

2024

COST OF LIVING SURVEY

ISLAND GLOBAL RESEARCH
ISLE OF MAN SUMMARY



Island Global Research

Thank you to all who participated in this survey. We are grateful for the time taken to share your views.

Changes to the cost of living are a global issue, but one that impacts each and every one of us in our day-to-day lives. It is perhaps of greater concern now than at any time in over a decade, with frequent coverage in the local and national media over the past few years.

This cost of living survey is part of our equality series and follows on from our 2022 Cost of Living survey. It sought to understand the continued impact of changes to the cost of living amongst islanders and examine the extent to which there is a divide between those who can comfortably afford their living costs and those who are currently struggling to do so.

We found that there continues to be a striking divide visible across the jurisdictions between those who categorise themselves as financially comfortable and those who struggle to afford their costs. Just over half of people categorised themselves as less than comfortable, including 8% who say they cannot usually afford their [living] costs, and often have to go without essentials like food and heating. The remaining 47% comprises 39% who are 'relatively comfortable' and 8% who are 'very comfortable'.

86% of respondents across the jurisdictions agreed or strongly agreed to the statement "The rising cost of living is impacting me and my household" showing that cost of living is still a factor in everyday living for many people. On an individual level, the cost of food appears to be an increasing burden in Jersey and Gibraltar, and across all jurisdictions 30% are extremely concerned about the future impact cost of living will have on their household. This understandably increases in those who feel less able to afford their costs. However, overall levels of concern about poverty and inequality have decreased slightly compared to 2022. This signals an adjustment to the new cost of living norms.

Research recently conducted by YouGov in the UK found that "six in ten Britons (61%) say they have made spending cuts at some point during the cost of living crisis", a figure that has stayed consistent throughout the crisis. We have found a similar trend in our findings, with 69% of people across all the islands reporting they had found it difficult to meet the cost of one or more of the types of expenditure asked about in our 2024 survey, which is consistent to our 2022 findings. This suggests that cost of living is continuing to affect the same proportion of our populations.*

We hope the insights provided by this survey can help our communities make informed decisions, as concerns and uncertainties remain around the future of the cost of living.

Lindsay, Lily and everyone at Island Global Research.



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This report presents findings from a survey on the cost of living, completed by 1013 residents of the Isle of Man between 12 April and 7 May 2024.

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See full report for results for Guernsey, Jersey and Gibraltar.

About Island Global Research

Island Global Research is a market research and consultancy company with experience in both quantitative and qualitative research methods. We regularly conduct market research for clients in the Crown Dependencies.

Island Global Research is part of the BWCI Group.

INTRODUCTION

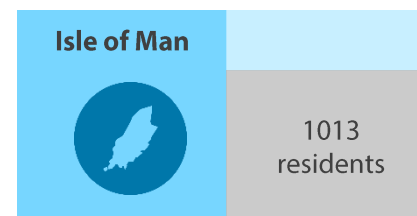
Island Global Research conducted an online survey about the cost of living in Jersey, Guernsey, the Isle of Man and Gibraltar. The survey was completed by 2660 residents including 1013 from the Isle of Man. Data collection took place between 12th April and 7th May 2024. This report presents the Isle of Man results.

The survey was undertaken to gain high-level insights into experiences and perceptions of the cost of living in each island. It asked about respondents' financial position, recent changes to their cost of living, and their opinion more generally on inequality in living standards today and in the future. This is a survey we first conducted in 2022, and results from this survey have been benchmarked to our 2022 findings.

The survey was publicised using social media and members of the Island Global Research Panel were invited to take part.

Survey weights were used to adjust for differences between the sample and the resident population. Everyone, no matter how comfortable they are financially, was encouraged to take part. We can see that respondents with a range of household compositions and incomes participated, and that after weighting, the sample is closely representative of the population of each island by age, gender and household income (where data are available). However, please note that all surveys are subject to a small amount of self-selection bias and that this survey may have appealed slightly more to those concerned about this issue.

12 April- 7 May 2024



Benchmarking Key



Decrease



Increase



Stay the same

About Island Global Research

Island Global Research is a market research and consultancy company with experience in both quantitative and qualitative research methods. We regularly conduct market research for clients in the Crown Dependencies.

From time to time, we also undertake our own research that we hope will be of interest to people living in Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man. This is one of our surveys, and is an opportunity for us to give back to the Island Communities who participate in our market research.

We are very grateful to everyone who completes our surveys. If you would like to participate in our surveys or hear more from us, please go to our website to find out more: www.islandglobalresearch.com.

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

The profile of people who completed the survey was compared to the latest available data on the population of Jersey, Bailiwick of Guernsey, the Isle of Man and Gibraltar.

Survey weights were applied to correct for age and gender differences between the sample and the population of each island. Thus, they compensate for different patterns of non-response from different sub-groups of the population, such that survey results can be generalised from the sample back to the population from which they are drawn. The largest weights have been applied to males aged 16-24 and these have been capped at 3.0.

Base size (sample)	Isle of Man			Base size (sample)	Isle of Man	
	1013				1013	
	Population	% of sample	% after weighting		% after weighting	
Age group				Household Composition		
16-24	11%	2%	7%	Working age	42%	
25-29	6%	5%	6%	Working age + children	22%	
30-34	7%	7%	7%	Pension age	23%	
35-39	7%	8%	7%	Other	13%	
40-44	8%	8%	8%	Children in Household		
45-49	8%	9%	9%	Yes	27%	
50-54	10%	11%	10%	No	73%	
55-59	10%	12%	10%	Household Income		
60-64	8%	11%	8%	Less than £20,000	12%	
65-69	7%	10%	7%	£20,000-£39,999	27%	
70-74	7%	8%	7%	£40,000-£59,000	20%	
75-79	5%	6%	5%	£60,000-£79,999	16%	
80+	7%	3%	7%	£80,000-£99,999	9%	
Prefer not to say	-	1%	1%	£100,000-£119,999	5%	
Gender				£120,000-£149,999	2%	
Female	51%	56%	52%	Over £150,000	2%	
Male	49%	43%	46%	Prefer not to answer /Don't know	6%	
Prefer to self-describe	-	0%	0%	Financial position		
Prefer not to say	-	1%	1%	Very comfortable	7%	
				Relatively comfortable	39%	
				Can normally cover essentials	44%	
				Cannot afford costs	8%	

KEY FINDINGS

IN THE ISLE OF MAN...



8%

cannot afford costs and often have to go without essentials

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IN THE ISLE OF MAN...



49%

strongly agree that the rising cost of living was impacting their household

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IN THE ISLE OF MAN...



36%

said they had found it hard to meet the cost of electricity / heating bills

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IN THE ISLE OF MAN...



Around 1 in 4

received support to help finance their everyday living expenses in the last 6 months

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ISLE OF MAN

- 8% cannot afford costs and often have to go without essentials
- 38% of those who cannot afford costs rent their property
- 14% said they could not afford an unexpected but necessary expense of £100
- 42% would struggle to afford a £100 per month increase in living expenses
- 48% found it difficult to meet living costs in the last 12 months
- 12% of people have found it difficult to meet the cost of transport, down 4 percentage points on 2022
- Around 1 in 4 have received support to finance their everyday living expenses in the last 6 months
- 84% agreed the rising cost of living was impacting their household
- Just under a third are extremely concerned about the future impact changes to cost of living will have on their household
- 42% are very concerned about poverty and inequality in living standards today
- 43% think inequality in living standards will get a lot bigger in the future



8% cannot afford costs and often have to go without essentials

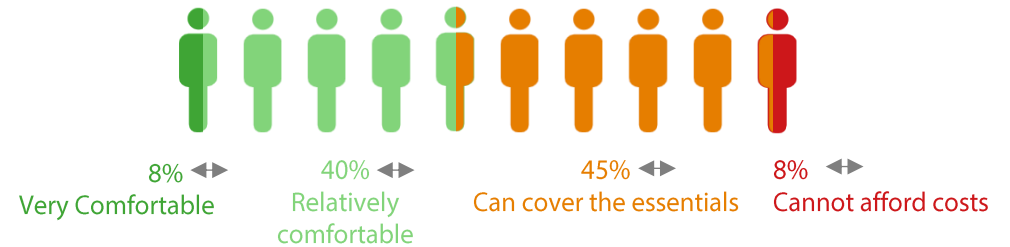
Respondents were asked: "Thinking about your finances, which of the following best reflects your position?"*

- 8% say they cannot afford their costs, and often have to go without essentials like food and heating.
- A further 45% report that they do not have money for luxuries but can normally cover the essentials.
- 8% said they are very comfortable financially, and 40% feel relatively comfortable.

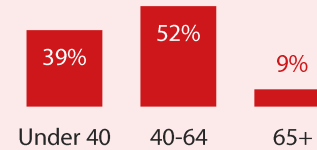
These are no notable changes compared to the 2022 IGR Cost of Living survey.

The profile of those that cannot afford their costs is also shown the right. Just over 9 in 10 of this group are aged under 65, just under two thirds are women, 42% have children in the household and just under 2 in 5 live in private rented accommodation. See overleaf for how this compares with the demographic profile of the other three groups.

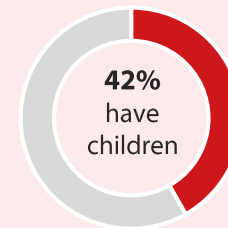
Which of the following best reflects your position?



Cannot afford costs



35% men v 61% women**



Live in...

Private rented property	38%
Own property with mortgage	18%
Own property without mortgage	14%
Affordable housing[^]	26%
Other / Prefer not to answer	4%



Note: Small base <100

* Excluding don't know

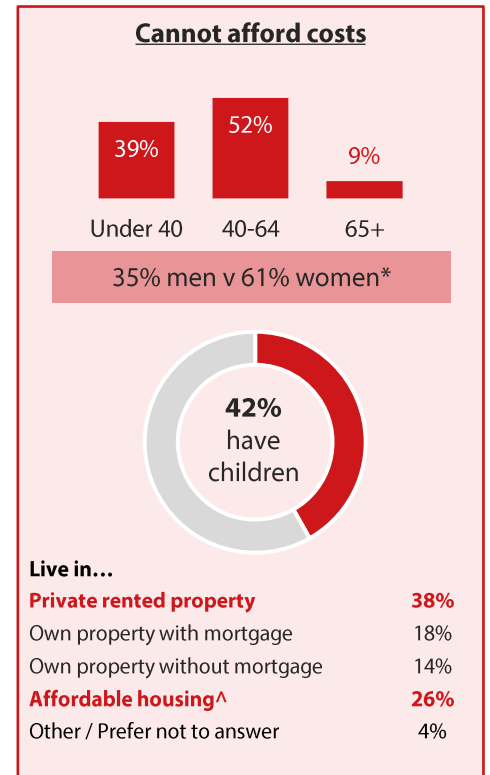
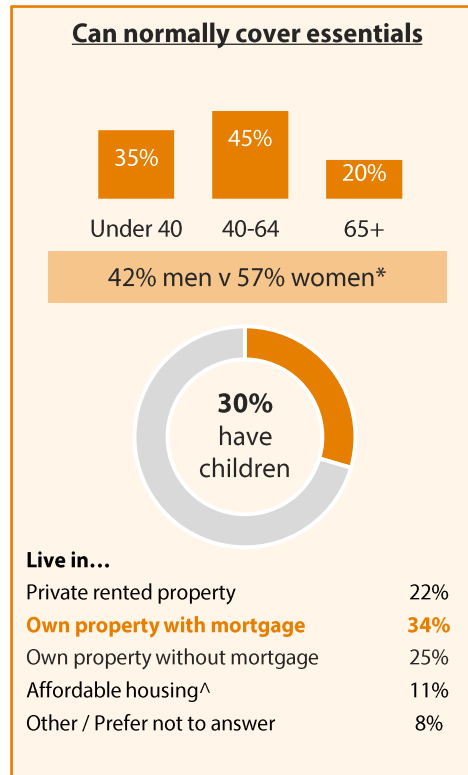
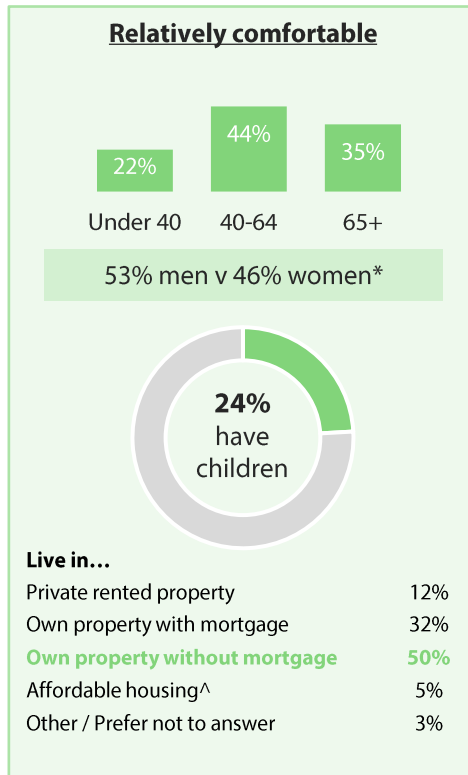
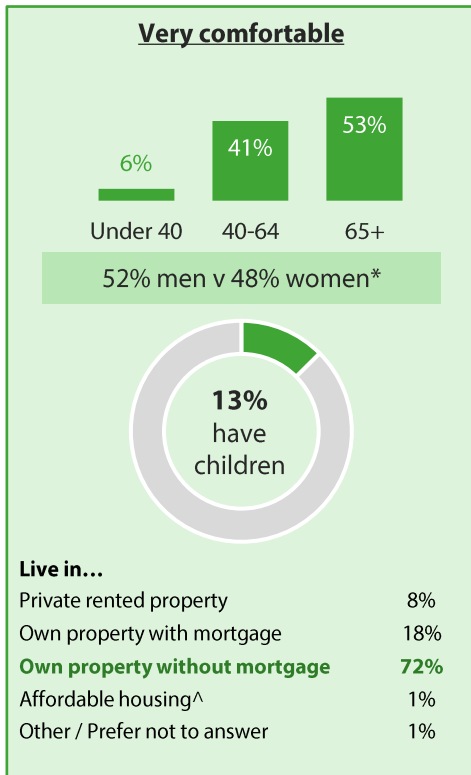
** 3% Prefer to self-describe/prefer not to say

[^]Government housing and partial ownership



38% of those who cannot afford costs rent their property

The profile of people in each of the four groups is shown below. The data suggests that those less able to afford their costs are more likely to be younger, female, live in rented accommodation and be families with children. Those who are very comfortable are more likely to own their home outright and be aged 65+.





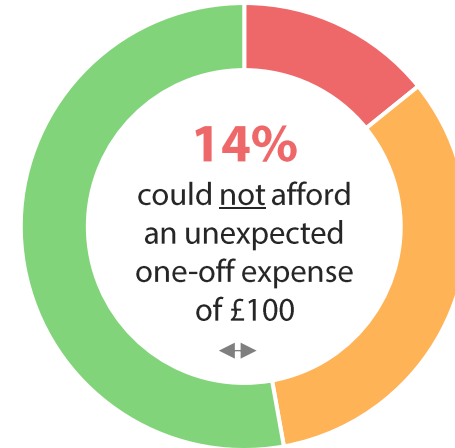
14% said they could not afford an unexpected but necessary expense of £100

Respondents were asked: "Could your household afford an unexpected, but necessary expense of £100?"*

While 14% could not afford it, those who could include:

- 33% who said yes but it would not be easy
- 53% who said yes, no problem at all

These are no notable changes compared to the 2022 IGR Cost of Living survey.



■ No ■ Yes, but it would not be easy ■ Yes, no problem at all

42% would struggle to afford a £100 per month increase in living expenses

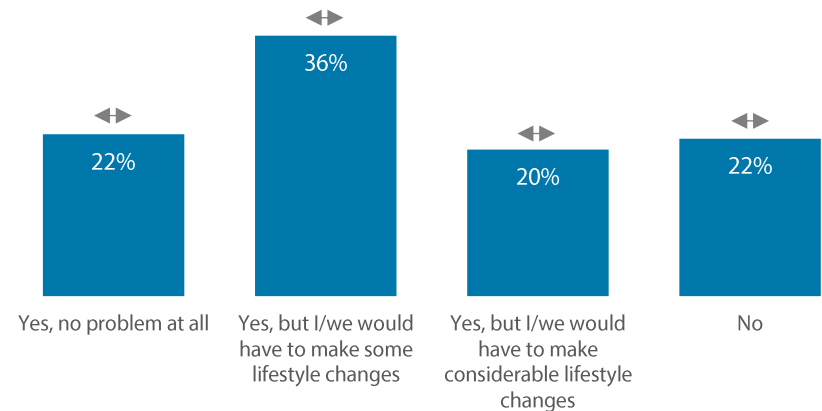
Respondents were asked: "Thinking about all your cost of living expenses - would you currently be able to afford a £100 per month increase?"*

22% said they could not afford this increase, while a further 20% said they could only if they made considerable lifestyle changes.

36% said they would have to make some lifestyle changes in order to do so, while 22% said it would be no problem at all.

These results are also similar to our 2022 survey.

Thinking about all your cost of living expenses - would you currently be able to afford a £100 per month increase?





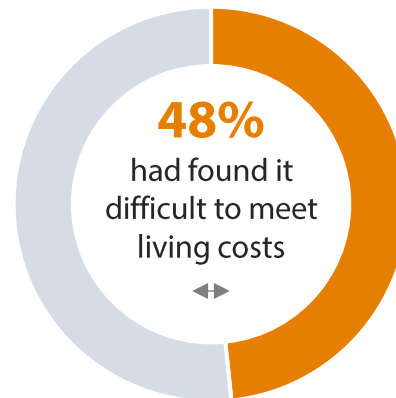
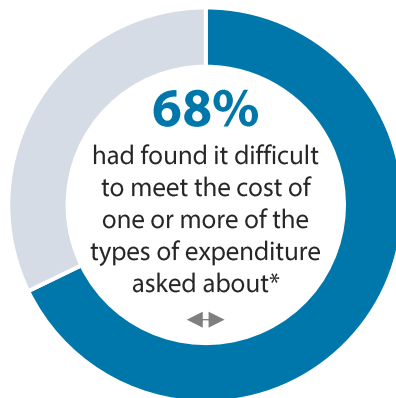
48% found it difficult to meet living costs in the last 12 months

Respondents were asked: "In the last 12 months, which, if any, of the following has your household found it difficult meet the cost of? (e.g. paid late, had to borrow money, have gone without, or cut back on)."

68% said they had found it difficult to meet one or more of the types of expenditure asked about, which is similar overall to that recorded in 2022:

- 48% said they had found it difficult to meet their living costs (including 43% who selected one or more of: rent/mortgage, electricity/heating, phone/internet, food). This show no notable difference from 2022. However, the graph overleaf indicates that people are less likely to be cutting back on transport costs compared to 2022.
- 19% said they had found it difficult or cut back on discretionary costs (such eating out and holidays) but had not had to cut back on other living costs. This again shows no notable difference from our 2022 survey.

This suggests people had started to make changes to their lifestyle that means they were more able to afford their living costs (including transport) and their discretionary costs in the last 12 months.



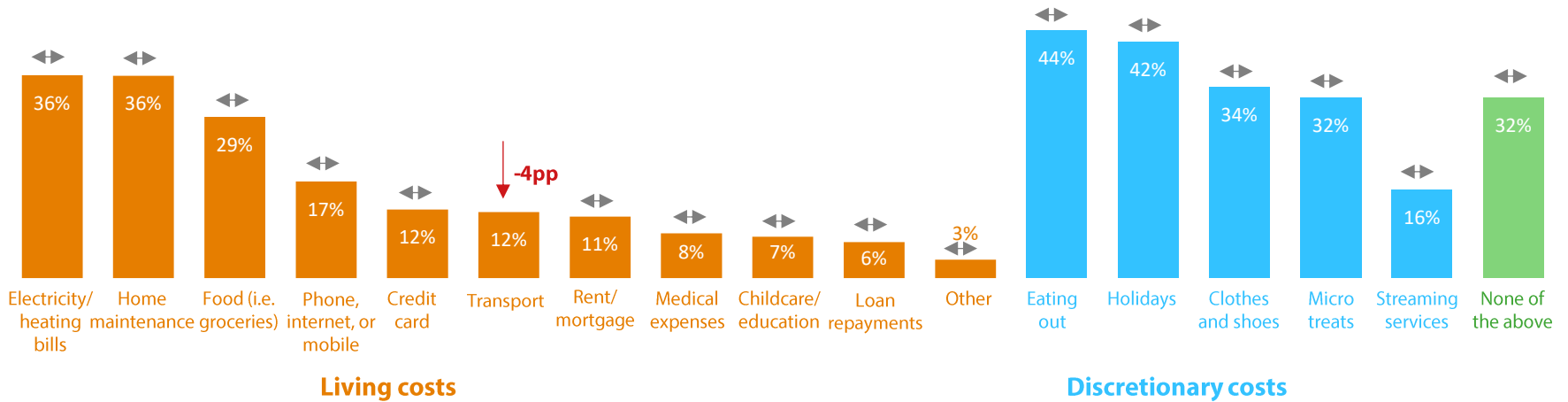


12% of people have found it difficult to meet the cost of transport, down 4 percentage points on 2022

Respondents were asked: "In the last 12 months, which, if any, of the following has your household found it difficult meet the cost of? (e.g. paid late, had to borrow money, have gone without, or cut back on)."

The graph below breaks responses down by individual item. For example, 36% said they'd found it hard to meet the cost of electricity / heating bills.

Found it difficult meet the cost of the following (e.g. paid late, had to borrow money, have gone without, or cut back on):





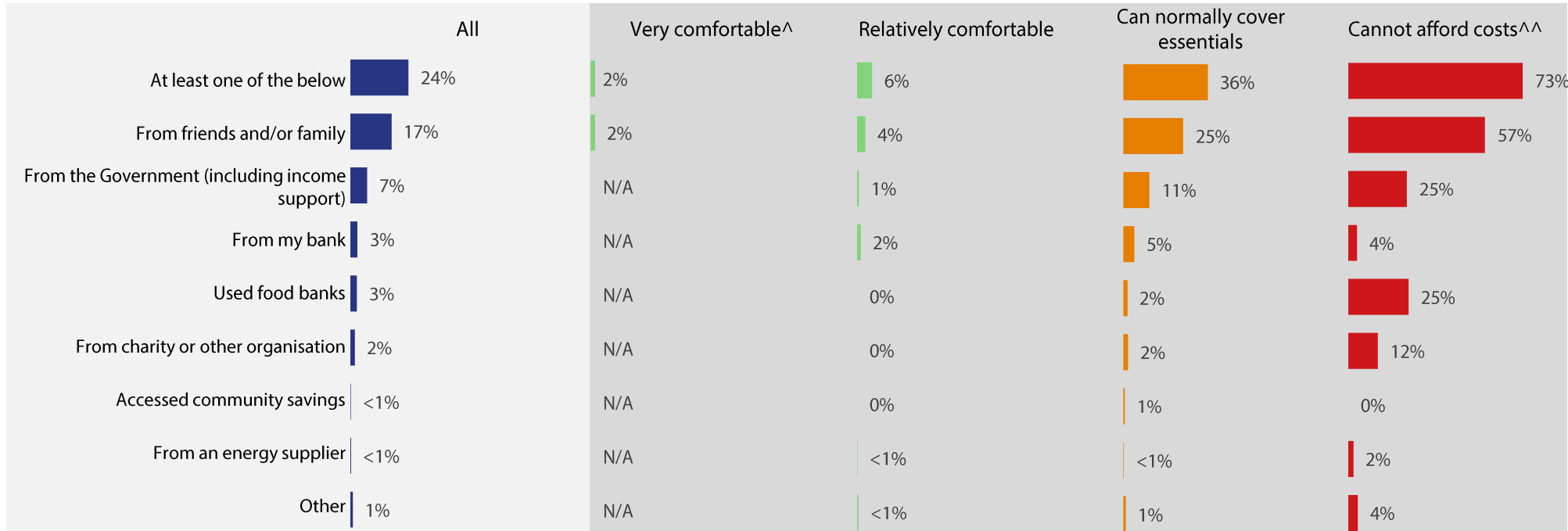
Just under 1 in 4 have received support to finance their everyday living expenses in the last 6 months

Respondents were asked: "In the last 6 months, have you received financial support or in-kind assistance with your day-to-day living expenses? Please select all that apply."

24% said they had received at least one type of financial support or help in kind to help finance their day-to-day living costs in the last 6 months, including:

- 17% who had received support from friends and/or family
- 7% who had received support from the Government

This increases to 73% of those who say they cannot afford their costs, including 57% who said this came in the form of informal support from friends and/or family. It is also important to note that 2% of those who say they are very comfortable financially also said they received informal support from friends and/or family.





DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ABOUT THE SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO RESIDENTS

Acknowledgement of support from:

- Government benefits- such as income support, disability and incapacity benefit, EPA (employed persons allowance), Green energy/green living grant
- Charities and Food banks- including homeless shelters and the Community Fridge Scheme
- Informal support from family and friends- was sort due to a perceived lack of other support available to individuals

Perceived lack of support for:

- Those on the poverty line
- Full time workers- both on low or middle incomes
- Single persons (unmarried and without dependants)
- University students
- Housing- mortgage support as well for those in private rentals
- Pensioners

Comments on support:

There were many respondents who believe there is no support available to residents on Isle of Man to help navigate Cost of Living. There were also a number who said they were unaware of any support available. Of those who said they were aware of support available, many commented they felt it wasn't enough.

Some comments were directed at the government, with respondents suggesting they felt the Government are not doing enough regarding support for all people who are struggling to meet costs. Many of these comments were directed at benefits. Some stated they felt the threshold for support was 'unrealistic', with several anecdotal comments from respondents who claimed to be earning just outside the support threshold saying they were finding it hard to meet their costs. A handful of comments suggested respondents felt that those who are currently on benefits are the only ones able to access any support, with others requesting more information to be published on what support is available.

It was also acknowledged by respondents that a recent increase in tax was not helping those most struggling with cost of living.



DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ABOUT THE SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO RESIDENTS CONTINUED

"Not even aware what support is available. I find the government website at best baffling, sometimes incomprehensible..."

"There is zero support if you don't claim benefits. I earn 62k a year so technically a good wage. However I'm a single mum and cannot afford to reduce my hours. I earn the same as two fairly basic wages really and am entitled to no help. I rely on my credit card to get me through each month"

"I feel sign posting has been lacking . For example, before Xmas 2023, I accompanied a friend to DHSS as she was struggling financially with no income and no savings. The advisor told her to go to the Salvation Army and that was the sum total of help offered whilst paperwork was filed . I am sure there were other avenues, but none suggested"

"Thresholds for support across the board seem unrealistic and penalise middle income earners"

"It's virtually impossible to find and get any form of help and support from the Manx Government, they make it as difficult as possible."

"I have looked around the food bank in our village which is doing an excellent job."

"I earn just too much to receive any benefits...my child benefits stopped when my husband did not do his tax return in time however we should receive something but don't...I have to pay school meals and buses to school...my mortgage has jumped up this year by more than 400 a month....we have plugged the gap with savings but they will run out...we are noticeably poorer than we were 10 years ago."

"Truth is I don't know what's available as I am embarrassed to admit we're struggling especially being surrounded by others that are compared to me rich! "

"Those that fall just above the line of support are really struggling"

"I don't think it's a true reflection on reality I am a single parent for children working three jobs unable to claim any benefits and often go without food so that my children can eat"

"There is no support for middle income earners or those people without dependent children. All the support is for those people with young families the older generation seem to have been forgotten."

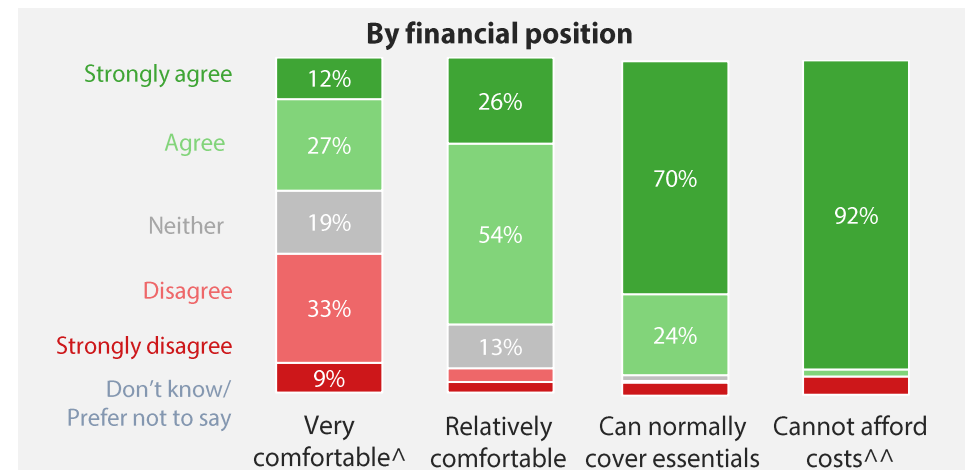
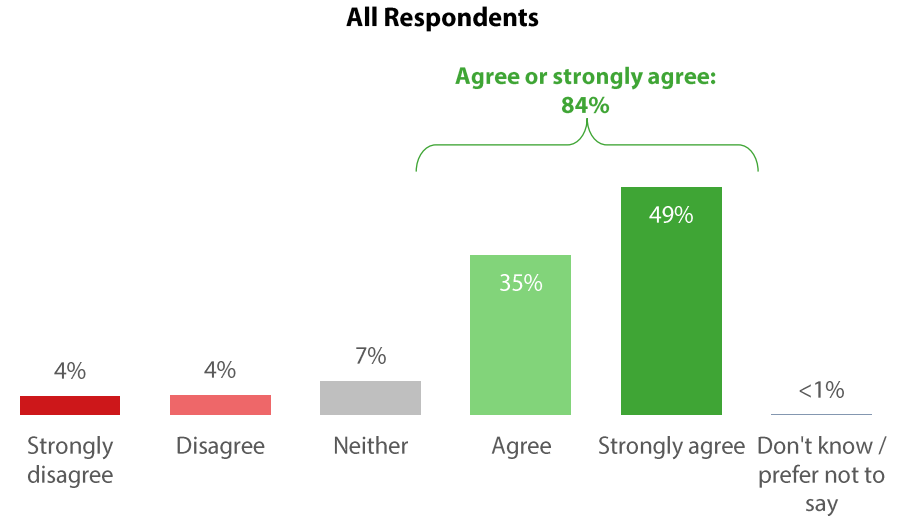


84% agreed the rising cost of living was impacting their household

Respondents were asked: "To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "The rising cost of living is impacting me and my household?"

- 84% agreed that rising cost of living was impacting their household, including 49% who strongly agreed to the statement.
- As you would expect, this rises to around 95% of those who are less able to cover their costs (cannot afford their costs or can cover essentials only).
- However, it is notable that those on the more comfortable end of the scale are also feeling the impact to some extent, including 80% of those who are relatively comfortable and 40% who would say they are very comfortable.

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "The rising cost of living is impacting me and my household?"



[^]Small Base: 71
^{^^}Small Base: 77

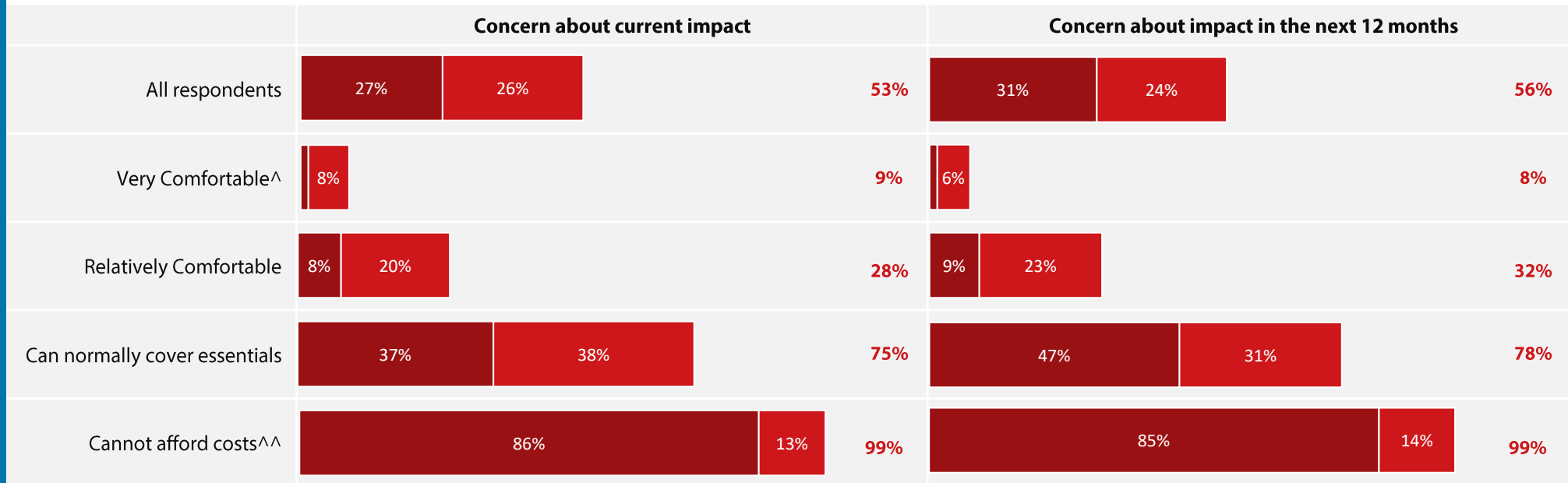


Just under a third are extremely concerned about the future impact changes to cost of living will have on their household

Respondents were asked: "How concerned are you about how changes to the cost of living are currently impacting you and your household?" and "How concerned are you about the impact changes to the cost of living will have on you and your household in the next 12 months?"

Respondents could rate on a five point scale from extremely concerned to not at all concerned* and the graph below shows the top two levels of concern.

- 27% are extremely concerned about how current changes to cost of living are impacting their household and a further 26% are very concerned (53% in total).
- A similar proportion of people are concerned for the future, with 31% extremely concerned about the impact of changes of cost of living will have on their households in the next 12 months and a further 24% very concerned (56% in total). But there is a shift from being very to extremely concerned amongst those who can normally cover their costs (37% extremely concerned now vs 47% for the next 12 months).
- Levels of concern do vary by financial comfort. As you would expect those less able to afford their costs are most concerned now and for the future, but it is notable that just under a third of those who are relatively comfortable are also concerned to some extent.



ISLE OF MAN

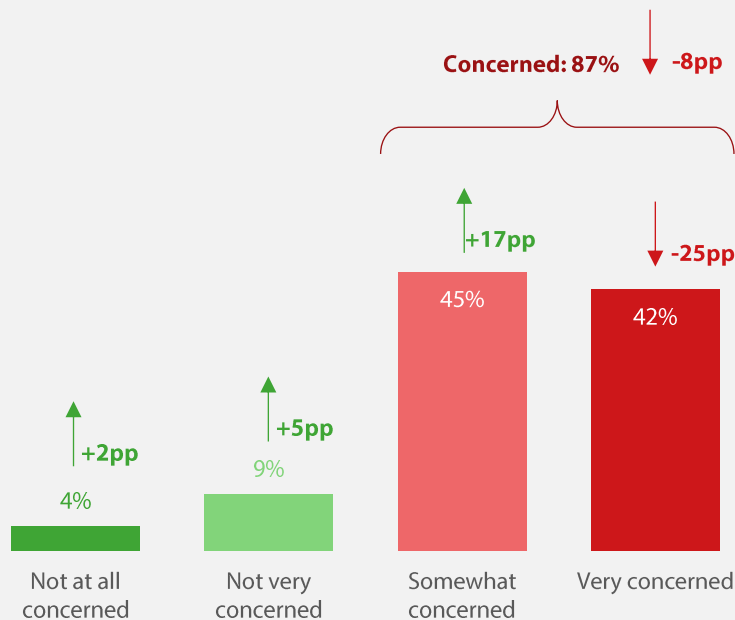


Inequality now....

42% are very concerned about poverty and inequality in living standards today

Overall concern about poverty and inequality has decreased since our 2022 survey, decreasing 8 percentage point to 87%. The number of those very concerned has decreased 25 percentage points.

How, if at all, concerned are you about poverty and inequality in living standards today? Please select the answer which best fits.*

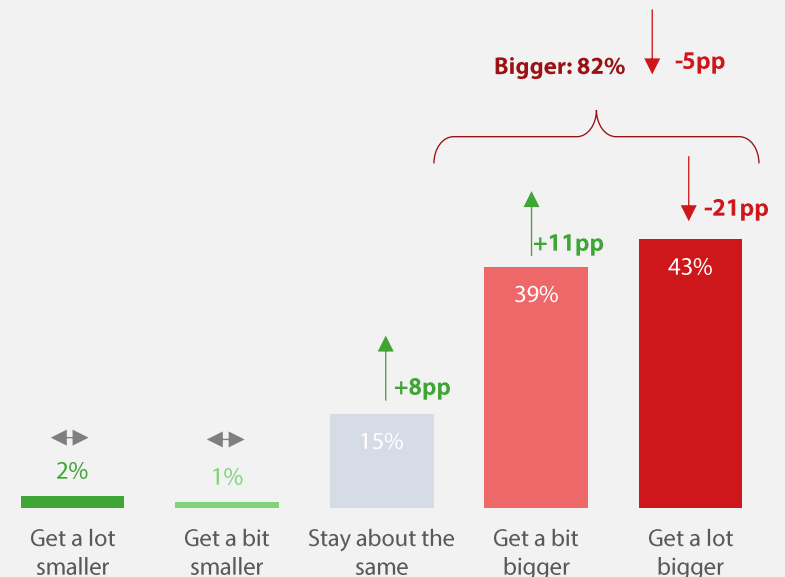


Inequality in the future ...

43% think inequality in living standards will get a lot bigger in the future

Compared to 2022, the number of respondents who believe inequality will get bigger has reduced by 5 percentage points from 2022 to 82%. 15% believe it will stay about the same, increasing 8 percentage points from 2022.

Looking to the future, do you think the inequality in living standards will ...*





DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS RELATING TO THE COST OF LIVING IN THE ISLE OF MAN?

Those who categorise themselves as very or relatively comfortable:

- The Government was the most mentioned in the final comments by this group, with respondents concerned that the Isle of Man Government is not doing enough to support islanders. Requests for those to receive more help were: those in poverty or struggling to meet costs; small local businesses. More details on this topic can be found on page 47.
- Housing and travel were the main cost concerns amongst this group, with younger respondents noting they are struggling to find suitable housing.
- Food and utilities were also highlighted as a cost concern, with many noting that the lack of competition in these areas are making goods and services on island more expensive, especially compared to the UK.
- Some feel cost of living has always been high in the Isle of Man. Reasons for this include the cost of freight to import goods. Wages not quite meeting cost of living was also noted as an impact.
- A handful had concerns that the way islanders spend their money was impacting cost of living, with some suggesting more education on budgeting and prioritising would enable more to live within their means.
- Other cost concerns were fuel, telephone bills, house maintenance and childcare.

Those who categorise themselves as 'Can normally cover essentials [only]' or 'Cannot afford costs':

- The high cost of living is the greatest concern amongst this group. Limited choice amongst companies offering utilities, and to some extent food, were thought to be drivers in rising costs. Many considered IOM's cost of living to be greater than that of the UK due to lack of competition.
- There is also large concern over housing, with comments describing a lack of affordable housing and high rental prices making it difficult for people to either get on the housing ladder or move homes.
- The Government was also mentioned by many. There is the perception that Government's current efforts are directed at bringing new residents to the island and that the Government does not understand or care what current residents need.
- Many also felt that local salaries did little to compensate for rising costs, with a couple of respondents acknowledging they were struggling with costs despite feeling they received a relatively good wage.
- Some respondents said they were considering moving off island to better afford their living costs. There were also a handful who are described a notion of feeling stuck due to cost of living.
- Other cost concerns were for phone and internet bills, childcare, healthcare and petrol. There were also a handful of concerns over the number of local business closing due to cost of living.



COMMENTS INCLUDE...

VERY COMFORTABLE

"Most are aware of the additional costs of living in the Isle of Man, but taxes are lower and net pay is higher. However, it is becoming clear that there is no longer a large advantage living in the Isle of Man compared to the UK."

"House prices are far too high. People hoping to get on the property ladder don't stand a chance. Therefore, they lose ambition to strive for a better future."

RELATIVELY COMFORTABLE

"Price of things have gone through the roof from utility bills to food"

"House prices and utilities are the main area that needs addressing - I worry that my children would not be able to buy/rent/live here."

"Very difficult for many people especially in relation to housing costs and the increased cost of travel away in particular"

"The cost of food, fuel for transport and heating has risen considerably - and is already making a noticeable difference to my spending power"

"I think people should learn to spend within their budget and not expect the Government/charities to bail them out. People need to focus on essentials and not luxuries"

"It's very expensive and the government need to do more to help those on lower wages"

"Houses and rent unnecessarily expensive compared to UK - pushes young people to move away"

CAN NORMALLY COVER ESSENTIALS

"The cost of childcare alone is crippling and is sometimes as much as my mortgage. Working is no longer financially viable when childcare is costing so much"

"Very little regulation of monopolies (e.g. telecoms and food) that are driving above inflation increases in prices."

"Fresh food and trying to maintain a healthy diet... is by far our biggest expense as a family. It is becoming unsustainable to eat healthy food as a standard."

"Because we are on a lower tax rate than the UK, employers here seem to think they can pay island residents less."

"Hard to get the things you need at a reasonable price"

"The cost of heating has become very difficult, and I have had to heat just the living room. Of course I would like to heat the kitchen too but my bills sky rocketed as gas has become so expensive. "

CANNOT AFFORD COSTS

"I feel stuck here, struggling to meet rising costs, I've taken a second job to make ends meet and still struggle and have to go without"

"Being able to choose different providers who supply utilities and telecommunications would help a lot of people the prices are far too expensive. Tax the needy and help the greedy seems to be the way it works"

"The secret extra cost here is all the government controlled infrastructure business from transport to connectivity...."

"It's increasingly no longer financially realistic to live here."

"I have been forced to give up my dog and not eat some days to make sure my son can."

"On the IOM you can rent a small room in a shared house without an ensuite for the price of renting a 3 bed detached house in Liverpool. Food costs minimum twice as much as the UK. Yet the island has absolutely nothing to offer to balance this out. I hope everyone else does the same as we are planning to, jump this sinking ship asap."



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