

# justfair

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Dignity and opportunity for all:  
securing the rights of disabled  
people in the austerity era

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An organisation called **Just Fair** works to make things fairer for everyone in the UK.



The UK Government has signed up to promises along with other Governments around the world to make sure everybody has rights.



**Just Fair** makes sure the UK keeps its promise to look after people. This includes looking after people with disabilities.



Every year Just Fair writes a report to say how the Government is doing. This report looks at what the Government is doing to help disabled people.

# Introduction



Even though the Government is spending less money it must still look after disabled people.



The Government must make sure things for disabled people get better and not worse in their daily lives.



1. The Government has promised that disabled people have the right to choose where they live and who they live with



2. The Government has promised that disabled people have the right to work and be treated well at work



3. The Government has promised that disabled people have the right to have enough money for important things like food and clothes



4. The Government has promised that disabled people have the right to benefits to help them pay for what they need



The report will look at these in more detail.



Some people have said they are worried the Government is not keeping its promises.



A survey by Just Fair asked disabled people about their lives. The results of the survey showed disabled people are worried mainly about 3 things:



1. They are worried about Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), which helps people who cannot work, and the Work Capability Assessment.



2. They are worried about Personal Independence Payment (PIP) which helps with disabled people's costs.



3. They are worried about people losing some of their benefit because the Government says they have too many bedrooms. Some call this the 'bedroom tax'.

# 1. The right to choose where you live and who you live with



In 2012 a group of MPs and people from the House of Lords wrote about disabled people's right to choose where they live and who they live with. It said that the Government has got better at helping people do this.



But some of the changes made by the Government have made it harder for disabled people to live where they want to live.

## Changes to Housing Benefit



Changes to housing benefits could mean disabled people cannot afford houses that are right for their needs. Disabled people often need extra space for equipment or a carer.



The 'bedroom tax' could mean disabled people have to pay more money or move to a smaller house. It could be hard to move to somewhere smaller or to have someone rent the other room.



We think the Government should think again about these changes. The changes break some of their promises. They make things more difficult for disabled people.

## Changes to Disability Living Allowance [DLA]



Disability Living Allowance [DLA] helps disabled people live an independent life. The Government said it would get rid of DLA and replace it with Personal Independence Payment [PIP].



The group of MPs and people from the House of Lords were worried because the Government said there would be less money for PIP.



Some disabled people will get more money. But for lots of disabled people it will be harder to get PIP. This could make it harder for disabled people to get benefits to help them at home or to travel around.



We think the Government should think again at how changes to benefits have affected disabled people.

## Closing Independent Living Fund [ILF]



The Independent Living Fund [ILF] helps people employ assistants and live an independent life.



The Government said it would close the ILF and give the money to local councils instead.



The group of MPs and people from the House of Lords were worried because research has shown disabled people will get less money once ILF closes.



The Government will close the ILF in 2015.



We think it is important that local councils are given enough money to make sure disabled people can choose where they live and who they live with.

### Less money for social care



More people need care and support but the Government is spending less money on social care.



This means some disabled people do not get the support they need or only get basic care and support.



There will be a new set of laws called the Care Act. MPs and people from the House of Lords hope this will give disabled people the care and support they need.



We think the Government should provide enough care and support to help disabled people live where they want to live.

## All the changes together



Lots of disabled people need support from health, care and benefits. The Government has made big changes to all of them.



We think the Government needs to do research on how all these changes affect disabled people. They need to make sure things do not get worse for disabled people.



Our research shows it is harder for disabled people to live independent lives.



We want the promises the UK has made with the rest of the world to be a part of UK law. That way the Government would have to keep their promise of making sure disabled people can choose where they live and who they live with.

## 2. The right to work and be treated well at work



Disabled people should be able to work. If they cannot work they should be able to rely on benefits.



Work benefits have changed a lot. To get benefits, some disabled people have to look for work and take any job even if it isn't the right job for them.



The United Nations [UN] has said the UK should do more to help people with learning disabilities and disabled women get jobs.



The Government is spending a lot of money on Welfare to Work Programmes. The 'Work Programme' has not helped many disabled people get jobs.



Some people think the Government should spend their money on other things.



The Work Choice Programme has helped more disabled people but not all can get on it. Access to Work has helped lots of disabled people but not all know about it.



Supported Employment is really good at helping people with learning disabilities into jobs. Individual Placement and Support is really good at helping people with mental health needs into jobs. The report says the Government should spend money on these programmes instead of the Work Programme



The UK needs to be better at helping disabled people gain skills and get qualifications.



Research shows people with disabilities are often treated badly at work.



The Government needs to help more disabled people find jobs. They need to make sure disabled people are not discriminated against or treated badly.

# 3. The right to a good life



The promises the UK Government have made say disabled people have the right to a good life. They also say disabled people have the right to be as healthy and safe as everyone else.



The United Nations [UN] has said the UK is good at trying to stop discrimination against disabled people.



It is good that the Government gives disabled people extra benefits. But it is getting harder for disabled people to get these benefits.



Some organisations in Europe have said the amount of money the UK Government gives disabled people is very low.

## Employment Support Allowance [ESA] and Work Capability Assessment [WCA]



If the UK Government does not help disabled people who cannot work, it is not keeping its promises to help disabled people.



If people are too disabled or too sick to work they get Employment Support Allowance [ESA]. People have to have a Work Capability Assessment [WCA] to see if they can get ESA.



Lots of people are worried that disabled people have been assessed wrongly and told they can work when they cannot.



Some disabled people only get ESA if they do a 'work-related activity'. If they do not do some things they may have their benefit stopped.



This may mean they will not be able to afford basic things. We think this breaks the UK's promises.



Lots of people have appealed. There are long waits to find out if they have won. This is all very stressful and costs the Government a lot of money.



Some people think the Government should spend their money on other things.



We think ESA and WCA should be changed. They should be better at supporting disabled people.

### Less advice services



Cuts have meant there is less money for advice services. It is now harder to get help and advice about benefits.



This will affect disabled people more than non-disabled people. It could mean disabled people have a worse life.

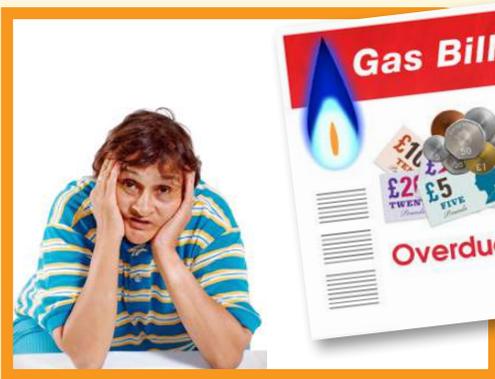


We think the Government should have a national plan for advice and support. We think disabled people should get more support to apply for benefits.

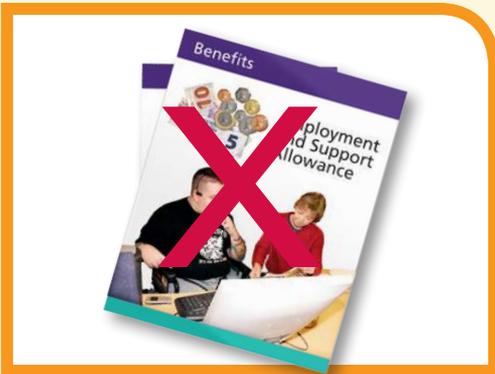
## Risk of being poor



Research shows that more adults and families are becoming poor.



Research shows that disabled people are really struggling. Some cannot even afford basic things such as food and heat.



Some people's benefits are being stopped because they do not understand what they need to do. This is not fair.



We think the Government should keep its promises and support disabled people.



The Government has spent a lot of money on benefits. We think the money has been spent on the wrong things.



Too much money has been spent on assessments, on wrong decisions and on support that does not work.



The Government should change the way it spends its money to make sure it keeps its promises to disabled people.



Disabled people should have the same choices and chances in life as everyone else.



We have not told you everything in the report. This is only the main points.

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This report was authored by Jane Young. Aoife Nolan authored Chapter 2 and provided input throughout the report. Neil Crowther provided advice and support. We are extremely grateful to the organisations that provide funding for our vital monitoring and advocacy work: Barrow Cadbury Trust, Clifford Chance Foundation, Henry Tinsley Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Network for Social Change. Many Consortium members contributed to this report by identifying priority issues, providing data, and contributing qualitative evidence. We are particularly grateful to the Just Fair Trustees for providing expert advice and detailed editorial guidance. This report was published in July 2014.

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