

Energy theme: Evidence Sources and Options

Definition: Fuel poverty is the condition by which a household is unable to afford to heat (or cool) their home to an adequate temperature (End Fuel Poverty campaign).

National Measure: Fuel poverty in England is measured using the Low Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) indicator. Under this indicator, a household is considered to be fuel poor if:

- they are living in a property with a fuel poverty energy efficiency rating of band D or below

and

- when they spend the required amount to heat their home, they are left with a residual income below the official poverty line

Before this recent revision you were considered in fuel poverty if you spent +10% on your disposable income on energy.

Drivers: There are three primary drivers of fuel poverty:

- Income - lower income means more likelihood of financial struggle when heating homes.
- Unit costs of fuel – increasing cost of energy means more households struggle to adequately heat their homes.
- Household energy consumption - Energy inefficient properties require people to need more energy to adequately heat their homes, increasing their energy consumption and therefore energy costs.

Cause	Issue	Evidence	Solutions? (No. From list below)
Rising energy prices	Fuel Poverty	<p>Department for Energy Security and Net Zero- Between the 2021 and 2022 fuel poverty datasets gas & electricity prices rose by 45 per cent in real terms.</p> <p>Datawand: Approximately 12,099 households in Wandsworth are in fuel poverty (2020) - there are parts of the borough where almost a quarter of households are fuel poor. Areas with higher concentrations of fuel-poor households include Tooting, Furzedown, Roehampton, Latchmere and Patmore.</p> <p>Testimony from Wandsworth Older Peoples Forum, Wandsworth Citizens Advice, CREW.</p>	
Low EPC rating –	Higher energy bills - struggling residents unable to pay	<p>Witness Testimony from Giles Read- EPC ratings are flawed, often not reflective of the issue</p> <p>Poor installation of energy efficiency measures (CREW, Thinking Works)</p> <p>Datawand: Wandsworth Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Ratings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 63,500 low energy efficiency homes across Wandsworth • At least 40% of homes in the borough have low energy efficiency: (16,800 rated and 46,700 rated D), with high concentration areas: Balham, Wandsworth Town, and Lavender. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,700 low efficiency homes (D-G) where household income is below £30,000 (High concentration areas in Shaftesbury & Queenstown, Roehampton, Tooting Bec, Furzedown, Battersea Park and Falconbrook) • 2,700 Low-efficiency (D-G) private rented or owner-occupied homes with household income <£30,000 across Wandsworth • Low income, energy inefficient households might have the additional burden of increasing private rents and mortgage repayments – the distribution of these households is similar to the above. 	
Damp & mould	Health issues Social issues Cost of repair	<p>Case studies from Wandsworth Citizens Advice Testimony from housing association Commission survey responses</p> <p>Research (NEA) - At least 10,000 people die each year due to a cold home, while treatment costs the NHS around £860 million in England alone</p>	

Long term ideas for further development

1. **Bulk Purchasing scheme:** Research and review options for bulk purchasing schemes. For example, looking into best practice such as the Leicestershire group buying for solar, reviewing buying clubs and looking at private sector purchasing power. Review options, including collective switches to green tariffs, collective LED purchases and collective draught excluder packs. There are many benefits to this approach including cheaper pricing can get those hesitant involved, raises the climate action profile and contributes to a sense of collective action and community spirit.
 - a. Solar Together Leicestershire is an innovative new scheme offering high-quality solar photovoltaic (PV) panels and battery storage. It is a group-buying scheme, which brings Leicestershire households together to get high-quality solar panels at a competitive price, helping you through the process and keeping you informed at every stage. (see resource)
2. **Social Tariffs approach:** Research and review social tariffs approach to provide more targeted support which could be evidenced to be more progressive and more cost-effective in the longer term. (See NEA article on social tariff)
3. **Demand Flexibility Service:** which has been developed to allow the electricity system operator to access additional flexibility when national demand is at its highest.
4. **Examine insurance policy approach** which involves targeted awareness raising for those approaching retirement to do specific energy efficiency improvements to ensure lowers bills during retirement.
5. **Landlord schemes:** Consider approaches where landlords pay their fair share (using ETHER data/Wandsworth data sets)
6. **Low carbon neighbourhoods.**
7. **Council quality mark:** Consider the development of a quality mark from the council, having an awards system on energy efficiency.

Other:

8. **Sunderland boiler prescribing service** -Pilot project in Sunderland hailed a success with GP and outpatient visits reduced by a third and heating bills cut by £30 a month Family doctors prescribing double glazing and loft insulation for patients living in cold, damp homes. The pilot project in Sunderland found GP and outpatient visits plummeted by a third after patients' homes were made warmer and cheaper to heat to the tune of hundreds of pounds a year. The impact of cold weather on health is estimated to [cost the NHS £1.5bn a year](#) and over [18,000 people died prematurely last winter](#). However, energy bills have soared in recent years, leaving millions of people in fuel poverty and unable to heat their homes properly.
9. **Energy Catapult – Warm Home Prescription** is helping vulnerable people with both cold-sensitive health conditions and low incomes, to stay warm and well at home, and out of hospital – by paying their energy bills over winter. This pilot study aims to determine whether it is more cost-effective overall to help pay the heating costs of vulnerable people than it is to pay for their health care if they fall ill – saving the NHS money and reducing pressure on frontline staff. An additional benefit of Warm Home Prescription is the ability to identify “hard to reach” homes that are eligible for funding to improve insulation and energy efficiency, cutting running costs and CO2 in the longer term (e.g. via ECO).
10. **London Rebuilding Society**- not for profit equity release
11. **GLA Community Energy**
12. **Telford and Wrekin Energy Guide**
13. **Portsmouth Switched On** – service offer helping through energy and money saving service, first time gas central heating offer, emergency boiler replacement etc.
14. **Norfolk county council package**
15. **Lancashire affordable warmth scheme**
16. **Greater Manchester funding project**