

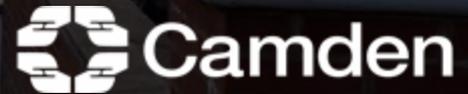
# The impact of the Cost of Living Emergency on women

Camden Women's Forum: 3<sup>rd</sup> inquiry

Data appendix

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January 2023



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# Introduction



# Camden Women's Forum (CWF)



The Forum has done two inquiries so far:

- Women's Economic Participation
- Domestic Violence and Abuse

Camden Women's Forum brings together a range of experts from across Camden and beyond to discuss complex issues and barriers facing women and girls in the borough. The forum is working **directly with women and girls to hear their concerns and experiences**, and partnering with employers and businesses, the voluntary sector and services providers to develop practical solutions.

The forum produce themed reports and make practical, tangible recommendations about how the Council, partners and communities can work together **to ensure every woman and girl in Camden has a voice**, the chance to live without prejudice or discrimination, and the opportunities they need to succeed.

The forum is co-chaired by Helene Reardon-Bond OBE and Angela Mason, and was set up by Georgia Gould in 2018, and sponsored by Jo Brown, Director of People & Inclusion

# Introduction

- Camden Women's Forum's inquiries have always been driven by an understanding of the data
- These slides provide the background to this inquiry, outlining why the cost of living crisis is a gendered issue
- Within these slides, we have looked at different aspects of a woman in Camden's finances to highlight how women are disproportionately impacted by the cost of living emergency
- The cost of living emergency exacerbates existing inequalities, and intersectionality is key to consider – women from black, Asian and other ethnic backgrounds and those with disabilities or caring responsibilities are at the sharp end of the crisis.
- The data within these slides helped to guide our work, and qualitative insight. You can read about our research and qualitative insight within our main report and research appendix
- For any questions about the data within these slides, please email [womensforum@camden.gov.uk](mailto:womensforum@camden.gov.uk)

02

# Statistics – why is the cost of living crisis a gendered issue?



# Gender pay gap and employment

The Gender Pay Gap means that women, with their lower earnings and savings, are coming to this from a disadvantaged financial position and this follows years of austerity.

Women's Median Pay for residents of Camden was 86% of men's pay in 2021, meaning a **woman's median pay is 14% lower** on average than that of a man.

Following the pandemic, the **national gender pay gap rose in 2021 from 14.9% to 15.4%** (ONS), meaning for **every one pound a man earns a woman earns 84p**. This widens for women over 40 years of age.

The proportion of **women staying out of the workforce to look after family has increased by 5%** in the last year, the first increase in more than 30 years, according to the Office for National Statistics.

# Camden council gender pay gap 2020/21

The 2020/21 Gender Pay Gap for Camden Council shows that female earnings continue to be marginally higher than male staff earnings. This gender pay gap is particularly noticeable for part-time employees, with the part-time Gender Pay Gap favouring female staff. Female staff form **73% of part-time** employees at the Council.

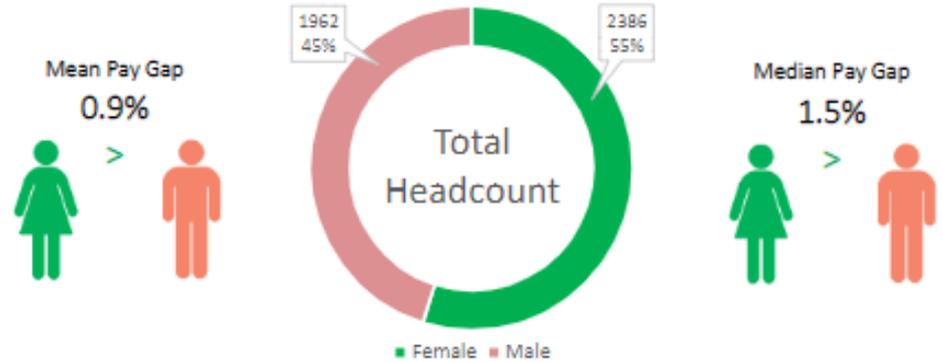


Figure 1: Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap

## Part-time/Full-time Gender Pay Gap

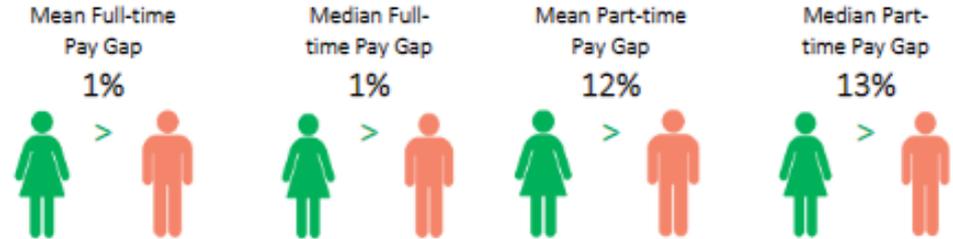


Figure 2: FT/PT Gender Pay Gaps

# Inflation

Women are generally the shock absorbers of poverty and likely to go without meals – a YouGov survey shows that 83% of women declared to have half or more of the responsibility for grocery shopping, compared to 57% of men

The 'pink tax' – all products have increased in price, because manufacture and transport costs have increased but the costs are disproportionately passed onto women – the cost's of **men's razors decreased by 6%** from 2020 to 2021, **but women's increased by 30%** (ONS). Women's formal shoes have increased 75% between June 2020 and June 2021, whereas men's have increased 14%.

In October 2021, a government scheme was announced to save women £205 per year on HRT prescriptions, by paying a single charge of £18.70 for a 12 month supply of HRT. Yet, this will not be introduced until April 2023, meaning **women will face a winter of HRT prescription charges of around £200 annually**

Some **baby formula products have increased by 14%** between August 21 and May 2022 (First Steps Nutrition Trust, 2022a). Price increases disproportionately affecting those on lower incomes as families with a higher socio-economic status are more likely to breastfeed for longer (Augsburg, 2021). **Healthy start vouchers have not increased**, meaning families need to subsidise these to buy formula

In the first three months of 2022, the charity Bloody Good Period reported a **78% increase in the need for free period products**. Tesco, for example, has doubled the price of its least expensive period pads

# Employment and risk of recession

- Women are at the sharp end of job losses and potential job losses.
- This was highlighted by the pandemic where in **72% regions across the UK, women were more likely to be furloughed than men.** Women were less likely than men to have their wages topped up by their employers' beyond the 80% granted through the furlough scheme
- 77% of workers who earn too little to pay income tax are women, meaning they will not benefit from planned income tax reductions



# Single Parents

The proportion of families with children headed by single parents has remained at around 25% for over a decade, around **90% of single parent families are headed by women**

Nearly **30% of single parents live in poverty**

2011 census recorded that there were **6,228 lone parents living in Camden and 5,828 of these women (93.6%)**, 27% of these women worked part-time, 21% worked full-time and 52% were not in work

Single parents are more likely to be trapped in low paid work. **68% of single parents are now in work**, but they find it difficult to find flexible work options and often are in low-paid and **insecure** work

Single parent households, on average have a savings pot 20 times smaller than the UK average, **£400 in savings** compared to £8000 average household in 2020 (ONS)

# Disproportionality

- TUC 2018 report found that disabled women face the largest pay gap and estimated that the combined impact of the gender disability gap means that **disabled women earn 22.1% less compared to non-disabled men**. Disabled people were already facing an average £583 in costs per month due to their impairment or condition. Even prior to Covid-19, **over a third of disabled workers were having to cut back on food and heating**
- Poverty rates are significantly higher among people from Bangladeshi (53%), Pakistani (48%) and Black (40%) ethnic groups than among White (19%), making it harder to meet rising living costs
- **Black, Asian and other ethnic minority workers could be worse hit by the inflation peak as they only earn 84% of what their white counterparts are paid**. Black African women have a 26% pay gap compared with average male worker, Bangladeshi women have a 28% gap and Pakistani women had a 31% gap compared to average male worker
- Women with 'no recourse to public funds' are excluded from claiming benefits and support with cost of living





# Disproportionality

- Research from Oxfam outlines that **ethnic minority women are amongst the most affected by the cost of living crisis** – white families now receive £454 less on average in cash benefits than 10 years ago, but this rises to **£806 less for black and minority ethnic families**, and to **£1,635 less** for black families
- **Black and minority ethnic women** have been some of the worst affected and currently **receive £1050 less than they did a decade ago**

# Disproportionality and health

- Lower income families are also at the most risk of poor health – **nearly half (48%) of poorest 40% of families in UK contain at least one person with poor health**
- Being unable to keep a home warm leaves people at risk of developing **respiratory diseases**, and for the most vulnerable, risk of death
- Constantly worrying about having enough money to pay bills or buy food can also lead to **stress, anxiety and depression**
- This build-up of psychosocial problems can put a strain on people's bodies, resulting in increased stress, high blood pressure and weakened immune systems
- For every 1°C drop in temperature below the optimum threshold, the relative risk of death increases by 10% from respiratory conditions and 3% from cardiovascular conditions



# Pensions

According to TUC data, the average pensions income gap between men and women is 38%

New TUC analysis reveals that in many industries women have workplace pensions worth less than a fifth of male colleagues

London is the region where women aged 45 – 64 have been able to build up the lowest amount of pension wealth (£12,600 on average) and where the gender pensions gap is largest (75%).

## The main drivers of gender pensions income gap are:

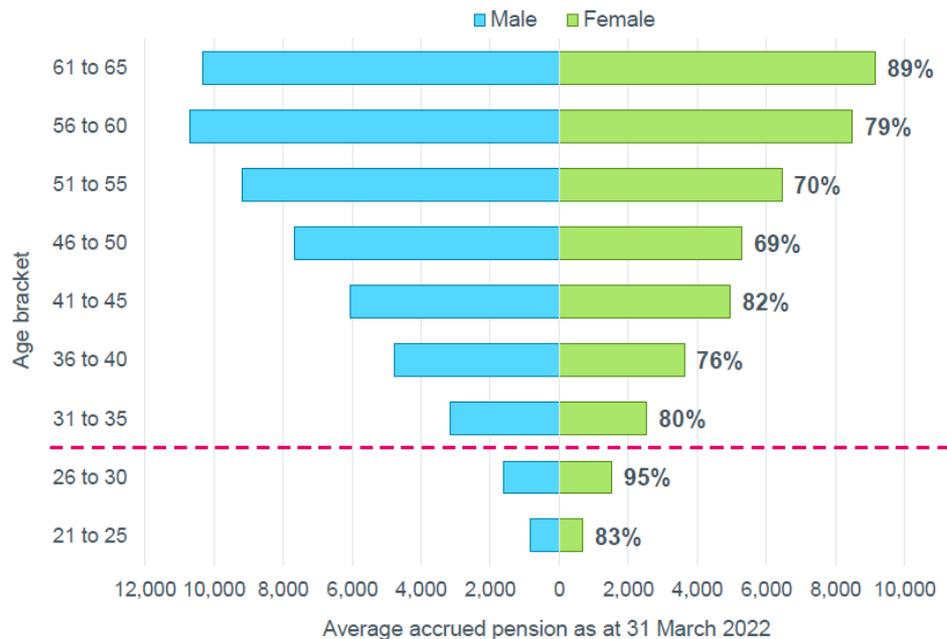
- Caring responsibilities – women often take a break from the workforce
- Auto-enrolment – auto enrolment rules mean that for lower earners, employers do not have to enrol low paid workers into a workplace pension
- Gender pay gap
- Historic differences in National Insurance that have left women with lower state pensions on average

# Camden council Gender Pension Gap

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) has 75% female members and has a gender pension gap. This is linked to a gender pension gap and women being more likely to work part-time and take career breaks.

With Camden's LGPS, on average, for every **£1 of pension paid to males, females are receiving around 75p.**

For those over the age of 31, there is still a gender pension gap of at least 20%



HYMANS ROBERTSON

Camden LGPS analysis January 2023

# Last year's drop in the number of nursery providers was the biggest drop for 6 years

## Childcare

Analysis, which uses the Coram family and childcare survey results alongside Office for National Statistics (ONS) income data, shows parents in the east of England and inner London spend the greatest percentage of their take-home pay on childcare, handing over 71% of their weekly earnings, compared to 65% nationally.

We also need to consider cultural attitudes towards childcare – we know that some cultures will favour a model where parents, family and community look after children over formal childcare options

*In Camden, childcare for 1 child under the age of 2 for 5 days per week costs around £1200+ per month*

### Contributing factors

Research suggests mothers are falling into debt to cover the cost of childcare, with one in 10 who responded to a survey on the website [workingmums.co.uk](http://workingmums.co.uk) saying they are **in £20,000 or more worth of debt**, while 49% were in debt of some kind, excluding their mortgage.

The survey of 2,264 users of the site, found:

- **51%** of mums said the cost of living was affecting their childcare decisions
- **58%** of mums were looking to change jobs, increase their hours or do an additional job, but 49% said lack of childcare was stopping them working more hours
- **68%** said their careers had stalled after having children

# Unpaid carers

Unpaid carers are particularly vulnerable to all types of rising costs due to their limited ability to earn an income, and due to additional costs they face that they cannot cut back on without affecting the safety of the person they care for.. e.g. travel to hospital, heating at a minimum temperature, extra laundry, buying special food item

The Family Resources survey estimated that in 2020/21 around 6% of the UK population were providing informal carer. Since 2009/10, around **60% of informal carers are women**

Carer's Allowance is **the lowest benefit of any kind, currently £69.70 per week** and available to carers who provide more than 35 hours a week of unpaid carer

**1 in 6 (16%) unpaid carers are in debt** as a result of their caring role and financial situation, increasing to 40% for unpaid carers in receipt of Carer's Allowance

**35% of carers said that over 20% of their income went towards their gas and electricity bill**, and 77% of carers said the rising cost of living was one of the main challenges they would face over the coming year

*"My son is incontinent... if we don't wash him in warm water several times a day this will cause him to physically decline. So how do we pay for the gas to heat the water if we are currently at max budget?"*

*"There are some things as a family we can cut back on but I cannot choose to stop powering the vital equipment that keeps my loved one alive."*

*"Our son has sensory and anxiety issues around food and with the cost of food increasing so quickly we are worried how we will continue to support his needs and be able to pay for it. He also needs adaptive equipment for school and we are struggling to afford the cost."*

*"We only leave our home now for appointments or once a week to grocery shop... We have had to cut one meal a day to save money to put toward fuel bills. My disabled husband stays in bed to keep warm without putting the heating on. We only shower occasionally because we struggle to afford our water meter."*

*"I am having to take on another job to make ends meet. So I am working in the evening as well as day time and caring duties."*

# Older women

Women have **51% on average of the pension wealth of men** in those years when they're approaching retirement

1 in 5 older women are living in poverty, and for single women this figure rises to 27% of older women

Research from Independent Age shows that 1 in 3 women over 65 could not afford a £25 monthly increase in their expenses

55% of women over 65 are now cutting back on everyday expenses, compared to 44% of men

51% of older women compared to 40% of older men are reducing their spend on heating

# Domestic abuse and cost of living

- Research by Women's Aid shows that 96% of survivors had seen a negative impact on amount of money available to them as a result of cost of living increases
- 66% of survivors told us that abusers are now using the cost of living increase and concerns about financial hardship as a tool for coercive control, including to justify further restricting their access to money
- Almost three quarters (73%) of women living with and having financial links with the abuser said that the cost of living crisis had either prevented them from leaving or made it harder for them to leave.



Camden have a **new £2million Cost of Living Crisis Fund**, providing a payment of up to £500 to individual residents or families facing severe financial hardship who have no source of monetary support available

75%

of people applying for Camden's Cost of Living Fund  
are women

# Case study

*Resident lives in temporary accommodation, provided by LBC, since Feb 2021. She has two children aged 10 & 7. She has both physical and mental health problems. She has degenerative disc disease, and she has right shoulder pain, and has been referred to the MSK clinic. She walks with a walking stick.*

*She has depression and anxiety, and has experienced panic attacks. She has been prescribed an anti-depressant. She also gets severe migraines. At present Ms Akter gets only basic rate Universal Credit for herself and her children, so she is having to borrow money to try to live.*

*She has to pay her monthly electricity bill, as well as groceries and household items. She has to pay service charges. She is struggling also to afford to buy items like clothing and footwear for her growing children. She would be grateful for any financial support you are able to give her.*

# Other case studies

*Anna has 3 children, two are SEN, she has her own health needs and requires the funding to manage the cost of living, the family live in the Broadhurst hostel and Anna recently enrolled the children into school and spent a lot on uniforms and shoes. This impacted food costs, We would like the family to get 350 towards food and clothing.*

*Resident is in debt. Cannot afford to pay water and electric bill. Things are very difficult for her at the moment as she sometime have to decide whether to pay a bill or eat. She has had to cancel her direct debit because of insufficient funds in her account so that she can buy food for herself and her daughter. Resident said that her daughter is coming to be a teenager and has grown out of a lot of her clothing, especially her school uniform and she needs a winter coat which she is not able to afford to buy for her. This situation is making her feel anxious and stressed*

*This lady came to see me at the surgery today and we discussed her circs. She was a victim of DV in 2019 and since then has had many housing issues as she had to leave her ex-partner. Due to Covid she lost her job and has since been unemployed. She currently receives UC but is now living in debt. She has mental health issues as well as many physical health issues that are not allowing her to go back to work. She used to be a physiotherapist. I believe this lady's circs are exceptional and while I understand most single people are awarded £100-150 I am applying for £300 for this lady and I hope that you will provide her with this.*