

Closing the Opportunity Gap

Scottish Budget for 2003-2006



Healthy Scotland

Prosperous Scotland

Safer Scotland

Caring Scotland

Smart Scotland

Opportunity Scotland

Sustainable Scotland



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Making it work together

Closing the Opportunity Gap

Scotland 2002

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Scottish Executive

October 2002



None of us wants to live in a Scotland where poverty and prejudice are allowed to prevail. None of us wants a Scotland where a family's potential is determined, not by their abilities but by their postcode. And no one wants a country where a child's future is decided before it is even born.

We published our Scottish budget, *Building a Better Scotland*, on 12 September. It shows clearly how our plans for growth in the economy, improvements in public services and closing the opportunity gap go hand in hand. This document sets out in more detail, by Ministerial portfolio, with objectives and targets, how our plans will tackle poverty, build strong, safe communities and create a fair, equal Scotland where rights for all is our byword.

We will do this by concentrating our efforts – and resources – on the priorities that are important to people, regardless of where they live. And we have set real and achievable targets that are about improving people's lives, not abstract ambitions.

We will help those without work find jobs. Unemployment may be falling, but people living in Scotland's most deprived areas are still four times more likely to be out of work. That is why we will devote our energies to increasing training and employment opportunities in these communities. We will provide childcare for those parents who need it, and work with others, such as Scottish Enterprise, HIE, the Scottish Welfare to Work Task Force, trade unions and employers to ensure that all Scots get the best of opportunities. In particular we will work with others to tackle the gap between men's and women's pay.

We will work with communities to help them take care of their neighbourhoods, making sure they are safe, secure and attractive. We will do this by investing in people's homes and their environment, and we will use community planning to ensure that public services meet the needs of people, not the demands of organisations.

We will focus particular attention on helping lone-parent families flourish and looked after children overcome their difficult circumstances.

We are determined to build a country where all children are valued, where all cultures are respected and every Scot can enjoy a healthy, fulfilling life.

It is my job in government to make sure that every part of the Executive concentrates its efforts on closing the opportunity gap, and delivers the commitments in this document. I shall champion social justice through:

- › Developing specific initiatives with other Ministers to help their programmes close gaps, such as our recent package of grants for childcare costs to help lone parents get back into education.
- › Making sure we mainstream social justice in all the Executive's policy proposals and spending plans, so that they contribute to closing gaps in opportunity and outcomes for the most disadvantaged people and areas.
- › Reporting publicly on how well the Executive as a whole is doing in closing gaps.

None of this is easy or straightforward. It will take time to close the opportunity gap, and we cannot do it on our own. It is our responsibility to work with others in the public, voluntary and private sectors, and the UK Government, to win social justice for all. And it falls to each and every one of us to help build a country where the wealth we all help create is used fairly and is used to pay attention to those who need our commitment and energy most.

A better Scotland is not a slogan, or a throwaway soundbite. A better Scotland is what we will work for - because it is what the people of Scotland deserve.



MARGARET CURRAN
Minister for Social Justice

Introduction

Scottish Ministers are committed to creating a prosperous, outward-looking, confident Scotland in which all citizens can contribute fully to and share in the rewards of that prosperity. The commitment is to opportunity and growth. That vision requires investment and action right across the Scottish Executive's programmes. Success depends upon many factors. But critical among these is the extent to which people and communities across Scotland can be freed from the barriers which limit their capabilities and capacity. We live in a society of significant wealth and prosperity for many but where, despite a major improvement in recent years, 21% of children still live in poverty in absolute terms. We live in a society where employment is increasing, where there is a record number of jobs in the economy but where people living in deprived areas are four times more likely to be unemployed than people in more prosperous areas; where there are unequal education and health outcomes for people depending on where they live; and where discrimination and disadvantage still affect the lives of women, people from minority ethnic communities, disabled people and people of different sexual orientation.

All of these factors serve to hold back Scotland's progress towards prosperity for all. They prevent many of our citizens, children and adults, from living their lives to their full potential and they constrain our capacity as a country to be the best that we can be. But none of these constraints is inevitable. Working with others, Ministers and the Executive can and will tackle these issues. We have committed ourselves to dismantling the obstacles that people face in their lives and by doing so, we will unlock the prosperity that is at the heart of our vision for Scotland.

This agenda is not new. From day one we have clearly signalled our intention to tackle social injustice and inequality. Our social inclusion strategy identified long-term targets and the actions that were required across the Executive to tackle poverty and exclusion; and our equality strategy set out a clear framework for tackling inequality in all its forms. Other initiatives across the whole range of the Executive's responsibilities have followed.

Over the last three years, a great deal has been achieved. Initially, a significant barrier was a lack of information about the nature of the problems that had to be tackled. Much progress has since been made in assembling that information and this has allowed Ministers to identify and prioritise problems and to develop policies to tackle those problems.

There has been significant action on a number of fronts. In 1997, 21% of children in Scotland were living in severe poverty. By 2001 this was down to 11% in absolute terms, so real progress is being made for our poorest children. We shall continue to work to close the gap for all children who are living in poverty today. A £24 million package of investment in childcare has allowed lone parents the opportunity to enter further and higher education when previously they would simply have been denied this opportunity. There is now a pre-school place for every 3 and 4 year old whose parents want it.

There has been significant investment of £12 million over four years in refuges for women and children who are fleeing domestic violence.

The proportion of pensioners living in low income households has fallen from 28% in 1996-97 to 24% in relative terms and 14% in absolute terms in 2000-01. More than 10,000 pensioners have had central heating systems installed in their houses at no cost and 140,000 people have been given free insulation under the Warm Deal scheme. Pensioners are now able to face cold winters without the worry of whether they can afford to keep themselves warm; and every pensioner in Scotland can now enjoy the benefits of free off-peak bus travel.

These are just some examples of investments that are making real differences to real lives. They are by no means the whole story. But the Scottish Budget for 2003-06 has presented the opportunity now to sharpen the attack on poverty, inequality and discrimination. Much good work has been done across the Executive, and armed with their experience of what has already been achieved, Ministerial portfolios have prepared plans for the future with a specific focus on action to tackle the opportunity gaps which people still face.

The Scottish Budget for 2003-06 is set out in Building a Better Scotland. The following chapters in this document set out the Executive's targets, within that budget, for closing the opportunity gap. These and the actions that will be taken to meet those targets are grouped by Ministerial portfolio. They are an important commitment by Ministers and the Executive, signalling clearly our intention to tackle, and close, the opportunity gap – in everything we do.

Our targets now include, for example:

- ▶ We will give our young people the best possible start in life, because no-one wants a country in which a child's future is decided before it is even born. We will concentrate our efforts in making sure that Scotland's health, education and care services focus their resources on those children and families who need the most support. By 2006 we will have helped at least 15,000 vulnerable children under 5, through programmes such as Sure Start Scotland.
- ▶ We will make our nation healthier. It cannot be right that men living in deprived areas are more than twice as likely to die from heart disease as men living in our most affluent areas. By 2010 we want to achieve a 50% reduction in death from coronary heart disease in people under 75.
- ▶ We want our young people to realise their full potential through education and work. Over 50% of young people in Scotland now participate in further or higher education, but young people need jobs too. Our Modern Apprenticeship scheme has already proved very successful in helping young people into work and by 2006 we will increase the number of apprenticeships to over 25,000.
- ▶ We will tackle poverty and disadvantage wherever we find it. One of the most iniquitous features of modern Scotland is fuel poverty. Families cannot flourish in homes which are cold or damp and no Scots pensioner should have to choose between food and fuel. By 2006 we will reduce the number of households in fuel poverty by 30%.

Our success in tackling social injustice in recent years has been significantly attributable to our capacity to tackle complex, multi-faceted problems by working in partnership across Ministerial portfolios and, of course, with other organisations and sectors. The renewed attack on disadvantage, signalled by the commitment to close the opportunity gap, will build upon existing partnerships and partnership working. The Minister for Social Justice will exercise a specific co-ordinating role, working with Ministerial colleagues and others to assist them in developing and delivering from their own policy agendas and encouraging and facilitating joint working where appropriate. Administrative structures need not and will not stand in the way of delivering the changes that are required.

This is an ambitious agenda. Many of the obstacles which people face are deep-seated and complex. But that is not an excuse for shirking responsibility.

Ministers are absolutely committed to serving everybody in Scotland – to giving everybody the chance to fulfil their potential. That is what is meant by closing the opportunity gap. The following chapters show in practical detail what will be done.

Closing the Opportunity Gap: Justice

Crime and the fear of crime still blight too many Scottish communities, and the communities disproportionately affected are largely those which are the most disadvantaged. We are determined that this should change. It cannot be tolerated anywhere in Scotland that people should be unwilling to leave their homes for fear that they may be attacked or that their houses and possessions are at risk. Everyone has a right to live a life free from concern about crime or victimisation and to have equal access to justice, whatever their personal circumstances. We are committed to delivering this.

Our policies aim to tackle crime head-on, wherever it occurs; to support and help the victims of crime; to work with offenders, including those in prison who are some of the most excluded people in our society, to address needs and reduce the likelihood of their re-offending; and to ensure that everybody, whatever their individual circumstances, is able equally to enforce their legal rights.

What we are already doing

In our work so far, we are helping to close gaps in the following ways:

Crime

- › Providing for record numbers of police officers to deal with violence, drug crime and housebreaking.
- › The police are working with others in local Community Safety Partnerships.
- › Increasing the protection available to communities from anti-social behaviour through extending the powers of the courts relating to Anti Social Behaviour Orders.

Victims of crime

- › Through the Scottish Strategy for Victims, increasing by 12% access to support services, such as Victim Support Scotland, for those victims who want support.

Civil Justice: Making Scotland Fairer

- › Piloting new ways of delivering quality legal information and advice to asylum seekers and other vulnerable groups.

Offenders

- › The Scottish Prison Service is addressing the problems faced by many offenders through poor health, particularly because of drug use, low educational attainment and poor employment prospects.
- › Strengthening throughcare services for prisoners to help with their resettlement on release.
- › Promoting more, and more effective, community disposals with the aim of reducing re-offending.

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As a result of the Building a Better Scotland announcements, we plan:

- › To provide an additional £4/6/10 million for community justice services, including rolling out Drug Testing and Treatment Orders across Scotland.
- › To make available a further £5/6/9 million for legal aid, to support wider access to justice.
- › To increase by 40% programmes for prisoners to improve their life skills and employment prospects.

How will we know that we are closing the opportunity gap?

We are setting objectives and targets that include:

OBJECTIVE: To make Scotland a place where people are safer and feel safer

Target: Reduce serious violent crime by 5% by 2004, with a further reduction to be agreed for 2006.

Target: Increase seizures of hard drugs by 25% by 2004, with a new target to be agreed for 2006.

Target: Reduce fear of crime or the seriousness of people's worries about crime.

OBJECTIVE: To reduce offending and provide more and more effective non-custodial penalties

Target: Increase the number of community disposals from 14,000 to 17,000 per year by 2006, with priority for women, young people and drug users.

OBJECTIVE: To make Scotland fairer through a modern, efficient and user-friendly/accessible civil justice system

Target: Increase by 5% the number of people getting access to justice through legal aid and other avenues.

Target: To make a statutory debt arrangement scheme accessible to everyone burdened by multiple debt who is eligible to participate by the end of 2005-06.

Closing the Opportunity Gap: Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service

The work of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service is critical to the Executive's drive to reduce crime and to help the victims of crime. Persistent offending, drug dealing and race crime affect all communities in Scotland, but disadvantaged communities and individuals more so than others. Our intention is to reduce the burden of crime falling on these communities; to prosecute crime – both serious and petty – effectively; to bolster confidence in the whole justice system, particularly in cases which involve race crime so that minority ethnic groups, and the community as a whole feel that the threats which they face are being tackled and dealt with. And while carrying through this agenda, we will ensure that all victims of crime are treated with dignity and respect.

What we are already doing

In our work so far, we are helping to close gaps in the following ways:

Crime

- › Modernising and reforming the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, so that it can investigate and prosecute quickly and effectively, to benefit communities and individuals whose lives are afflicted by crime.
- › Establishing an independent Inspectorate which will review the handling of race crime cases.

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As a result of the Building a Better Scotland announcements, we plan:

- › To provide increased resources for speedier and more effective prosecutions through more frontline lawyers and better IT systems in real-time links to criminal records. This will benefit communities and individuals whose lives are affected by crime.
- › To set up an enhanced Criminal Confiscation Unit and a new Civil Recovery Unit to investigate and recover drugs and fraud proceeds. Monies recouped can be targeted on community initiatives, including those addressing drug problems.

How will we know that we are closing the opportunity gap?

We are setting objectives and targets that include:

OBJECTIVE: To improve the delivery of justice by timely, efficient and effective investigation and prosecution of crime

Target: To agree by December 2002, targets covering the progress of cases through the criminal justice system.

Target: To take action in 75% of crime reports within six weeks by 31 March 2005 and within five weeks by 31 March 2006.

OBJECTIVE: To secure public confidence, including that of minority ethnic communities, in the prosecution system

Target: To conduct a public survey, to monitor trends in public confidence in the prosecution service, commencing in 2003-04, with improvement targets to be implemented by 31 March 2004.

Target: The new Inspectorate to conduct an independent review and report on the prosecution of racial crime to be published by 31 December 2005 and recommendations to be implemented during the following Spending Review period.

OBJECTIVE: To give priority to the prosecution of serious crime, including drugs trafficking and persistent offenders

Target: To implement recommendations of Quality and Practice Review Unit review of High Court prosecution relating to investigation and preparation of High Court cases by 31 March 2005 and implement fully those relating to the management of High Court cases at Court, which will be relevant to the review by Lord Bony, in the next Spending Review period.

Target: To serve indictments in 80% of Sheriff and Jury cases that involve bail within nine months of first appearance on petition by 31 March 2005.

Closing the Opportunity Gap: Education and Young People

Our ambition is to ensure that everybody living in Scotland has the opportunity to achieve their maximum potential in their lives. This is vitally important for our children. We know that people's whole lives can be shaped by their experiences in childhood; that early opportunity or lack of it can set the course of a person's life. So we are determined to end child poverty.

We are determined to provide a school system that allows all children in Scotland to enjoy the same educational opportunities – not limited by where they live, by their family circumstances or by any special needs they may have. We are determined to foster self-esteem, respect for others and positive attitudes to learning so that all children are able to make the most of their potential. We are determined to set them on a path of healthy living, helping them towards balanced diet, opportunities for exercise and living habits that will serve them well for the rest of their lives. We are determined to protect children who are exposed to abuse and children who are drifting towards crime. We are determined that children who, for whatever reason require to be looked after by the state, should have as much chance of a fulfilled childhood as any other child.

Children are Scotland's future. All children have a part to play in that future. We are going to make sure that they all have the same opportunities to do so.

What we are already doing

In our work so far, we are helping to close gaps in the following ways:

Supporting children

- › Driving forward better integrated services for, particularly, the most disadvantaged children through initiatives such as the Changing Children's Services Fund, under the leadership of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Children's Services, chaired by the First Minister.
- › Early years intervention (through, for example, Sure Start Scotland and the childcare strategy). Lone parents in particular can benefit from the expansion of support for the childcare strategy as well as from the provision of nursery places for all 3 and 4 year olds. Childcare is a key factor in enabling lone parents to get back into work, which in turn is the most effective intervention to reduce child poverty and disadvantage. We are committed to providing extra out of school places for 100,000 children by 2003.
- › Support for looked after children. This includes introducing new resources for throughcare and aftercare: helping young people to move into independent adult living. It also includes resources to improve the educational attainments and qualifications of looked after children.
- › Support for children on the child protection register.

Schools

- › Planning to make significant improvements to the quality of school meals, remove the stigma attached to free school meals and increase take-up.
- › Support for children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- › Taking forward the recommendations of the Discipline Task Group.
- › Rolling out the new community schools approach, learning from the pilot projects. The aim is that all schools will have adopted the new community schools approach by 2007.
- › Established the Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit to support all schools in becoming health promoting schools.

Youth crime

- › Tackling youth crime through the Executive's Ten-Point Action Plan.

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As a result of the Building a Better Scotland announcements, we plan:

- › To provide £2.5/9/10.5 million for care and throughcare of looked after children, and to improve their educational attainment.
- › To continue the Changing Children's Services Fund to 2006 at an enhanced level.
- › To provide £16.5/21.5/25.8 million to roll out the new community school approach to all schools in Scotland.
- › To provide an extra £1.1/19/21 million to further improve inclusion and access to education for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- › To provide a further £8/24/33 million to implement the Action Plan to tackle youth crime.

How will we know that we are closing the opportunity gap?

The Education Department's priorities are central to closing the gap for children and young people. We are setting objectives and targets that include:

OBJECTIVE: Closing the gap by: putting children and young people and their families first; ensuring they are safe and do not threaten the safety of others; promoting equality, inclusion and diversity; and developing values and citizenship

Target: By 2006, ensure that at least 15,000 vulnerable children under 5, every looked after child, every pupil with special educational needs and every child on the child protection register have an integrated package of health, care and education support which meets their needs.

Target: By 2006, the number of persistent young offenders will be 10% less than in 2000-01.

Target: By 2006, reduce the gap between the average attendance levels in schools serving areas of high and low deprivation by 10%, and by another 10% by 2008.

Target: By 2006, increase the nutritional value and presentation of school meals and increase take-up, especially among pupils eligible for a free school meal.

OBJECTIVE: Building capacity by: establishing an effective framework for learning; investing in infrastructure; and ensuring the workforce has the capacity to deliver high quality services

Target: Full implementation of the national agreement on teachers' pay and conditions ("A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century") by 2006.

Target: Provision of a modern, high quality learning environment through the completion of 200 either new or substantially refurbished schools by 2006.

Target: Rollout of the new community school and health promoting school approach across every local authority by 2006 and to every school by 2007.

OBJECTIVE: Ensuring Excellence by: maximising achievement and attainment; and providing a basis for Learning for Life

Target: Increase by at least 5% the proportion of pupils achieving expected 5-14 levels relevant to their stage in primary and secondary school, and at least five passes at SCQF level 5 (or better) by the end of S6, by 2006.

Target: Reduce by at least 15% the proportion of pupils failing to reach level C in P7, level D in S2, and five passes at SCQF level 4 (or better) by the end of S6, by 2006.

Closing the Opportunity Gap: Tourism, Culture and Sport

Culture and sport can be powerful tools in helping people marginalised by society for whom other approaches have failed. Music, theatre, art and many other such activities play a major part in people's lives, whether they participate, watch or listen. They can act as an opportunity for self-expression and developing personal confidence, they can help people develop social skills, they can provide jobs and perhaps most important of all, they can give pleasure. Sport also provides huge opportunities for participation by all sections of society, improving people's health, giving them new interests and often providing positive alternatives to anti-social behaviour.

So sport and culture can provide bridges for people who face disadvantage to develop new opportunities for themselves and the communities they live in. We are therefore determined to increase the opportunities and access for everybody to participate in such activities.

What we are already doing

In our work so far, we are helping to close gaps in the following ways:

Tourism

- › Tourism plays a vital role in the local economy of many rural communities, providing employment and drawing visitors to the area.

Culture

- › A key priority of the National Cultural Strategy is to maximise the social benefit of culture, through widening access, promoting diversity and addressing equality issues. The Strategy includes promoting culture and the arts to help regenerate communities and to assist individuals to develop personal self-confidence, new skills, team working, good health and employability.
- › Over 30 Social Inclusion Partnerships now have arts projects supported under the Scottish Arts Council's Social Inclusion Scheme.
- › Funding for the school cultural co-ordinators programme will bring significant benefits to children from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- › Historic Scotland provides free access to all its sites for one weekend of the year to encourage visits by those who might otherwise feel excluded; and over 60,000 school children benefit from free school visits to Historic Scotland properties.

Sport

- › The sport strategy for Scotland, Sport 21, has targets for increasing the number of people with disabilities, women and young girls, people who live in areas of economic and social disadvantage, rural communities and people from minority ethnic communities who participate in sport.
- › sportscotland is working with all Social Inclusion Partnerships to ensure that there is an appropriate sports component in their programmes.
- › Funding for the School Sport Development programme and the Active Primary School programme is already bringing particular benefits to children and young people suffering poor health as a result of economic and social disadvantage.

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As a result of the Building a Better Scotland announcements, we plan:

- › To increase support (£0/3.85/6.95 million) for cultural activities, with an objective to widen participation.
- › To increase funding for the Active Primary School and School Sports Development programmes from £1.3 million per annum to £24 million over the next 3 years (£2/10/12 million).

How will we know that we are closing the opportunity gap?

We are setting objectives and targets that include:

OBJECTIVE: To support social inclusion by ensuring the widest possible involvement in cultural, social and sporting opportunities

Target: By 2006, to increase the numbers of under-represented groups, especially children and young people, taking part in cultural and sporting activity by 5%.

Target: By 2006, to increase the number of cultural and sporting programmes in areas of economic and social disadvantage and the number of partners engaged in supporting these programmes by 10%.

OBJECTIVE: To develop Scotland's tourism potential through Historic Scotland and VisitScotland and in partnership with relevant organisations

Target: By 2004, to restore visitor numbers and spending to the levels before the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak and the September 11th terrorist attack.

Target: By 2005, to have 75% of accommodation bookable through the Internet.

In addition, all of the bodies for which the Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport is responsible have their own, more detailed, closing the gap targets, such as those in Sport 21, aimed at helping to deliver the Executive's targets.

Closing the Opportunity Gap: Health and Community Care

The creation of the National Health Service nearly 60 years ago did a great deal to close the gap in the health care available to people throughout the United Kingdom. But it did not eradicate health inequalities, either in terms of the health of different sections of the population, or their access to health services. Gaps remain that are unacceptable. People's health should not depend on where they live or their socio-economic status. So we are aiming to create a step change to improve the health of the people of Scotland.

We will do this by tackling the causes of ill-health, including diet, a lack of physical activity the environment, smoking and excessive alcohol consumption. We will address inequalities in health, many of which are linked to poverty and deprivation. This includes addressing issues of access to health care for everybody. We will make children and young people a key priority, because health in childhood has a profound impact on health and wellbeing in later life. And above all we will put the individual patient at the centre of everything we do – a health service for the people.

What we are already doing

In our work so far, we are helping to close gaps in the following ways:

Allocating resources fairly

- › Allocating resources to NHS Boards using a formula that matches money to relative health needs. This ensures that the NHS Boards with significant areas of deprivation receive additional resources and takes account of the extra costs of delivering healthcare in remote and rural areas.

Improving health

- › Providing a clear direction to NHS Boards to ensure resources are used to tackle inequalities, through addressing life circumstances, lifestyles and health priorities such as cancer, coronary heart disease and mental illness (much of which is preventable). We are developing an integrated approach to health improvement that will focus on the most disadvantaged groups, who are more likely to experience unhealthy lifestyle choices.

Children and Families

- › Ensuring children and families have equal and easy access to comprehensive and combined health care that is integrated with support from other agencies. We are focusing health improvement action. For example by promoting breastfeeding, improving children's diet and levels of activity, and by reducing smoking of parents and pregnant women.

Focusing on patients and the public

- › Putting a patient and public focused approach to health at the core of health services and health policy development. This principle emphasises the need for local services to reflect and be responsive to need, including the needs of specific groups and communities. Two specific examples include the NHS implementation of a 3-year programme to take account of minority ethnic communities' health (Fair for All) and the health needs of homeless people being tackled by a vigorous programme of local action plans, supported by a national co-ordinator.

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As a result of the Building a Better Scotland announcements:

- › Additional resources of £23/50/100 million across the Executive will be used to improve health, for example through integrated action in children's early years, raising the level of physical activity for school children, improving the nutritional content of school meals. In addition resources will be used to promote healthy eating generally, to encourage more people to stop smoking and to reduce alcohol problems.
- › Investment of £40 million over 3 years to improve coronary heart disease and stroke treatment, care and prevention, where much of the disease burden is centred around disadvantaged communities.
- › Investment of at least £36 million to modernise and improve GP and dental facilities, with a particular emphasis on disadvantaged areas.

How will we know that we are closing the opportunity gap?

We are developing indicators to monitor progress in reducing health inequalities and allow resources to be better targeted. These indicators will cover lifestyle such as smoking and diet, and a range of health conditions including coronary heart disease and cancer. They will measure progress made in tackling health inequalities in children, younger people, adults, and older people. Key indicators of inequalities in health will be included in the framework for monitoring progress made by NHS Boards.

We are setting objectives and targets that include:

OBJECTIVE: Work towards a step change in life expectancy for Scots, particularly disadvantaged members of the community, including children and older people

Target: Achieve a 50% reduction in death from coronary heart disease in people under 75 between 1995 and 2010.

Target: Achieve a 20% reduction in death from cancer in people under 75 between 1995 and 2010.

Target: Achieve a 50% reduction in death from cerebrovascular disease (stroke) in people under 75 between 1995 and 2010.

Target: Achieve a reduction in smoking from 35% to 33% between 1995 and 2005 and to 31% by 2010.

Target: Achieve a reduction in the incidence of adults exceeding weekly drinking limits for men from 33% to 31% between 1995 and 2005 and to 29% by 2010 and for women from 13% to 12% between 1995 and 2005 and to 11% by 2010.

Closing the Opportunity Gap: Enterprise and Lifelong Learning

Employment, or the lack of it, lies at the heart of many of the opportunity gaps which people face. Having a job increases the economic wellbeing of individuals and their families. It boosts their self-esteem, often improving their health and can offer new social and cultural opportunities. Employment in Scotland has increased significantly in recent years but inequalities remain. A person is four times more likely to be unemployed if they live in a deprived area than if they live elsewhere in Scotland. At the same time, we have vacancies waiting to be filled but cannot find the people to fill them. Key to getting a job is having the right skills and we are working to push up the skills of Scotland's most poorly paid, unskilled workers. Our targets are to increase participation in education and training, particularly for disadvantaged groups; working with the UK Government to reach the many people who, for a range of reasons find themselves a long way from being job-ready. We are also determined to tackle the range of other obstacles that can stand in the way of a person getting a job – such as childcare, ill-health, or lack of transport. The prosperity of Scotland depends upon our making best use of everyone's talents. We are determined to allow everyone the opportunity to fulfil their potential and contribute to that prosperity.

What we are already doing

In our work so far, we are helping to close gaps in the following ways:

Education

- ▶ Piloting Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs) which provide financial support to encourage young people from low income households to remain in post-compulsory education in school or college.
- ▶ Careers Scotland is now part of the Enterprise Networks and has a target of reducing 16-19 year olds not in employment, education and training.
- ▶ Widening access to further education. This includes: boosting the number of students who have their fees waived; funding increased by £7.5 million as part of the £24 million Child Poverty package referred to on page 18 of this document, to provide childcare for 6,000 students: specifically targeting those facing greatest financial hardship, including lone parents; providing a further £2 million each year to promote ethnic diversity by providing non-advanced courses, principally English language, for asylum-seekers and others.
- ▶ Widening access to higher education. This includes funding to create 2,800 additional places between 1999 and 2003, targeted at those from under-represented groups; funding to institutions recruiting students from under-represented groups, disabled students and part-time students; a part-time fee waiver scheme for low-income students; bursaries for students from low income families; and financial support for students with dependants, lone parents to help with childcare costs (£8.5 million over 3 years as part of the £24 million Child Poverty package referred to on page 19), and disabled students who need specialist equipment.

Training

- ▶ Training programmes provided by Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise cover a range of schemes tackling relatively disadvantaged groups through Training for Work; local action plans in response to major redundancies and in the New Futures Fund linked to the New Deal.
- ▶ Improving the skills of unskilled workers, including through Modern Apprenticeships.

Jobs

- ▶ Targeting Regional Selective Assistance (RSA) at Scotland's Assisted Areas, thereby addressing areas of relatively high disadvantage and unemployment. New RSA initiatives include a direct linkage to the New Deal programme.

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As a result of the Building a Better Scotland announcements, we plan:

- › To provide an additional £0/8/26 million to extend EMAs to cover the whole of Scotland.
- › To provide extra funding of £3/40/78 million for further education which will enable colleges to expand their activities and continue to support those from disadvantaged groups financially and in other ways.
- › To provide a further £5/10/10 million for Modern Apprenticeships.

How will we know that we are closing the opportunity gap?

We are setting objectives and targets that include:

OBJECTIVE: Closing the opportunity gap on employment and learning

Target: Increase support to 16-19 year olds from low income families to stay on at school and/or FE college, thereby raising the participation and retention rates of this group by at least 5% by 2007/08.

Target: Reduce the proportion of 16-19 year olds not in education, training and employment by 2006.

Target: Increase the proportion of participants in higher education from socially and economically disadvantaged groups by 2006 while maintaining retention rates.

Target: Close the gap in unemployment rates between the worst 10% of areas and the Scottish average by 2006.

Target: Through the RSA scheme, assist projects linked to the planned creation and safeguarding, in needier areas of Scotland, of 6000 jobs per annum, during each year to 2006.

OBJECTIVE: Improve the skill base of Scotland to be better prepared to meet the demands of the knowledge economy

Target: Increase Modern Apprenticeships to over 25,000 in employment and training by 2006, targeting under-represented groups.

Target: Increase the number of people in employment undertaking training.

Closing the Opportunity Gap: Social Justice

Social Justice underpins the whole range of Executive policies. It is entirely concerned with closing the opportunity gaps faced by deprived communities and disadvantaged groups. It encapsulates the Executive's core beliefs that child poverty is unacceptable and must be eradicated; that everybody should have the chance of a decent, warm home; that people should be supported in building for themselves strong, safe communities in which to live and work; that inequality and discrimination have no place in Scottish society; that public services are for all and that nobody should have to put up with sub-standard services; and above all that everyone in Scotland, young and old, families, communities, should be treated fairly, should be treated with respect and should be both able and encouraged to fulfil their potential.

The portfolio delivers at its own hand measures to close the opportunity gap and it draws together and focuses the actions taking place across the Executive and described elsewhere in this document.

What we are already doing

In our work so far, we are helping to close gaps in the following ways:

Lone parents

- › We have invested £24 million to help lone parents get into further and higher education by providing help with childcare, which is one of the biggest barriers to returning to work or education.

Housing

- › We are supporting transfers of council housing to community ownership, which unlock billions of pounds to repair and improve the housing stock. Community ownership also gives tenants much more involvement in the future of their homes and communities, so helping to make them more sustainable.
- › We are applying "Secured by Design" features to new and improved housing that we fund, to reduce the fear of, and opportunity for, crime.
- › Since 2001, more than 10,000 pensioners have received free central heating and 140,000 people have got free insulation under the Warm Deal scheme.
- › We are on track to deliver our commitment of removing the need for people to sleep rough on Scotland's streets, thus addressing the needs of one of the most disadvantaged groups in our society.

Community Regeneration

- › Working through Social Inclusion Partnerships and the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund. By funding local partnership working, developing social capital and providing targeted services in deprived communities, we are working to improve the outcomes delivered by services that are our priorities for action: health, education, crime, jobs and transport.
- › We have published our Community Regeneration Statement to promote agencies working together through community planning partnerships and delivering better and more responsive services where these are most needed.

Voluntary Sector

- › We are working in partnership with the voluntary sector and supporting it within the framework established by the Compact between government and the sector. Volunteers and voluntary organisations are key elements in a healthy, inclusive society.

Equalities

- › We are implementing our Equality Strategy across all the Executive's portfolios and policy areas. We are working in partnership with the Equal Opportunities Commission, business community, trade unions and advice bodies to reduce the pay gap between men and women and will continue to support the Close the Gap initiative.
- › We are promoting awareness of race equality through a major public awareness and education campaign beginning this autumn.
- › We will work in partnership with disability groups to raise public awareness on disability issues, in particular during European Year of Disabled People in 2003.

Scottish budget for 2003-06

As a result of the Building a Better Scotland announcements, we plan:

- › To help people in deprived areas into work by providing £0/10/10 million to fund childcare as part of a package of intensive employment support. This will help us work towards our long term target to defeat child poverty, through helping parents into employment and training.
- › To provide a further £0/5/5 million to increase the number of homes that will get free central heating to over 60,000 by 2006, through targeting the over 80s.
- › To invest £5/15/15 million to support the provision of alternative accommodation and support services to replace Glasgow's outdated homeless hostels, with further investment of £2/5/5 million being made from the health budget.
- › To tackle anti-social behaviour and poor quality of the environment and help local people build safe strong communities by investing £0/15/15 million in neighbourhood wardens, support schemes and other local initiatives. This programme will contribute to achieving the social justice target of increasing residents' satisfaction with their neighbourhoods and communities and the social justice milestone of reducing crime rates in deprived areas.
- › To provide funding for stock transfer for a further 70,000 households, to enable them to live in a warm damp free and structurally sound home.
- › To spend £750 million over the next 3 years to fund improvement or replacement of poor housing stock and to provide access to decent and affordable housing for homeless people and those on low income.
- › To invest £0/8/12 million to accelerate the reclamation of vacant and derelict land in Glasgow, North Lanarkshire and Dundee.

How will we know that we are closing the opportunity gap?

Everything that the Social Justice portfolio does is about closing gaps in innovative ways that complement and reinforce what is being done in other Executive programmes. We are setting objectives and targets that include:

OBJECTIVE: Delivering good quality, sustainable and affordable housing for everyone

Target: By 2006, increase the supply and quality of Scotland's housing stock by approving 18,000 new and improved homes for social rent and low-cost home ownership.

Target: By 2006 reduce the number of houses with poor energy efficiency by 20%.

Closing the Opportunity Gap

OBJECTIVE: Regenerating our communities, through our Better Communities in Scotland strategy to make core public services as effective as possible in deprived areas and build social capital for individuals and communities, to increase the opportunities open to them

Target: We will demonstrate that we are closing the opportunity gap for disadvantaged communities in respect of key outcomes for education, health, justice, transport, housing and jobs.*

Target: By 2006, return to productive use (i.e. for housing, economic or leisure purposes) an additional 100 hectares of vacant or derelict land.

Target: By 2006, support local authorities to develop or implement proposals for transferring 70,000 houses to community ownership, subject to the wishes of councils and tenants.

OBJECTIVE: Tackling homelessness and providing good quality housing management and support services

Target: By 2006, substantially reduce the number of households becoming homeless more than once in a year.

OBJECTIVE: Ending fuel poverty by 2016

Target: All private sector houses occupied by elderly people and all housing associations and local authority houses to have central heating by 2006.

Target: By 2006 reduce by 30% the number of households in fuel poverty.

* We will measure whether we are closing the opportunity gap using a series of indicators based on portfolio targets. In each case, we will compare the outcome in the most disadvantaged areas with the national average to establish the extent of the gap and measure change over time. The baseline year will be 2003-04 and the indicators that we intend to use are:

Education

Children achieving at least basic educational qualifications.

Health

Death from coronary heart disease in people under 75.

Mothers who smoke during pregnancy.

Justice

Levels of house-breaking.

Transport

Serious and fatal road accidents involving children.

Access to a local bus service.

Housing

Homes with poor energy efficiency.

Jobs

Unemployment rates.

16-19 year olds who are not in education, training or employment.

Children in workless households.

Closing the Opportunity Gap: Transport

Everybody in Scotland in some way relies on our transport infrastructure. People travel to work, they do business across Scotland, they visit family and friends. And for many, public transport links are a necessity – for those living in island communities, of course, but also for the many who do not have access to a car but who nevertheless need to travel in order to live their daily lives. And the requirement is, for all these people, that the public transport systems they use are safe, reliable, serve the needs of users and are affordable. Poor or expensive transport systems can be instruments of social injustice; good systems can help close opportunity gaps. Our intention is to develop transport systems that meet the needs of everybody living and working in Scotland.

What we are already doing

In our work so far, we are helping to close gaps in the following ways:

Providing services

- › Using Public and Integrated Transport Funds to make step change improvements so that the services people need for work, health, shopping and recreation are available to them.
- › Subsidised bus services and rural transport measures to improve bus services generally, and off-peak rural services in particular.
- › Providing affordable life-line ferry services such as Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services, which are critical to people's participation in employment, education and training opportunities.

Support for disadvantaged groups

- › Enhancing existing concessionary fares schemes to allow for free local bus travel within existing scheme boundaries for pensioners and disabled people outwith the morning peak.
- › Work through the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland to improve access to transport for disabled people, to open up a job, education and recreation opportunities.

Scottish Budget for 2003-06

As a result of the Building a Better Scotland announcements, we will continue to close the gap, working to provide:

- › wide access to good public transport services for the significant proportion of the Scottish population for which public transport is its main or sole mode of transport; and
- › good access by road and ferry to the remoter parts of Scotland which would otherwise suffer disadvantage compared to more populated areas.

In particular we will:

- › Invest in new transport infrastructure through the Integrated Transport Fund.
- › Protect fares and enhance services as we let new ferry contracts.
- › Through the new Scottish Passenger Rail Franchise, build on existing improvements and accessibility to rail travel and the development of viable rural communities.
- › With additional funding for British Waterways, encourage social and rural regeneration throughout the canal network.
- › Through increasing support for Highlands and Islands Airports Limited, provide a base from which air services are maintained and developed for the economic and social benefit of the communities served.

How will we know that we are closing the opportunity gap?

We are setting objectives and targets that include:

OBJECTIVE: To promote social inclusion by improving access to public transport and by maintaining and enhancing the lifeline links

Target: Traveline Scotland to answer at least 1 million enquiries per annum by 2006; Transport Direct portal to achieve at least 1.5 million visits per annum by 2006; and for performance and output standards to be met.

Target: Increase passenger numbers passing through HIAL airports by 5% by 2006.

Target: Increase the quality and quantity of lifeline ferry services and ensure 98% of planned sailings actually sail and 98% arrive on time by 2006.

OBJECTIVE: To support sustainable development by promoting more efficient transport networks and more sustainable modes of transport, having regard to the overarching principles of minimising resource use, energy and travel

Target: Increase rail passenger journeys on the Scottish rail network by a further 5% by 2006.

Target: Increase local bus passenger journeys by 5% by 2006.

OBJECTIVE: To improve road safety and reduce road accident casualties

Target: Reduce the number of serious and fatal road accident casualties by 40% by 2010 and by 50% for children over the same period, compared with the 1994-98 annual averages.

Closing the Opportunity Gap: Environment and Rural Development

Rural communities and people living in them can face similar challenges to people living in deprived areas in our towns and cities. And opportunities can be frustrated by other factors such as remoteness, gaps in rural services provision, and difficulties in accessing services. People living in rural areas can feel cut off from the chances that they see elsewhere in Scotland. But rural areas make up most of Scotland and have an important part to play in shaping Scotland's economy, and its society. Executive policies are therefore aimed at increasing prosperity and quality of life for communities in rural Scotland, making sure that they remain viable and allowing the people living in them the same opportunities as people living elsewhere in Scotland.

Environmental issues affect us all. They are not just about preserving and enhancing our natural heritage, important though that is. They are also concerned with the environment in which everyone of us has to live, whether in an inner-city, a peripheral housing scheme or a remote croft. It is not acceptable for people to have to live their lives breathing polluted air or that their children are forced to play in streets, scarred by neglect. We are committed to tackling the environmental injustices that can afflict people's lives – wherever they live.

What we are already doing

In our work so far, we are helping to close gaps in the following ways:

Jobs

- › Supporting farming, fishing and forestry to help sustain around 60,000 jobs in our rural communities.
- › Our implementation of the Scottish Forestry Strategy is helping to ensure that forestry continues to provide jobs in rural Scotland. Currently, some 10,000 people are employed in forestry and primary wood processing in Scotland.
- › Natural Heritage activities are also resulting in increasing employment in the management, protection and improvement of the National Heritage: an estimated 6,700 full-time equivalent jobs. Employment is also being created in related sectors such as tourism, recreation, manufacturing, local food and craft activities.

Environment

- › Cleaning up the environment, for example, measures to improve air quality targeted on certain urban areas will help to reduce asthma and cardio-vascular disease, with benefits for children and older people respectively.
- › Reducing reliance on landfill for waste disposal. Many waste facilities, particularly landfill sites, are in or near disadvantaged areas.

Rural communities

- › Improving the delivery of services to rural communities in line with the vision statement Rural Scotland: A New Approach, and the findings of the reports, Services in Rural Scotland and Poverty and Social Exclusion in Rural Scotland. The Scottish Rural Partnership Fund supports “gap-filling” projects and initiatives to build the capacity of local communities. It funds around 80 new rural development projects, partnerships and village halls each year, as well as supporting other developments such as the rural community gateway website.
- › We have convened a Forestry for People Panel to ensure that the Forestry Commission has the best available advice on optimising the benefits from forestry for local communities, particularly in rural areas and on stimulating greater community involvement in forestry.

Scottish budget for 2003-06

As a result of the Building a Better Scotland announcements, we plan:

- ▶ To provide an additional £2.2 million a year from 2004-05 for the Scottish Rural Partnership Fund.
- ▶ To provide an additional £2 million a year from 2003-04 to improve business and other advice to farmers, in order to encourage the rural economy, supporting strong and prosperous rural communities.
- ▶ To provide a further £0/60/81.5 million through the Strategic Waste Fund to improve local authority waste management, increasing recycling and reducing landfill.
- ▶ To provide a further £6/8.3/6.8 million for other waste initiatives including recycling, waste minimisation and handling and disposal of hazardous wastes.
- ▶ To invest a further £3.8/4.5/6.4 million in protecting the environment, including reducing urban pollution.
- ▶ To provide an additional £1.8/4.2/4m to improve flood defences, which will protect communities from damage caused by flooding and thereby assist disadvantaged groups including those without household insurance.

How will we know that we are closing the opportunity gap?

We are setting objectives and targets that include:

OBJECTIVE: Ensure progress towards sustainable management of Scotland's waste and achievement of EU landfill reduction targets by 2010, 2013 and 2020

Target: Increase the amount of waste collected by local authorities which is recycled or composted to 25% by 2006.

Target: Reduce landfilling of biodegradable waste collected by local authorities to 1.5 million tonnes by 2006.

OBJECTIVE: A clean and safe environment, tackling climate change and complying with domestic, EU and international standards

Target: Through the introduction of flood prevention measures, 1,850 properties to have their risk of flooding reduced to below 1% by 2006.

Target: SEPA to deliver a comprehensive assessment of the state of Scotland's water environment by 2006 and extend its water quality monitoring network by 15% by 2004.

OBJECTIVE: Reduce the opportunity gap by promoting economic development, social justice, better service delivery and sustainable development in rural communities in Scotland

Target: Encourage more sustainable agricultural activity on 13,500 farm businesses in Scotland's remote hills by 2006.

Target: Deliver better service provision to rural communities through support for around 80 new rural development projects each year, and funding for three – four joint initiatives a year with other Executive departments or agencies, by 2006.

Closing the Opportunity Gap: Finance and Public Services

Everyone in Scotland uses public services. But disadvantaged groups and communities rely particularly upon them. Indeed they often need a greater investment in these core services in order to meet their particular needs.

There has been a history of universal public services being imposed upon local communities that is now no longer acceptable. Our new community planning framework opens up the opportunity for local communities to have their own say in the kind of services that they need. At the same time service providers are required to co-operate with each other and the local community in designing and delivering those services. This will mean better and more responsive public services which meet the needs of all disadvantaged groups and communities. We are determined to improve the quality of life for all Scots by providing public services that make a real difference.

What we are already doing

In our work so far, we are helping to close gaps in the following ways:

Funding

- › Through the local government grant distribution formula, steering resources towards local authorities with high levels of deprivation and those with difficulties in delivering services to remote communities.
- › Operating the European Structural Funds, which focus explicitly on areas where communities experience economic difficulties or on equal opportunities for access to jobs, particularly for unemployed people.

Community Planning

- › Legislating for community planning, which is already encouraging local agencies to work together more effectively to tackle the causes and consequences of deprivation and involve communities in funding and service decisions.

Making public services more accessible

- › Through the Modernising Government Fund, improve access to public services and information. New Technology, such as Smart Cards, can reduce the stigma from making use of services like free school meals. More citizen-focused services will make it easier for disadvantaged people to get information and help.

Scottish budget for 2003-06

As a result of the Building a Better Scotland announcements, we plan:

- › To increase revenue grant for local authorities to over £8 billion a year by 2005-06, to improve the quality of life in our communities and to modernise and protect services.
- › To provide £45 million through the Modernising Government Fund to encourage services to address the needs of the citizen, including a multi-functional citizen's smart card to provide easy access to public information and services.

How will we know that we are closing the opportunity gap?

We are setting objectives and targets that include:

OBJECTIVE: To secure, with local government, improvement in local authority services.

- Target: By April 2004, have in place a new framework for monitoring the delivery of local services through Best Value, to ensure all councils are delivering sustained improvements across their service responsibilities.
- Target: By December 2003, establish with local government a new public service improvement function to help local authorities share best practice and increase joint working to deliver service improvements.
- Target: Provide local authorities with the stability of three year grant allocations and resources to support existing services and new priority policy initiatives.
- Target: Establish by 2004-05 a new framework for local authority capital investment, supporting better investment decisions, long-term planning and increased levels of investment in local infrastructure.

OBJECTIVE: To secure further progress on the modernisation of local governance

- Target: By 2006, to have secured a statutory basis for Community Planning and a Power of Well-being, issued accompanying guidance and developed best practice in both and taken appropriate action on renewing local democracy.

OBJECTIVE: To secure better public service delivery, including access to information, through a citizen-focused approach.

- Target: By 2006, develop a Scottish electronic citizen card available to all citizens, which will give them faster and more convenient access to public information and services.

OBJECTIVE: To equip unemployed people with the skills to secure a job, re-skill the existing workforce or improve the skills base of particular geographic areas through European Structural Funds

- Target: By 2006, have awarded project grants to train 38,000 unemployed beneficiaries for employment 12 months after training, and to generate 112,000 qualifications by 2008.
- Target: By 2006, have awarded project grants to assist 28,000 socially excluded people into employment by 2009.

OBJECTIVE: To encourage economic development through the European Structural Funds in areas suffering from industrial decline, rural or urban problems, and areas experiencing difficulty arising from pressure on the fisheries sector

- Target: By 2006, have awarded project grants to assist 23,000 existing businesses by 2008.
- Target: By 2006, have awarded project grants to create 83,000 net jobs by 2009.

Closing the Opportunity Gap: Administration Budget

The Scottish Executive has to support the delivery of the many initiatives described throughout this document, so that Executive policies make real differences to people's lives. But in doing so, it has to set an example in terms of how, as an organisation, it seeks to close the opportunity gap. That means becoming more diverse as an employer, making sure that our workforce properly reflects the diversities in Scottish society.

What we are already doing

In our work so far, we are helping to close gaps in the following ways:

Better policies

- › Working with analysts to develop and monitor appropriate targets and indicators.
- › Equality proofing the budget as a whole.

How will we know that we are closing the opportunity gap?

We are setting objectives and targets that include:

OBJECTIVE: To ensure the organisation is open and diverse

Target: By 31 March 2005 increase the percentage of:

- › Women in senior positions in the workforce to 48% in Band B, 43% in Band C and 30% in the Senior Civil Service (SCS);
- › Staff from minority ethnic communities in the workforce to 1.7% across the Executive (i.e. SCS and Band C as well as Bands A and B); and
- › Staff with disabilities in the workforce to 5% in Band A, 3.2% in Band B, 1.4% in Band C and 3% across the SCS.



This publication is available free of charge in Braille, audio tape, large print format, Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali, Arabic, Chinese and Gaelic.

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This document and the Social Justice Annual Report are also available on the Scottish Executive website:
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/socialjustice/index.htm>

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