



**Inclusion  
Scotland**

Disabled People's Organisation

**Our voices ■ Our choices**

# **Disabled People: Fuel Poverty and the Cost-of-Living Crisis**



# Disabled people in Scotland



- In 2015 to 2016, 22% (1.1 million) of people in Scotland said that they were disabled..
- The prevalence of disability rises with age.
- Approximately 9% of children are disabled, compared to 21% of working age adults and 42% of adults over State Pension age.



# Extra Costs of Disability



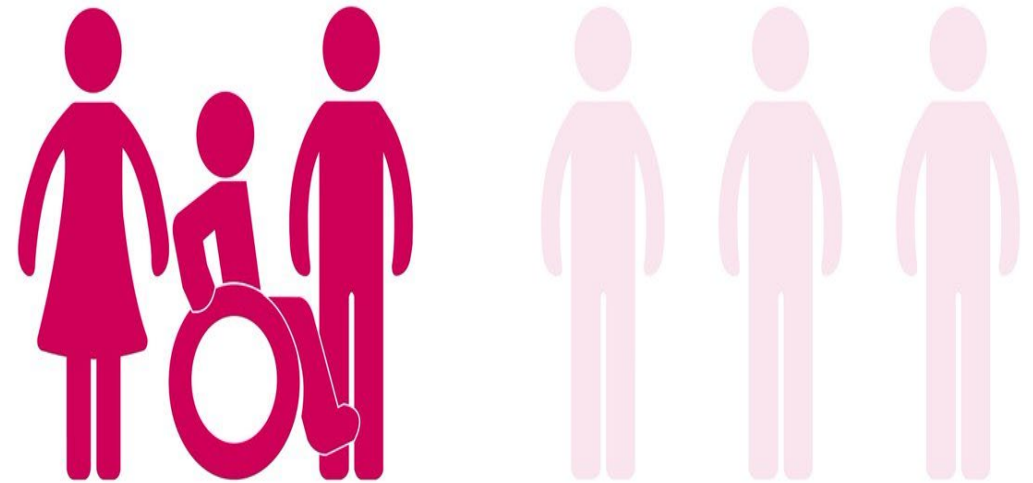
Research by the disability charity Scope in 2019/20 found that –

- On average, disabled households (with at least one disabled adult or child) needed an additional £975 a month to have the same standard of living as non-disabled households.
- If this figure is updated to account for inflation over the current period 2022/2023, these extra costs rise to £1,122 per month.
- The average additional costs in Scotland were the highest in any part of the UK.

# Disabled People and Poverty

- In Scotland 41% of children living in poverty come from a household containing a disabled adult or child.
- Once the extra costs of disability are taken into account nearly half of all those living in poverty in the UK are disabled people or live in a family with someone who is.

Of the **14.2 million people in poverty** nearly half are **disabled**, or live in a family with someone who is



# Poverty & Destitution

- [Destitution in the UK 2023 | JRF](#) This study, reveals that approximately 3.8 million people experienced destitution in 2022, including around 1 million children.
- Disabled people are amongst those at the highest risk of destitution. 63% of all destitute survey respondents reported having a disability. Full report – <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-uk-2023>
- Three out of four Scots Trussell Trust foodbank users come from households containing a disabled person.
- In 1971, out-of-work benefits were worth 20.1% of men's weekly pay. They're now on a trajectory to be worth just 11.2% by 2030, even if benefits are uplifted by inflation every year.

News / Scotland

## Scotland sees 'by far the lowest rise' in destitution levels in UK

Research found benefits such as the Scottish Child Payment may have helped curb levels of destitution in Scotland.



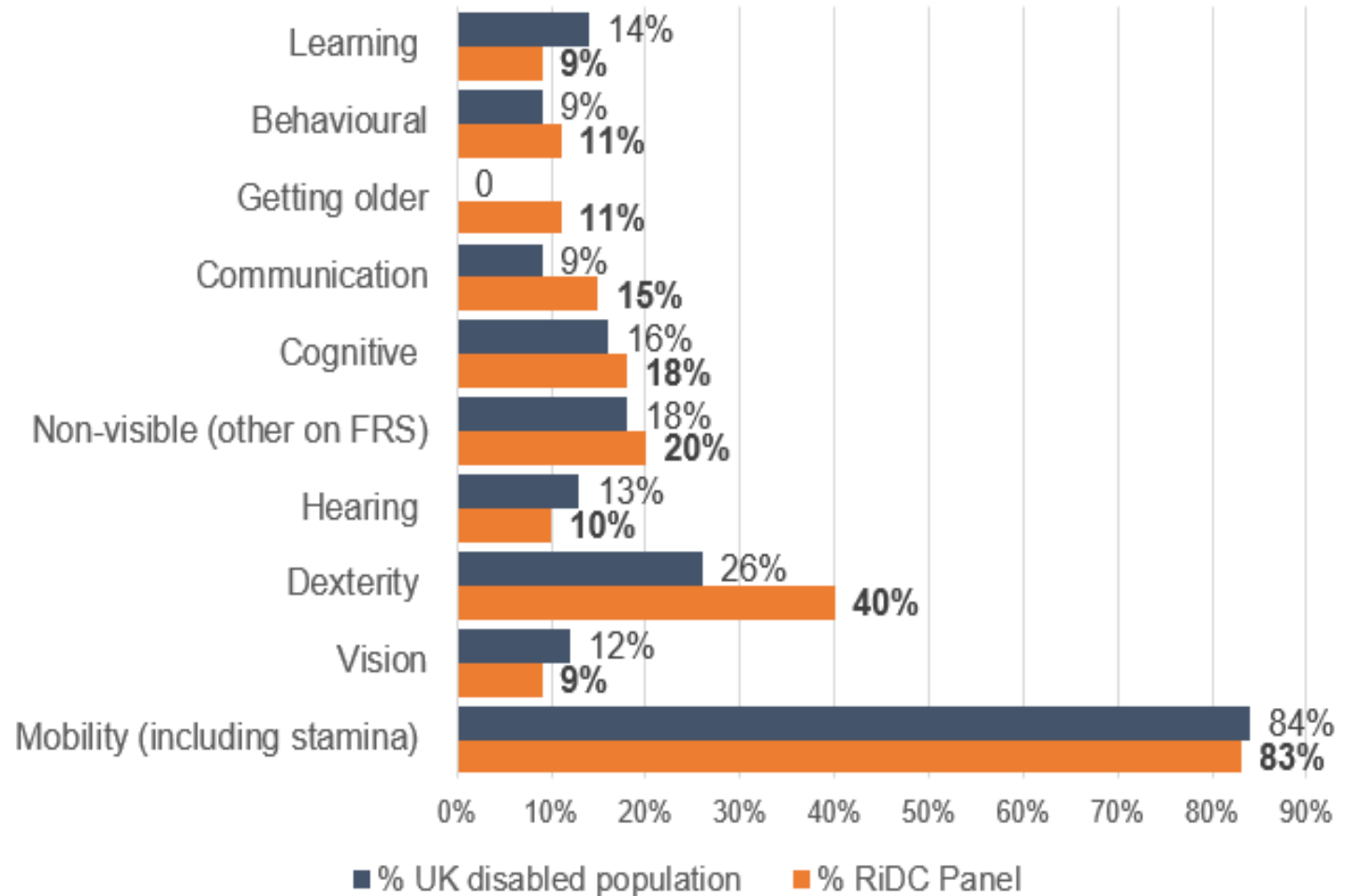
PA Media  
7 hours ago

The UK has seen a "shameful increase" in destitution, though Scotland has had "by far the lowest" rise in the numbers suffering from this, a new report has found.

# RiDC Consumer Panel

Research Institute for Disabled  
Consumers

- 3,800 Panel members
- Pan-disability spread right across the UK





# Impacts in last 6 months

- 52% of disabled people were unable to keep their homes warm
- 26% had borrowed money to meet daily living costs
- 21% had to seek help from their families
- 12% had used foodbanks
- 12% had sought debt advice



# RIDC Survey Results

**40%**

said that their financial situation was making their physical health worse.

**45%**

said that their financial situation is making their mental health worse.



# Disabled People and Fuel Poverty

- Analysis by Scope in 2018 – before the recent huge rise in energy costs - suggested that 4.1 million households containing disabled people spent over **£1,500 a year** on energy.
- In comparison, at that time. the average UK household spent **£1,200**.
- Of these, **790,000** spent over £2,500 a year, over double the average household spend.



# Medical costs

- Many disabled people use medical equipment - ventilators, oxygen concentrators, dialysis machines or other devices – to manage their condition and symptoms at home.
- Compared to an average household, powering these devices alone might add anywhere from 13% to 32% onto the cost of an average energy bill.
- Research by Marie Curie (in England and Wales) found that a person's energy bill can increase by as much as 75% after a terminal illness diagnosis.
- This means that many terminally ill people were paying as much as **£3,500** pa for energy last year. Research by CHAS showed that families with terminally ill children faced similar costs in Scotland.
- As a result 90,000 terminally ill people died in poverty last year.

# Some Solutions

- **Take-up:** Benefits, money and fuel poverty advice in health settings & schools needs to become standard and receive long term, secure funding.
- **Additional investment in social housing.** High rents in the private rented sector and higher mortgage costs means that there's an even greater need for good quality, accessible, energy-efficient housing which is genuinely affordable.
- **Increase the Winter Heating Payment to £100.** The advantages are that no separate claim would have to be made and over half of the 400,000 eligible households contain a disabled adult and/or child.
- **Implement and roll-out the Warm Homes' Prescription model.** As a preventative measure this would protect disabled people's health and prevent them from being hospitalised at great expense to the NHS and risk to themselves.
- **Meet the fuel costs of those using medical equipment at home.**