the resources below. Pick out ideas for the campaign.

Step 2 – In groups of 4, design a campaign aimed at reducing persistent poverty in Britain. The campaign should have a name, an aim, a mission statement, realistic schemes and a description of how the media would be involved.

Plenary

Example mark scheme for 'Comment on the causes and responses to poverty in Britain' (8 marks)

Level 1 – Simplistic answer which makes general statements about the causes and responses to poverty but does not include any depth or examples to support the comment (1-4 marks)

Level 2 – A complex answer that seeks to comment on the links between the causes and responses to poverty in Britain and includes reference to specific causes in Britain and comments on the extent to which the responses have addressed poverty (5-8 marks)

This can be adapted to fit your specific examination specification.

Persistent poverty in Britain – Lesson 2 resources

The Big Issue

The Big Issue is one of the UK's leading social businesses, which seventeen years since its inception continues to offer homeless and vulnerably housed people the opportunity to earn a legitimate income.

The organisation is made up of two parts; a limited company which produces and distributes a magazine to a network of street vendors, and a registered charity which exists to help those vendors gain control of their lives by addressing the issues which have contributed to their homelessness.

The Big Issue Company publishes a weekly entertainment and current affairs magazine, which Big Issue sellers (or vendors) buy for £1 and sell for £2, thereby earning £1 per copy. Any post investment profit generated through the sale of the magazine or the sale of advertising is passed on to our charity, The Big Issue Foundation. The Foundation is also reliant upon donations from the public to fund its crucial work with vendors.

The organisation currently supports over 2900 homeless and vulnerably housed people across the country. The magazine is read by over 670,000 people every week throughout the UK.

The Big Issue was launched in 1991 by Gordon Roddick and A. John Bird in response to the growing number of rough sleepers on the streets of London. Roddick, who also co-founded The Body Shop, was inspired by a newspaper called Street News, which was sold on the streets of New York. Upon his return from America he enlisted the help of Bird, who had experience in the print trade and who had himself slept rough. The two

believed that the key to solving the problem of homelessness lay in helping people to help themselves, and were therefore determined to offer a legitimate alternative to begging.

This they did when the magazine hit the streets in September of the same year, initially as a monthly publication sold by ten vendors in London. In June 1993 the title went weekly, and regional editions soon followed.

There are currently 5 editions of the magazine which collectively cover the whole of the UK - Big Issue Scotland, Big Issue Wales, Big Issue in the North, Big Issue South West & the original Big Issue.

In November 1995 The Big Issue Foundation (a registered charity) was created with the aim of tackling the underlying issues which cause homelessness, and supporting vendors in their journey away from the streets. Since its creation the Foundation has provided services and referrals to address issues around housing, health, finances, education and employment. It also exists to support vendors in fulfilling their personal aspirations.

The Big Issue exists to offer homeless and vulnerably housed people the opportunity to earn a legitimate income by selling a magazine to the general public. We believe in offering 'a hand



up, not a hand out' and in enabling individuals to take control of their lives.

In order to become a Big Issue vendor an individual must prove that they are homeless or vulnerably housed, undergo an induction process and sign up to the code of conduct. Once they have done so they are allocated a fixed pitch and issued with 5 free copies of the magazine (or 10 in London). Once they have sold these magazines they can purchase further copies, which they buy for £1 and sell for £2, thereby making £1 per copy.

Vendors are not employed by The Big Issue, and we do not reimburse them for magazine which they fail to sell, hence each individual must manage their sales and finances carefully. These skills, along with the confidence and self-esteem they build through selling the magazine, are crucial in helping homeless people reintegrate into mainstream society.

And we don't stop there. We recognise that earning an income is first step on the journey away from homelessness, and that a variety of issues may have contributed to an individual becoming homeless. The Big Issue Foundation, a registered charity, exists to link vendors with the vital support and services which will help them address these issues and fulfil their potential.

We work exclusively with vendors, offering advice and referrals in four keys areas; housing, health, financial independence and aspirations. Our definition of success is people making positive life changes. The Foundation is committed to providing this crucial support in all the areas in which the magazine is sold. We rely almost

entirely on voluntary donations and receive minimum support from statutory and government funding hence the need for your support. Without the generosity of individual donors and charitable trusts we simply would not exist.

Messages from vendors

"I became homeless following the painful break down of my marriage and after sleeping rough in several cities I ended up in London in 2004. I turned to The Big Issue as a last resort. The Big Issue helped me to get off the streets and into a hostel and after a few months I was given the opportunity to be a Vendor Coordinator. The Big Issue has helped me sort my life out so it is great to be able to help other Vendors out."

"I am Polish. I'm sitting in a garden. It's a lovely day in April. I'm resting from study during my Easter holiday. All around me a dinner party for my boyfriend is finishing. Bliss! All this wouldn't be possible without help from The Big Issue. It was a year ago that I came to Great Britain. I'd got myself a job interview. I didn't get the job. I'd arrived in the UK and now I had no job and no means to earn a living. Luckily my boyfriend knew The Big Issue offices in Birmingham."

"In the past few months my life has started to change for the better. This is due in no small part to the efforts of The Big Issue Foundation in Bournemouth. My life has been all about drug addiction for the last thirty years but I genuinely feel I've made inroads into tackling the problem – both with help of the Foundation and through my own hard work."

Source: http://www.bigissue.com/About_Us_2.php

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation

'Transforming disadvantaged places: effective strategies for places and people' July 2008

Source: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/2255.pdf>

Key issues

Spatial polarisation of wealthy and poor people increased in Britain from 1970 to 2005. Urban clustering of poverty has also increased.

- Overall unemployment decreased between 2000 and 2005 in areas with high claimant and poverty rates, but high levels of worklessness persist in many areas affected by economic decline, often concentrated amongst social housing tenants.
- There is varied evidence on the recovery of areas affected by economic decline in terms of people's access to work, for example in former coalfields. There is no universal model for successful regeneration.
- Attachment to locality based on strong family and social networks in deprived neighbourhoods can limit people's horizons and willingness to consider opportunities elsewhere. However, strong social networks can also foster resilience within deprived neighbourhoods.
- Sustained place management in deprived neighbourhoods can help to stabilise and turn around their prospects. This approach should pay equal attention to issues affecting people as well as place-related disadvantage.
- Fragmented policy and governance arrangements, particularly in relation to social inclusion and economic development, remain key barriers to the delivery of more effective interventions.
- Debates about whether to focus on place or people interventions impose a false divide. The social equity principles of sustainable

development require effective, interlinked approaches across social, environmental and economic domains at all spatial tiers of governance.

Neighbourhood interventions

- empower residents as active partners in programmes;
- partnership structures between public, private and voluntary sectors and residents;
- spatial targeting of initiatives on the most deprived places (using multiple indices of deprivation);
- holistic, integrated interventions aiming to tackle the complex array of social, environmental and economic problems in deprived areas;
- a desire to 'bend' the mainstream spend of frontline service providers, to achieve service provision more closely aligned to resident-defined needs and priority issues of concern;
- long-term funding allocations.

Government initiatives

Working Neighbourhoods Fund

The Fund aims to promote:

- focused action on improving employability as a key means of tackling poverty;
- investment to address the causes of poverty, not its symptoms;
- early interventions for vulnerable individuals, families and disadvantaged communities;
- promotion of joint working between local partners.

'Building public support for eradicating poverty in the UK' July 2009

Source: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/public-support-eradicating-poverty-summary.pdf>

Key points

- There are very few initiatives that actively and explicitly set out to build public support for government action to eradicate poverty in the UK.
- Formal assessments of the impact of activity to engage the public with the poverty agenda are rare, but most organisations hold some information on their achievements.
- UK poverty-related activity appears to be more effective in changing perceptions and behaviour than in changing attitudes.
- Using the term 'poverty' is not very successful in getting people to engage with the issue. Focusing on a specific aspect of poverty, such as wage levels, housing conditions or debt, is more likely to work.
- When using the term 'poverty', it is important to clarify what it means and help the audience understand the realities of living in poverty. They need to identify with people below the poverty line.
- Targeting groups by a common interest, job or locality enables organisations to reach individuals who have little awareness or knowledge of UK poverty.
- Real-life stories and messages about a specific injustice with a clear solution can be effective in changing perceptions, but do not necessarily build support for sometimes unpopular anti-poverty policy measures.

What works?

- approaching the issue indirectly – presenting the poverty message in a format that does not at first appear to have anything to do with UK poverty such as the tabloid-style free newspaper 'New Londoners' celebrating diversity in London;
- focusing on a specific poverty-related issue that people find easier to understand and relate to, such as wage levels, debt or homelessness;
- using a champion – identifying someone who is passionate about and committed to tackling poverty and is willing and able to convince people to engage with the UK poverty agenda.

Review of causes and solutions to persistent poverty in Britain

Causes of persistent poverty in Britain	Impacts of persistent poverty in Britain	Solutions to persistent poverty in Britain
Unemployment	Impact on health	Building stronger communities
Low income	Impact on education	Allowances for job seekers
Inadequate benefits	Lack of social inclusion	Education for all
Ethnicity	Lack of self esteem	Female empowerment
Lack of social mobility	Lack of power	Improve social mobility through training
Government policy	Debt	Fair wage structures