

# The Winter Ahead:

the outlook for low-income households

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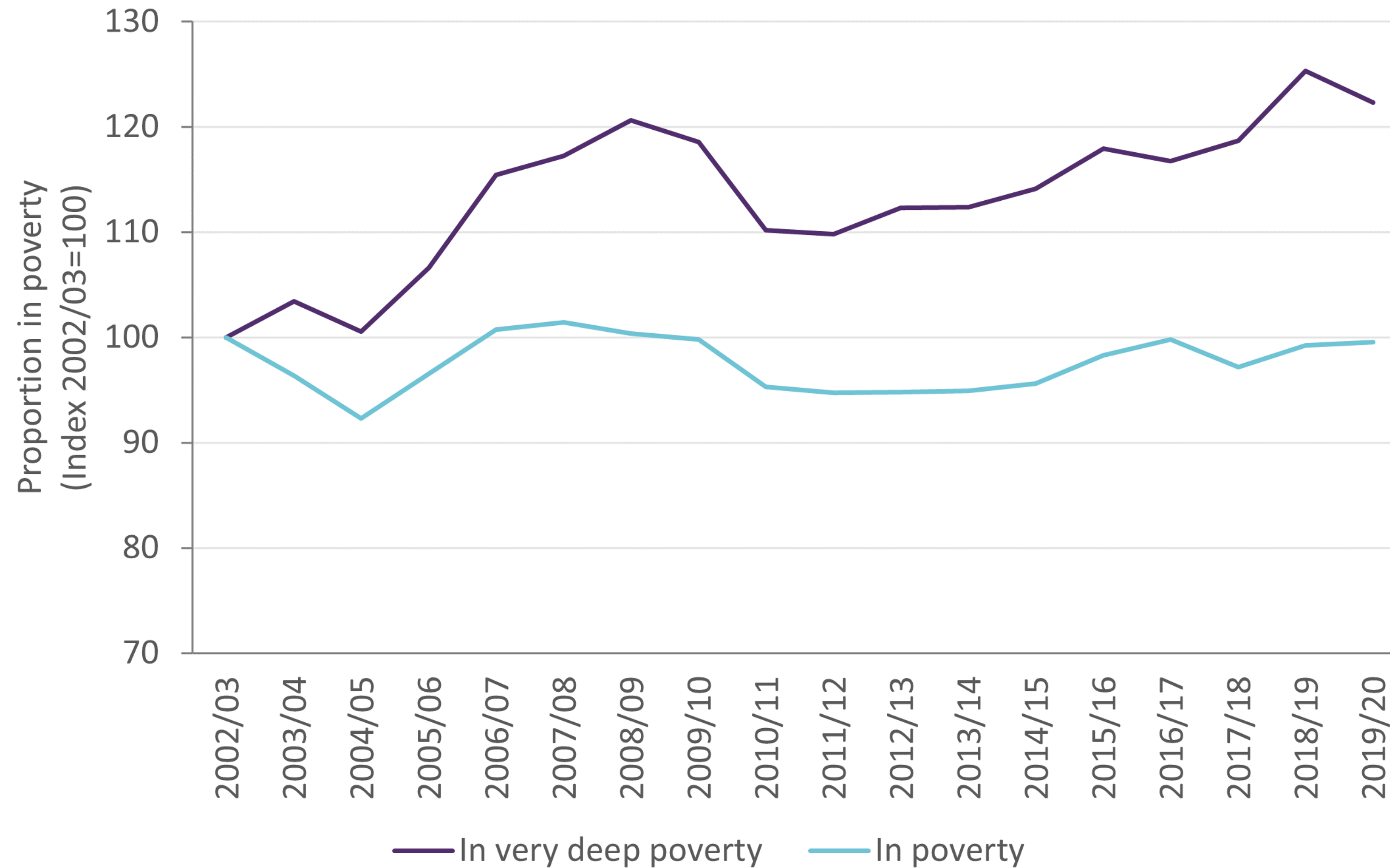
# Overview

- We came into this series of crises in bad shape
- The cost of living is hitting hardest at the bottom
- Government action is required





# Deepening poverty in the UK pre-pandemic

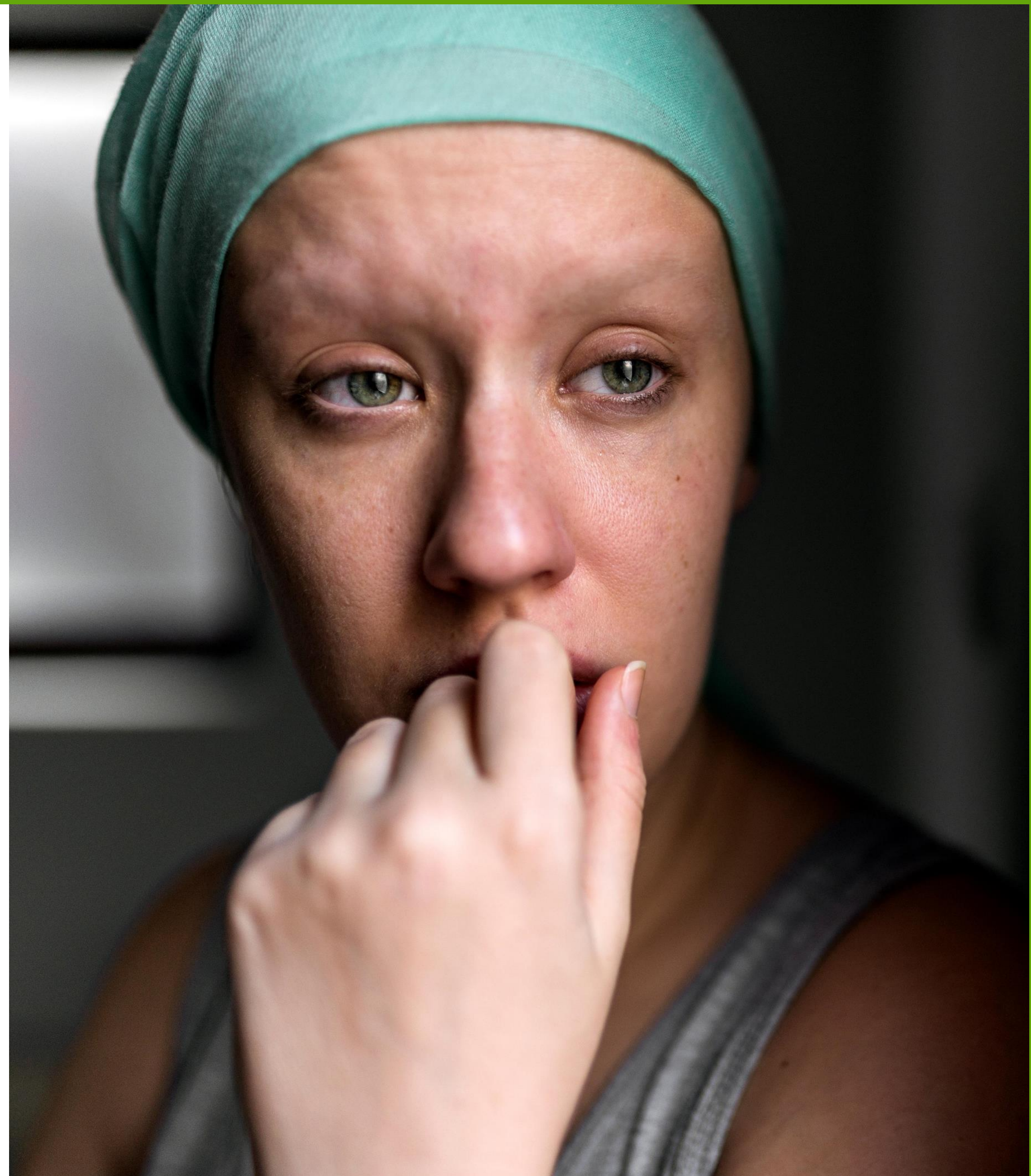




# Who has poverty been deepening for?



- Lone parents: sharp upward trend after 2010
- Large families (3+ children): sharp upward trend after 2010
- Disabled: steady upward trend
- Workless: steady upward trend from a very high base
- Ethnic minority backgrounds: overall high risk (18%), but risk and trajectory varies for different ethnic groups.

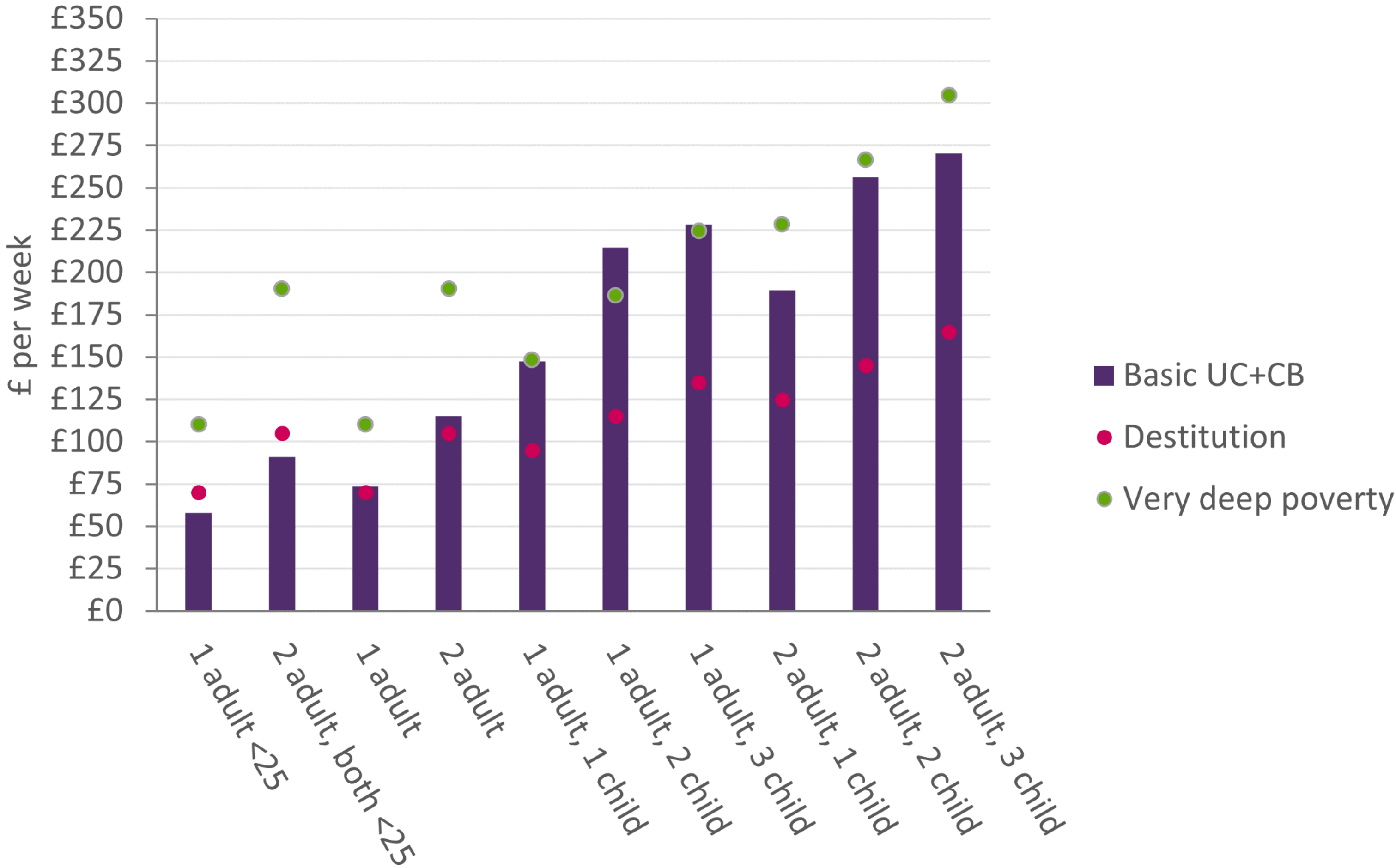




# Social security is a key driver



Destitution & deep poverty line vs basic benefit rates



# We entered this series of crises in bad shape

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- Analysis is pre-pandemic. Since then...
  - Deepening debt and arrears during the pandemic
  - Universal Credit increased then cut
  - Cost of living crisis



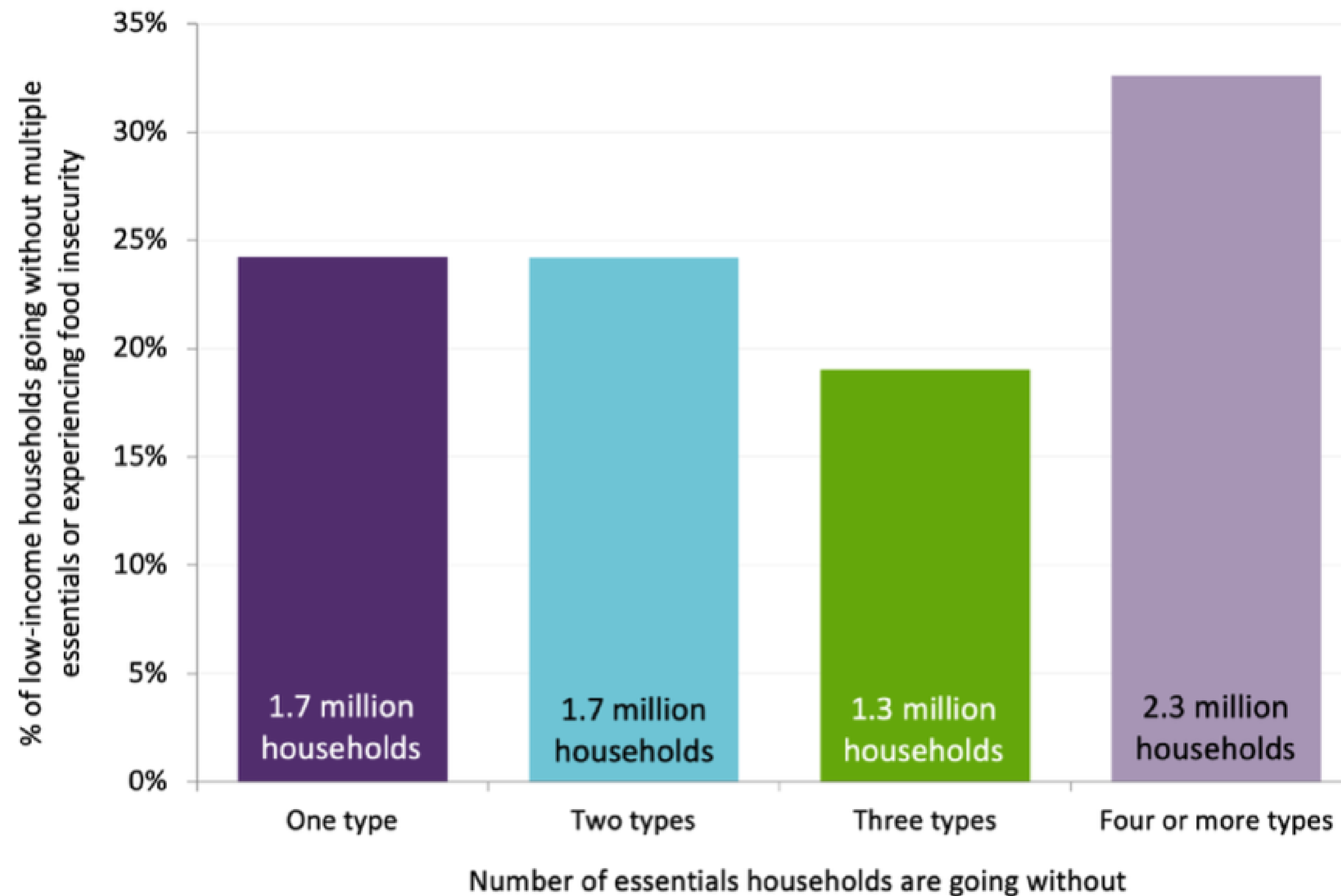




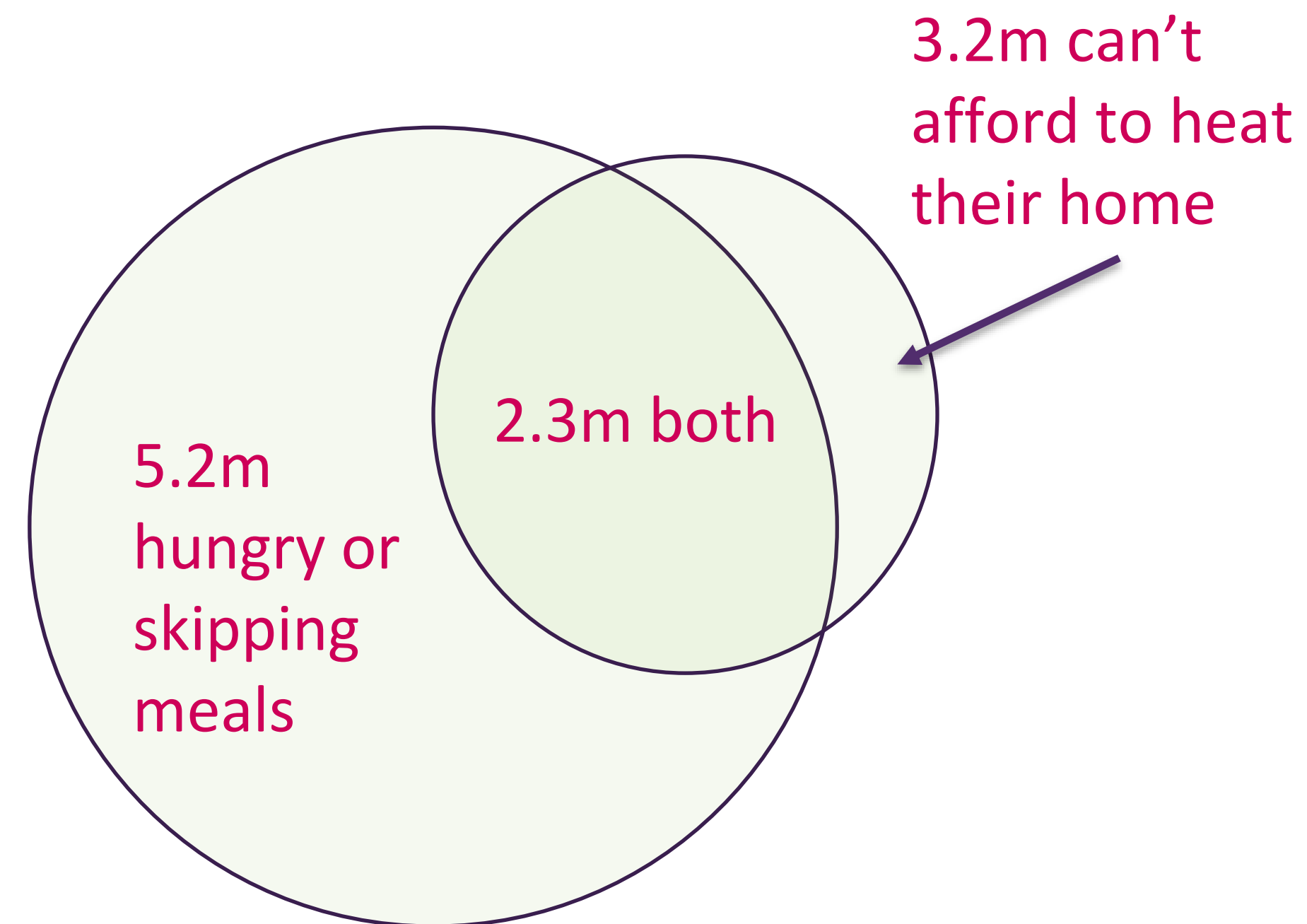
# 7m households going without essentials



**Three quarters of low-income households are going without more than one kind of essential** – like food, a warm home or toiletries.



# Not heating or eating



# Disproportionately struggling



- Households who are subject to deductions from their benefits
- Black, Asian and Mixed ethnicity households
- Working age households (especially young ones)
- Large families and lone parents
- Those struggling with loneliness or mental health



# Government action is required



# Government support package

- **Government support package:**

Council tax	£150
Energy Bill Support Scheme	£400
One of payment for means-tested benefit recipients	£650
One of payment for pensioners	£300
One of payment for disabled people	£150
Household Support Fund	£1.5bn since October 2021
6 month Energy Price Guarantee	Average user will pay £2,500

- But there's still a gap for people on means-tested benefits:

**£450 on average *this* year**



# Immediate priorities & longer term reform

- **People need help this winter:** Bring forward uprating of benefits
- **Do not cut benefits:** Uprate in the usual way in April 2023 (with prices, not earnings)
- **One off support payments are not a substitute:** when inflation subsides prices won't fall
- **Reform Universal Credit:** so people can *at least* always afford the essentials









## Cost of Living

### Innovation and coordination between Council and CVS

Helen Starr-Kedde





#CostOfLivingCrisis





## Cash-First Approach

- Community hub
- Local discretionary funding scheme
- Children's Centre vouchers
- Free school meal vouchers in the holiday periods
- Food access service
- Household support fund



# Supporting the Community

- Parking permits
- Central food hub
- Children's Centre pilot
- Food access commission



# FOOD SOS

## Harvest Festival Food Donation Plea

Get involved now  
[BHFOOD.ORG.UK/FOODSOS](http://BHFOOD.ORG.UK/FOODSOS)

**#FOODSOSBTN**



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[STUDIOEVERETT.COM](http://STUDIOEVERETT.COM)

Brighton & Hove  
**FOOD**  
Partnership







# Brighton & Hove Cost of Living Crisis Campaign





[www.bhfood.org.uk](http://www.bhfood.org.uk)

 @btnhovefood

 /btnhovefood



# Meeting the shortage of surplus food and donations

Sam Dyer, Cambridge Sustainable Food

**#goldfoodcambridge**



## Context

- Austerity mark 2, ongoing, In Feb 22 76% of hub visitors said the rise in food and energy prices meant that they were finding it difficult to afford food and pay their bills
- People not necessarily feeling it so much yet - energy cap, mild autumn.
- Pandemic strengthened local partnerships, networks and services and highlighted inequalities - eg ethnicity / access to culturally diverse foods
- City Council support ongoing



“To speak with other people  
so I don't feel socially  
isolated.”



## Response: Building on existing work

- Food Hubs x 8, 21200 visits 21/22
- Food Distribution centre: CoFarm, Grow a Row, donations, surplus 204 tons
- Christmas: Seniors Meals ( 250 to sheltered Housing '21)
- Hampers: 650 expected to families - partnership project City Council, CSF CIC, Cambridge City Foodbank]
- Existing Alliance meeting monthly ( 27 orgs)



“ It means I don’t  
have to steal food.”

## Response: Building on existing work

- CAB direct referral: · 70% of referrals had a long term health condition or disability · Income gain outcome for those referred was £38,517 )
- In total over 70 businesses and organisations have supported the programme
- Warm spaces: City Council 4 x community spaces - Breakfasts
- funded 38 warm spaces projects with £1k grants can be spent on food costs for meals, food parcels etc
- COL Roadshow - advice on debt, Health, Household Support Fund, Utilities, Healthy Start Vouchers



The poster is titled "Cost of Living Support Pop Ups" and features logos for Cambridgeshire County Council and Think Communities at the top. It includes an illustration of three hands holding hearts. The text "Drop in to get information and advice. Helping you with the challenges you're facing this winter." is present. A red circle on the right says "FREE REFRESHMENTS!". The poster lists 10 pop-up events in a grid format, alternating between red and white background rows. At the bottom, it says "TURN OVER FOR INFORMATION".

WEDNESDAY 18TH OCTOBER	TUESDAY 16TH NOVEMBER
1-4pm Chesterton Methodist Church CB4 1RW	1-4pm Cambridge Central Library (3rd Floor) CB2 3QD
TUESDAY 1ST NOVEMBER	THURSDAY 17TH NOVEMBER
9.30-12.30pm Church of the Good Shepherd CB4 2ET	3-6pm The Clay Farm Centre CB2 9FN
THURSDAY 3RD NOVEMBER	THURSDAY 24TH NOVEMBER
3.30-6.30pm Christ the Redeemer Church CB5 8RS	4-7pm Cambridge Central Mosque CB1 3DF
WEDNESDAY 9TH NOVEMBER	TUESDAY 29TH NOVEMBER
11am-2pm The C3 Church CB1 3HR	2-5pm St James Church CB1 8QJ

TURN OVER FOR INFORMATION

"My kids don't sleep hungry"

# Fundraiser

A city wide appeal to help front line community food services and projects to buy ingredients and slow cookers for those in Cambridge hit hardest by the cost of living crisis.

- Matched funded 10k CCC
- Raised £25k
- 13 orgs



Cambridge Sustainable Food CIC is organising

**I can't pay all bills and rent with benefits so this is my main source of food."**

## Call on Government

- Over 30 local voluntary sector organisations and public bodies signed a statement of concern
- Presented to Shadow Minister for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Daniel Zeichner



*“Our member organisations are experiencing a perfect storm of increases in the numbers of people seeking help with food, often people who never expected to find themselves in this position ... We feel that the voluntary sector is plugging gaps in state provision for vulnerable households and worry that we will not be able to cope with rising demand”*



[www.cambridgesustainablefood.org](http://www.cambridgesustainablefood.org)

[sam@cambridgesustainablefood.org](mailto:sam@cambridgesustainablefood.org)





# Building Local Capacity



Chris Nottingham

Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership

[chris.nottingham@taicalon.org](mailto:chris.nottingham@taicalon.org)



**Synnwyr  
Bwyd Cymru  
Food Sense  
Wales**



**Tai Calon**  
Community Housing



Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations  
Cymdeithas Mudiadau Gwirfoddol Gwent



**GIG  
CYMRU  
NHS  
WALES**

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Aneurin Bevan  
University Health Board



**Cyfoeth  
Naturiol  
Cymru  
Natural  
Resources  
Wales**

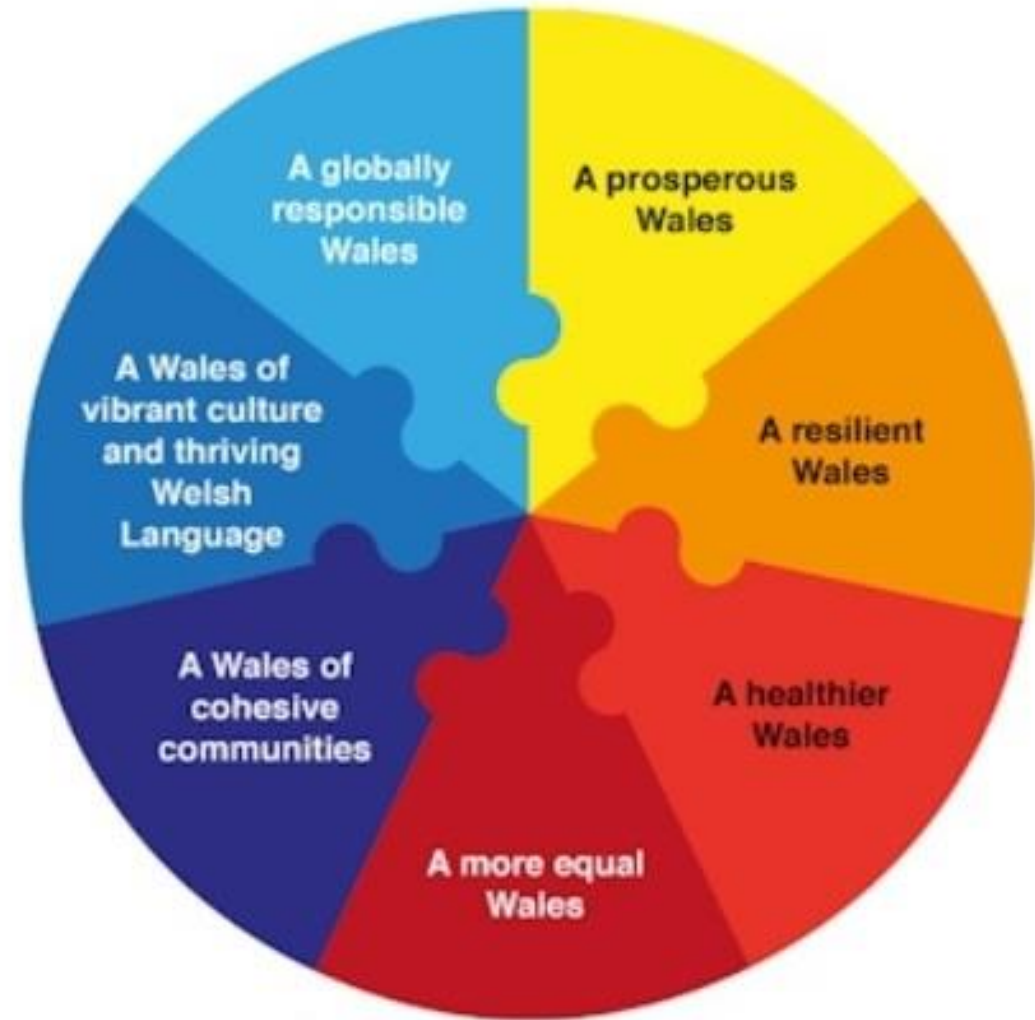


Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
**Blaenau Gwent**  
County Borough Council

# Public Services Board accountable to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015)

Objective:

Generational change whilst working on  
problems of the present





# National Support for Food Partnerships



Yesterday (Monday, July 11<sup>th</sup>), Jane Hutt, Minister for Social Justice chaired a Cost of Living Summit during which she **announced a series of intervention packages**, including financial support for cross-sector food partnerships in Wales.

This funding from Welsh Government is worth £3 million and will **support the development of cross-sector food partnerships**. The funding will also strengthen existing food partnerships that help build resilience in local food networks through the co-ordination of on the ground, food-related activity; help tackle the root-causes of food poverty; develop citizen action; maximise the effectiveness of projects and ensure that resources are targeted at areas of greatest need.

Keep up to date with Welsh Food Policy news:  
[www.foodsensewales.org.uk](http://www.foodsensewales.org.uk)





Image credit: Richard Whitcombe



## Outlook in Blaenau Gwent

A resident in Blaenau Gwent has a 15 year shorter life expectancy than someone living 5 miles away in Monmouthshire.


Child measurement survey showed 19.8% 4 to 5 year olds reported as obese, an 8% increase from pre-pandemic levels

Housing Association issuing 10's of food bank vouchers a day, previously 10 a week

84% increase in Trussell Trust Food Bank use since Covid



## Comparing the crises



*'It don't feel the same (as covid support).... It's like having a lead weight around our neck and we're getting pulled down and down and down''*

*Claire in Tredegar comparing Cost of Living Crisis to Covid-19 Pandemic*



## Building local capacity

- Partnership plays a key role in administering Local Authority funding
- Evidence of spending money well led to Health Board funding
- Supporting bids for small pots of funding





## Local woodland group funded to start a food growing project



- Produced Blaenau Gwent's first ever veg box – delivered to a food insecurity project
- Provided low cost veg boxes in the community – able to accept Health Start cards





## Healthy Start booster program

- Strengthened partnership with Early Years social services Flying Start program
- Developed links with local retailers
  - Next iteration will be less prescriptive



**Boost your  
Healthy Start card  
with £5 at  
Fresh 'n' Fruity  
& M&J Fruit & Veg**



**Fresh 'n' Fruity**  
Brynmawr + Ebbw Vale  
**M&J Fruit and Veg**  
Abertillery

This £5 voucher can **only be used**  
**with your Healthy Start card** in  
Blaenau Gwent  
Expires 31/03/22



A person with short brown hair, wearing a white and dark blue striped shirt, is seen from the side, focused on preparing food in a kitchen. They are using a red-handled knife to cut a green vegetable on a grey cutting board. In the background, there are several jars of sauce, including one labeled 'HUNTERS CHICKEN SAUCE', and a white sink. The scene is dimly lit, with the text overlaid on the right side.

# Community Food Organisations

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Fareshare Cymru, some weeks struggles to meet demand. Partnership network has a good quality food through LA funding.

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Building in support and frontline knowledge with signposting and partner organisations to deliver 'more than' food.

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Working with the Housing Association to reduce tenant stigma of accessing surplus food provisions





## Housing Association reach in the community

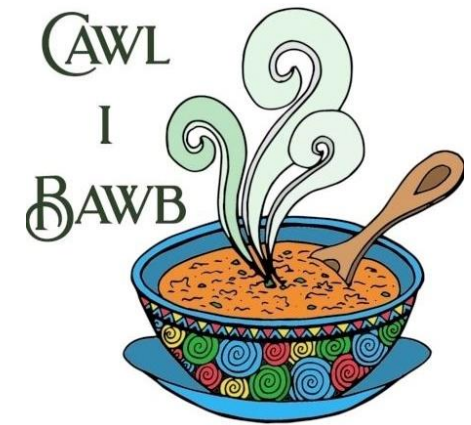
- Well connected in the community
- Infrastructure available to deliver on additional resources
- Frontline staff work with a range of tenants that could benefit from food support





## Warm places and food

- Welsh Government funding
- Libraries on board and proving popular – another opportunity for frontline signposting
- Mutual aid network once again delivering



**Ebenezer**  
Community Kitchen

**SOUP** & a Warm Welcome





A group of people are gathered around a kitchen counter, preparing food. One person is cutting vegetables on a purple cutting board, while others are working on different tasks. The kitchen has dark cabinets and a white countertop. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark grey layer containing text.

## *Finally*

Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership is an ally, supporting the network to build capacity, access funding and spend money well

Being hosted by a housing association has helped bring in further resources regards tenant outreach – recommend all food partnerships developing strong links with local housing associations

Similarities in the Covid response require redoubling of partnership working to collaborate with other service providers

