



Community Foundation

Vital Signs North East: Living Standards



Living Standards

How donors and funders can continue to support those faced with a decline in living standards due to economic pressures and rising costs



About this Vital Signs report

Vital Signs is a Community Foundation resource presenting information about a range of issues affecting our area. It draws on statistics, published research, local expertise and knowledge gathered through funding across the region to ‘take the pulse’ of communities and inform a better philanthropic response to their needs. We see it as the start of a conversation and would love to hear your views about the ambitions of local communities and what more philanthropy and charitable funding could do to meet them.

This is our ninth Vital Signs North East 2024 report. It provides an update on the themes covered in our **Vital Signs – Cost-of-living crisis report** published in October 2022.

Vital Signs will explore ten themes during 2024:

- Economy** – How can philanthropy help build a strong regional economy where everyone benefits from increased prosperity?
- Education** – What opportunities can charitable funding create for people to learn, develop skills and achieve their potential?
- Health** – How can charitable funders improve the overall health of our region, and reduce differences in health outcomes between richer and poorer people?
- Homes** – Can philanthropists help ensure that there are decent, secure homes for everyone who needs them?
- Environment** – What support can philanthropy provide to help communities look after the environment and ensure the region rises to the challenge of climate change?
- Access** – How can philanthropists help people overcome the barriers they face in getting access to opportunities and services?
- Community** – What can charitable giving contribute to the task of ensuring our communities are strong, welcoming and able to cope with the challenges of uncertain times?
- Culture** – How can philanthropy help foster the North East’s unique culture, from iconic theatres, museums and concert halls to diverse community arts, heritage and sports groups?
- Justice** – How can charitable funding help reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and support the communities and individuals it affects?
- Living standards** – How should philanthropic funds support those faced with a decline in living standards due to economic pressures and rising costs?

In addition to reporting on each of these themes we will produce a brief printed summary of our findings.

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Just over half of adults (55%) reported that their cost-of-living had increased over the last month.
Office for National Statistics, June 2024

A note on terminology

- In this report we use the following geographic terms:
- “The North East” or “The North East region”:** this refers to the North East English region which will soon cover the Tees Valley Combined Authority and new North East Combined Authority
 - Tees Valley:** this refers to the area covered by the Tees Valley Combined Authority comprising Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees
 - The North East sub-region:** this refers to the area to be covered by the new North East Combined Authority comprising Northumberland, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Gateshead, Sunderland and County Durham.

Executive summary

This issue of Vital Signs is intended chiefly to update our report on the cost-of-living crisis published in October 2022. At that time inflation was over 11%.

The good news is that it's now down to just over 2%. But prices haven't stopped going up – they're just rising less rapidly. This means the North East remains vulnerable, in particular because it lacks the levels of financial resilience that enable more prosperous areas to ride out downward pressure on living standards. More people here are 'just about managing' and therefore at risk of falling into serious financial difficulties, particularly while mortgage and credit payments remain high. Households on low incomes from work and/or benefits – who have endured huge increases since 2021 in the price of essential items like food (up 31%) and energy (up 90%) – remain in or at the margins of poverty.

In this context, demands on charities working in areas like benefits and debt advice, mental health, family support and community

cohesion will continue to rise. And this will happen at a time when such organisations are likely to struggle to meet the increased cost of delivering their services. The immediate crisis we face – as identified in our 2022 report – remains unchanged.

And, in the longer term, we continue to believe that it is vital that civil society organisations focus on helping to build a more productive North East economy, with increased living standards and greater levels of financial resilience. In an uncertain world, this represents the best way to help the region ride out further periods of economic difficulty arising from global economic disruption, pandemic disease and/or climate change. In our view, this should involve supporting the efforts of statutory partners and the private sector to enable individuals and communities to benefit from opportunities created by the push to achieve net zero and implementation of new technologies notably Artificial Intelligence.



Want to know more?

You can download all our Vital Signs reports as they are produced via our website at www.communityfoundation.org.uk/vitalsigns

The Community Foundation believes philanthropy can have the most impact on living standards in three areas

1

Helping people, families and communities by ensuring basic needs are met, that families and carers under pressure get help and that communities are encouraged to stick together through the problems they face.

2

Supporting charities and community organisations as they face rising demand and pressure on their core budgets, so they continue to have the capacity and resources to help while staying financially sustainable and able to advocate and campaign for those they serve.

3

Building long-term resilience by ensuring people, families and communities are better able to benefit from regional economic development and cope with challenges like the cost-of-living crisis.



The cost-of-living: an update on developments since 2022

Our autumn 2022 Vital Signs report on the cost-of-living crisis was published as inflation peaked at an annual rate of 11.1%, a 41-year high that was followed by a decline in August 2024 back to 2.2%, just above the Bank of England target rate of 2%. This return to relatively low inflation is welcome. But the cost-of-living crisis is not over. Its overall impact between May 2021 and May 2024 has been an increase in consumer prices of 21%. The energy bill for a typical household is now £400 higher than it was three years ago. A pint of milk that cost around 42p in July 2021 now costs closer to 65p. Prices are continuing to rise: they are doing so at a lower rate, but from a higher baseline.ⁱ

The main mechanism for controlling inflation by the Bank of England is the interest rate it sets. Interest rate increases work by suppressing the demand for goods and services, reducing the

spending power of people and businesses by making mortgages and loans more expensive. This reduces inflation, as businesses hold or cut prices in a bid to attract customers with less to spend. But it's a slow and blunt instrument. It takes around two years for an interest rate increase to have the maximum effect on inflation, and it has an uneven impact on standards of living across society.

The high percentage of households on low incomes from benefits or work in the North East gained some protection as a result of increases in the minimum wage and benefit rates. But they are spending relatively more of their household budgets to meet particularly steep increases since 2021 in the price of food (+31%) and domestic fuel (+90%) and will struggle in the long term to cover a sustained increase in mortgage and credit repayments.ⁱⁱ

The Bank's interest rate was cut by 0.25% to 5% in August – despite fears over the level of service price inflation within its Monetary Policy Committee. These have proved unfounded, and there may be more confidence that the price of goods and services will be contained despite the return of upward pressure on wages. However, we are likely to see a cautious approach to easing pressure on consumers. And everything depends on there being no unexpected economic disruption or inflationary developments in the foreseeable future.

We must hope that this will indeed be the case. But in our 2022 report we argued that it would be prudent to look beyond the current crisis and consider how to increase resilience to the possibility of further economic disruption.

Our concerns focused on three main areas.

1. Uncertainty surrounding the global economy and energy prices:

the consensus view is that, all being well, the world economy will grow steadily in 2024-2025 with an accompanying decrease in inflation. But all may not be well: there are uncertainties surrounding the US and Chinese economies, and global trade remains at risk of serious disruption. The war in Ukraine grinds on, with conflict in the Middle East and attempts by China to assert its authority in the Pacific fuelling international tensions. On the plus side, European overdependence on Russia for energy has ended – with Norway and the USA now meeting much of the UK's needs – and with it the prospect of damaging politically-motivated hikes in energy prices. But conflict in the Middle East could yet disrupt markets and force up energy prices, whilst in the longer-term skills and infrastructure shortages may restrict the UK's ability to reduce its vulnerability to the market by ramping up domestic energy production (e.g. North Sea oil and gas, renewables).

2. The continued impact of Brexit and Covid and the possibility of further disruption due to pandemic illnesses and/or climate change:

whilst the long-term benefits of Brexit may yet be realised, its immediate impact, whilst not as negative as some had predicted, has been to depress productivity, imports and exports. There may be further problems as the transition process is completed: concern is being expressed from the food, agriculture, logistics and port industries about the impact on prices of new trade arrangements scheduled for implementation during 2024.ⁱⁱⁱ Similarly, whilst Covid is no longer massively disrupting production, it has had longer term effects that amplify the potentially inflationary impact of wage increases due to labour shortages post-Brexit. Most notable amongst these is a rise in the number of economically inactive people, with high levels of long-term health conditions in the UK prior to 2019 exacerbated by the subsequent impact of long Covid. Research published in the Lancet in August 2024 found that this condition now affects just under 2% of the population, can last for years, and is markedly more prevalent in poorer communities.^{iv}

Meanwhile Covid remains very much with us – with around 3,000 cases reported weekly at the time of writing (July 2024) – leaving open the possibility of more problematic variants emerging.^v Added to this is the possibility of further pandemic illnesses, something the former Chief Scientific Officer, Sir Patrick Vallance considers “absolutely inevitable”.^{vi} There are currently 30 identified pathogens considered as having pandemic potential, with increased urbanisation and climate change amplifying the risk they pose.^{vii} This is just one aspect of the disruptive potential of an increase in global temperatures, the impact of which on our region was explored in our **Vital Signs Environment report**.



3. Structural problems within the UK and North East economy:

in our **Vital Signs Economy report** we highlighted the many opportunities that were available to the UK as a leading world economy. As part of this there is the potential for sustained, inclusive growth within the North East regional economy which could raise living standards and our resilience to the economic impact of events like Covid-19, the cost-of-living crisis and climate change. The barriers to success, both nationally and regionally, remain largely as identified there:

- low productivity and an ageing, relatively ill and under-skilled workforce;
- low levels of financial resilience; and
- high levels of inequality between, and within, regions.

We ought, however, to add something on the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The story here is perhaps less likely to be one of massive job losses as people are replaced by machines. It is more likely the need to have people in jobs will persist – we'll just have the opportunity to get inventive about what those jobs are by focusing on what humans do best whilst machines do the heavy lifting.^{viii} In the near future the automation of some roles may accelerate, as has happened already in customer services (although customer backlash

may eventually put a brake on this). In the longer term the technology may create a raft of new, high-value jobs whilst simultaneously transforming the way many of us work and our level of productivity. If so, this has the potential to raise wages, and drive further growth in the foundational economy. It might also encourage an expansion in those areas of work where AI is less suited: the arts, care, environmental work, sports, leisure and entertainment. The prize might be greater access to the things that contribute to a better quality of life.^{ix}

But just like the “Green Industrial Revolution”, the “AI revolution” will require workers with digital skills to fuel its development. Here the North East remains at a disadvantage. **Tech UK's** Local Digital Skills Index 2023^x suggests that whilst there is good progress on digital infrastructure particularly in the north of the region, there is much ground to be made up in areas like skills and the adoption of digital technologies if we are to take advantage of the opportunities presented by digital trade. Currently our digital sector gross value added per person is amongst the lowest in the English regions. If we are to raise living standards in the North East, closing the digital attainment gap between our region and the rest of the UK is essential.

How the cost-of-living crisis continues to impact on living standards in the North East

Our 2022 Vital Signs – **Cost-of-living crisis report** identified three major impacts that inflationary pressure was having on people in our region. So, what is the current situation, and future outlook, in relation to each of these?

1. Increased financial hardship and poverty

Our region remains less financially resilient than England as a whole. The factors that underpin this are identified in our table of indicators:

- relatively low levels of income from employment reflecting low regional productivity;
- high levels of benefit dependency as a result of high rates of unemployment, and economic inactivity. An ageing population and prevalence of long-term health conditions in the region, combined with a failure to improve the accessibility of the standard jobs market, underpins the latter problem;
- historically low levels of household wealth, and higher than average levels of problem debt and individual insolvency, due to the regional economy being unable to support a reasonable level of prosperity for all its residents.

The cost-of-living crisis therefore continues to have a disproportionate impact in the North East. Those on the national minimum wage and benefits have received some support to compensate for the effects of inflation. However neither they, nor many people in the relatively low-paid jobs that prevail in our region, have seen the real value of their incomes keep pace with inflation. They have had little to cushion them from the impact of higher-than-headline rates of price increases affecting those items that swallow the majority of modest household incomes, notably food and fuel. For older people on modest incomes, whose financial situation places them above

the benefit threshold, the loss of winter fuel payments may be keenly felt. And whilst low housing costs in the region have lessened the impact of interest rate increases on mortgages and pressure on rents – which have increased relative poverty after housing costs in other regions – any benefit from this needs to be offset against the increased difficulties of large numbers of North East households in problem debt. Rates of individual insolvency here remain high, although less than at the pandemic's height.

At the national level it may be that the new government adds to these difficulties as it seeks to maintain confidence in its management of the public finances. Tax and benefits may be the focus of cost-saving measures. We may see a freeze on tax thresholds, or further restrictions on access to benefits, at the expense of those on low wages or the margins of benefit eligibility. The action already taken in relation to fuel payments is evidence that this is a government that will not baulk at what it terms the “really tough decisions”. We will know more in October 2024.^{xi}

At a North East sub-regional level, however, there have been positive developments. The cross-sectoral North East Child Poverty Commission has done much to raise awareness and understanding of the impact of poverty on children and young people in the region, not just across the public and private sectors but also amongst the general public. The recent election of Kim McGuinness as North East Mayor on a manifesto prioritising an end to child poverty is a positive development, particularly as it was soon followed by the announcement that a Child Poverty Reduction Unit was being established to develop a region-wide strategy to deliver this goal. The degree of consensus on the need for action on child poverty has rarely been greater.



2. Greater pressure on individuals, families and communities

In our 2022 report we highlighted the potential of the cost-of-living crisis to diminish living standards within North East communities by:

- harming individuals' physical and emotional health, so adding to the economic and social burden created by the prevalence of health inequalities and long-Covid in the region;
- creating further difficulties within families under financial strain, particularly given the region's lack of financial resilience. We highlighted the potential implications of this for the level of care afforded to dependent children and adults;
- fuelling an upsurge in anti-social behaviour and acquisitive and hate crime. We were particularly concerned that misplaced resentment about declining living standards, and restricted access to costlier services, might be taken out on those socially marginalised groups that are easy and visible targets from disabled people to rough-sleepers and asylum seekers.

In part these concerns have proven to be justified.

- In our region, high levels of dependency on food bank provision speaks to the level of physical hardship that many are experiencing as costs rise, with evidence that the North East has the highest concentration of neighbourhoods where affording or accessing healthy food is problematic.^{xii} A recent literature review identified a range of emerging and long-term health problems associated with the cost-of-living crisis including: increased serious respiratory illnesses in the very young and older adults; a decline in healthy eating; reduced take-up of healthcare services and unsafe practices like reducing ventilation in sleeping areas to conserve heat.^{xiii} These may exacerbate problems arising from the Covid pandemic, not least for the 5%-6% of North East residents that have long Covid.^{xiv} The effect on mental health is no less marked. In a recent YouGov Public Perceptions survey, 74% of respondents reported that rising living costs had impacted on their mental health, up from 53% in 2022. Women, younger people,

those from non-White ethnic backgrounds, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and disabled people were particularly affected.^{xv}

- Our table of indicators shows that our region currently has a large number of households on low incomes, in problematic debt and/or in poverty who will be under mounting pressure as inflationary pressures persist. It seems likely that this contributes to our region's persistently high and rising level of domestic violence, and it may also provide part of the explanation for why the number of children referred to social services here has increased at well above the national rate since 2020. However, it is important to add that most families under pressure are not affected by these issues, and that domestic violence and child protection issues occur within families across the entire social spectrum.
- Persistent inflation also has implications for many older and disabled people, particularly those who are dependent on unpaid carers. Older people are more likely to live on fixed incomes, or to be at the margins of means-tested benefits eligibility, and they are particularly affected by high domestic heating costs. Disabled people have been estimated to face extra living expenses of around 63% (after housing costs). These cover items like heating; aids, adaptation and equipment; medicines and therapies and transport costs (e.g. taxis).^{xvi} Our region has a high number of people in these groups that are dependent on unpaid carers – about 10% of the population have unpaid caring responsibilities with a sizeable minority on low incomes. With around 47% in a recent survey reporting that they are struggling financially, the demands of caring for elderly, disabled or vulnerable relatives become ever more difficult to meet.^{xvii}

Whether the crisis has led directly to increased levels of anti-social behaviour and acquisitive and hate crime is as yet harder to demonstrate. An increase in financial hardship and pressure on families may be contributing to a wider problem with anti-social behaviour caused by the impact of the pandemic on young people's social and

educational development, a loss of youth services and changes in our perception of what is normal and what crosses the line into socially transgressive behaviour. In relation to acquisitive crime some might cite our region's upsurge in shoplifting as an example of how rising prices are leading previously law-abiding people to steal food and other goods out of desperation. But it may simply be that the main driver is the decision of career criminals and others, encouraged by ineffective police responses to retail crime, to cash in on local demand for cheap food and other goods.^{xviii}

And finally, with regard to the victimisation of Black, Asian and other minoritised ethnic groups as a result of misplaced resentments concerning pressure on living standards and services, we should acknowledge the encouraging fact that recorded hate crime figures for 2023 show a fall from the previous year's peak. But the underlying trend continues to be upwards, and even if this is in part due to a more robust approach to taking action in relation to offences it remains noteworthy that racially motivated crimes predominate. It is certainly possible that misplaced resentment around living standards helped fuel both this and the protests and later riots that took place over the summer of 2024. However although polling suggests that protests against immigration were "strongly supported" by a significant minority of the public (14%), the descent into criminality during riots that targeted not just immigrants but Muslims and Asian communities in general had very little "strong support" (just 2%). This, together with the overwhelming opposition subsequently exhibited to the rioting across our region, may provide some comfort to the communities who were victimised and attacked.^{xix}



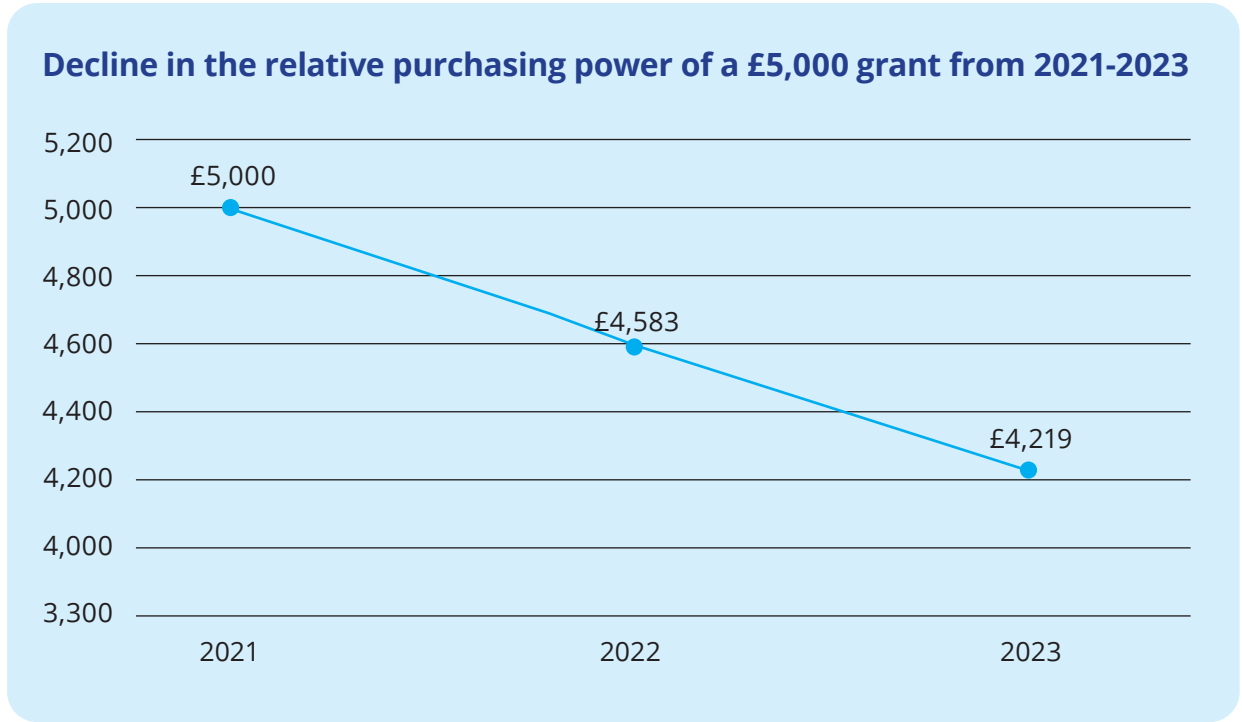
3. Rising demand and rising costs affecting civil society organisations

There is no doubt that charities have been hit hard by the cost-of-living crisis. The problem, as anticipated, is one of increasing demand coupled with increased financial pressures. The latter are due to a range of factors ranging from a loss of income from trading (e.g. reduced room hire revenue) and a reduction in the fixed value of contracts and grants to increased staffing, fuel and consumable costs.

A Charities Aid Foundation survey of 621 charities across the UK published in June 2023 found that 81% of responding organisations had experienced increased demand, with 46% using reserves to cover running costs and 47% unable to afford their current staffing levels. Only 38% felt confident that they would be able to cope with the demands on them.^{xx}

These findings were echoed in a survey of community organisations funded by the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner undertaken to assess the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. Of 84 organisations responding 71% reported an increase in demand over the previous year, with 35% using reserves to meet core costs and 63% cutting back on staffing, services and energy to control them. In all 79% of those surveyed reported that they were now struggling to meet demand.^{xxi}

Additional problems are a reduction in the general public’s charitable giving as belts are tightened, and a post-Covid dip in levels of participation in levels of volunteering which was already relatively low in our region.^{xxii} Overall inflationary pressures may have eased somewhat, but the North East community and voluntary sector remains vulnerable, in particular due to its relatively low level of reserves.



How is the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland helping those affected by downward pressure on living standards in the region, and what should we prioritise?

We believe that the three broad priorities identified in our October 2022 Vital Signs Cost-of-Living Crisis report will continue to apply for the foreseeable future. Below we look briefly at what was done in relation to them by the Community Foundation during 2023-2024 and offer suggestions for possible future action.

Priority 1: helping people, families and communities by ensuring basic needs are met, that families and carers under pressure get help and that communities are encouraged to stick together through the problems they face.

This has been addressed primarily through the Community Foundation’s day-to-day grant making. In the North East 23.5% of organisations responded to our Third Sector Trends survey identified tackling poverty as part of their remit, compared to 18.9% in England and Wales as a whole. It is likely that a higher percentage address the needs of people in poverty indirectly, but it is notable that in 2022 organisations in this group were 24% more likely to report that they expected a rise in demand. In 2023-2024, 79% of our total grant expenditure went to organisations based in areas with above average levels of deprivation.^{xxiii} Examples of grants made in 2023-2024 include:^{xxiv}

- £1,150 to Edbert’s House for the provision of benefits, financial and housing advice to people in Gateshead;
- £3,960 to Benwell Christian Shop Project (Cornerstone) to support families in hygiene poverty by providing free access to laundry services;
- £10,000 to North Tyneside Carers’ Centre for the costs of its service to young carers;
- £1,000 to Phoenix Detached Youth Project to support the integration of young refugees and asylum seekers within North Tyneside.

We should also mention our Playschemes Fund, launched initially in response to our Vital Signs report of 2019 on the alarming level of food poverty that existed in the region even before the inflationary crisis kicked-in. With the continued support of our donors, we were able to provide £144,448 to support 18 summer playschemes in 2023, supporting in particular families that whilst on low incomes were ineligible for free places. The initiative continues as a key way the Community Foundation can support families on whom the summer holidays can impose considerable financial strain. As one beneficiary organisation put it: *“The parents/ carers have passed comment on how much [the playscheme] has supported them to pick up extra shifts and work longer hours throughout the Summer which was something they were terrified of as the holidays approached.”*

The amounts of money available to us may be relatively small given the scale of the problems created by the cost-of-living crisis in our region. But as part of a wider philanthropic effort they help our grantees make an enormous difference to the quality of life of people in need. For this reason we believe that the relief of financial hardship and poverty, and mitigation of its impact on individuals, families and communities, should remain a key task for community philanthropy in the region.



Priority 2: supporting charities and community organisations as they face rising demand and pressure on their core budgets, so they continue to have the capacity and resources to help while staying financially sustainable and able to advocate and campaign for those they serve.

Our immediate response to this priority was the launch of a time-limited fund in autumn 2022 to support organisations under pressure. The Cost-of-Living fund was initiated with an £100,000 allocation of the Community Foundation’s discretionary funds, which were soon augmented through the generosity of our donors enabling us to make a total of £385,801 in grants. Awards of up to £10,000 were made to 65 organisations working to relieve poverty, advise those on low-incomes and in debt and support families and carers including victims of domestic violence. We were also able to provide much needed support to help community centres, village halls and other community hubs. The funding was unrestricted, and was used for items such as rent, utility bills, fuel for transport, staffing and volunteer costs and to meet rising costs not covered by existing grants and contracts. The fund has now closed, allowing our other funds to step in as the situation has eased somewhat. However it provides a model for how we might respond to any future upsurge of inflation.

Our pro bono sector support services are also playing their part in helping charities and community organisations as they grapple with the managerial challenges presented by increased demand and relatively low but persistent inflation. In part this has been about helping them to strengthen their boards and, in particular, to meet a demand for qualified individuals to act as treasurers. But we have also been able to broker the provision of free or subsidised consultancy support in areas like governance, business planning, marketing and organisational efficiency to help groups achieve greater sustainability. This is perhaps the best long-term support we can provide.

Priority 3: building long-term resilience by ensuring people, families and communities are better able to benefit from regional economic development and cope with challenges like the cost-of-living crisis.

This issue of resilience was explored in some detail in our Economy and Environment Vital Signs reports, and we will not revisit the issues in detail here. We will, however, flag up the need for more strategic thinking about the role philanthropy can play in making the region ready for a future characterised by both enormous opportunities and significant challenges. This has influenced the establishment of initiatives including our North East Roots Fund^{xxv} which encourages the region’s diaspora to give back, with a focus on getting ahead of long-term regional trends of low-incomes and vulnerability to cost-of-living rises and helping strengthen the foundations for a competitive economy. Work on issues of equity, diversity and inclusion must be integral to this priority if we are to ensure that future challenges do not provide a pretext for prejudice, discrimination and victimisation.



Appendix 1:
Table of Indicators

	North East	England	South East	Date*
Median monthly pay	£614	£675	£724	2023
% of gross household incomes made up by state support (note 1)	20%	14%	12%	2024
Median total household wealth	£168,500	£307,622	£503,400	2022
% households with problem debt	5%	4.5%	4%	2022
Rate of individual insolvencies per 10,000 adults	28.7	21.7 (inc Wales)	19.6	2024
% of people in households with less than 60% median UK income before housing costs (% children in brackets)	18% (22%)	16% (21%)	13% (14%)	2024
% of people in households with less than 60% median UK income after housing costs (% children in brackets)	21% (30%)	22% (30%)	19% (25%)	
% of constituencies with a child poverty rate of at least 25%	88.9%	70%	44%	2024
% people reporting using support from charities/foodbanks due to increased cost-of-living	4%	3%	3%	2024
Number of referrals to children’s social care services per 100,000 that resulted in action (increase since 2020)	578 (+4%)	448 (+1%)	492 (+6%)	2024
Percentage of third sector organisations which serve people and households in poverty that expect demand to rise	89.5%	88%	86%	2024

Notes: Individual insolvencies occur when people who are unable to pay debts enter formal procedures. **State support** includes Tax Credits, State Pension plus any Pension Credit, Disability benefits and other benefits.



References

ⁱ Data on milk prices is available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/timeseries/cznt/mm23> whilst the data on fuel prices is from the BBC <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-58090533>

ⁱⁱ Cominetti, N et al (2024) **Paying the Price** Resolution Foundation

ⁱⁱⁱ See <https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/border-controls-for-uk-and-eu-imports-and-exports/#:~:text=From%2030%20April%202024%2C%20physical,animal%20origin%20from%20the%20EU> and <https://obr.uk/forecasts-in-depth/the-economy-forecast/brexit-analysis/#assumptions>

^{iv} See <https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2024-08-01-new-study-highlights-scale-and-impact-long-covid>

^v The United Nations warned in August 2024 of Covid’s “worrying comeback”

^{vi} See <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/may/25/another-pandemic-is-absolutely-inevitable-says-patrick-vallance-covid>

^{vii} See <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-024-02513-3>

^{viii} As one wag on social media put it: “I don’t want AI making art whilst I work in a factory. I want AI working in a factory whilst I make art.”

^{ix} For an interesting discussion of the issues see David Runciman (2023) *The Handover: How We Gave Control of Our Lives to Corporations, States and Ais*. There is a summary at <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2023/aug/19/the-end-of-work-which-jobs-will-survive-the-ai-revolution>

^x Available at: <https://www.techuk.org/shaping-policy/nations-and-regions-hub/local-digital-capital-index-2023.html>

^{xi} The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has done a commendable job of developing our understanding of poverty in the UK. For a comprehensive analysis of the issues we recommend in particular their comprehensive **UK Poverty 2024** resource.

^{xii} See our table of indicators and <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cl7l8j29rpvo>

^{xiii} Meadows, J et al (2024) **The impact of the cost-of-living crisis on population health in the UK: rapid evidence review** BMC Public Health

^{xiiv} See <https://www.theguardian.com/society/article/2024/aug/23/fifth-patients-two-north-england-surgeries-long-covid-study-finds>

^{xv} Survey of 5,000 adults in British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy/YouGov (2024). YouGov/BACP Public Perceptions Survey. March 2024.

^{xvi} See <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/money-matters/tackling-the-cost-of-living-crisis-july-23.pdf> and <https://www.scope.org.uk/campaigns/extra-costs/disability-price-tag>

^{xvii} See <https://carers.org/news-and-media/news/post/374-government-figures-show-carers-continue-to-live-in-poverty-heres-what-can-be-done>

^{xviii} See <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2023/oct/24/organised-gangs-are-shoplifting-to-order-in-uk-john-lewis-boss-says> and <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/czdpvd41z7mo>

^{xix} See <https://yougov.co.uk/politics/articles/50257-the-public-reaction-to-the-2024-riots>

^{xx} See <https://www.cafonline.org/home/about-us/press-office/cost-of-living-charities-still-struggling-to-meet-demand-and-cover-costs>

^{xxi} **Worse than Covid** (2023) Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner

^{xxii} See <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/news-and-insights/news-index/uk-civil-society-almanac-2023/volunteering/what-are-the-demographics-of-volunteers/>

^{xxiii} By above average here we mean in deciles 1-5 of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019

^{xxiv} For a full list of grants made in 2023/2024 see: <https://www.communityfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Grants-Awarded-2023-2024.pdf>

^{xxv} <https://www.communityfoundation.org.uk/northeastroots/>

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The Community Foundation is grateful for the time and expertise given by our Vital Signs North East editorial group. The group comprises:

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While the group advises on data sources, analysis and findings, the Community Foundation has overall editorial responsibility. The content and findings of our Vital Signs reports reflect the Community Foundation's conclusions not the individual views of editorial group members or of Newcastle Building Society.

Let's talk

We hope that this report will inspire more of you to give to causes that contribute to improving the situation of individuals and communities affected by the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. You can help inform our work on this and the other Vital Signs themes by completing the Vital Signs North East 2024 questionnaire. Just visit www.communityfoundation.org.uk/vitalsigns or scan the QR code below.

If you would like to discuss this report further, or what you could do to help, please contact us:

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