

Living on a low income

Caption

The people in this film were interviewed for the ITV Breadline Britain series in 1983, 1991 and 2013 and the PSE case studies in 2011 and 2012.

1983: Tricia

A lot of people think you get a lot more than what you actually do get. You get people saying people are scroungers on supplementary benefit well the can't be because nobody wants to live like that, I mean I surely don't, not for the rest of my life anyway. There's no way – it's very, very difficult to manage from day to day

Making comparisons

2012: Mark

We're not actually poor like in a living on the streets way. We ain't got the perfect clothes in the world, clothes that other people's kids have, like combat jeans, like Nike trainers but we're happy with what we've got as long as we can live

1991: Jimmy

What is poor where do you draw the line on at poor? If you can't pay for anything if you're classed as poor, we are poor. We find it very difficult and you don't ... like you said, everything is run by money, rules, everything. When you've got nothing well by the time you've paid everything out you've got nothing, to either save or buy things, if that's what you call poor, that's poor. That's where we are. It's where you draw the line, I suppose.

1983: Kevin

I know there's people worse off than me. Like really, I think I'm lucky than other people, know what I mean.

Caption

In 2012, as in 1990 and 1983, around 10% of adults felt poor all of the time.

At least 25% felt poor some of the time.

Juggling money

1983: Mavis

A standard of living surely gives you a benefit of making a choice of whether you have a piece of beef or a small chop. A piece of beef would last you two or three

days whereas a chop would last you one. Surely living standards should give you the choice.

1991: Julie

I usually put about £5 a week in 50 pence pieces in my electric bill. I have to spend £2 a week on my phone I pay rent on this flat, I have to pay part of the rent, as well. You just can't make things, you know, you can't make things go any further than the money

2013: Marc

Usually at beginning of week I put my money into two piles just so I don't overspend. I put £53 in each pile because it works out £106 a fortnight or what ever it is like that, just so I can get by. It's £15 for bus fare because it comes to £14 something or other. £10 gas which if you use wisely will last fortnight. £15 food.

Caption

In 2012, 18% of households found it a constant struggle to keep up with all their bills or had fallen behind

Worrying about the bills

2013: David

It is a constant worry in the back of your mind. You think to yourself you're managing to pay the bills, you're managing to pay your way. We've got our pride. You want to be able to clear any debts that you're due people and be able to hold your head up.

1991: Paula

You've got your rent, your gas, your electric, the milkman, even the milkman is a debt to us. By the end of it there is no money left to save. I mean you haven't got enough money really coming in to pay your bill so saving is just out of the question.

1983: Elaine

Roy give me £15 a week and I have me family allowance which is £17.55 a week. ... every penny's spoke for. I mean he puts £15 a week in the meters. What Roy gives me, is for food.

But the money I get on a Monday, I have a, the lady across the road has a catalogue I pay her so much a week for clothes and then I pay another clubber £2 a week so plus Darren's dinner money, which I'm waiting to get free dinners for him now. But by the time I have paid out a couple of things it's gone.

Caption

In 1983, 15% of households were in arrears on their bills at some point over that year.

By 2012 this had risen to 20%.

The future

1983: Roy

Well the future to me it doesn't seem much for me or my family. I feel as though I have brought my children into a world that's just dying. The unemployment there nothing for them to look forward to.

1991: Jimmy

All the outcomes on life that I wanted to do ... it's just like a big jamballoon that's just been deflated... so it's hard to explain till you have been there. Sometimes you just feel like throwing in the can, you've just had enough.

2012: Renée

My dreams for my children – the foremost is for them to be happy, to be comfortable, have their education, see that they have a good job, and they can go on their merry ways and enjoy their life. That's my dream for my children.

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