

Disabled People's Panel

Doing things differently
for Greater Manchester



GM Big Disability Survey 2022



This is the shorter, more accessible version of this report.
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**Disabled
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ANDY BURNHAM
MAYOR OF
GREATER
MANCHESTER

Part 1 Introduction

About the Greater Manchester Disabled People's Panel

Greater Manchester Disabled People's Panel was set up in 2019 by Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People.

The Panel is made up of 15 different Disabled People's Organisations from all over Greater Manchester.

A Disabled People's Organisation is a group that is mostly run by disabled people.

The groups have members with all different sorts of impairments.

The Panel advises Andy Burnham, the Mayor of Greater Manchester about issues disabled people think are important.

We work with other Greater Manchester Equality Panels.

We follow the Social Model of Disability.

Organisations that are Panel members



- Breakthrough UK
- Bury People First
- Disability Stockport
- Embrace Wigan and Leigh
- GM Autism Consortium Advisory Committee
- Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People (Convenor)
- George House Trust
- Manchester Deaf Centre
- Manchester Disabled People's Access Group
- Manchester Disabled People Against Cuts
- Manchester People First
- People First Tameside
- Rochdale and District Disability Action Group
- Salford Disability Forum
- Stand Up Sisters



How to Contact Us

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About the Survey



In June, July and August 2022, we held the biggest survey of disabled people in the UK.

1,617 people from all over Greater Manchester answered our questions. 1,495 of them were disabled people. We asked them about things that affected them such as:



- Money, Bills and Food



- Social Care and Personal Assistance



- Housing and Where People Live



- Accessibility, Transport and Lifestyle



- Problem Solving and Support



- Mental Health and Wellbeing



- Health Services



- Education and Employment

Part 2

What people told us



Money, Bills and Food

Benefits



8 out of 10 people got benefits.

The most common benefit was Personal Independence Payment (PIP).



We asked people how hard it was to apply for a benefit. Most people found it hard.



1 in 10 people found it impossible.



“I am always going to be disabled, yet I still have to fill in a form every few years which causes me stress and anxiety as the DWP are very difficult.”

“It was soul-destroying and I couldn’t cope with appealing further as it was making me really ill.”

“Claiming PIP was a very stressful and deflating experience, it left me in tears and caused extreme anxiety and low moods...”

Affording Things



2 out of 10 disabled people in Greater Manchester do not have enough money to buy the basic things they need to live.



3 out of 10 can only buy the basics and nothing else.

So, more than half cannot afford any 'luxuries'.

Food



About 2 out of 10 have used a food bank. More people have been using food banks, especially disabled people.



5 out of 10 were eating less.



"My neighbour brings me leftovers sometimes."

"I would love to cook healthy food but have to get cheaper meals."



Bills

Over 3 out of 10 cannot afford to pay all of their bills.



Of the people who were having trouble, 7 out of 10 said they were having to use less heat and light.



7 out of 10 think being disabled means they have to use more gas and electric. A lot were very worried about keeping warm this Winter.



Nearly 1 in 10 were missing payments.



3 out of 10 were borrowing money.



“Behind on rent, council tax paid late every month and other debt is under payment plan reviews.”

“I have returned my motability vehicle as I can no longer afford to run it.”



Digital Exclusion

Over 2 out of 10 people said lack of money stopped them using digital services. Digital services are things such as broadband and telephone services and devices such as smart phones, tablets or computers to get on the internet.



A lot of people had old devices which they could not replace when they broke down, or had problems paying for the electricity to charge them or broadband bills.



Social Care and Personal Assistance

6 out of 10 of disabled people who did the survey got help with daily living or going out.



2 out of 10 of these said they had to pay for it.



3 out of 10 people did not get the care they needed because they could not afford to pay.



3 out of 10 people said the support they got had got worse over the last 2 or 3 years.

Some people relied on family or friends. The rate of pay they could afford to pay was low, so it was hard to get personal assistants.



“My husband had to give up his full-time work to care for me. It is very expensive having a carer.”

“Me and my mum could go out a lot more together if there was someone to help us. It would also mean my mum could have some time to herself to visit her friends.”



Housing and Where People Live

Over 4 out of 10 disabled people in our survey lived in housing that did not meet all their needs. This is more than in our 2020 survey, which means things could be getting worse.



Only 3 out of 10 people who used a food bank said their housing met their needs. This shows that some disabled face more than one problem.



6 out of 10 said they were worried about housing. Poorer people were more worried.





Over 5 out of 10 people said they worried they might not be able to live on their own because the right support is not available.



“Do not have a downstairs toilet and struggle with stairs at times.”

“The place I am living is over run with rats I cannot leave my doors open there is antisocial behaviour”

“If anything happened to my husband I wouldn't be able to live on my own.”



Accessibility, Transport and Lifestyle

7 out of 10 disabled people said they had problems or could not travel everywhere they wanted to.



7 out of 10 said this was because of accessibility.



6 out of 10 said this was because of cost.



2 out of 10 people said not having a photo identity card was a problem.

People told us parking and the lack of disabled toilets were problems when going out. Stairs at stations and public transport not being regular enough were also issues.



“Access isn’t available in possibly over 50% of places where I try to venture.”

“Public transport in Greater Manchester is a joke. Delays are constant, prices are too high and it can take so long to get from A to B when it wouldn’t in a car, and needing multiple changes and different bus companies.”



Problem Solving and Support

8 out of 10 people told us they sometimes get stuck and had no one to help them.

Most have to get help or support from family. Some said this is because there is no one else. Some ask other disabled people for help because they have the same sort of experiences and the right sort of knowledge.

Some got help from Citizens Advice or community groups when they had a problem such as filling out a form.



Mental Health and Wellbeing

We asked disabled people what they were worried about?



6 out of 10 said the cost of living crisis.



5 out of 10 said their quality of life.



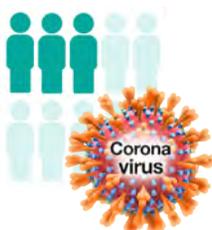
3 out of 10 said discrimination.



Over 2 out of 10 people were worried about hate crime. 2 out of 10 had experienced it. Many said it was a waste of time reporting it.



5 out of 10 people did not feel part of their neighbourhood or feel completely safe in it.



Nearly 3 out of 10 people in our survey felt attitudes to disabled people were worse than before Covid.



“There is a lot of anti-social behaviour and violence locally with a bit of a sinister atmosphere.”

“Somebody smashed the front door of our flats down in the middle of the night. I called the police, but they did not come out or even call back.”

But lots of disabled people felt they were treated well and supported by their neighbours:



“People can be lovely and very helpful when you have a disability.”

“People are generally friendly and polite, but I do worry on occasion about how someone might react if they saw me as a nuisance.”

We asked people what would help their mental health?



6 out of 10 said having enough money to live



5 out of 10 said having friends

5 out of 10 said having their support needs met



Over 4 out of 10 said having access to health services



Over 4 out of 10 said feeling part of their community



4 out of 10 said having access to transport



“Lack of a social life – Staying indoors 24 hours a day – No Money”.

“Stress. It also affects my physical health, which has a knock-on effect on my mental health”.

Some disabled people are put off getting help with their mental health. Reasons were given such as waiting lists, lack of services, problems with professionals in the past and the stigma of having a mental health issue.



Health Services



7 out of 10 people said their physical health care needs are not being fully met.



4 out of 10 said they could not afford all the things they need to keep well.



6 out of 10 thought being disabled people would affect the treatment they were given.



“Prescription costs and transport to appointments are difficult to fund”.

“Heating is needed much more... I cannot afford to have it on as much as I need”.

Long waiting lists are a problem and some health services are not accessible.



“...appointments when they finally arrive feel rushed and like they don't want to listen”.

“Most appointments are done on the phone, which is pointless. Most of my issues need people to look at them”.

“My GP's is physically inaccessible. The doors are too small for a standard wheelchair”.



Government and Social Support



3 out of 10 people who did our survey said the Government were neglecting disabled people.



2 out of 10 people said the Government were harming disabled people.



Only 2 out of every 100 people thought government were doing everything they can to help disabled people.

People thought local councils were doing a bit better than the Government.



Education and Employment

Most of the people who did the survey were not in education any more.



About 4 out of 10 disabled people felt welcome in mainstream education.



6 out of 10 did not feel welcome.



5 out of 10 people were not in work.



Nearly 5 out of 10 said they did not earn enough to cover all their living costs.



8 out of 10 did not think they got the same chances as people who were not disabled.



“Advised not to mention disability as it’s off putting.”

“It can be exhausting to have to be the person who is saying you have a disability and you need something...”

Part 3

What should be done



5 Things To Do Right Now

To help disabled people there are 5 things that we think should be done straight away by the Mayor of Greater Manchester, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the 10 local councils in Greater Manchester and health and social care services.

1. Target disabled people for support.
2. Have better advice for disabled people.
3. Social care should be free. Local councils should stop charging disabled and elderly people for their care needs. Greater Manchester should tell the Government there should be a National Independent Living Service.
4. Disabled People's Organisations and the Disabled People's Panels should come up with disability equity training.
5. The voice of the Greater Manchester Disabled People's Panel should be listened to by GMCA and the 10 local councils.



6 Changes To The Way Things Are Run

We found disabled people are not getting the rights they have under laws such as the Human Rights Act, Care Act and Equality Act, and international agreements such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People.

Many disabled people rely on help from family and foodbanks to meet their basic needs. At the same time, the Prime Minister has called benefits paid to disabled people “handouts”.

We recommend 6 things that should be done by Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the 10 local councils in Greater Manchester and the GM NHS Integrated Care Authority.

1. Change the way services for disabled people are run to be rights based.
2. Come up with a way the Greater Manchester councils can see how disabled people in their areas are doing.
3. Find out how the way public services, housing and social care are run has an impact on the lives of disabled people.

4. Work to have more disabled people as leaders and making political decisions.
5. Look at how to make the voice of the Disabled People's Panel heard and play a part in the way decisions are made.
6. Make sure disabled people do not face barriers to being able to vote. This must include 'free voting cards' for people who do not have a Photo ID.

Things to do



Money, Benefits and Energy Costs

- Energy suppliers should have accessible information.
- Pre-payment meters should cost the same as standard meters.
- Customers should not be forced into debt repayment schemes with companies. They should have accessible advice.
- Government funding for debt and benefit advice.
- Benefits increased by at least as much as the rate of inflation.
- Abolish the bedroom tax and 2-child limit.
- Bring back Legal Aid for tribunals.

- All disabled people to get the £150 Disability Cost of Living Payment.
- End to arrears-related money being taken from benefits.
- Warm Home Discount for all disabled people on benefits.
- Give cash instead of vouchers and food parcels etc.



Social Care and Personal Assistance

- Local councils do things to ease rises in care charges and the cost of living, such as a rise in the Minimum Income Guarantee.
- Social care should be free.
- Assessments should show unmet needs.

- Local councils should work with the Panel and Disabled People's Organisations to push for fully funded social care that meets people's right to a full and independent life.
- Look at supporting Personal Assistant co-operatives.
- Look at why agencies get paid more than direct payments to disabled people.
- Fully independent and accessible advocacy for people who are trying to get social care.
- Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board to have a co-produced complaints system.
- Campaign for Personal Assistants and care workers to get good wages and their work be valued.



Housing and Where People Live

- All new homes to be built to accessible standards. 10% should be wheelchair accessible.
- Local Housing Plans to be co-produced with disabled people.
- Raise grants to pay for disabled facilities.
- Older housing be made more accessible and use less energy.
- Help for disabled people to get green technology.
- Stop rent increases. Halt evictions and rental debt recovery.
- Look at having a 'Good Housing Charter'.
- No rent rises, halt evictions, stop rent debt recovery.

- Licensing departments to make sure pubs, bars and restaurants are fully accessible.
- Look at setting up an independent anti-discrimination body. It will support disabled people to take action against inaccessible businesses.
- Greater Manchester Police to run a campaign about disability hate crime. There should be accessible ways of reporting crime, especially by learning disabled people. Police officers should get disability awareness training.



Accessibility, Transport, and Lifestyle

- More Access Officers to make sure things meet access standards.
- Ring and Ride co-produce changes to the service to make it better.
- All new transport vehicles and things such as stations should meet wheelchair access standards. Existing ones by 2030.
- The Mayor and Transport for Greater Manchester should carry on with the plans to have accessible buses, concessionary, cheap fares and an integrated transport system.
- Record taxis that refuse to pick up wheelchair users.
- Have a way of showing live faults with lifts at tram and train stations.
- GMCA and Greater Manchester councils should set up an anti-discrimination unit.



Problem Solving and Support

- There should be a Greater Manchester Advice and advocacy service.
- All organisations should make accessibility part of what they do. Publicly funded organisations should fund equality training.



Mental Health and Wellbeing

- GM Integrated Health and Social Care should support the whole person. Services should fit the individual person.
- Services should be given when they are needed. Long waiting times mean people do not get care when it is needed.
- People who use services need to be listened to and play a full and equal part in co-production.

- To reduce inequality, we need to look at how the way organisations such as the DWP and social care and housing providers work.
- Look at running alternatives to traditional treatments.
- Stop using words such as ‘resilience’ to hide the removal of healthcare and support.
- Listen to people who have been labelled as having a ‘personality disorder’. Look at stopping using this label.
- Where services are failing or are not available because of lack of funding, decision makers should work with disabled people to push for rights-based improvement.
- The Integrated Care Partnership should look at its role in cases of abuse. They should use co-production to make the providers and the users of services more equal and should support whistleblowers.



Health Services

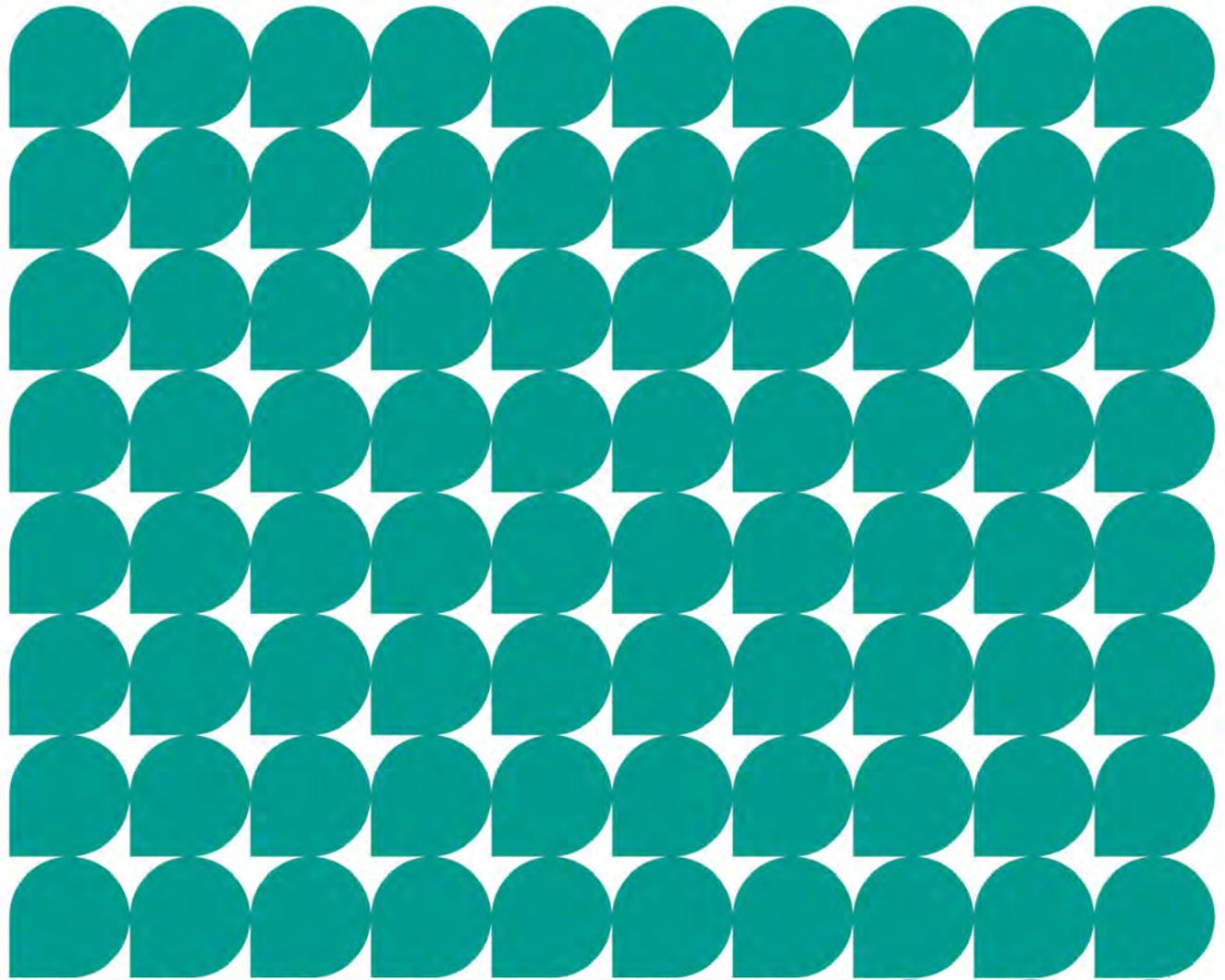
- Lack of social care services mean people are kept in hospital. Fixing social care is something that the NHS, council social care providers and people who get social care should work together to do.
- Records of people's name, address, date of birth and access needs should be available to all health and social care providers, so disabled people do not have to keep giving this information over and over.
- Staff networks should have more power. There should be more information about numbers of disabled staff. There should be disability equality training for senior staff such as consultants and board members.
- The NHS Accessible Information Standard is a very long document. There should be shorter more accessible versions, including video and audio versions.

- A Panel task group should be funded to look at problems with access for dentistry, physiotherapy, GP and wheelchair services.
- There is a link between medical needs and housing needs not being met. The way things are run needs to be changed.
- Greater Manchester Health and Social Care should do things to stop the rise in cases of Covid, and not just follow what the Government says they should do.
- Some groups of people have more inequality in health and poverty than others. The things that cause this need to change.
- More people need to be told about Prescription Payment Certificates.



Education and Employment

- Disabled people should be part of mainstream education. Education departments should look at co-producing Education, Health Care Plans with disabled students.
- If someone is waiting for a diagnosis, support should be given as if they had already been given the diagnosis.
- There should be more funding and staffing for support in university.
- Access and travel grants should be made more widely known. The Panel should carry on work about updating the Concessionary Pass Scheme.



We did the biggest survey of disabled people in the UK

It showed that disabled people have been badly affected by Austerity, Covid and the Cost of Living crisis

These problems have been caused or made worse by the Government

This report says what needs to be done in Greater Manchester

