

Bracknell Forest Council have created a document call “**Creating opportunities 2011-2014 – Breaking the Cycle – a strategy for reducing child poverty in Bracknell Forest**” and it contains pages of statistics and some ideas for dealing with the issues.

The most telling table is this one....In the report, at some point in the 2011-2014 period, there were 2385 children living in poverty in the BFC area.

From the "Creating opportunities 2011-2014" document from Bracknell Forest Council

Showing the number of children against family type. **Having both parents in full time work is the best way to minimise the number of children in poverty**

		% of Children in poverty	actual number of children 2385
Family Type	Economic Status		
Couple	Both in full time work	1	24
Lone Parent	Full time work	2	48
Couple	One full time, one part time	4	95
Lone Parent	Part-time work	6	143
Couple	One or more in part-time work	11	262
Couple	Self employed	12	286
Couple	One full time, one not working	14	334
Couple	Both not working	19	453
Lone Parent	Not working	31	739

note; 2385 represents about 10% of all BFC children

The table shows the percentages of those 2385 for each of the family types. It shows that the best way to keep children out of poverty is to have both parents working. **BUT even then, there were still some children living in poverty which highlights the fact that some jobs in the BFC area don't pay enough for a family to survive.**

In the deprivation section above, income deprivation includes having a low paid job.

From time to time the Bracknell News carries articles about Bracknell's poverty and deprivation.

From the Bracknell News, March 2024.

“One in 10 children in Bracknell Forest were living in poverty last year (so 2023), new figures show.

Figures from the Department for Work and Pensions show 2,341 Bracknell Forest children aged under 16 were living in relative poverty in the year to March 2023.

It meant 9.4% of children in the area were in a family whose income was below 60% of average household income before housing costs.

They also claimed child benefit and at least one other household benefit.

This was down from 10.9% the year before and significantly lower than the UK rate of 20.1%.

Of all the children facing poverty in Bracknell Forest, 616 were below school age.

Children’s charity Barnardo’s said youngsters “can’t be happy and healthy if they are going to bed in a cold home, on an empty stomach.”

CEO of Barnardo’s Lynn Perry MBE said: “Living in poverty means children miss out on opportunities and the activities that make childhood fun and support their development.

“The Government needs to urgently focus on reducing child poverty.

“That should start with a strategy for ending child poverty, including ending the two-child limit ‘sibling penalty’ on benefit payments and ensuring struggling families can afford essentials like food and household bills.”

Children’s commissioner for England Dame Rachel de Souza said she was “horrified” by the figures and called for welfare reform, including auto-enrolment for free school meals and more free breakfast clubs.

She said: “We need to go much further, faster to support these families, because no child should grow up in poverty in the sixth richest country in the world.”

Across the UK, there were 2.5 million children living in low-income families before housing costs.

However, the number hit a record high and was nearly double after housing costs were considered, with 4.3 million children in relative poverty.

Chief executive of the Child Poverty Action Group Alison Garnham said: “In a general election year, nothing should be more important to our political leaders than making things better for the country’s poorest kids.

“We know that change is possible, but we need to see a commitment from all parties to scrap the two-child limit and increase child benefits.

“Anything less would be a betrayal of Britain’s children.”

Overall, there were 228,739 children experiencing poverty across the South East last year, who accounted for 13.1% of all children in the region.

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Mel Stride said: “I know the last few years have been tough, with the aftershocks of Covid and the war of Ukraine driving up inflation and cost of living pressures.

“That’s exactly why we stepped in with the biggest cost of living package in Europe, worth an average of £3,800 per household, and this unprecedented support prevented 1.3 million people from falling into poverty in 2022-23.

“We’re also going further in April, by uprating benefits and pensions to support millions of people on the lowest incomes and extending the Household Support Fund to provide vital support for those most in need.”