



DEBATE PACK

Number CDP 2017/0098, Debate day 21 March 2017

Fuel Poverty

A General Debate on 'Fuel Poverty' will be held in the House of Commons Chamber on Tuesday 21 March 2017. The subject for the debate has been chosen by the Government.

The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

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1. Defining fuel poverty in the UK

Fuel poverty is devolved. Until 2013, a single definition of fuel poverty was used across the UK: **a household was defined as being fuel poor if they needed to spend more than 10% of their income to keep their home at a reasonable temperature**. This definition is still used in Scotland,¹ Wales,² and Northern Ireland³ but England has since adopted a different definition.

1.1 England

England has adopted the 'Low Income High Costs' (LIHC) definition of fuel poverty. Under this definition, a household is fuel poor if:

- the amount they would need to spend to keep their home at "an adequate standard of warmth" is above the national median level
- and if they spent that amount, their leftover income would be below the official poverty line.⁴

In other words, under the English definition of fuel poverty, **a household is fuel-poor if their income is below the poverty line (taking into account their energy costs); and their energy costs are higher than is typical for their household type.**

In both the 10% and the LIHC definitions, "an adequate standard of warmth" and a "reasonable temperature" are defined as 21°C in the main living area and 18°C in other rooms.⁵

The LIHC measure was developed by Professor Sir John Hills as part of an independent review of fuel poverty conducted for the Government. Hills published a final report in March 2012 recommending that the Government adopt the LIHC measure.⁶ Following a consultation, the Government announced their intention to adopt the measure in July 2013.

The LIHC definition of fuel poverty can be used to produce two different indicators:

- **The extent of fuel poverty** – the number of households meeting the LIHC definition of 'fuel-poor'.⁷
- **The depth of fuel poverty** – how badly affected each fuel-poor household is; measured by looking at the difference between fuel-poor households' required energy costs and the median required energy costs.⁸

¹ Scottish Government, [Quality – Fuel Poverty](#) [accessed 17 March 2017]

² Welsh Government, [Fuel poverty](#), 1 September 2016 [accessed 17 March 2017]

³ Department for Communities, [Fuel poverty](#) [accessed 17 March 2017]

⁴ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy ('BEIS'), [Fuel poverty statistics](#), 19 September 2016 [accessed 17 March 2017]

⁵ DECC, [Annual fuel poverty statistics report 2016](#), 30 June 2016, p.10

⁶ DECC/CASE (Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion, LSE), [Getting the measure of fuel poverty](#)

⁷ DECC, [Annual fuel poverty statistics report 2016](#), 30 June 2016, p.7

⁸ Ibid.

The new definition has been criticised by some who argue that because the indicator relies on averages, it is unlikely to show the true impact of variations in energy prices on fuel poverty.⁹

1.2 Devolved administrations

The devolved administrations' definition of fuel poverty is as follows: a household was defined as being fuel poor if they needed to spend more than 10% of their income to keep their home at a reasonable temperature.

Extreme fuel poverty indicates that a household would have to spend more than 20% of its income to maintain a satisfactory heating regime.

⁹ This point is for example made by Dr Lucie Middlemiss for the EU Fuel Poverty Network in ['Low income high costs and the new politics of fuel poverty in England'](#), 26 October 2016

2. Statistics on fuel poverty

Fuel poverty is affected by three key factors: a household's income, their fuel costs, and their energy consumption. In practice, energy consumption is primarily affected by the energy-efficiency of the household's dwelling.

In Great Britain, average annual domestic gas prices rose by around 125% in real terms between 2004 and 2014, and domestic electricity prices by around 75% over the same period (more information on trends in energy prices is available in the Library's [Current Energy Market Reforms in Great Britain](#) briefing paper). In the devolved administrations, this trend was reflected in a rise in the number of households defined as fuel poor up until 2013. This is because the 10% measure is sensitive to changes in energy prices. The 2014 data show a decrease in fuel poverty in Scotland.

In England, the number of households defined as fuel poor did not fluctuate in the same way. This is because the LHC indicator is designed to be less sensitive to energy prices. Because the measure is relative, price changes that have a similar effect on all households do not cause the number of fuel poor households to increase.

However, rising energy prices are associated with greater depth of fuel poverty – the fuel poverty gap in England has grown as energy prices have risen. In 2013 the gap increased although the 2013 figure represents a fall in real terms from its highest point 2012.

2.1 Comparing fuel poverty across the UK

The DECC Publication [Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics 2016](#) cautions against summing the fuel poverty totals across the four nations of the UK to arrive at a UK-wide total. The publication notes that

“As a result of both definition and methodological differences in fuel poverty for each devolved nation, the figures are non-additive (i.e. should not be combined) in relation to a UK total.”¹⁰

2.2 England - Trends in fuel poverty

In England, fuel poverty is measured using the LHC indicator described above. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy ('BEIS') produce [estimates](#) of the extent and depth of fuel poverty in England. Estimates are currently available up to 2014, using the new definition.

BEIS estimate that in 2014 under the LHC definition there were 2,379,000 households in fuel poverty (10.6% of all households in England). Of these, 1,864,000 were 'vulnerable' households – those

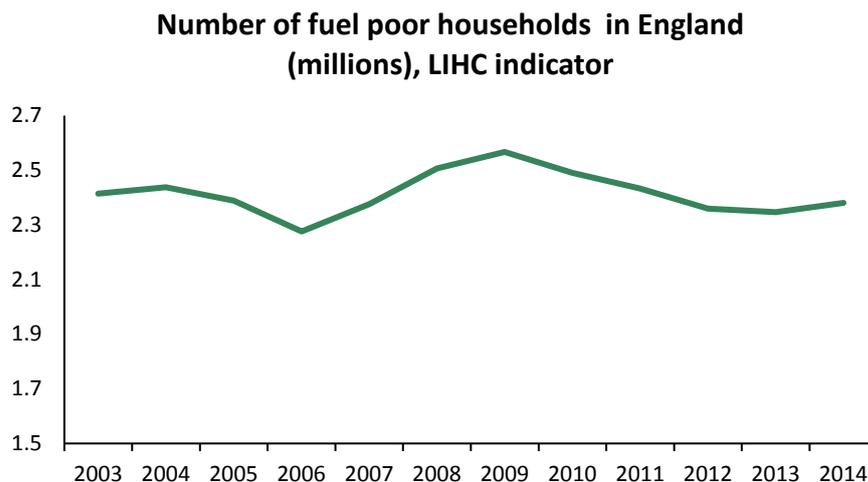
¹⁰ DECC, [Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics Report](#), 2016, p.24

containing at least one person who is elderly, a child, disabled or living with a long-term illness.¹¹

BEIS also produce an estimate of the fuel poverty gap: on average, fuel-poor households had to pay £371 more than the median amount for fuel in 2014. For vulnerable households, the gap was slightly larger at £388.¹² The aggregate fuel poverty gap for all fuel poor households in England in 2014 came to £882m.¹³

Figure 1 shows trends in the number of fuel-poor households and the fuel poverty gap since 2003 using the LIHC definition. There has been a small reduction in the number of fuel-poor households since 2003, when 2,414,000 households (11.6% of the total) were in fuel poverty. The lowest *number* of fuel-poor households occurred in 2006 (2,276,000 households). However, this represented a slightly higher *proportion* of households than in 2013 (10.7% compared to 10.4%) because of growth in the population more generally.¹⁴

The average fuel poverty gap increased from £231 in 2003 to £374 in 2013 – however, the 2013 figure represents a fall of 2.9% in real terms from its highest point of £385 in 2012.



¹¹ BEIS, [Fuel poverty detailed tables: 2014](#)

¹² All prices relating to the fuel poverty gap have been provided by DECC in December 2014 prices.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ BEIS, [Fuel poverty trends: 2003-2014](#)

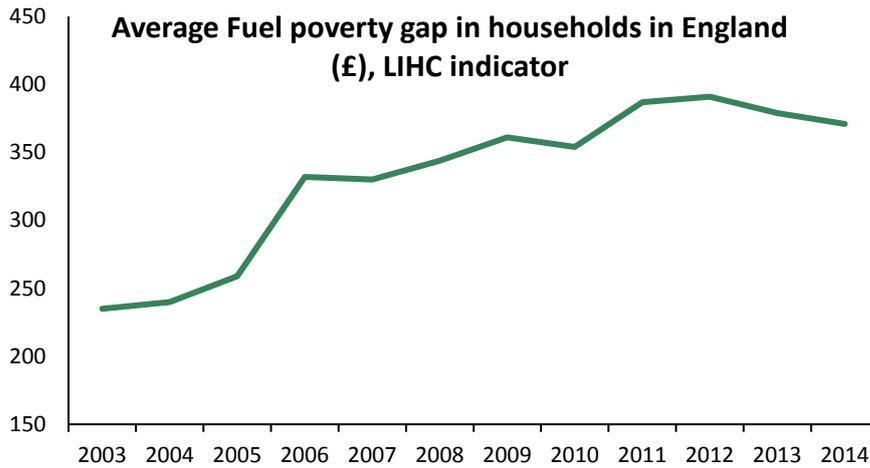


Figure 1: Number of households in fuel poverty and average fuel poverty gap, England 2003-2014, LIHC indicator

Source: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, [Fuel poverty trends: 2003-2014](#)

2.3 England - Fuel poverty by region

Figures 2 and 3 show how the extent and depth of fuel poverty have changed in each region in England between 2004 and 2014. In 2004, the North East had the highest proportion of households in fuel poverty (18%). In 2014, the highest proportions were in the North East, Yorkshire & the Humber, West Midlands and the South West (12% each). The depth of fuel poverty increased across all regions but the South West remained the region with the largest average fuel poverty gap, rising from £331 in 2004 to £498 in 2014.

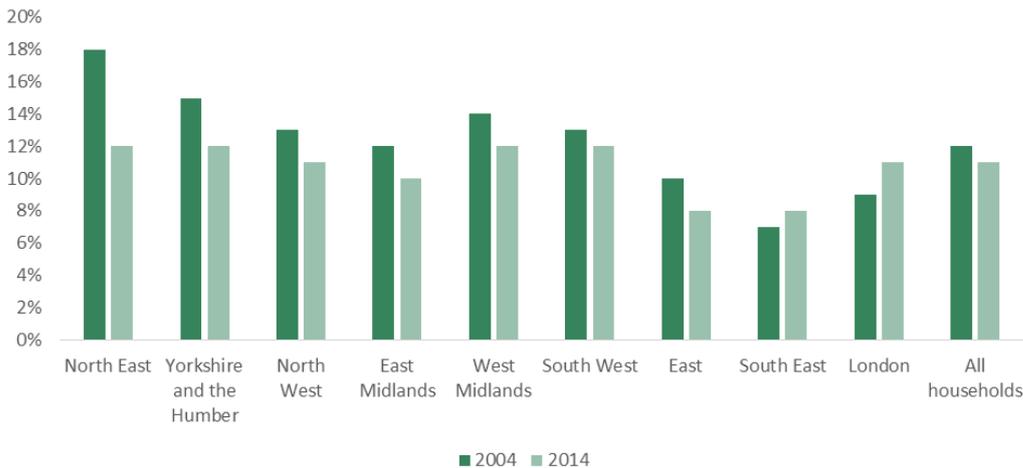


Figure 2: Proportion of households defined as fuel-poor in the regions and across England, 2014, LIHC indicator

Source: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, [Fuel poverty trends: 2003-2014](#)

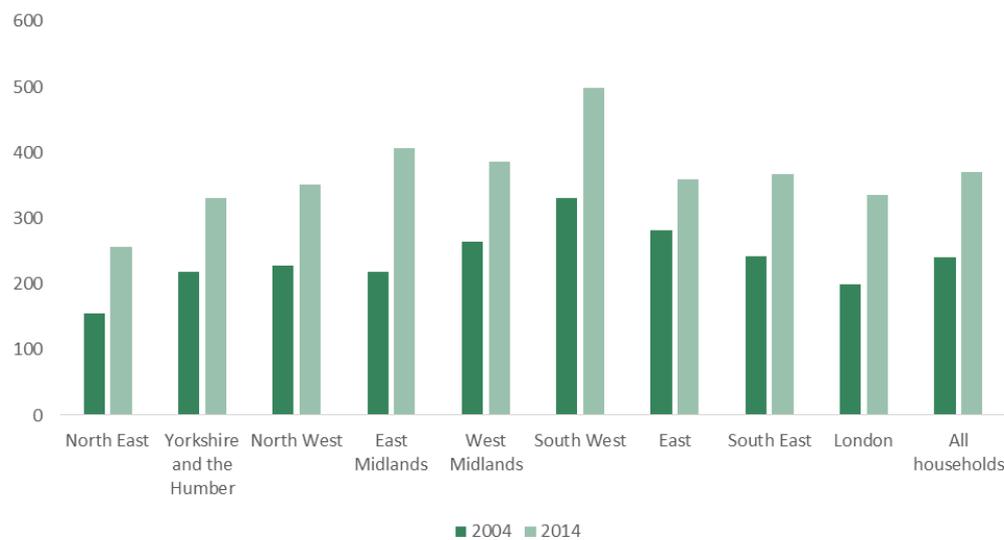


Figure 3: Average fuel poverty gap (£) in regions and across England, 2014, LIHC indicator

Source: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, [Fuel poverty trends: 2003-2014](#)

2.4 Fuel poverty in Wales

In Wales, a household is defined as being in fuel poverty if they need to spend over 10% of their income on keeping their home at a reasonable temperature.¹⁵ The Welsh Government has produced a set of projections of levels of fuel poverty up to 2016, based on data from the 2008 *Living in Wales* survey.

The projections estimate that there were 291,000 households in fuel poverty in 2016 (23% of all households) of which 261,000 were vulnerable (i.e. households containing someone who is elderly, a child, disabled or living with a long-term illness). This represents an decrease from 2008, when there were an estimated 332,000 households in fuel poverty (26% of all households) of which 285,000 were vulnerable¹⁶.

2.5 Fuel poverty in Scotland

In Scotland, a household is defined as being in fuel poverty if they need to spend over 10% of their income on keeping their home at a reasonable temperature.¹⁷ A methodological change means that figures produced prior to 2013 are not comparable with the latest estimates.

In 2014, there were an estimated 845,000 households in fuel poverty (34.9% of all households). This represents a decrease from 860,000 households in 2013 (35.8% of all households).¹⁸

¹⁵ Welsh Government, [Fuel poverty](#), 1 September 2016 [accessed 17 March 2017]

¹⁶ Welsh Government, [The production of estimated levels of fuel poverty in Wales: 2012-2016](#)

¹⁷ Scottish Government, [Quality – Fuel Poverty](#) [accessed 17 March 2017]

¹⁸ Scottish Government Directorate for Housing, Regeneration and Welfare, [Scottish House Conditions Survey: 2014 Key Findings](#)

2.6 Fuel poverty in Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, a household is defined as being in fuel poverty if they need to spend over 10% of their income on keeping their home at a reasonable temperature.¹⁹ The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) have produced estimates of the extent of fuel poverty in Northern Ireland using data from the 2011 Northern Ireland House Condition Survey. Their estimates are shown in Figure 4. According to their estimates, there were 294,000 fuel-poor households in Northern Ireland in 2011 (42% of all households). This represents an increase from 167,000 households in 2001 (27% of all households).²⁰

Year	2001	2004	2006	2009	2011
Number of households	167,000	146,000	226,000	302,000	294,000

Figure 4: Number of fuel poor households in Northern Ireland, 2001-2011

Source: NIHE, [Northern Ireland House Condition Survey 2011: Main Report](#)

The higher fuel poverty rate in Northern Ireland than in Scotland or Wales has been attributed to a combination of factors including lower incomes, higher fuel prices and greater use of oil, electricity and solid fuel for heating.²¹

¹⁹ Department for Communities, [Fuel poverty](#) [accessed 17 March 2017]

²⁰ NIHE, [Northern Ireland House Condition Survey 2011: Main Report](#)

²¹ Ibid.

3. Fuel poverty targets and policies

3.1 Current policies in England

Since the LIHC definition of fuel poverty was adopted in **England**, the Coalition Government has published a new strategy for fuel poverty which set a new fuel poverty target for England:

As of 5 December 2014, successive Governments are bound by the following statutory fuel poverty target:

The fuel poverty target is to ensure that as many fuel poor homes as is reasonably practicable achieve a minimum energy efficiency rating of Band C, by 2030.²²

A range of measures are currently available to help alleviate fuel poverty in England. Targeted support includes direct financial assistance for paying bills (e.g. the [Warm Home Discount](#) and [Winter Fuel Payment](#)) and energy saving measures (e.g. Energy Company Obligation [ECO](#)) to help reduce costs. They are covered in the Library Note, [Help with energy bills](#).

The UK Government has withdrawn funding from the Green Deal Scheme which was the main policy for promoting energy efficiency in the home. The Autumn Statement 2015 announced the Warm Home Discount scheme will [be extended to 2020-2021](#).

The UK Government is currently amending the ECO scheme following the result of the [Help to Heat consultation](#): the existing ECO scheme is ending in April 2017 and being replaced by a one-year transition scheme which with an extended 18-month deadline (until September 2018) and an increased budget:

Next week, the Electricity and Gas (Energy Company Obligation) (Amendment) Order 2017 will be debated in both houses to extend the scheme from 1 April 2017 to 30 September 2018. The measure will seek to reform ECO so that 70% of the support under the scheme will now be directed at low-income homes. That represents an increase from £310 million to £450 million a year that will be invested in improving the energy efficiency of homes that most need support. We expect that the reformed ECO will improve about 500,000 homes over the coming 18 months, and the Government have made a commitment to insulate 1 million homes over the life of this Parliament.²³

After that, it will be replaced by a new scheme with broader eligibility criteria (for social housing households with E, F or G Energy Performance Certifications), ring-fenced spending in rural areas and an increased focus on energy efficiency measures like cavity wall insulation

²² HM Government, [Cutting the cost of keeping warm – a fuel poverty strategy for England](#), URN 15D/062, March 2015

²³ [HC Deb 14 March 2017](#), Vol. 623, Col. 372-373

(rather than boiler replacements). The Affordable Warmth Group will also be increased from 4 to 4.7 million eligible households.²⁴

On 18 March 2017, the Prime Minister suggested she was getting ready to introduce caps on energy prices to protect the poorest consumers from rising energy prices.²⁵ More details on the latest energy market reforms and trends in energy prices are available in the House of Commons Library briefing paper [Current Energy Market Reforms in Great Britain](#).

3.2 Fuel poverty targets and policies in the devolved administrations

The Scottish Government committed to “ensure that by November 2016, so far as is reasonably practicable, people are not living in fuel poverty in Scotland.”²⁶

The Scottish Government also commissioned, on behalf of the Fuel Poverty Forum (FPF), [a review of the evidence](#) in relation to the assumptions underpinning the definition of fuel poverty in Scotland.

The forum’s final report was published in 2014 – its recommendations were accepted by the Scottish Government and the forum continues to report regularly on progress towards eradicating fuel poverty.²⁷

The Welsh Government launched a demand-led fuel poverty scheme called Nest in 2011. It committed over £120 million funding from April 2011 until August 2017 for energy efficiency measures in low-income households and energy advice for any Welsh householders.²⁸ Other initiatives from the Welsh Government are the Arbed scheme which funds energy efficiency measures in deprived Welsh communities and the Welsh Housing Quality Standards.²⁹

The Northern Ireland Department for Communities launched a Warmer Healthier Homes – a new fuel poverty strategy for Northern Ireland in 2011. Among other things, it put forward a boiler replacement scheme, and funding for energy efficiency measures.³⁰

3.3 Reactions

In May 2016, National Energy Action – a charity on fuel poverty – published its annual [UK Fuel Poverty Monitor 2015-2016](#) in which they argued that progress towards eradicating fuel poverty across the UK

²⁴ BEIS, [Household energy - Energy Company Obligation \(ECO\): Help to Heat](#), 30 January 2017 [accessed 18 March 2017]

²⁵ The Times, [‘PM set to cap energy prices over ‘injustice’ of soaring bills’](#), 18 March 2017

²⁶ Scottish Government, [Quality – Fuel Poverty](#) [accessed 17 March 2017]

²⁷ Scottish Government, [Scottish Fuel Poverty Forum](#) [accessed 17 March 2017]

²⁸ Welsh Government, [Fuel poverty](#), 1 September 2016 [accessed 17 March 2017]

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Department for Communities, [The fuel poverty strategy](#), 11 March 2011

was hindered by frequent policy changes and a lack of coordination across the four UK nations.³¹

The charity also criticised the lack of funding and cross-departmental government coordination to tackle fuel poverty in England.³² They urged the Northern Irish Executive to implement the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines on how to reduce winter deaths and illness.³³ They made the same recommendation to the Scottish Government and asked for a detailed roadmap for eradicating fuel poverty.³⁴ They argued that the Welsh Government should spend more on tackling energy efficiency measures in Welsh households.³⁵

A report from the Committee on Fuel Poverty published in September 2016 argued that there were “significant shortfalls in funding to meet the 2020/25 milestones and 2030 household energy efficiency target and assist households in fuel poverty to pay their energy bills.” The Committee urged the Government to upgrade the amount of funding available for the targets and more measures targeted at fuel-poor households.³⁶

The Committee on Climate Change published its [Energy Prices and Bills Report 2017](#) which set out the following recommendations regarding fuel poverty:

If the insulation and low-carbon heat installations required to meet the carbon budgets can be successfully targeted at the fuel poor then around three-quarters can be lifted out of fuel poverty by 2030. However, meeting the Government’s goal of improving fuel poor homes to efficiency band C by 2030 would require roughly doubling the funding currently provided under the Energy Company Obligation.³⁷

3.4 Fuel Poverty in England: policy history

The statutory requirement to address fuel poverty was at the centre of the [Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act \(WHECA\)](#) which was passed with cross party support in 2000.

Following an announcement in the October 2010 spending review³⁸, Professor John Hills of the LSE conducted an independent review of fuel poverty for England and Wales, for DECC. Hill’s interim report³⁹ addressed the problem of measuring fuel poverty, and his final report [Getting the measure of fuel poverty: Final report of the fuel poverty review](#)⁴⁰ was published in March 2012. In September 2012 the

³¹ National Energy Action, [UK Fuel Poverty Monitor 2015-2016](#), p.15

³² Ibid., p.20

³³ Ibid., p.23

³⁴ Ibid., p.27

³⁵ Ibid., p.31

³⁶ Committee on Fuel Poverty, [A report on initial positions](#), September 2016

³⁷ Committee on Climate Change, [Energy Prices and Bills Report 2017](#), p.8

³⁸ HM Treasury Spending Review 2010 [press notices](#) October 2010

³⁹ [Fuel Poverty: The problem and its measurement](#) October 2011

⁴⁰ John Hills, CASE Report 72, March 2012

Government ran a [consultation on proposed changes to the fuel poverty measurement framework](#) to which they responded on 9 July 2013.

A new definition of fuel poverty has been adopted which finds a household to be fuel poor if their income is below the poverty line (taking into account their energy costs); and their energy costs are higher than is typical for their household type. It also uses a fuel poverty gap (i.e. the difference between a household's bill and what it would need for them to no longer be fuel poor).

A [framework for future action on fuel poverty](#) was published in July 2013 which sets out the way the Coalition Government intended to measure fuel poverty going forward and the action it intended to take to help people who are fuel poor.

Ofgem has also undertaken work and developed a [Consumer Vulnerability Strategy](#), published in July 2013 that aimed to address problems vulnerable groups face including poverty premium issues.

In July 2014 the Coalition Government consulted on proposals for a new fuel poverty strategy following on from the 2013 paper. The consultation was based around 4 key principles:

- A new fuel poverty objective - the new target - and an ambition to improve the energy efficiency standards of fuel poor homes.
- A roadmap to meet the target based around the following themes:
 - Warmer homes: cutting bills and increasing comfort in the coldest low-income homes, making a real and lasting difference through energy efficiency and heating improvements.
 - Supporting people: helping people directly with their energy bills and helping to increase incomes
 - Fairer markets: ensuring that everyone can take action and benefit from a more open energy market
 - Improving delivery: making the most of the support available, getting it to the right people, and working together to support fuel poor households – recognising that fuel poverty is not a problem that central government can tackle alone
- An approach to assessing progress towards the target and how we will review the strategy over time. This will enable us to take account of the latest understanding of fuel poverty, developments in technology, and changes in the wider policy landscape.

At the same time as the consultation the Coalition Government also published [a review of research evidence into fuel poverty](#). This noted key findings of:

- householders' awareness and understanding of energy efficiency in the home can be driven by a complex array of factors, but that comfort and cost were key issues.
- Households employed a wide range of efficiency (how to make the most efficient use of the heat) and sufficiency (what is the

minimum that is required for a 'manageable' level of warmth) strategies to heat their homes within their budgets, and there is evidence to suggest a generational divide in preferences (and needs) for different types and forms of home heating. For example, older people who grew up with solid fuel heating or proximal heaters are more likely to utilise these forms of heating than younger generations.

- There appears to be capacity for at risk or vulnerable households, particularly older people, to improve on the use of their current systems, including better informed use of heating systems, timers and thermostat controls, cladding hot water tanks, insulation of windows and the use of draft excluders. Various factors could trigger such behaviour change, such as advice and clear information from a trusted source and financial incentives. However, barriers to change do exist. The process of switching energy supplier, for example, is seen as too complex and uncertain for many to feel that they can, or have the ability to, change. Evidence suggests some poorer households have anxiety about change, for fear of incurring financial costs and upsetting carefully designed coping strategies. Financial savings from switching suppliers or installing energy efficient measures had to be sufficiently large for some individuals to consider it worth the effort.

A [response](#) to the consultation was published on 3 March 2015 alongside a [Cutting the cost of keeping warm: a fuel poverty strategy for England](#) which set the government target "to ensure that as many fuel poor homes as is reasonably practicable achieve a minimum energy efficiency rating of Band C, by 2030." In order to achieve this target, two interim targets were set:

Interim Milestones: (i) as many fuel poor homes as is reasonably practicable to Band E by 2020 and (ii) as many fuel poor homes as is reasonably practicable to Band D by 2025.⁴¹

⁴¹ DECC, [Cutting the cost of keeping warm: a fuel poverty strategy for England](#), 3 March 2015

4. Press Articles

The Times

18 March 2017

[PM set to cap energy prices over 'injustice' of soaring bills](#)

The Guardian

19 January 2017

[Disabled and cold: Sandra is penalised for being poor. Fuel poverty is harsh; Their freezing home makes her asthmatic son sick, but she can't access a cheaper energy tariff. So she rations heat, cuts out food and goes to bed early](#)

The Guardian

30 December 2016

[More than 2.3m families living in fuel poverty in England; Tories urged to act as one in 10 households is fuel poor, rising to about one in five for those renting from private landlords](#)

The Guardian

30 November 2016

[Set up by the local council, clinical commissioning group and housing providers, Oldham's scheme is helping residents out of fuel poverty](#)

The Guardian

29 November 2016

[UK fuel poverty to last a lifetime, report says; Report by charity National Energy Action, fronted by I, Daniel Blake actor Dave Johns, says government must give more support](#)

The Independent

10 September 2016

[The building that could end both fuel poverty and thermostat squabbles](#)

telegraph.co.uk

19 April 2016

[Charities warned over energy deal 'risks' as Age UK criticised for E.On partnership](#)

The Guardian

18 April 2016

[Chancellor overruled Amber Rudd on changes to fuel poverty scheme; Emails show George Osborne's aides insisting he was unconvinced of energy secretary's plan to improve targeting of scheme](#)

The Independent

16 April 2016

[New definitions are redefining poverty; Terms like 'food poverty', 'fuel poverty', even 'funeral poverty' are being used by politicians and charities. But are they doing those on the breadline more harm than good?](#)

BBC online

21 March 2016

[Cold homes caused 9,000 deaths last winter, study suggests](#)

The Guardian

21 March 2016

[Household efficiency installations plummet 80% after cuts - report; Number of UK households being helped by government to improve their energy use fell 75% since 2012, according to research](#)

The Guardian

27 January 2016

[Criticism surrounds appointments to fuel poverty watchdog](#)

Independent

16 January 2016

[Energy bills, the Big Six and the scandal of people dying of cold in their own homes](#)

Independent.co.uk

28 November 2015

[Fuel poverty: England's poorest households won't all be properly heated for nearly 100 years; Poorest and coldest households receiving improved insulation at a rate of only 1 per cent a year](#)

Independent

19 September 2015

[If you're in fuel poverty, British Gas might come to the rescue. Trust me, it's true](#)

5. Press releases

National Energy Action

17 February 2017

Charity warns 2 million children left in the cold this winter and calls on Chancellor to provide urgent support. Warning issued on Fuel Poverty Awareness Day

National Energy Action (NEA) has issued new analysis highlighting an estimated 2 million children across England are living in cold homes this winter. NEA has issued the warning on Fuel Poverty Awareness Day and is calling on the Chancellor to use the forthcoming budget to help people across the UK who are unable to live in a warm and healthy home. The charity says the plight of young people is not being addressed fast enough and the charity is warning the impact on them accessing equal life chances is particularly stark.

Half a million dependent children live in the coldest homes with the worst energy efficiency rating meaning they are often almost impossible to heat. Fuel poverty often results in social isolation, which is a risk factor for depression. It also means families may need to choose between heating and spending on food – and as a result children can be malnourished.

It even impacts on education; a study in Cornwall showed that children living in damp conditions lost 9.3 days per 100 school days because of asthma. This was reduced to 2.1 days after central heating was installed in their bedrooms. Despite the benefits, no public money is going to be spent this Parliament on improving energy efficiency levels in domestic properties in England – the only nation without a Government-funded energy efficiency programme for the first time in over 30 years, with delivery of home energy efficiency improvements slowing dramatically as a result.

Maria Wardrobe, Director of Communications and External Affairs at NEA said:

“The UK has among the highest rates of fuel poverty and one of the most energy inefficient housing stocks in Europe. It is completely unacceptable that in the 21st century children are living in cold, damp homes that are detrimental to their health and wellbeing. The Chancellor needs to use the forthcoming budget to improve the quality of their lives.

“There are few reasons to argue against acting fast to fix our housing stock. Targeted investment would make a massive difference to individuals but also reduce much bigger costs to society”.

The film ‘I, Daniel Blake’ shows a struggling single mum with two children in fuel poverty. BAFTA winning actor Dave Johns supports the campaign. He said: “I’m backing NEA’s Warm Homes Campaign to highlight what help is available to cope with rising energy bills as winter takes hold, and demand more support from government.”

Fuel Poverty Awareness Day will conclude the Warm Homes Campaign. On the launch of the WHC in November Channel 4 news illustrated the real impacts living in a cold home have on vulnerable people. NEA highlighted that based on current policies we will not see an end to the cold home crisis in the lifetime of a baby born today.

Fuel Poverty Awareness Day is coordinated by NEA and many organisations are also holding events across the UK, issuing messages of support, or holding bake sales as part of the Nation's Biggest Housewarming. People and organisations are also being asked to sign up to NEA's Twitter Thunderclap, which will help ensure that Fuel Poverty Awareness Day reaches over 2 million people. NEA is also launching a range of new resources including a new Steps to Affordable Warmth video resource, which provides hints and tips on how to afford to stay warm and healthy at home and is designed to be shared at community events with clients or publicised online.

Notes for editors:

National Energy Action is the national fuel poverty charity, working across England, Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure everyone can afford to stay warm in their homes. For more information visit www.nea.org.uk

NEA's top ten policy asks can be found here: http://www.nea.org.uk/campaigns-policy/nea-top-10-policy-priorities/#_ftn12

Latest government statistics indicate that there are over four million UK households in fuel poverty. Fuel poverty is caused by a combination of low incomes, high energy prices and poor quality energy-inefficient housing. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fuel-poverty-statistics>

The number of children in fuel poverty is estimated from NEA analysis of the English Housing Survey (2014)

Fuel poverty statistics are available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fuel-poverty-statistics>

Excess winter deaths in England and Wales alone were an estimated 24,300 in 2015/16[i]. Over a five-year period, the average number of excess winter deaths in England and Wales is 28,218. Based on the World Health Organisation's estimate that a minimum of 30% of Excess Winter Deaths are due to people living in cold homes, an average of over 8,000 people die each winter because they cannot be kept warm at a reasonable cost[ii].

The Committee on Fuel Poverty (CFP) has estimated the overall cost of meeting national fuel poverty commitments in England. Overall, an investment of £20bn is required to get all (current) fuel poor homes in England to at least an EPC C by 2030[iii].

According to the Committee on Fuel Poverty[iv], the Climate Change Committee (CCC)[v] and think tanks such as Policy Exchange[vi] current

resources are less than half of what is required to meet these commitments.

This lack of public funding is in spite of domestic energy consumers predicted to contribute an estimated £14 billion to the Treasury[vii] this Parliament, £30 billion over 10 years[viii].

Just before the last General Election the Treasury raised an additional £500 million pounds creating higher energy bills[ix] and dramatically impacting low income consumers' ability to heat and power their homes and their life chances. These funds can be used to invest in improving national competitiveness by reducing energy demand – many other EU governments[x] channel many of these resources back to consumers, future-proofing their economies and helping to improve national competitiveness by reducing energy demand.

End Notes:

[i] Office of National Statistics, Excess winter mortality in England and Wales: 2015/16 (provisional) and 2014/15 (final) (ons.gov.uk)

[ii] Further analysis on excess winter deaths are attributable to cold indoor temperatures was carried out by Sir John Marmot for Friends of the Earth : The Health Impacts of Cold Homes and Fuel Poverty, Marmot Review Team, 2011.

[iii] This breakdowns as £1.9bn to meet the 2020 EPC E milestone, a further £5.6bn to meet the 2025 EPC D milestone and a further £12.3bn to meet the 2030 EPC C target. A further £6bn would be required to ensure all low income households (not just those that are currently fuel poor) are brought up to EPC band C by 2025. This investment does not fall to central Government solely; it must be defrayed across a number of parties (central government, private and social landlords; LAs, utility companies, escos, gas and electricity network operators as well as other key actors such health agencies, charities and community groups.

[iv] This breakdowns as £1.9bn to meet the 2020 EPC E milestone, a further £5.6bn to meet the 2025 EPC D milestone and a further £12.3bn to meet the 2030 EPC C target.

[v] Addressing fuel poverty and meeting carbon budgets go hand in hand (CCC), 7 October 2014.

[vi] Warmer Homes – Improving fuel poverty and energy efficiency policy in the UK, 2015, Policy Exchange

[vii] We estimate that £11.82bn will be collected in England, £1.33bn in Scotland, £690m in Wales and £190m in Northern Ireland

[viii] This analysis of the revenues the Treasury receives from domestic consumers is based on Government sources to estimate how much expected revenue they will receive from a) the European Union Emission Trading Scheme (EU ETS), b) the Carbon Price Floor (CPF) and c) VAT on an average electricity bill. We have then combined this with expected VAT revenues from domestic gas bills. These estimates are all based on the Government's own assumptions regarding energy consumption and

this includes an unfounded assumption that EU products policy will increase the domestic energy efficiency of electric appliances substantially

[ix] This figure is the estimated income from the Carbon Price Floor 2015-16 compared to 2014-15. Source: Carbon Price Floor, 14 May 2014, House of Commons Library

[x] According to a recent report: The economic case for recycling carbon tax revenues into energy efficiency, Prashant Vaze and Louise Sunderland, February 2014: 13 countries in the EU have pledged to return part of the proceeds from the EU-ETS auctions to climate and energy efficiency programmes.

[iv] This breakdowns as £1.9bn to meet the 2020 EPC E milestone, a further £5.6bn to meet the 2025 EPC D milestone and a further £12.3bn to meet the 2030 EPC C target.

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National Energy Action

23 September 2016

Government advisory committee on fuel poverty says government policies and resources need to be refocussed to meet fuel poverty goals for England.

The Committee on Fuel Poverty has produced a list of recommendations in its first report which is to be launched on Friday 23 September at the annual conference of fuel poverty charity National Energy Action.

The committee has set out a number of recommendations that it believes will be needed to achieve the Government's 2020, 2025 and 2030 targets to reduce fuel poverty and highlights policy changes and the level of resources that will be needed following its initial analysis. It stresses the need for better targeting of assistance to those in fuel poverty through new Government data sharing powers, refocusing of energy company schemes on the fuel poor, opportunities to lever additional finance, the need for greater involvement by local authorities and public health bodies, access to high quality advice and the role of private landlords in improving their properties. Jenny Saunders, speaking for the Committee, said:

"The Committee has reached initial positions on success criteria for the Government's fuel poverty strategy for England. Whilst significant resources appear to be available to meet the 2030 target to substantially improve the energy efficiency of low-income households and provide income supplements to pay fuel bills, the reality is that these resources are currently poorly targeted at those in fuel poverty. We acknowledge that the Government has made a start to address this issue, but it needs to do more through data sharing to identify people in fuel poverty. It also needs to ensure the recommendations of the Competition and Market Authority's remedies are implemented so that the energy market works for all consumers, particularly those who are more vulnerable, and lever additional finance particularly in the private-rented sector.

"The Committee is presenting its recommendations to around 250 fuel poverty practitioners from across the country in Manchester. We are working with the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and other Government departments to help steer policy changes needed to maximise resources cost effectively to increase the energy efficiency standards of households in fuel poverty and thereby reduce the cost of energy bills and prevent the health and other impacts of living in cold homes."

National Energy Action

9 May 2016

The UK Fuel Poverty Monitor, says huge variations and changes to relevant national and UK wide affordable warmth policies have inevitably hindered progress to eradicate fuel poverty

Peter Smith, Head of Policy and Research at NEA comments:

“Despite our report warning for many years that a pan UK-wide approach to eradicating fuel poverty is a very distant prospect, in the last five years alone there are now over 500,000 more fuel poor households living in cold homes. We hope the report will help all UK nations to now get the job done and end the unnecessary cost and suffering caused by fuel poverty once and for all”.

Norman Kerr, Director of Energy Action Scotland added:

“For over five years EAS has called on the Scottish Government to commit to a detailed route-map with targets and milestones for eradicating fuel poverty. The new Scottish Government must now act on this key recommendation. The report also calls on the new Government to press on with the introduction of ambitious energy efficiency regulations for private sector homes”.

Pat Austin, Director of NEA Northern Ireland:

“Despite recent drops in wholesale energy prices further actions are needed to address NI’s dependency on home heating oil. Policy makers in NI also must ensure current and future schemes are effectively targeted at those that need the most support to reduce their heating costs”.

Carole Morgan Jones, Director of NEA Cymru:

“Whilst it is clear from the report that tackling fuel poverty needs a more joined up approach between the devolved administrations and UK Government, the newly elected Welsh Government needs to adopt a fresh approach within its devolved areas of responsibility. The Fuel Poverty Coalition Cymru’s Manifesto ‘Ending Wales’ Cold Homes Crisis’ sets out five clear priorities for action for the new Government including an urgent need to address the needless deaths caused by cold homes”.

NEA and EAS have produced the annual UK Fuel Poverty Monitor (UKFPM) report since 2003. The report specifically aims to review fuel poverty policies in the four UK nations. It also provides an opportunity to identify cross-nation learning to inform policy makers and practitioners. The publication of this year’s report reviews progress on the previous recommendations that have been made since 2010 and draws this analysis together within each country and at a UK level.

Editors notes

1. To read the report click [here](#). The opening section of this year’s report aims to highlight the key differences and similarities in the way fuel poverty is addressed within the four UK countries. This includes a summary table and timeline with the most significant developments in attempts to provide greater levels of affordable warmth across the UK. The report then provides a UK wide summary of progress on key recommendations before investigating each nation in turn. The report then provides some short conclusions and next steps.
2. NEA is an independent charity which seeks to help low income households across the UK who can’t adequately heat and power their homes. NEA has a network of offices throughout England and also has national offices in Cardiff and Belfast which also work to support deprived communities and low income energy

consumers in Wales and Northern Ireland respectively. For more information visit www.nea.org.uk.

3. EAS campaigns for an end to fuel poverty in Scotland and is the only charity with this sole remit across Scotland. Through its membership network which spans all sectors, it provides a link between policy makers and practitioners to highlight both progress and gaps in the provision of assistance to tackle fuel poverty. For more information visit www.eas.org.uk/.
4. Since 2011 there is no longer a common approach to the way fuel poverty is measured across the UK nations. Following Professor Hills' recommendations the Low Income High Cost (LIHC) indicator definition is now used in England. This states that an individual is considered fuel poor where they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level) and were they to spend that amount; they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line. The low income high cost measure consists of two parts, the number of households that have both low incomes and high fuel costs and the depth of fuel poverty amongst these households.
5. Prior to the introduction of the Low Income High Costs indicator in England, fuel poverty was measured under the 10 per cent indicator across the whole of the UK. The 10 per cent indicator continues to be used in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Under this indicator, a household is considered to be fuel poor if they were required to spend more than 10 per cent of their income on fuel to maintain an adequate standard of warmth. Under this definition, in the last five years alone, there are now over 500,000 more fuel poor households and 4.5 million households are living in cold homes across the UK. An adequate standard of warmth is usually defined as 21°C for the main living area, and 18°C for other occupied rooms. The impact that this divergence in measurement has across the nations is noted in the recommendations.

Department of Energy and Climate Change

A strategy to end cold homes for good

04 Mar 2015

Yesterday's new Fuel poverty strategy sets out a revolutionary approach to identifying and targeting England's energy inefficient homes.

Future governments will now, for the first time, be required by law to tackle fuel poverty by making the coldest, leakiest homes in England more energy efficient.

This new Fuel poverty strategy – the first for over a decade – outlines challenges and actions for the next 15 years to ensure future Governments take the right steps to tackle fuel poverty and get help to those who need it most.

A new legally binding target – in force since December 2014 – is at the heart of the new strategy. It requires a minimum standard of energy efficiency (Band C) for as many fuel poor homes as reasonably practicable by 2030.

Early measures to tackle the problem of fuel poverty and hit the new target include:

- New regulations so from April 2018 private landlords cannot rent out energy inefficient properties (homes with Energy Performance ratings below 'E')
- Tackling the problem of fuel poverty in off gas grid properties with a new £25 million fund to help people install central heating systems for the first time
- Extending the successful ECO scheme to 2017, so that a further 500,000 properties will be made cheaper and easier to heat, building on the one million homes that ECO and the Green Deal have helped in the last 2 years

The strategy prepares the ground for future new measures with a series of pilots focused on priority areas, ranging from health aspects of fuel poverty through to specific housing types like off gas grid properties and park homes.

A £3 million pot for such pilots will see £1 million released immediately to scale up local 'warmth-on-prescription' projects to help primary healthcare professionals such as GPs play a much larger part in tackling fuel poverty. In the coming months up to £2 million more will be released to support innovation pilots, not just in health but also for off gas grid, park homes and community energy approaches.

Unveiling the strategy, Energy and Climate Change Secretary Ed Davey said yesterday:

Today marks a crucial step towards a future free from cold homes and bloated energy bills in England. We now have a legally binding commitment to plug our draughtiest houses – adding to the 1 million homes we've made warmer and cheaper to heat.

From tackling fuel poverty in the private rented sector to facing up properly to the challenges of rural off gas grid fuel poverty, this strategy marks a significant change from the old approach.

Yet even as we implement new regulations and new spending priorities to make homes warmer, we are planning for the next phase of cutting fuel poverty, with a series of key pilots, especially into the link between improving health and cutting fuel poverty.

Households in fuel poverty in the least energy efficient homes (Bands F and G) typically face energy costs that are £1,000 more than those in higher quality homes. To help focus support where it is needed most, the strategy introduces interim milestones to get as many as fuel poor homes as reasonably practicable up to a minimum energy efficiency rating of Band E by 2020 and Band D by 2025.

Minister for Energy and Climate Change Amber Rudd:

We want the fall in levels of fuel poverty seen under this Government to continue - so that cold homes are gone for good.

That's the future we're presenting, alongside our ambitious targets, so even more households can join the 1 million homes already reaping the benefits of lower energy bills and warmer homes this winter.

Last month, the government laid draft regulations to introduce minimum energy efficiency standards that will see up to 1 million people renting from private landlords benefit from warmer and cheaper to heat homes. Many of the poorest tenants will benefit and, with government support, landlords can improve their properties at no upfront cost – and landlords will only have to make improvements that are cost-effective. This will be backed by a new law to give tenants the right from April 2016 to request consent for improvements that the landlord cannot unreasonably refuse.

Nearly 2 million heating and energy efficiency measures have already been installed across the country. With ECO being extended to 2017 an extra half a million people will be able to keep warm for less, including many low-income, vulnerable households. This is on top of half a billion pounds of investment in energy efficiency schemes over three years, including the Green Deal Home Improvement Fund.

Dr Tim Ballard, Vice-Chair of the Royal College of General Practitioners, said:

The Royal College of GPs welcomes this new fuel poverty strategy. It marks an important turning point in acting on what we have known for some time: that cold homes contribute to the most vulnerable people being unhealthy and can even be lethal for them.

The new strategy provides a long-term framework in which the health sector has a vital role to play, in partnership with Government. The new funding for health-related pilot projects is especially needed and will help build the case for more investment to cut the cost of warmth and help reduce the burden of cold homes on the health service.

Note to editors

- The new [Fuel poverty strategy](#)
- More information on the [Private Rental Sector Regulations](#)
- Fuel poverty is calculated by modelling the fuel bills of households in England to ensure they maintain an adequate standard of warmth, based on the characteristics of the householders, the dwelling characteristics and energy prices.
- Under the Low Income High Cost (LIHC) definition a household is considered to be fuel poor where:
- They have required fuel costs that are above the national median level.
- Were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

**Centre for the Analysis of Social Exclusion
Independent Review Projects Fuel Poverty to Worsen and Calls
for Reinvigorated Strategy**

15 March 2012

Professor John Hills today publishes the final report of his independent review of fuel poverty. The review confirms that fuel poverty is a serious national problem and shows that it is set to rise rapidly. It affects people with low incomes and energy costs above typical levels. It proposes a new way of measuring the problem, focused both on the number of people affected and the severity of the problem they face. Using the proposed measure:

- Nearly 8 million people in England, within 2.7 million households, both had low incomes and faced high energy costs in 2009 (the most recent year with available data). These households faced costs to keep warm that added up to £1.1 billion more than middle or higher income people with typical costs.
- The review's central projection is that this "fuel poverty gap" – already three-quarters higher than in 2003 – will rise by a further half, to £1.7 billion by 2016.
- This means fuel poor households will face costs nearly £600 a year higher on average than better-off households with typical costs.
- The report also argues that:
- Fuel poverty exacerbates other hardship faced by those on low incomes, has serious health effects (including contributing to extra deaths every winter), and acts as a block to efforts to cut carbon emissions.
- The current official way of measuring it, based on whether a household would need to spend more than 10 per cent of its income on energy, is flawed, giving a misleading impression of trends, excluding some affected by the problem at some times and including people with high incomes at others.
- Interventions targeted on the core of the problem – especially those that improve the energy efficiency of homes lived in by people with low incomes – can make a substantial difference, but the impact of those planned to be in place by 2016 is only to reduce the problem by a tenth.

Professor Hills said:

There is no doubt that fuel poverty is a serious national problem – increasing hardship, contributing to winter deaths and other health problems, and blocking policies to combat climate change. But the official measure has fed complacency at times and gloom about the impact of policies at others.

When one focuses on the core of the problem in the way I propose, the outlook is profoundly disappointing, with the scale of the problem heading to be nearly three times higher in 2016 – the date legislation set for its elimination – than in 2003.

But this daunting problem is one with solutions. Our analysis shows that improving the housing of those at risk is the most cost-effective way of tackling the problem, cutting energy waste, with large long-term

benefits to society as a whole. We need a renewed and ambitious strategy to do this.

Notes to Editors

1. After its publication copies of the final report, *Getting the measure of fuel poverty*, will be available at:

www.decc.gov.uk/hillsfuelpovertyreview

<http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/case/> (as CASE report 72)

The interim report (CASE report 69) is also available at these addresses.

3. Professor John Hills, Director of the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) at the London School of Economics, was appointed in March 2011 to conduct an independent review from first principles of the fuel poverty definition and target. See www.decc.gov.uk/hillsfuelpovertyreview for additional background. A consultative interim report was published in October 2011.

4. The approach set out in the report would capture households where required spending is higher than the median (typical) required levels and where spending this amount would reduce household income below the poverty line. The report finds that 7.8 million people in 2.7 million households were in this position in England in 2009, compared to 7.2 million people in 2.8 million households in 1996. This definition reflects the wording of the Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000, which states:

"A person is to be regarded as living "in fuel poverty" if he [sic] is a member of a household living on a lower income in a home which cannot be kept warm at reasonable cost."

5. The new indicator is supplemented by a "fuel poverty gap" which is the difference between the required spending faced by fuel poor households and the median level. In England in 2009, the aggregate gap was £1.1 billion, with an average gap of £414 per household. The gap shows how badly fuel poverty affects those households who experience it. It has risen since 2003 as rising prices have increased bills and have pulled more people into fuel poverty.

6. The current definition of fuel poverty is based on a ratio of required spending to income: if a household would need to spend more than 10 per cent of its net income (before housing costs) to achieve adequate warmth, it is classed as fuel poor. Using this definition, fuel poverty was said to have fallen by four-fifths between 1996 and 2004 (from 5.1 million to 1.2 million households) but has more than trebled since. The latest official statistics, published in July 2011 and relating to 2009, found 4.0 million households (containing 7.4 million people) to be fuel poor in England.

7. Technical enquiries about the content of the report may be addressed to:

hillsfuelpovertyreview@decc.gsi.gov.uk

6. Parliamentary Material

Parliamentary Questions

[Fuel Poverty](#)

Asked by: Furniss, Gill

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies on support for fuel-poor households of the report by National Energy Advice of February 2017 entitled, *In from the cold*.

Answering member: Jesse Norman | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The Government has noted the paper presented by National Energy Action on February 13th and will assess what the implications are for current policies. Government will consider this and other evidence provided by stakeholders as part of the design of any future fuel poverty schemes. In particular it will consider the views of the Committee on Fuel Poverty.

Government recently confirmed plans to reform the Energy Company Obligation, which is worth £640m per year. In 2017-18, 70% of the scheme will be directed at low income households. This represents an increase from £310m to £450m of funding per year. Energy companies are also required to provide over 2 million low income and vulnerable households with a £140 rebate off their energy bill each winter, under the Warm Home Discount Scheme, which is worth £320m per year.

02 Mar 2017 | Written questions | House of Commons | 64855

[Fuel Poverty](#)

Asked by: Furniss, Gill

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he plans to take to ensure that more support is offered to (a) non-gas and (b) other fuel-poor households.

Answering member: Jesse Norman | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The Government recently confirmed plans for the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) policy for 2017-18. In 2017-18, 70% of the support under the scheme will be directed at low income households. This represents an increase from £310m to £450m of funding per year, under the Affordable Warmth Obligation.

The policy also includes elements designed to incentivise delivery to non-gas homes, such as an uplift of 35% to 45% (depending on the measure) for delivery to such homes under the Affordable Warmth element of ECO, and limiting the deployment of gas replacement boilers to enable a more diverse mix of measures to be delivered.

As a result, the Impact Assessment for the policy estimates that 16% of the delivery under Affordable Warmth will be to homes not heated by mains gas. This represents a significant increase on delivery to this group to date, which is below 2%.

23 Feb 2017 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 64520

[Housing: Energy](#)

Asked by: McCarthy, Kerry

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many fuel-poor households require bringing up to the minimum band C energy efficiency standard by 2030; and what steps the Government is taking to bring such households up to that standard.

Answering member: Jesse Norman | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The latest official fuel poverty statistics show that there are 2.2 million fuel poor households in England living in a home with an energy efficiency rating of Band D or lower.

Government recently confirmed plans to reform the Energy Company Obligation, which is worth £640m per year and requires the large energy suppliers to improve household energy efficiency. In 2017-18, 70% of the support under the scheme will be directed at low income households. This represents an increase from £310m to £450m of funding per year.

Energy companies are also required to provide over 2 million low income and vulnerable households with a £140 rebate off their energy bill each winter, under the Warm Home Discount Scheme, which is worth £320m per year.

These policies combined will see at least £770m of support for low income and vulnerable households in 2017/18.

23 Feb 2017 | Written questions | House of Commons | 64351

[Insulation](#)

Asked by: McCarthy, Kerry

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what progress the Government has made towards meeting its target to insulate over one million homes by 2020.

Answering member: Jesse Norman | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The Government has committed to "support low-cost measures on energy efficiency, with the goal of insulating a million more homes over the next five years, supporting our commitment to tackle fuel poverty." Since the start of May 2015 to end October 2016 around 312,000

homes have had at least one insulation measure installed, predominantly under the Energy Company Obligation.

Progress against the target remains on course to be achieved by the end of April 2020.

Source: Table 1.2.1

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/household-energy-efficiency-national-statistics-headline-release-december-2016>

23 Feb 2017 | Written questions | House of Commons | 64350

[Warm Home Discount Scheme](#)

Asked by: Poulter, Dr

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans his Department has for the future of Warm Home Discount payments.

Answering member: Jesse Norman | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The Government announced in the Spending Review in November 2015 that the Warm Home Discount scheme would be extended to 2020/21 at current levels of £320m per year, rising with inflation, to help households who are at risk of fuel poverty with their energy bills.

The current regulations last until 31 March 2018 and we plan to consult on any changes to the scheme in 2017.

09 Jan 2017 | Written questions | House of Commons | 58056

[Health Services: Weather](#)

Asked by: Jarvis, Dan

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the differences are between the Cold Weather Plan 2015 and the Cold Weather Plan 2014.

Answering member: Nicola Blackwood | Department of Health

Public Health England publishes the Cold Weather Plan for England (CWP), in collaboration with the Department, NHS England and the Local Government Association. The CWP was first published in winter 2011 and has undergone annual updates until 2015 based on stakeholder feedback, new policy developments and new evidence. As a result of feedback from end-users who requested stability of content to facilitate local implementation, the 2015 edition of the plan remains extant until further notice.

Amendments include confirmation and integration of the findings of the 2012-13 independent evaluation of the CWP; consistency checking with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence Guidance on Excess Winter Deaths and morbidity and the health risks associated with cold homes; reference to the fuel poverty strategy for England; updated advice on flu vaccination consistent with most recent recommendations;

and publication of the 'Top Tips for keeping Warm and Well' leaflet developed in collaboration with the Department for Work and Pensions and revision of the 'Keep Warm, Keep Well' booklet.

12 Dec 2016 | Written questions | House of Commons | 56274

[Fuel Poverty](#)

Asked by: Whitehead, Dr Alan

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the tenures of property were of the fuel poor households living in F and G rated properties in the last year.

Answering member: Jesse Norman | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The tenure of fuel poor households that had been rated as an F or G rated property in line with either the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP), or the Fuel Poverty Energy Efficiency Rating (FPEER) are as follows:

	Fuel poor and SAP rating		Fuel poor and FPEER rating	
	F/G		F/G	
	Number of households	Proportion	Number of households	Proportion
Local authority	8,841	3%	8,259	3%
Owner occupied	132,545	46%	128,664	47%
Private rented	123,371	43%	117,694	43%
Registered social landlord	22,059	8%	20,532	7%
Grand Total	286,816	100%	275,149	100%

Figures are representative of England in 2014, the latest year available.

08 Dec 2016 | Written questions | House of Commons | 55672

[Fuel Poverty](#)

Asked by: Whitehead, Dr Alan |

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to paragraph 7.5 of the Fuel Poverty Strategy, on what date the first annual fuel poverty debate in Parliament was held; and when the Government plans to timetable the next such debate.

Answering member: Jesse Norman | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

Fuel poverty has received Parliamentary scrutiny in Westminster Hall debates held on November 24th 2015 and February 6th 2016 and in the House of Lords on October 25th 2016. Government also published a report setting out annual fuel poverty statistics on June 30th 2016.

The Department recognises the importance of Government holding an annual debate on this topic in Parliament, and will seek to schedule a debate as soon as Parliamentary time allows.

06 Dec 2016 | Written questions | House of Commons | 55114

[Energy Performance Certificates](#)

Asked by: Whitehead, Dr Alan

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many fuel poor households are living in properties that have been assessed for an energy performance certificate the result of which has been placed on the register.

Answering member: Jesse Norman | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The English Housing Survey, from which Fuel Poverty estimates are calculated, does not collect information on whether a surveyed household has an EPC certificate.

Detailed tables for 2014 fuel poverty statistics for England can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/fuel-poverty-detailed-tables-2014>.

06 Dec 2016 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 55106

[Fuel Poverty](#)

Asked by: Farron, Tim

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many people are deemed to live in fuel poverty; and how this figure has changed over the last three years.

Answering member: Jesse Norman | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

Fuel poverty is measured at household level. The official statistics for the past three years for which data is available show that the number of households living in fuel poverty has remained relatively stable.

There were 2.36 million households living in fuel poverty in England in 2012, this fell slightly to 2.35 million households in 2013, then increased to 2.38 million households in 2014.

We believe the most sustainable way to address fuel poverty is by improving the energy efficiency of homes occupied by those living in fuel poverty. Between 2012 and 2014 the number of fuel poor homes with an energy efficiency rating of E, F or G reduced by approximately 350,000.

07 Nov 2016 | Written questions | House of Commons | 51747

[Fuel Poverty: Scotland](#)

Asked by: Lord Wallace of Tankerness

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the recommendations and conclusions of the reports, published in October, from the Scottish Rural Fuel Poverty Strategic Working Group and the Scottish Fuel Poverty Strategic Working Group which relate to areas of their responsibility.

Answering member: Baroness Neville-Rolfe | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

Her Majesty's Government has not made any assessment as fuel poverty is a devolved matter for the Scottish Government.

We are aware of the reports published on 24th October and will consider their findings and recommendations with interest.

03 Nov 2016 | Written questions | House of Lords | HL2675

[Fuel Poverty](#)

Asked by: Lucas, Caroline

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with the Committee on Fuel Poverty on meeting (a) the 2030 fuel energy efficiency target and (b) the interim milestones in England; and if he will publish details of such discussions.

Answering member: Jesse Norman | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The Committee on Fuel Poverty published its report on initial positions on 23 September 2016. We are considering this report and look forward to discussing their thinking and future work programme over the coming months.

02 Nov 2016 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 50253

[Warm Home Discount Scheme](#)

Asked by: Onwurah, Chi

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether public consultations or surveys were undertaken in the former Department for Energy and Climate Change to ascertain whether people trusted and understood the data-sharing element of the Warm Home Discount Scheme in the run-up to implementing that scheme.

Answering member: Jesse Norman | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The Warm Home Discount consultation, published in December 2011, included questions on data sharing.

Prior to the Warm Home Discount, the Energy Rebate Scheme, which ran for one year, used data-matching (of DWP and energy suppliers' data) to identify a group of pensioners likely to be vulnerable to fuel poverty, so that their electricity supplier could award a one-off rebate to their electricity bill. This earlier scheme ran for one year.

DWP Social Researchers carried out a small-scale qualitative evaluation of the scheme, involving telephone interviews with customers to investigate reactions to their personal data being used in this way – this including issues around privacy, security and data sharing, and the broader concept of data use in Government.

The findings of the research and consultation responses can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-warm-home-discount-scheme>

24 Oct 2016 | Written questions | House of Commons | 48717

[Social Security Benefits: Fuel Poverty](#)

Asked by: Gwynne, Andrew

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if his Department will make an assessment of the effect of the Government's welfare reforms on low-income households who are in fuel poverty since 2010.

Answering member: Caroline Nokes | Department for Work and Pensions

The Government's reforms simplify the system for claimants, helping move more people into work, and reduce the cost for taxpayers. Throughout these reforms the Government is ensuring that the vulnerable are protected. In every year to 2020 spending on disability will be higher than in 2010.

The Warm Home Discount scheme provides eligible households with a £140 energy bill rebate. This winter, almost a million low income working age households will be helped under the scheme.

We are also reforming the Energy Company Obligation to have a greater focus on vulnerable and low income households. It will have a value of £640m a year from 2017 until 2022 and could reduce the energy bills of those who receive energy efficiency improvements by up to £300 per year.

DWP provides help with the additional costs of heating during periods of severely cold weather to eligible claimants on certain income related benefits. In 2015-16, DWP made nearly 155,000 awards worth £3.9 million. For winter 2016/17 the cold weather payment rate will continue to be £25 for each seven day period of very cold weather.

12 Oct 2016 | Written questions | House of Commons | 46362

[Fuel Poverty](#)

Asked by: Jarvis, Dan

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how much progress her Department expects to make towards eliminating fuel poverty by the end of this Parliament.

Answering member: Andrea Leadsom | Department for Energy and Climate Change

The 2030 target, now enshrined in law, requires Government to improve as many fuel poor homes as reasonably practicable to Band C energy efficiency standard by 2030.

We have also set an interim fuel poverty milestone for 2020, to get as many fuel poor households as reasonably practicable into Band E.

The Government will be guided by the fuel poverty strategy published in March 2015 which sets out a clear policy of working towards improving energy efficiency standards in the homes of the fuel poor.

We intend to focus the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and the Warm Home Discount more effectively on the fuel poor, and will consult on our future approach. Between them they will provide around £1 billion of support each year.

The latest available statistics indicate that, in 2013, 2.35 million households were in fuel poverty in England of which 2.04 million were Band E or above. The next fuel poverty statistical release is due on 30th June 2016.

15 Jun 2016 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 40206

[Warm Home Discount Scheme](#)

Asked by: Dodds, Mr Nigel

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how much has been contributed by energy suppliers towards the rebate on electricity bills under the Warm Home Discount Scheme in each year since 2010.

Answering member: Andrea Leadsom | Department for Energy and Climate Change

From 2011 to 2015, energy suppliers spent a total of £868m on electricity bill rebates under the Core and Broader Group elements of the Warm Home Discount. The annual breakdown is set out below.

Warm Home Discount

Scheme year	Total contribution on rebates (£million)
Scheme year 1 (2011/2012)	£112.3m
Scheme Year 2 (2012/2013)	£198.1m
Scheme Year 3 (2013/2014)	£248.66m
Scheme Year 4 (2014/2015)	£309.3m

We expect that at least £286m has been spent by suppliers on direct rebates in 2015/16.

From 2011 to 2015, households have also received other assistance through the Warm Home Discount to the value of £264m.

Government announced in the Spending Review in November 2015 that the Warm Home Discount scheme would be extended to 2020/21 at current levels of £320m per year, rising with inflation, to help households who are at risk of fuel poverty with their energy bills.

Further details can be found in Ofgem's annual reports at:

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications-and-updates/warm-home-discount-annual-report-scheme-year-4>.

13 Jun 2016 | Written questions | House of Commons | 39692

[Warm Home Discount Scheme](#)

Asked by: Lewis, Clive

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, pursuant to the Answer of 27 April 2016 to Question 35137, what estimate she has made of the proportion of fuel poor households needed to reach the interim energy efficiency target of EPC band E by 2020 using the fuel poverty efficiency rating methodology that will be households in receipt of the Warm Homes Discount Scheme.

Answering member: Andrea Leadsom | Department for Energy and Climate Change

The number of F and G-rated fuel poor households [1] in England that will be in receipt of Warm Home Discount to 2020 will depend on changes in the energy efficiency of the housing stock and reforms to the welfare system over time.

Based on current scheme eligibility, we estimate that around 25% of F and G-rated fuel poor households in England are eligible for Warm Home Discount.

The Warm Home Discount has an important role in supporting households with their energy bills but is not the primary way we are addressing fuel poverty in the long term. We are reforming the Energy

Company Obligation to improve the energy efficiency of homes that need it most, tackling the root cause of fuel poverty.

[1] As measured by the Fuel Poverty Energy Efficiency Rating. More information is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/332236/fpeer_methodology.pdf

10 May 2016 | Written questions | House of Commons | 36488

[Housing: Energy](#)

Asked by: McCabe, Steve

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, pursuant to the Answer of 15 March 2016 to Question 26458, how much investment in energy efficiency measures (a) was made during the last Parliament and (b) will be made during this Parliament.

Answering member: Andrea Leadsom | Department for Energy and Climate Change

Government policies supported investment of around £7.4bn on energy efficiency measures¹ over the last parliament.

This included spending of:

£2.9bn on ECO and the Green Deal²

£3.8bn on CERT

£0.7bn on CESP^{3,4}

During the course of this parliament, Government policies are expected to support investment of around £3.6bn. This includes spending of⁵:

£1.7bn on ECO⁶

£1.9bn on ECO's successor⁷

£0.1bn on the Green Deal⁸

The planned level of spend this parliament reflects Government's desire to minimise the impact of energy efficiency policies on consumers' energy bills, reduce reliance on subsidies, and set long-term policy frameworks. Government intends to focus investment on the households that need it most, with the aim of tackling the root causes of fuel poverty.

We are working to deliver our schemes more efficiently by reducing administrative complexity. This will improve the overall value for money and ensure as much of the cost of the schemes as possible goes towards delivery.

A reformed domestic supplier obligation (ECO) from April 2017 will upgrade the energy efficiency of over 200,000 homes per year for the 5 years to 2022, tackling the root cause of fuel poverty. Our extension of the Warm Home Discount to 2020/21 at current levels of £320m per annum will also help vulnerable households with their energy bills.

Together through ECO and Warm Home Discount we will be spending nearly £1 billion a year helping with energy bills. We expect to increase our spending focused on fuel poverty from April 2017 and again in April 2018.

We intend to focus our efforts through ECO and WHD more effectively on the fuel poor, and will be consulting on our future approach in the forthcoming months.

Footnotes:

[1] *Supporting costs by measure type are not available, so it is not possible to provide spend on insulation measures specifically.*

[2] *Source: Green Deal and ECO stats*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/household-energy-efficiency-national-statistics-headline-release-february-2016>

[3] *Please note that as CERT ran from April 2008 – December 2012, and CESP from Sept 2009 – December 2012, these include some spend prior to 2010.*

[4] *Source CERT Evaluation*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-the-carbon-emissions-reduction-target-and-community-energy-saving-programme>
(figures adjusted for inflation)

[5] *Figures may not add up to £3.6bn due to rounding.*

[6] *Estimated ECO spend (April 2015- March 2017), as reported Future of the energy supplier obligation IA*

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/373650/ECO_IA_with_SoS_e-sigf_v2.pdf. *Note that suppliers over delivered against their ECO 1 targets (January 2013- March 2015), so actual spend by suppliers may be lower than estimated in the IA. Figures are adjusted for inflation.*

[7] *Supplier spend consistent with the 2015 Spending Review announcement*

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/479749/52229_Bluef_Book_PU1865_Web_Accessible.pdf (page 39).

[8] *Based on estimated Green Deal plans, Green Communities, and Green Deal Home improvement Fund spending from May 2015 to April 2020.*

18 Apr 2016 | Written questions | House of Commons | 32639

Asked by: Newlands, Gavin

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what steps she is taking to reduce the level of fuel poverty.

Answering member: Amber Rudd Department for Energy and Climate Change

A reformed domestic supplier obligation (ECO) from April 2017, which will run for 5 years, will upgrade the energy efficiency of over 200,000 homes per year tackling the root cause of fuel poverty. Our extension of the Warm Home Discount to 2020/21 at current levels of £320m per annum will also help vulnerable households with their energy bills.

We intend to focus our efforts through ECO and the Warm Home Discount more effectively on the fuel poor, and will be consulting on our future approach in the spring.

07 Jan 2016 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 902839

Asked by: Thomas-Symonds, Nick

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department has taken to seek the views of pensioners on (a) his Department's policies and (b) winter fuel allowance since the closure of the UK Advisory Forum on Ageing.

Answering member: Justin Tomlinson | Department for Work and Pensions

The UK Advisory Forum on Ageing closed on 2nd December 2015. Since then the Department has continued to work with older people, employers, the financial services industry and other stakeholders on issues such as simplifying automatic enrolment into workplace pensions, the introduction of the new State Pension, and fuller working lives. For example, the Department has conducted structured research into the attitudes of people over 50 to fuller working lives, the new State Pension, and Class 3A Voluntary National Insurance Contributions. The Department is also working with the Money Matters Working Group of the Age Action Alliance on increasing take-up of benefits by older people, and especially take-up of Pension Credit.

With specific regard to the Winter Fuel Payment, the Government has committed to help provide dignity and security in retirement by protecting it and other pensioner benefits, such as free bus passes, for the lifetime of this Parliament. Where issues arise linked to older people and fuel poverty, both the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Energy and Climate Change are active members of the Safe, Warm Homes Working Group of the Age Action Alliance, which is a valuable forum for both developing both policy and innovative ways of delivering support and advice to older people.

21 Dec 2015 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 19732

Asked by: Lewis, Clive

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, with reference to chart 4.2 of the Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics Report 2015, published by her Department on 28 May 2015, what proportion of the

(a) local authority, (b) owner-occupied, (c) private rented and (d) housing association households are in fuel poverty.

Answering member: Andrea Leadsom | Department for Energy and Climate Change

The number and proportion of fuel poor households in England by tenure are shown below:

The number and proportion of fuel poor households in England by tenure

Tenure	Local Authority	Owner occupied	Private Rented	Housing Association
2003 - Number of fuel poor households (000s)	496	1,220	483	215
2003 - Proportion of households (%)	21	8	25	14
2013 - Number of fuel poor households (000s)	193	1,104	816	234
2013 - Proportion of households (%)	12	8	19	10

23 Nov 2015 | House of Commons | 15089

Asked by: Ms Karin Smyth

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many children were living in households classed as being in fuel poverty in (a) Bristol South constituency, (b) Bristol, (c) the South West and (d) England in each year since 2010?

Answering member: Andrea Leadsom | Department for Energy and Climate Change

Fuel poverty is measured at the household level rather than the individual level and detailed data on the age of household occupants is not available at the sub-regional level.

The table below shows the number of fuel poor households which contain at least one child under the age of 16 in (a) England and (b) the South West, in each year since 2010.

Number and proportion of fuel poor households with at least one child under 16

	England		South West	
	(000s)	%	(000s)	%
2013	1064	45	115	42
2012	1101	47	77	35
2011	1029	42	74	33
2010	988	40	74	29

Government is committed to supporting fuel poor households in line with our fuel poverty obligations. For example, the Energy Company Obligation supports around 260,000 households per year on low incomes or in low income areas with insulation and heating measures to bring their bills down. Further, the Warm Home Discount provided support to over 2 million low income households with £140 discounts on their electricity bill last winter.

18 Jun 2015 | House of Commons | W900406

Asked by: Seema Kennedy

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what steps she is taking to ensure that the fuel poverty strategy benefits people living in park homes.

Answering member: Andrea Leadsom | Department for Energy and Climate Change

The Government will be guided by the fuel poverty strategy published in March 2015 which sets out a clear policy of working towards improving energy efficiency standards across the English housing stock, including in the homes of the fuel poor. The strategy highlighted a concern relating to issues faced by park home residents in keeping their homes warm. Therefore, the Government is undertaking further research and working with stakeholders to understand the drivers of fuel poverty in park homes.

DECC has also been ensuring park homes residents are able to benefit from our existing schemes targeted at the fuel poor such as the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and Warm Home Discount (WHD).

21 Jul 2015 | House of Commons | W7569

Debates

Adjournment Debate

Fuel poverty

[HC Deb 14 March 2017c368-374](#)

Extract

[...]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Jesse Norman)

What a delight it is, Mr Deputy Speaker, to see you in the Chair. I thank my hon. Friend the Member for Sutton and Cheam (Paul Scully) for selecting such an important issue for debate this evening. I am very grateful to him not just for his interest in fuel poverty, but for his leadership in hosting a discussion in the Palace of Westminster next week. You may have detected, Mr Deputy Speaker, the subtle way in which he wove in the details of the time and place into his speech on how we can support efforts to tackle fuel poverty in the UK.

The Government recognise that fuel poverty is a significant issue, affecting households throughout the United Kingdom, as the Committee on Fuel Poverty rightly highlighted in its 2016 report. I massively welcome the insight and challenge to Government that the committee brings. I also welcome the fact that it can help us, by those means, to deliver a suite of solutions for those who need help that is as effective as possible. Only this morning, I spoke to David Blakemore, the chair of the committee since November last year, and I look forward to working with him and the committee over the coming years.

As my hon. Friend has said, fuel poverty is measured in England by the low income, high costs indicator. According to that indicator, a household is fuel poor if it has an income below the poverty line and, at the same time, higher than typical energy costs. It is a relative indicator that is essentially a balance of two averages. It is fair to say that the total number of households living in fuel poverty has been relatively static over the past few years. However, there has been a fall over time between 2010, when there were just under 2.5 million households in fuel poverty in England—as my hon. Friend will know, this is a devolved matter—and 2014, when the latest official statistics record 2.38 million households. Those households face an average fuel poverty gap of some £371, which is itself a measure of the severity of the problem.

Perhaps I can assure my hon. Friend that, as he has rightly acknowledged, the Government are committed to helping households in fuel poverty, or on lower incomes and living in homes that are expensive to heat. I congratulate him on rightly highlighting the broader measures that the Government have taken in recent years by raising income tax thresholds and introducing the national living wage. Both those things are, at the broadest level, important contributions to solving the problem. He also rightly focused on the significant public concerns about recent announcements of price increases by the energy suppliers. I am glad that, as a result of action by the Competition and Markets Authority, in February this year Ofgem announced details of a cap on the amount that suppliers can charge prepayment meter customers. This will take effect from April and will help to protect those customers from high energy costs.

Energy suppliers have delivered nearly 700,000 measures in 500,000 low-income and vulnerable households since the energy company obligation began in 2013. That is part of a total of some 1.6 million homes that have been improved over that period, but this Government are going further to take action to tackle the root cause of fuel poverty, recognising that improving household energy efficiency is the most sustainable long-term solution to tackling the problem.

Next week, the Electricity and Gas (Energy Company Obligation) (Amendment) Order 2017 will be debated in both houses to extend the scheme from 1 April 2017 to 30 September 2018. The measure will seek to reform ECO so that 70% of the support under the scheme will now be directed at low-income homes. That represents an increase from £310 million to £450 million a year that will be invested in improving the energy efficiency of homes that most need support. We expect that the reformed ECO will improve about 500,000 homes over the coming 18 months, and the Government have made a commitment to insulate 1 million homes over the life of this Parliament.

Recognising the fact that people also need immediate support with energy bills, we also have in place the warm home discount, which my hon. Friend recognised. The scheme provides more than 2 million low-income and vulnerable households with a £140 rebate off their energy bill each winter, when temperatures are lowest and bills highest. Together, the schemes mean that there will be at least £770 million of

support for low-income and vulnerable consumers over the period 2017-18.

In my intervention on the hon. Member for Sutton and Cheam (Paul Scully), who introduced the debate, I mentioned having a co-ordinated plan across the whole of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland so that we can collectively—in all the regions—take on the energy companies and work together. Has the Minister given any thought to how we could progress that?

As I have said, this is a devolved matter, so that does not specifically bear on it. However, on the wider question of whether there is scope for more joined-up thinking, I would absolutely welcome the hon. Gentleman's suggestions, or indeed suggestions from the Northern Ireland Executive, as to how those things could be done, and we would give them a very warm interrogation. I am not sure what would come out—we would have to see the suggestions—but the warmth and the interest from our side are certainly there.

I should add that the role of regulation will also be important as we take action to ensure that tenants can live in a home that keeps them comfortably warm. The private rented sector regulations will target the least efficient, F and G-rated properties from 2018 by requiring landlords to improve those properties to at least a band E, unless a valid exemption applies. My Department is considering options for the implementation of the regulations, with a view to ensuring they can be implemented effectively by April 2018.

Of course, there is more work to be done. One important area will be to improve targeting on the households most in need—a topic my hon. Friend rightly raised. The Digital Economy Bill, which is going through Parliament, will be important in that regard, as it will make available better data on householders and properties. That, in turn, will reduce the costs obligated suppliers face in identifying households that are most in need, and it will allow more measures to be installed for the same cost.

I hope my hon. Friend will agree that the Government are taking this matter with the appropriate level of seriousness, but what I have described are all Government-led actions, whereas fuel poverty is a problem for all of society, and the Government cannot tackle it alone, as he rightly said. That is why partnership is a key theme of the fuel poverty strategy. It is important for the Government to play a leadership role, but it is also important for them to work alongside initiatives from local government, businesses, individuals and the charitable sector. Only by making the most of the varied skills and resources of each of these partners—the collective resources of society as a whole—can we collaboratively tackle the long-term social problems of fuel poverty.

In that context, I welcome the Fuel the Change initiative, which is due to be launched next week, and which my hon. Friend mentioned. I am looking forward to hearing the outcomes from the discussion led by my hon. Friend and Baroness Verma of how businesses can support the fight to tackle fuel poverty in the UK. This debate, and my colleague's

excellent speech this evening, are important contributions to that further conversation.

Westminster Hall Debate

Fuel Poverty

[HC Deb 03 Feb 2016 605 cc377-401WH](#)

Westminster Hall Debate

Fuel Poverty

[HC Deb 24 Nov 2015 cc353-370WH](#)

Note: Digital debate took place on Money Saving Expert.

Adjournment Debate

Domestic Oil Purchasing Syndicates

[HC Deb 07 Dec 2015 cc830-8](#)

Adjournment Debate

Pre-payment Meters

[HC Deb 01 Dec 2015 | cc311-320](#)

Westminster Hall Debate

Energy Policy and Living Standards

[10 Dec 2014 589 cc353-362WH](#)

Westminster Hall Debate

Domestic Energy Efficiency

[21 Oct 2014 586 cc228-235WH](#)

Select Committees

Energy and Climate Change Committee

Oral evidence: [Home energy efficiency and demand reduction, HC 552](#)
19 January 2016

Oral evidence: [Home energy efficiency and demand reduction](#), HC 552
8 December 2015

Oral evidence: [Home Energy Efficiency and Demand Reduction](#), HC 552
17 November 2015

Oral evidence: [Home Energy Efficiency and Demand Reduction](#), HC 552
3 November 2015

Early Day Motions

[FUEL POVERTY IN WESTMORLAND AND LONSDALE](#)

That this House recognises that there are 4,469 households across Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency living in fuel poverty; acknowledges the hardship and suffering this causes; regrets that so few residents have benefitted from the main national energy efficiency programme; and calls on the Government to introduce a new Warmer Homes, Cheaper Energy insulation scheme to target support at those households living in fuel poverty.

07 Mar 2017 | House of Commons | 1029 (session 2016-17)

[CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY REPORT ON PREPAYMENT METERS](#)

That this House welcomes the new report, *The Poor Pay More*, published by Christians Against Poverty, a charity which helps thousands of people each year struggling with unmanageable debt; acknowledges the report's conclusion that people using pre-payment meters (PPMs), which are used by 39 per cent of CAP's clients, are being forced to pay more on their energy bills because they are unable to access the same tariffs as people who pay their energy bills by credit, and that there are 266,000 households in arrears on their PPM who will self-limit their energy use this winter; endorses the report's recommendations, particularly that PPM users should access the same tariffs as monthly direct debit customers, that accountability structures that place a responsibility on energy suppliers to act on those who self-disconnect should be established, and that awareness about standing charges amongst consumers should be raised; and therefore encourages the Government to pursue reform in this area and support vulnerable people who use PPMs.

!4 December 2015 House of Commons | 865 (session 2015-16)

[WARM HOME DISCOUNT SCHEME - EXCLUSION OF NORTHERN IRELAND](#)

That this House notes with concern the exclusion of pensioners resident in Northern Ireland from the Warm Home Discount Scheme since its inception in 2011; recalls that the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), in its Fuel Poverty Statistics Methodology and User Manual, described fuel poverty as a partially-devolved matter and has stated that the purpose of the Warm Home Discount Scheme is to reduce fuel poverty in the UK; acknowledges that, despite having high levels of fuel poverty amongst pensioners, Northern Ireland is the only region of the UK that is excluded from the scheme; further notes the strong case being made by Age Sector Platform reflecting a Pensioners' Parliament resolution on these issues; and calls on ministers in DECC to enter into discussions with the Northern Ireland Executive in order to agree the extension of this important scheme so that pensioners in Northern Ireland can enjoy the benefits of this annual rebate on the cost of household energy bills.

18 Nov 2015 House of Commons | 721 (session 2015-16)

OUR POWER ENERGY

That this House welcomes the establishment of Our Power Energy, the first UK energy company to operate on a non-profit distribution basis, which hopes to reduce bills to customers by as much as 10 per cent; recognises that Our Power Energy has been founded by 35 organisations, including many of Scotland's housing associations, and has been supported by £2.5 million from the Scottish Government and a further £1 million from Social Investment Scotland; and, given that fuel poverty currently sits at its highest level in a decade and energy bills have risen by seven per cent between 2012 and 2013, looks forward to Our Power Energy starting to trade later this year in direct competition with the Big Six energy suppliers.

16 Jul 2015 | House of Commons | 323 (session 2015-16)

ENDING COLD HOMES

That this House welcomes the *Ending Cold Homes: Affordable Warmth Manifesto* launched by the End Fuel Poverty Coalition, an alliance of over 50 poverty, environmental and consumer groups, trade unions and other civil society organisations; supports the Manifesto's core aim of ending the misery of fuel poverty in the UK; further supports the six key pledges set out in the Manifesto: to improve the energy efficiency standards of all low income homes to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C by 2025, to make energy efficiency a national infrastructure priority, to implement a cross-departmental fuel poverty strategy, to use trusted agencies and organisations, such as local authorities, to improve homes and encourage health and social workers to refer people for home improvements, to require fuel companies to provide a better deal for low income households, with rebates on fuel bills to all low income consumers and to ensure employment and income policies provide a sufficient income to pay fuel bills and maintain a good standard of living; and therefore urges current and future governments to support the Affordable Warmth Manifesto and take immediate action on fuel poverty to improve the quality of millions of people's lives across the UK.

17 Dec 2014 | House of Commons | 643 (session 2014-15)

7. Further Reading and Useful Links

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)
[*Energy Company Obligation: Help to Heat April 2017 To September 2018*](#) January 2017 and [*Impact assessment*](#) January 2017

Committee on Fuel Poverty
[*A report on initial positions*](#)
19 September 2016

[*Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics Report 2016: England*](#),
30 June 2016

Committee in Climate Change
[*Energy Prices and Bills Report 2017*](#)
16 March 2017

National Energy Action
[*In from the Cold: The funding gap for non-gas fuel poor homes under ECO and a proposal to fill it*](#)
13 February 2017

National Audit Office
[*Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation*](#)
13 April 2016

Energy and Climate Change Committee Inquiry
[*Home energy efficiency and demand reduction*](#)
Written evidence submitted by the [National Energy Action](#) (HEE0031)
October 2015

Energy and Climate Change Committee
[*Energy Prices, Profits and Poverty: Government and Ofgem Responses to the Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2013–14*](#)
Fifth Special Report of Session 2013–14, HC 717, 10 October 2013

Energy and Climate Change Committee
[*Energy Prices, Profits and Poverty*](#)
Fifth Report of Session 2013–14, 29 July 2013
Volume I and Volume II

Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion
[*Getting the measure of fuel poverty: Final Report of the Fuel Poverty Review*](#)
John Hills
CASE Report 77, 22 March 2012

House of Commons Library Briefing papers

ECO, the Energy Company Obligation

14 December 2015

Warm Home Discount

5 May 2016

Energy Saving Advice Service [Website](#)

Home Energy Scotland [Website](#)

Energy UK [Fuel poverty](#)

DEBATE PACK

Number CDP 2017/0098
Debate day 21 March 2017

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