

JULY 2009

Annual Review 2008-09



In May 2008 Get Fair coalition members held a meeting in Parliament with the Minister and Opposition front bench teams for Work & Pensions, chaired by the journalist Polly Toynbee. This set the agenda for the year ahead, helping to refine and develop policy themes for:

- An income that meets minimum living standards
- Affordable housing and decent neighbourhoods
- Fair access to services, without discrimination

By September, we had launched the Get Fair website and published a YouGov poll on public attitudes to poverty in the UK, gaining local and national media coverage in support of the End Child Poverty in Trafalgar Square that followed.

Soon after, the banking crisis and world recession became apparent. Get Fair raised concerns directly with the Prime Minister and Opposition party leaders in Westminster. Correspondence over that period can be found at www.getfair.org.uk/press-and-media. Get Fair policy calls were shaped by those discussions and changing circumstances of the economic recession to:

- Put planned changes to welfare benefits on hold and introduce an emergency increase in out-of-work benefits and tax credits
- Increase the number of social rented homes delivered per year to 45,000 by 2010/11
- Protect local services in the recession, with additional funding to ensure quality public services reach out to those most in need

Last month in June, Get Fair organised a lobby of MPs in their constituencies. Local groups lobbied over 110 MPs 26-27th June, with more to follow. A poverty pledge was published for MPs to sign. As a direct result, representatives from Get Fair have met the Secretary of State and Opposition shadow ministers for Work & Pensions in short succession. They have committed to continuing dialogue with Get Fair around policy development and implementation, in particular in relation to poverty targets and ideas for national minimum income levels.

We will keep Coalition partners informed of developments, through email updates and feedback at the quarterly meetings set for the year ahead.

www.getfair.org.uk