Drivers of poverty in rural and island places

Education and work

- High costs of doing business
- Sectors characterised by precarious, low-paid, low skill and seasonal employment
- Gender pay gap
- Distance to work and education
- Choice of education and training courses
- Migration policy contributing to depopulation and demographic change

Cost of living (rural premium)

- Less consumer choice and less downward pressure on prices, including food prices
- Reliance on private cars and need to travel long distances to access services including health services
- Expensive, unreliable and 'skeletal' public transport
- Cost of energy/fuel including for off grid properties
- Cost of housing/housebuilding and suitability/condition of existing housing stock.
- Limited access to social and leisure opportunities

Welfare system

- Benefit levels do not reflect cost of living rurally
- Benefit take up lower in rural and island areas

Service design bias (market failure)

- Products (e.g. energy tariffs) unsuited for rural consumers
- Connectivity: rollout of broadband leaving communities behind, digital exclusion
- Transport: lack of investment in rural infrastructure or public transport planning (joined up journeys)
- Childcare and social care: inflexible regulation and low pay of care workers, inadequate support for unpaid carers including young carers
- Health: closure of generalist services; distance from specialist services ; waiting lists for treatment

Invisibility and stigma

- Vexed definition of rural (no standard definition across UK)
- Poorly understood intersections between poverty and protected characteristics
- Rural idyll stereotype
- Lack of visibility within dispersed populations
- Inadequate data sets, including comparisons between rural areas
- Challenges participating in service design for people with lived expertise
- Social isolation

Exacerbating impacts of climate change and biodiversity crisis

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