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“IT’S TIME TO GET FAIR” – MPs TO SIGN POVERTY PLEDGE

Over sixty charities and community organisations have come together to challenge MPs across the country to act now and protect the poorest in society who are hardest hit by the recession.

After weeks of the expenses scandal and having elected a new Speaker for the House of Commons to clean up their own act, MPs returning to their constituencies at the weekend face calls to sign a Poverty Pledge (26-27 June). Local groups will meet with over 100 MPs in their constituencies, raising local issues and pressing the case for change nationally. Many more MPs are being lobbied across the UK.

Vanessa Stanislas, chair of Get Fair and Chief Executive of Disability Alliance said: “With the economy in recession and rapidly rising unemployment, it’s time to get fair – that’s why we are calling on MPs to sign the Get Fair poverty pledge. Once people find themselves living below the breadline, it is virtually impossible for them to pull themselves out of poverty. Things will only get worse, not better unless action is taken. All politicians and political parties should commit to make the UK a fairer place and help bring an end to poverty.”

Get Fair is calling for immediate action to:

- **Put planned changes to welfare benefits on hold:** with a rapid rise in unemployment, current government plans will result in severe hardship for many families
- **Increase the number of social rented homes by 45,000:** house building has almost stopped and repossession rates are rising as people lose their jobs
- **Protect local services:** additional funding focused on quality public services that reach those most in need

Poverty Pledge for MPs: "I undertake to use, or support the use, of all policy powers available to parliament to meet poverty targets and include concrete measures in my party manifesto to achieve a lasting reduction in poverty in the UK."

Get Fair members include: Oxfam; Shelter; Age Concern/Help The Aged; Disability Alliance; Refugee Council; Church Action on Poverty; YWCA; Church Urban Fund www.getfair.org.uk

Leading figures from national charities and churches are available for interview. Regional and local groups may be identified for local news and interest.

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Notes to the editor:

1. GET FAIR is a coalition of over 60 national children's and older people's organisations, refugee and disability groups, housing organisations, faith and community groups. www.getfair.org.uk

2. Get Fair campaigns for:
 - An income that meets minimum living standards
 - Affordable housing and decent neighbourhoods
 - Fair access to services, without discrimination

3. Meetings with MPs are organised for 105 constituencies listed below:

Aberdeen	Exeter	Regents Park & Kensington
Alyn and Deeside	Flintshire	North
Angus	Fylde	Rhyl
Argyll and Bute	Glasgow Central	Rochdale
Barnsley Central	Glasgow Kelvin	Salford
Barnsley East	Glasgow North	Sheffield Central
Barnsley West	Gloucester	Sheffield Hallam
Birmingham Sparkbrook	Hartlepool	Sheffield Hillsborough
Birmingham Selly Oak	Hexham	Sleaford & North Hykeham
Birmingham Yardley	Hillsborough, Sheffield	South East Cornwall
Bosworth	Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch &	South West Devon
Brighton Kemp Town	Strathspey	South Worcestershire
Brighton Pavilion	Islington South	St Ives
Bristol East	Lanark & Hamilton East	Streatham
Caerphilly	Lanark and Hamilton East	Stretford & Urmston
Cambourne and Redruth	Lancaster and Wyre	Stroud
Cannock Chase.	Leeds East	Tiverton and Honiton
Cardiff Central	Leicester West	Torbay
Cardiff North	Lewisham, Deptford	Torridge and West Devon
Cardiff South and Penarth	Liverpool Garston	Totnes
Central Devon	Ludlow	Tower Hamlets
Cheadle	Manchester Central	Truro & St Austell
Chesham and Amersham	Manchester Gorton	Twickenham
Chipping Barnet	Manchester Withington	Tyne Bridge
Clwyd South	Mid Norfolk	Wansbeck
Clydebank & Milngavie	Mid Worcestershire	West Derbyshire
Clydesdale	Morecambe & Lunesdale	West Lancashire
Conwy	Newcastle Central	Wirral West
Delyn	North Ayrshire and Arran	Woodspring
Denton & Reddish	North Cornwall	Wrexham
Ealing, Southall	North Devon	Ynys Môn
East Devon	North Southwark and	
East Dunbartonshire	Bermondsey	
East Lothian	Northavon	
Edinburgh East	Ochil and Perthshire South	
Edinburgh North and Leith	Oxford East	
Edinburgh Pentlands	Oxford West & Abingdon	
Edinburgh South West	Perth	
Epsom & Ewell		