

How are things for others?

CEO Overview.

We know that many of you like to hear about how things are for others from time to time, so we are aiming to get this update out to you 3 times a year.

The general situation for people 3 months into the New Year is hard. We have a general election looming, a cost-of-living crisis and the increase in fuel and food costs. Yes, the living wage is being increased, but this adds yet more financial pressures on small businesses and organisations who employ staff. On top of this, we have less and less social housing and now also less and less private rental properties available and those that are, are increasing in cost at a staggering rate.

Housing

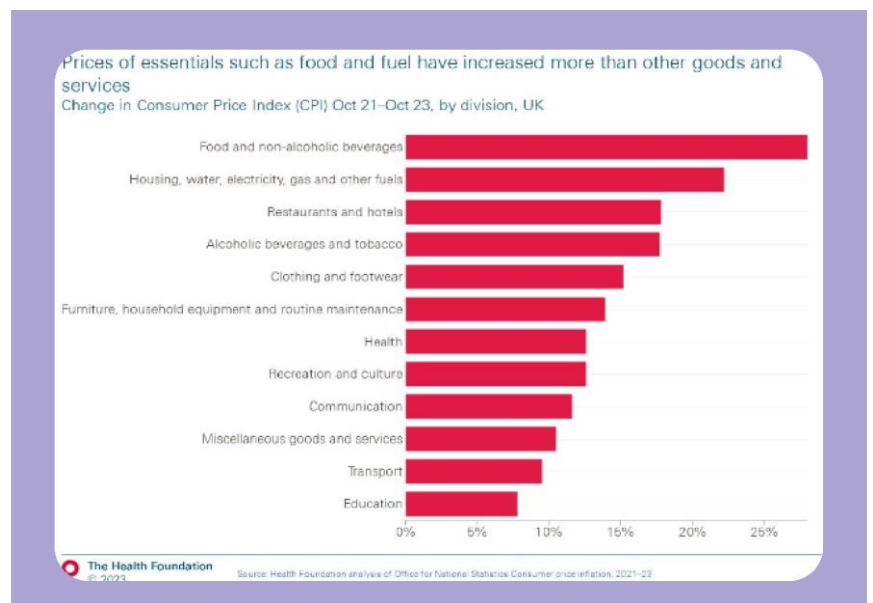
According to figures captured by Shelter, homelessness in England is at a record high. A record number of children (more than 142,000) are growing up homeless in temporary accommodation across the country. And rough sleeping is up 27% in a year. These figures don't account for the hidden homeless who are sofa surfing, staying with different people when they can put them up.

In Portsmouth we currently have approximately 165 families living in temporary accommodation around the city. Some in hotels and B&B's, some in self-contained flats supported by Roberts Centre and others in hostels or shared houses.

Cost of Living

The cost-of-living crisis is far from over. Although the headline rate of inflation has started to fall, rates remain high and above the 2% inflation target, with the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) at 4.6% in October 2023. Inflation rates have also been high for more than 2 years, leaving price levels substantially higher than in 2020. Higher prices – especially when income growth has not kept up – impact health directly through higher costs of essentials but also indirectly through problem debt. Increased living costs can mean debt repayments take up a greater share of household income, leaving people struggling to cope with paying them and/or with less money for health-promoting activities.

So far, the amount of outstanding debt as a proportion of incomes is lower than pre-pandemic levels. However, for some, the impact from both the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis has been acute – in March 2023, 26% of adults surveyed reported using credit cards and overdrafts to make ends meet, and 19% of respondents living in households with lower incomes were behind on priority bills.



Children & Young People



Children with learning difficulties front emotional campaign video

SEND Reform England and Disabled Children's Partnership has launched its new 'Let Us Learn Too' initiative - which features Lord David Blunkett, who was born blind.

Children's mental health services 2022-23

March 2024

Over a quarter of a million children still waiting for mental health support

Shocking new statistics show that more than a quarter of a million (270,300) children and young people are still waiting for mental health support after

Children's Commissioner for England / Mar 15

Children's mental health

Shocking new statistics show that more than a quarter of a million (270,300) children and young people are still waiting for mental health support after being referred to Children and Young People's Mental Health Services (CYPMHS) in 2022-23.

The annual report on children's mental health found that almost 305,000 (32%) children and young people referred to mental health services received support. But 28% (270,300) were still waiting for support from mental health services, while 39% (372,800) had their referral closed before accessing support.

Today's report, Children's Mental Health Services 2022-23, revealed waiting times for mental health support continue to vary significantly. For the 305,000 children and young people who accessed support the average waiting time was 35 days. But children are still waiting far too long to access the help they need – in the last year nearly 40,000 children experienced a wait of over two years.

The Association of Directors of Children's Services, a membership org for senior leaders of LA children's services in England. @ADCStweets

ADCS
Leading Children's Services

4.2 million children are living in poverty

48%

of children from global majority groups live in poverty

70%

of children in poverty live in a household where at least one adult works

43%

of children with two or more siblings live in poverty

Since 2017, the number of children living in destitution has risen threefold



1 in 4 older young people had a probable mental health condition in 2022, up from 1 in 10 in 2017



30% of children living in the most deprived areas are obese by the end of primary school



90% of childcare providers say government funding doesn't cover delivery costs



Tooth decay is the most common reason five to nine year olds are admitted to hospital

£800m
children's social care funding gap in 2022/23



£4bn
local gov funding gap over the next 2 years

Black children are involved in 20% of police stop and searches, despite making up 6% of the population



9 in 10 girls were regularly exposed to unwanted explicit images or videos



24% of all pupils are receiving benefit related free school meals

1 in 5 pupils are persistently absent, up 60% on pre-pandemic levels

High inflation has wiped out the planned 15% uplift in funding for schools

Increases in children's services activity in 2021/22 compared to the previous two years:



The Association of Directors of Children's Services Ltd. February 2024

Poverty

62% OF WORKING AGE PEOPLE REFERRED TO FOOD BANKS IN OUR NETWORK IN EARLY 2020 WERE DISABLED - THREE TIMES THE RATE IN THE GENERAL WORKING AGE POPULATION.



95% OF PEOPLE REFERRED TO FOOD BANKS IN OUR NETWORK IN EARLY 2020 WERE DESTITUTE, MEANING THEY WERE UNABLE TO AFFORD TO EAT OR STAY WARM AND DRY.



18% OF HOUSEHOLDS REFERRED TO FOOD BANKS IN OUR NETWORK DURING THE PANDEMIC WERE SINGLE PARENTS - MORE THAN TWICE THE RATE IN THE GENERAL POPULATION.



<https://www.trusselltrust.org/state-of-hunger/>

4.2 million

children are growing up in poverty in the UK.

9

children in an average classroom of 30 (29%) are living in poverty.

7 out of 10

children living in poverty have at least one parent in paid work.

48%

of children from Black and minority ethnic groups are in poverty, compared to 25 per cent of white children.

44%

of children living in lone-parent families are in poverty.

900,000

children in poverty in England alone miss out on free school meals.



Food poverty: Households, food banks and free school meals

This paper provides statistics on household food insecurity, food bank usage and free school meals in the UK, and tracks the impact of rising living costs.



The Observer

Almost 13 million adults now struggling to pay bills, debt charity warns

Cost of living crisis and rising interest rates forcing more people to become 'trapped in poverty'

The Guardian / Jul 2, 2023

Health

According to The Health Foundation there is a direct link between people in debt and those who are in worst health.

Debt can affect health in different ways:

Struggling to meet debt repayments can act as a stressor, a 'hardship or demand' that can lead to adverse mental health outcomes (for example, depression) and physiologically harmful stress responses. Some evidence suggests that it is worry about debt rather than the debt itself that drives worse health outcomes.

Experiencing stress about debt can lead people to engage in health-harming behaviours as coping mechanisms, such as problem drinking and drug use.

Meeting debt repayments means having less money available to spend on health promoting goods or activities. Our previous analysis suggests debt repayments can in effect reduce available income to below the poverty line for a significant number of people.

Over 250,000 people do not have a dentist due to lack of nhs dentists available. Most of the families we support don't have a dentist but thanks to the dental academy some have been able to access services in an emergency but currently they are beyond capacity.



<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-66167563>



How debt can affect health during the cost-of-living crisis

Anna Gazzillo looks at how falling back on or struggling to cope with debt during the cost-of-living crisis can pose a risk to people's health – and how government can support future financial resilience.

The Health Foundation

Being in problem debt is associated with worse health outcomes. People in problem debt are three times as likely to report that their health is 'bad' or 'very bad' (21% compared with 7% for those not in problem debt). Worse health also increases a person's likelihood of experiencing persistent debt problems. Only 56% of people with poor health and a heavy debt burden no longer had one 4 years later, compared with 71% of people in good health.

Employment

The Buckland Review of Autism Employment was commissioned by Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Mel Stride and led by Sir Robert Buckland KC. It includes the views of hundreds of employers and autistic people and makes 19 recommendations for workplace culture changes.

According to the report, autistic people face the largest pay gap of all disability groups, receiving a third less than non-disabled people on average. Autistic graduates are also twice as likely to be unemployed after 15 months as non-disabled graduates, with only 36% finding full-time work in this period.

In addition, autistic graduates are most likely to be overqualified for the job they have, most likely to be on zero-hours contracts, and least likely to be in a permanent role.

Mel Merritt, Head of Policy and Campaigns at the National Autistic Society, said: “The autism employment gap is shocking; with just 29% of autistic people in work, compared to around half of all disabled people and eight in ten non-disabled people.



Unemployment

Unemployment rate in the United Kingdom from March 1971 to January 2024.

Published by [Statista Research Department](#), Mar 12, 2024



Living wage increases.

National Living Wage confirmed to rise to £11.44 from April 2024. The UK Government has accepted the recommendations of the LPC and will be raising the national minimum and national living wages from 1 April 2024. This puts the NLW at £11.44, which is two thirds of median hourly pay for workers over the age of 21.

Further Reading

- <https://www.statista.com/aboutus/our-research-commitment>
- <https://www.learningdisabilitytoday.co.uk/news/autism-employment-gap-is-focus-of-new-government-review/>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-66167563>
- <https://www.health.org.uk/news-and-comment/charts-and-infographics/how-debt-can-affect-health-during-the-cost-of-living-crisis>
- <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9209/>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2023/jul/02/almost-13-million-adults-now-struggling-to-pay-bills-debt-charity-warns>
- <https://www.trusselltrust.org/state-of-hunger/>
- <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-13148977/let-learn-campaign-lord-david-blunkett-daniel-wakeford.html>
- <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/blog/over-a-quarter-of-a-million-children-still-waiting-for-mental-health-support/>