

Influenced by the ground-breaking achievements of Glasgow and Leeds, and in parallel with growth of the national Poverty Truth Network, Morecambe Bay Poverty Truth Commission was founded in autumn 2016. Poverty Truth Commissions seek to discover the answer to the question, 'what if people who struggled against poverty were involved in making decisions about tackling poverty?'



At the initial stage in round one of the Commission, a group of local citizens with lived experience of poverty began to meet and share their stories with each other. This group became the Commission's Community Commissioners. Gradually this group decided who from positions of local leadership they would like to share their stories with, and these individuals were invited to the formal launch of the Commission in July 2018. The launch event attendees ultimately formed the second group, the Commission's Civic Commissioners. All of the Commission's Commissioners then worked together to understand the nature of poverty, to unearth some of the underlying issues that create poverty and to explore creative ways of addressing them.

### What services does Morecambe Bay Poverty Truth Commission offer?

Now in round two, The Morecambe Bay Poverty Truth Commission is offering a new group of Community Commissioners the opportunity to share their stories and be heard in a way that can change the understanding and challenge the stigma of poverty.

The Commission meets at various community locations including The Cornerstone in Lancaster and Stanley's Community Centre in Morecambe, and its facilitators spend a lot of time meeting new Commissioners individually to understand what issues they would like to share.

### How many people are currently using the service?

Each round of the Commission aims to have an equal number of Community and Civic Commissioners, which is around 15. We currently have a few spaces for new Community Commissioners before our official commencement in September of this year.

### Feedback from people using the service:

"It makes us feel more important like we can actually go into a room and sit with these professional people without feeling we shouldn't be there, that we had no right to be there. We feel like we are humans and should be there just like them."

### Can you tell us about any future projects?

The future of Morecambe Bay Poverty Truth Commission is in the hands of our Commissioners and the important issues of poverty that they wish to tackle. We do however have a number of successful projects from round one of the Commission up and running. The first is the charity Let's Befriends where volunteers support people who have been rehoused after years of homelessness. Round one also forged the new Citizens Representative job role which helps people with complex needs navigate complicated health and benefit systems.

### How can I find out more?

You can find out more about Morecambe Bay Poverty Truth Commission at the following website <https://www.morecambebaypovertytruthcommission.org.uk/about/>