

**p**overty  
truth  
network

**Access to  
Services  
Principles**



## Summary

What does good access to services look like? These principles were developed by a group of Commissioners from the Poverty Truth Network to answer that question. They are for use by those planning and delivering public services. We know that even when everyone is trying their best, the perfect solution doesn't always exist, but hope these principles will help improve access, including for people facing the struggle against poverty.

'Nothing about us, without us, is for us,' is the starting point for Poverty Truth Commissions. It identifies that lasting social change only happens when those who experience the struggle participate in generating that change. Yet, if we want to go far we have to go together. People experiencing poverty should take this journey with decision-makers and organisational leaders. By listening to each other, sharing wisdom and building empathy, trusting relationships are formed to have difficult conversations and find the way forward. Poverty Truth Commissions are places where those transformational relationships are formed and nurtured. The Poverty Truth Network supports this work.

**Consistent and connected services from cradle to grave**

**A whole person and a whole community approach**

**Services when and where people need them that everyone can access**

**Dependable and supportive relationships**

**Everyone is treated with dignity and humanity**

# Amplify

Sometimes issues bubble up from local Poverty Truth Commissioners that need change at a national level. That is what Amplify is all about. Commissioners across the UK are working on six themes – and one of those is access to services.



Access to Services Principles

## Access to services theme group

In September 2022, Commissioners at our National Gathering selected three new themes to work on nationally. One theme was access to services, because many of us have met challenges accessing support from public services. We came together as a theme group in January 2023 and began to discuss the barriers and challenges. Over time it became clear to us that we were circling around a set of principles for how access to services could be improved. We began to turn problems into solutions. Since then we have worked together as Commissioners experiencing the struggle against poverty and Commissioners in civic and business roles to write down and refine the five principles that follow.



# Purpose and audience

We want these principles to be used by people planning and delivering public services. We know that even when everyone is doing their best, there often isn't a perfect solution, so our aim is to improve what is currently happening.

We also think that change happens best in relationship. So we encourage anyone using these principles to consider how you can work with your local Poverty Truth Commission or similar group to make change together.



# Consistent and connected services from cradle to grave



Correct information about me is shared with services relevant to my needs with my ongoing permission. This means when I speak to different services I don't have to tell my story over and over again which is emotionally hard.

When things change in my life, the support and advice on offer changes as well.

# A whole person and a whole community approach



I am listened to, respected, and accepted for who I am. There's room for me to talk about what I want and what my hopes are, regardless of my situation or circumstances!

If I'm interested, we discuss community activities and groups that I can join which will help me build friendships and meet other people in my situation.

I am involved in decision-making, sharing my knowledge, skills and experiences.

# Services when and where people need them that everyone can access



I have a choice about where and when my appointments are. Before the meeting is made someone asks me what barriers might prevent me getting there, from physical barriers like stairs to language, the cost of travel and caring responsibilities.

When needed, pop-up services come to places I already use like my local school or community centre. If I want to meet online or on the phone, I have choice about that, too.

# Dependable and supportive relationships



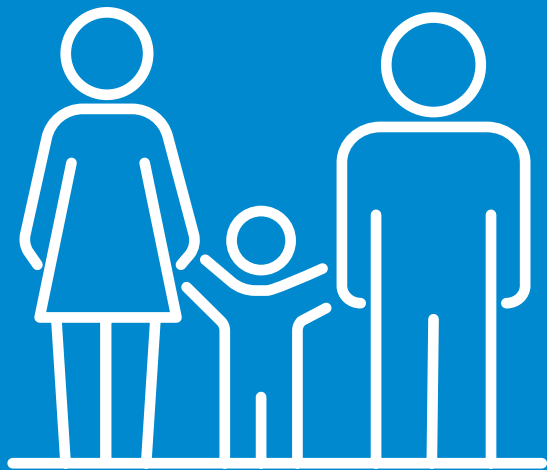
I see the same person and we grow to trust each other. We listen deeply and take one another seriously. They understand me and what is going on in my life because they get to know me and my reality.

My needs are taken on board and together we make progress. When either one of us says we'll do something, we do it.

Working together develops mutual respect and trust.



# Everyone is treated with dignity and humanity



I am always treated with compassion and without judgement.

I am included in decisions made about me and there is honesty about what my options are and what's possible.