

London Challenge Poverty Week 2023

Fact Sheet



#LDNChallengePoverty
#povertyfreelondon

Some Basic Numbers

- 25% of Londoners are living in poverty after housing costs.
- 33% of children in London are in poverty
- 22% of working age adults in London are in poverty
- 23% of pension age adults in London are in poverty (compared to an average of 18% for the rest of England)
- 27% - the increase in price that households in London with the lowest incomes would see if they were to buy the same goods and services as they did in the three years to March 2020. ([London's Cost of Living Tracker](#) | [Trust for London](#)).

As we approach elections in London and nationally, London Challenge Poverty Week 2023 presents an opportunity to send a message to those that would represent us, that Londoners want real systemic change. **Let's all come together during the week to highlight the injustice of poverty in our city, show that we already have many of the solutions to put an end to it and bring the reality of a poverty free London one step closer.**

Aims of London Challenge Poverty Week

This will be the sixth annual London Challenge Poverty Week. It begins on Monday 16 October and culminates on Sunday 22 October, incorporating the UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on 17 October. It is an opportunity for all those who care about tackling poverty in the capital to come together to:



Increase the visibility of the reality of poverty in London;



Encourage positive debate and discussion about poverty; and



Show what is being done to tackle poverty & call for the changes needed to end it.

Themes for the week

Monday 16 October: Adequate income, social security and work

Challenging poverty must start with recognition that everyone should have adequate income to live on.

- 'In 2021/22 those in the 90th net income percentile in London took home 10 times more than those in the 10th net income percentile (a 90:10 net income ratio of 10.5). In the rest of England the 90:10 net income ratio is 5.2, according to [Trust for London](#)
- 'This [means](#) that the gap between the rich and poor in London and the rest of England is much larger today than it was two decades ago.'
- The Joseph Rowntree Foundations [Cost of Living tracker](#) shows that low-income households in London are more likely to be in every type of arrears and experiencing going without essentials than any other region in the UK.

Tuesday 17 October: Food insecurity and hunger

Too many Londoners are living with the fear of not being able to afford to feed themselves and their families. Access to food is a basic human right which should be upheld.

- Trust for London's [cost of living](#) tracker shows that the cost-of-living crisis has not hit all families equally.
 - 'For London households in the lowest income category, expenditure on food and non-alcoholic beverages represents 17% of their total expenditure and expenditure on energy bills represents 7%. Households in the highest income category spent 8% of their total on food and only 3% on energy bills.'
- According to [Trust for London](#), 'Households in the lowest income quintile now need to spend £74 to buy the same food and non-alcoholic beverage items that they bought for £57 pounds in the three years leading up to March 2020. They have to pay £50 to use the same amount of energy as they did leading up to 2020 Q1, when it cost them £23.'
- [Trussel Trust](#) distributed 384,477 food parcels in 2022/23 across London of which 145,575 were for children.

Wednesday 18 October: Childcare and Education

Exorbitant childcare costs are a key driver of poverty for families in London. Everyone should have access to high quality education from the early years.

- According to Coram Family & Childcare Survey for [2023](#),
 - 'the highest price for 25 hours of nursery childcare for those aged under two (Inner London, £199.01) is 54 per cent higher than the lowest price.'
 - 'For 25 hours of nursery childcare for children aged two, the highest prices are again seen in Inner London (£188.02), which is 50 per cent higher than the lowest price which is seen in East Midlands (£125.02).'
 - 'Childminder costs for 25 hours (under twos) are 71 per cent higher in Inner London (£178.98), which has the highest cost compared to the lowest price which is in the East Midlands (£104.81).'

- ‘Parents typically need to find at least £39 per week for a child’s secondary school education and £19 for a primary-aged child’, research for Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) finds.
- Coram’s [Holiday survey for 2023](#) also showed,
 - Parents often struggle to find the money and time to cover care for their children during summer holidays. Coram found that ‘The average cost for [holiday] childcare in London (Inner and Outer) (£169) is 7.6 per cent higher than the average cost in Britain (£157).’
 - The Coram survey also states that some local authorities in Inner London reported 0 sufficient holiday childcare.
 - ‘The proportion of local authorities across all regions reporting sufficient holiday childcare for disabled children is low, ranging from 0 per cent in the East of England, East Midlands, Inner and Outer London and the South West to 14 per cent in the North West.’
- Research conducted by [4in10 and Just for Kids](#) law found that children who are eligible for free school meals (FSM) in London are nearly three times as likely to get a fixed-term exclusion and more than three times as likely to be permanently excluded, compared to their peers.
 - Black children experience racist bullying and abuse in schools. In a recent poll 32% of children had heard someone be racist at school and 50% of parents felt racism is a problem in [schools](#).
 - Fixed-rate exclusions in these areas are the most disproportionate for both Black children and children eligible for free school meals, compared to their peers.
- CYPMH’s report on [Behaviour and Mental Health in Schools](#) highlighted that ‘The Children’s Society spoke to young people who had experienced school exclusions and reported that school policies disproportionately impact young people from racialised communities, with consequences for poor behaviour escalating much more quickly for these groups, particularly for young Black boys (Lamrhari et al., 2022).’

Thursday 19 October: Poverty, dignity and discrimination

The experience of poverty is often compounded by discrimination, which undermines human dignity. Challenging poverty also means challenging discrimination in all its forms.

- The Changing Realities project captures diary entries from individuals experiencing the harm caused by poverty and inadequate policy interventions that are supposed to alleviate inequality. Their quotes highlight the stigma and discrimination as well as the powerful work of many to assert their rights and dignity.
 - ‘We are in the same storm but not all of us has access to a suitable boat to survive. Help support us so we can not only survive, but thrive - it's the right thing to do, not as a politician, as a compassionate human being. Redesign the Social Security system so it works for everyone if they fall on hard times. In addition - I want to remind my MP that those of us living in desperate times didn't plan to be living this life. Absolutely anyone can be swept into poverty through circumstances beyond their control - even them. For me it was escaping domestic abuse whilst on unpaid maternity leave, becoming homeless & having to live in a hostel with my 3 children back in 2005. I tried to go back to work but became permanently disabled in 2011. I'm still trying to hang on in 2023. How can that be right? Yet even though I cannot work, I am still worthy of

respect, support & have worth' (Changing Realities (2023), Gabbie S. <https://changingrealities.org/e/9yfoG> (09 Jun 2023).

- 'I had a spat online over the weekend, because someone said that anyone claiming Universal Credit instead of getting a better paid job was "scum". When I said that I had more than one job and still get Universal Credit, they tracked me down on Facebook and tried to shame me for claiming benefits...I don't believe what he said, but it has taken root in my mind with its nasty tendrils. I find myself feeling defensive about my finances in a way I never have before' (Changing Realities (2023), Marcie M. <https://changingrealities.org/e/5AAGr> (31 Oct 2022).
- 'This town is divided by wealth. A culture of ostracising from friendship groups due to the stigma of poverty and being a single parent. It's 2023 and yes there are people who are small minded. I'm hurting and depressed living in an area where not welcomed' (Changing Realities (2023), Bessie J. <https://changingrealities.org/e/7w2o6> (13 Jan 2023).

Friday 20 October: Homes, communities and volunteers

Having a secure and affordable home in a safe and thriving community should be the experience of all Londoners.

- According to [Centre for London](#), 'The risk of a household living in temporary accommodation in London is much higher than elsewhere in England. 59 per cent of all English households in temporary accommodation are in London: this represents 56,500 households, including 75,850 children.'
- News [reports](#) have highlighted that, 'The number of London properties available for private rent down by a startling 41 per cent since the Covid-19 pandemic, with rents now 20 per cent above their March 2020 level and fewer than three per cent of rental listings affordable to those relying on the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) benefit to cover their housing costs.'
- 'It helps alot to feel like you live in a thriving area even if it's got struggles, but it's a comfort that every struggling area within this council has its own community centre that gets not enough but better than you'd expect for the hardships funding for its community. These things bring me joy, taking part in the community, trying new things, seeing things from other cultural perspectives.' (Changing Realities (2023), Victoria S. <https://changingrealities.org/e/kojQn> (06 Mar 2023)).

Details of training and further resources will be posted on the London Challenge Poverty Website. To make sure that you are aware of them as soon as they become available make sure you [sign up](#) to become a member of 4in10's network and receive our bi-weekly newsletter.



