



UK Government

Review of the 2021 Fuel Poverty Strategy

Summary of responses and government
response to consultation



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Overview of responses received

Government consulted between 7 February 2025 and 4 April 2025 on the government's proposals to update the Fuel Poverty Strategy for England. Officials also attended several stakeholder meetings.

This document summarises the key themes that emerged from each consultation question and explains how they have informed drafting of the updated Fuel Poverty Strategy for England.

There were 65 responses received via CitizenSpace, and a further 67 replies received as correspondence to the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ). The total number of responses was 132. Respondents came from varied backgrounds, including energy companies, charities, local authorities and academics.

All responses to this public consultation have been recorded and analysed. Below each question we have provided a summary of the main themes raised. Cross-cutting issues which appeared in multiple questions were addressed under the most relevant question.

Not all respondents answered every question, with some choosing to respond only to specific ones. As a result, the number of responses varied significantly across questions. We have noted the number of responses each question received. For questions that called for a yes or no answer, we have also included the percentage of respondents who answered yes or no.

Government appreciates the effort and time put into the views expressed by the range of contributors, including those who engaged in the stakeholder meetings, and have carefully considered all views expressed.

Government response

The fuel poverty target

This section of the consultation discussed retaining the existing fuel poverty target and 2030 target date as well as seeking views on alternative targets which could better reflect energy affordability and/or the planned updates to energy performance certificate (EPC) metrics.

Retaining the 2030 target

1. Should the 2030 fuel poverty target be retained? Please explain your reasoning

Summary of responses

Responses: 100

Yes: 90 (90%)

No: 10 (10%)

There were 100 responses to Question One. Of these, 90% supported retaining the current 2030 fuel poverty target. Many respondents in favour of retaining the current target acknowledged the challenges of achieving it. However, 22% argued that the challenge should push government to be more ambitious in meeting the 2030 target. They argued that amending the target or timeline could be seen as deprioritising fuel poverty.

20% of those in favour of retaining the current target highlighted how addressing fuel poverty supports many government missions. The most frequently cited benefit was improved health outcomes, as living in a warmer home would reduce the cost burden on the NHS. Respondents also argued that addressing fuel poverty through energy efficiency upgrades would improve economic growth and align with the Clean Power 2030 mission.

Respondents stated that retaining the target also provides greater certainty for the supply chain, with some arguing that retaining the target would provide an important market signal which would ensure continued momentum to make progress towards the target. Retaining the target would also demonstrate government's commitment to addressing the structural causes of fuel poverty by making homes more energy efficient.

While respondents were overwhelmingly in favour of retaining the current target, many also highlighted the potential to reform it prior to 2030. 11% of those in favour of retaining the current target supported reforming the target to align with the updated Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) framework being introduced in 2026, subject to consultation.

10% of respondents argued that the target should be changed. The main reasons given were that meeting the target in the next 5 years is an unrealistic goal and a more ambitious, but realistic, target should be set in its place. These respondents also highlighted that households rated an EPC A-C are ignored by the current target, despite facing energy affordability challenges. This fed into a wider critique of the current EPC system which these stakeholders viewed as flawed.

Government response

In line with the majority view of stakeholders, the statutory fuel poverty target will be retained. This government will accelerate progress towards this target; the updated fuel poverty strategy sets out a policy plan which aims to lift around 1 million households out of fuel poverty by 2030.

Alleviating fuel poverty remains a key priority, and retaining the current target reinforces governments commitment to this. We believe that the most sustainable approach to alleviating fuel poverty is through improving the energy efficiency of homes. This not only supports households directly but also contributes to broader government objectives by reducing the cost burden on the NHS and contributing to economic growth.

As a result of the inherited position with 2.7 million households living in fuel poverty this will mean that fuel poverty remains at an unacceptable level, so 2030 cannot be the end goal. We are therefore committing to consult within this Parliament on a new statutory fuel poverty target to succeed the 2030 target.

Alternative objective

2. What are your views on an alternative fuel poverty target objective and what this objective should be?

Summary of responses

There were 81 responses and considerable diversity in the views of what an alternative fuel poverty target objective should be, resulting in no overall consensus. Many responses included more than one alternative objective resulting in one answer sometimes applying across several categories.

43% of respondents were supportive of the consultation's proposal to include an additional affordability-based indicator alongside the Low Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) metric (further details on respondents' views on an affordability indicator can be found in the summary of responses to Question 4). This was the most common recommendation for an alternative fuel poverty target objective. The primary reason for supporting the inclusion of an additional affordability indicator was that the current target and LILEE metric are not sufficiently sensitive enough to energy affordability and that EPC A-C homes are excluded from being considered fuel poor.

23% of respondents suggested that the fuel poverty target should be updated to align with the reformed EPC framework. Of these, 78% either argued that the target should be based on the updated cost metric up to 2030 or did not specify which metrics the target should align with. The remaining 22% argued that the target should adopt a multi-metric approach.

The rest of the responses to this question covered a range of alternative fuel poverty objectives. Many of these responses were focused on expanding the focus of fuel poverty beyond the current definition and energy affordability considerations. 11% argued that the fuel poverty objective needs to include a greater focus on decarbonisation to ensure that fuel poor households are early beneficiaries of the transition to net zero. 6% suggested that the target objective needs to account for the beneficial health impacts to a greater extent.

Government response

The government is committed to retaining the 2030 fuel poverty target and accelerating progress towards it over the next 5 years.

The fuel poverty target has a clear focus on improving the energy efficiency of fuel poor homes. While we know that other factors can affect how much it costs to keep warm, such as high energy prices and household incomes, tackling the structural issue of low income households living in the poorest quality housing remains the most effective and sustainable route to alleviating fuel poverty.

The updated fuel poverty strategy sets out a policy plan to accelerate progress towards the target, aiming to lift around 1 million households out of fuel poverty through a mix of interventions to improve energy performance and reduce energy costs.

Objective date

3. What are your views on the objective date? We welcome views on the target date for the current 2030 objective and any objective date for any alternative target which could replace or succeed the 2030 target.

Summary of responses

There were 77 responses to this question with 83% supporting the retention of the 2030 target date. 10% supported revising and delaying the target but did not specify a new timeline and 4% proposed pushing the deadline back to 2035. Several reasons were provided for retaining the target date, the most common reason was that retaining the objective date demonstrates that government still views tackling fuel poverty as a priority, given the imminent timeframe. Respondents felt that delaying the target date sends the wrong signal.

Of the 83% that supported retaining the 2030 target date, 31% stated that while the date should be retained, government should also commit to later targets beyond 2030. These respondents argued that fuel poverty will continue to exist beyond 2030, and that government will need to continue to provide support. Respondents suggested a range of objectives for the longer term. The most popular response (15%) was that any longer-term objective and objective date should focus on decarbonisation and align with government's net zero goals. 10% argued that the objective should take a more holistic approach, considering both energy efficiency and energy affordability.

Government response

Government is committed to retaining the 2030 fuel poverty target and believes that 2030 is a key legal milestone driving progress in the short term.

Government recognise that there will still be households living in fuel poverty in 2030 and that support will still be needed beyond this date. As such, within this Parliament, government will develop and consult on a future fuel poverty target. This consultation will consider the views to this question, such as whether a future fuel poverty target should align with net zero.

Measuring fuel poverty

This section of the consultation discussed the government's proposal to retain the Low Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) metric as the official measure of fuel poverty, while exploring an additional affordability indicator to better reflect the impact of energy prices on low-income households.

Low Income Low Energy Efficiency

4. What are your views on:

a: retaining the Low Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) metric as a measure of structural fuel poverty and as the official measure of progress to the statutory fuel poverty target in England?

b: whether to adopt an additional indicator to monitor the impact of energy prices on the affordability of energy?

c: the form of an energy affordability indicator, including whether this should include an income constraint and considerations on the basis on which to determine unaffordable energy requirements?

Summary of responses

In response to question a, 89% of respondents were in favour of retaining the LILEE metric alongside the introduction of a new affordability indicator. 11% of respondents were opposed to retaining the LILEE metric.

Respondents in favour of retaining the LILEE metric highlighted its value in measuring structural fuel poverty and tracking progress towards improving the energy efficiency of homes. However, many also stressed the need for an additional affordability indicator to better capture the impact of rising energy prices on household fuel poverty. Several respondents also raised concerns that the LILEE metric alone does not capture all households experiencing fuel poverty, particularly those living in more energy efficient properties (EPC Bands A–C) who nonetheless face high energy costs relative to their income.

Of those who opposed retaining the LILEE metric, many argued that a sole focus on affordability would be more appropriate in the current context. These respondents noted that LILEE does not adequately reflect changes in energy prices or actual energy consumption patterns, particularly after housing costs are taken into account. They also raised concerns that LILEE fails to sufficiently capture vulnerability factors such as disability and health conditions, the wider medical impacts of fuel poverty, and pointed to the limitations of the energy efficiency ratings, Energy Performance Certificate and Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP), on which the LILEE measure is based.

In response to question b, 96% of respondents supported the adoption of an additional indicator to monitor energy affordability and many respondents stressed that the affordability of energy is now a fundamental component of understanding and addressing fuel poverty, particularly given recent increases in energy prices and broader cost of living pressures. There

was a strong view that incorporating an affordability measure would ensure that the monitoring framework more accurately reflects the lived experiences of households in fuel poverty.

In response to question c, 40% of respondents agreed that any energy affordability indicator should include an income constraint, to ensure that it captures low-income households who are disproportionately affected by high energy costs. 57% of respondents were either neutral or unclear, while 3% opposed the inclusion of an income constraint.

A number of common themes emerged across responses to all parts of this question. Respondents highlighted the impact of energy price volatility and wider inflationary pressures on household budgets, the need to recognise regional variations in energy costs and consumption patterns, particularly for rural and off-gas grid households, and the vulnerability of specific groups such as older people, households with young children, and those with disabilities or long-term health conditions. Respondents also raised concerns about the accuracy and reliability of EPC and SAP ratings in assessing energy efficiency and emphasised the wider health impacts of living in cold homes, including increased pressure on NHS services. There was a view that any future affordability measure should seek to account for actual household energy consumption requirements/usage, rather than relying solely on modelled energy usage.

Government response

Following consideration of the feedback received, we will retain the LILEE metric as the official measure of structural fuel poverty and for statutory reporting against the 2030 fuel poverty target. Government acknowledges that LILEE has a specific focus on low income households living in D-G rated homes and is therefore introducing the monitoring of energy affordability, by measuring average required energy costs as a proportion of household income. This aims to monitor the impact of energy prices for both all households and low income households and inform whether interventions are required.

Monitoring energy affordability will enable us to recognise a broader cohort of households struggling with energy costs. We will monitor the impact of energy affordability across all households, with a particular focus on low income households, and we will report annually on average required energy costs as a proportion of household income (after housing costs). Fuel poverty statistics are constructed using modelled required energy costs for households to be heated to a standard level. This avoids the issue of fuel poverty statistics under-representing fuel poverty by using the energy costs of households who under-heat their homes and this approach will also be applied to the way in which we monitor affordability.

Strategic principles

This section of the consultation discussed the four strategic principles introduced in the 2021 strategy and considered whether these principles should be carried forward, whether any changes were appropriate and asked for views on whether the strategy should include any additional principles.

Supporting the worst homes

5. What are your views on adapting or implementing the 'Worst First' principle, in order to maximise the number of fuel poor homes brought to Band C while ensuring that the worst homes are not left behind?

Summary of responses

There were 95 responses of which 65 respondents explicitly stated their stance on the worst first principle. 66% supported it, 32% favoured adapting it, and 2% disagreed with it.

Overall, responses emphasised the need to link fuel poverty to lived experiences rather than solely to property characteristics or EPC ratings. Many also highlighted that measures to address fuel poverty should not follow a one-size-fits-all approach due to the diversity of the UK's housing stock, which varies significantly by age, type and condition across different regions.

Those who supported the worst first principle strongly emphasised the need to prioritise groups typically at higher risk of the negative impacts of fuel poverty, including but not limited to individuals with disabilities or medical conditions, carers, single parent households, off-gas households, those using prepayment meters, renters, young households, and financially vulnerable households.

Several responses in favour of the principle also highlighted the importance of cost-effective interventions, however opinions differed on the balance between breadth and depth of support. While 14% of respondents stated that deep retrofits significantly improve individual properties and offer the most cost-effective approach in the long run, 57% of respondents favoured a broader approach spreading improvements across more homes. 29% recognised the importance of both. Concerns were raised about current schemes such as ECO4, which focused heavily on deep retrofits.

Respondents who suggested adapting the worst first principle gave a range of suggestions including expanding the principle to include households in EPC Band D, focusing on vulnerable groups and considering affordability alongside energy efficiency. 10% of respondents who supported adapting the principle were in favour of shifting from a property-by-property approach to an area-based approach, allowing local authorities to target regions with high fuel poverty and streamline delivery. 38% of respondents in favour of adapting the principle specifically highlighted their views on EPC bands. Within this group, 25% emphasised the need to prioritise low-income households regardless of EPC rating, another 25% supported prioritising the worst performing homes (E, F and G) without excluding Band D.

The remaining 50% argued for Band D homes to be upgraded at scale, recognising the significant number of fuel poor households in this category.

Government response

Government recognises the importance of supporting the worst performing homes. The updated strategy reflects this feedback by adapting the 'Worst First' principle into a new approach to 'Supporting the worst homes'.

In line with the view of the 57% of stakeholders who favoured a broader approach, this principle will no longer prioritise the worst homes at the expense of those in Band D properties (where the overwhelming majority of fuel poor households reside). We are seeking to accelerate progress through ensuring the maximum number of low income households can benefit from lower bills and more energy efficient homes by 2030.

To ensure that this principle retains a focus on supporting the worst homes, supporting E, F and G rated homes is specified as a key outcome the strategy aims to achieve, with annual monitoring of progress to reduce the 462,000 fuel poor households living in E, F or G rated homes. Government views this principle as focusing on the quality of the housing stock and complementary to the vulnerability principle, which focuses on households who are most vulnerable to the impact of living in a cold home.

Cost effectiveness

6. What are your views on how we could better define or implement the cost effectiveness principle?

Summary of responses

There were 68 responses and a wide range of views and suggestions were given. 100% of the 20 respondents that gave an explicit view suggested the principle should be maintained.

Many respondents suggested the principle ought to be better defined and that a wider range of benefits should be included. 46% said that health benefits ought to be better accounted for, particularly the reduction in NHS costs from reducing the fuel poverty gap. 22% of respondents also stated benefits from better air quality and lower carbon emissions should be better accounted for. 19% of respondents also gave the view that cost effectiveness calculations should take a more long-term view, accounting for future prices, appropriate discount rates and future repair and maintenance costs. 7% said the benefits from improved education should be factored in, as well.

While many respondents recognised cost caps can be useful, 18% also voiced concern that cost caps are too restrictive to use as the only measure of cost effectiveness, as they disincentivise higher cost measures which could be necessary to retrofit difficult-to-decarbonise homes.

There were a range of views that were given on how the fuel poverty strategy could be more cost effective. 13% gave the view that cost effectiveness should be considered on a household-by-household basis. Many relatedly emphasised the importance of a person-centric approach, with many support options unlikely to be suitable for all households. Though, there was also recognition that more tailored support could lead to higher operationalisation costs from government schemes.

Government response

In line with the majority view of stakeholders who explicitly commented, the cost effectiveness principle will be retained in the updated strategy. As reflected in the consultation responses and considering the diversity of households in fuel poverty, a uniform approach to assessing cost effectiveness is not appropriate.

The updated strategy proposes that schemes should establish cost control mechanisms which align with their specific policy objectives to ensure cost effectiveness at scheme level. We will not be able to account for all of these factors at a household level in our schemes, as this would significantly drive up their costs and create barriers for households in need of support. We will ensure that carbon, air quality, comfort and bill saving benefits continue to be accounted for in scheme value for money assessments. This will ensure consistent delivery alongside ensuring that the measures and types of households that receive treatment are value for money.

Vulnerability

7. What are your views on how we could better define or implement the vulnerability principle?

Summary of responses

Overall, the 87 responses received emphasised the importance of a clear, inclusive, and well-targeted definition of vulnerability to effectively address fuel poverty, and using partnership working, better data use, health sector referrals and an improved universal Priority Services Register for implementing the principle.

Of the 87 responses received, 66% of respondents that expressed a view supported either the vulnerability principle in its entirety or its individual components, such as the inclusion of health-related issues, disabilities and mental health conditions. Approximately 10% of respondents wanted to see the inclusion of households with school aged children. They highlighted that growing up in fuel poverty can lead to missing school, doing less well in exams and getting a lower paid job or being unemployed later in life. Almost 5% of respondents wanted consideration of how rural or remote a household is, as well as the inclusion of financially vulnerable households and those with a terminally ill member.

38% of respondents wanted to see improvements in the use of data when implementing the vulnerability principle. Of these, 64% called for greater sharing of health data, 27% for social care data, 18% for benefits data, and 6% for income data. 15% of respondents wanted data to be shared more freely with frontline organisations supporting fuel poor households and 12% supported greater data sharing with energy suppliers. A common theme was the need for smoother and extensive data sharing across government departments.

20% of respondents wanted to see improved referral mechanisms to help implement the vulnerability principle. Many saw greater data sharing working hand-in-hand with better referral mechanisms to allow frontline health and social care workers to refer households to further energy support. 10% of respondents wanted to see a reformed and improved Universal Priority Services Register working across multiple utilities with more accurate data, whilst 2% didn't want to see the Priority Services Register used at all due to the wide range of vulnerabilities that they currently include such as 'sense of smell'. Over 11% of respondents wanted the vulnerability principle to be more strongly embedded in government energy schemes. Of these, half called for the inclusion of specific targets to support vulnerable households. One-fifth supported greater use of professional judgement by the health sector to identify vulnerability, like the approach used in some ECO Flex routes under the Energy Company Obligation.

Government response

Government will retain the vulnerability principle in the updated fuel poverty strategy in recognition that some fuel poor households are more at risk from the impacts of living in a cold home than others. Reflecting stakeholder views, government agrees on the importance of aligning this principle with NICE NG6 guidance. As such, DESNZ will continue to engage with NICE, UKHSA and DHSC to ensure identification of vulnerable groups is based on the latest evidence.

DESNZ officials will continue to work closely with the Child Poverty Taskforce to reduce and alleviate child poverty. The fuel poverty strategy aligns with this work, and working alongside the Child Poverty Strategy we will continue to monitor outcomes related to children and fuel poverty to demonstrate the link between child poverty and fuel poverty and ensure that we tackle both issues effectively. Government recognises the increasing importance of cross government working, and referral routes. These issues are set out in Chapter 5 of the Fuel Poverty Strategy.

Sustainability

8. What are your views on how we could better define or implement the sustainability principle?

Summary of responses

There were 98 responses and overall, respondents agreed with the premise of the sustainability principle, particularly to ensure that strategy on fuel poverty and achieving net zero are complementary. Several responses suggested that this was essential to ensure that net zero was a fair transition, which enabled low-income households to be early beneficiaries.

62 respondents gave a view on the role of fabric. Of these, 53% stated that there should be a continued 'fabric first' focus to retrofit to reduce bills, energy demand and prepare housing for clean heating upgrades. A common view among respondents was to prioritise affordable warmth in the short term, with clean heating seen as a longer-term goal as part of the wider energy transition. 47% of those who expressed a view on fabric felt that building retrofit should be considered more holistically, with fabric having a role where it is cost effective, necessary and desired by the consumer. A common view here was that additional fabric is not necessary for all homes and does not need to be a barrier to the acceleration of heating decarbonisation.

46 respondents provided a view on the role of fossil fuels and clean heating. Of these, 49% thought that there should be a continued role for fossil fuel heating in fuel poverty schemes. However, most of these respondents felt that its use should be limited to specific circumstances, such as crisis situations, support for the most vulnerable households and where clean heat is not suitable or does not deliver bill savings. 27% of respondents felt there should be no continued subsidy for fossil fuels, emphasising that funding should instead support the installation of low-carbon technologies in line with net zero objectives. To enable clean heating to deliver greater bill savings for a wider cohort of households, 59% of respondents suggested that some form of intervention to reduce the price of electricity relative to gas is required.

42 respondents gave a view on the role of smart technology, with support for the potential for consumers to benefit from time of use tariffs and technologies such as solar photovoltaics and battery storage. 26% of these responses included caution that smart technologies and tariffs needed to be made more accessible to fuel poor and vulnerable groups.

Government response

The sustainability principle will be retained in the updated strategy. This principle has an increased importance given the priority to accelerate progress to both alleviate fuel poverty and achieve net zero as part of a fair transition.

Government will prioritise rooftop solar, clean heating, energy storage, flexibility, fabric and adaptation measures to make the nation's homes fit for the future. While the exact technology installed will vary, as every home is different, and innovation could mean that the technology mix changes over time, government will support measures that cut energy bills, reduce fuel poverty, improve health outcomes, and lower greenhouse gas emissions. As part of this mix of measures, fabric interventions will continue to play a prominent role in reducing heat loss.

Cleaner heating will predominantly be delivered through heat pumps and heat networks. Certain building characteristics can make some technologies more suitable than others to install. For many, a hydronic heat pump will be the most cost-effective way to electrify their heating, while for those living in denser locations like city centres, the best option is likely to be a heat network. For a small minority of homes, characteristics such as age, availability of indoor and outdoor space, planning requirements, lease restrictions, heritage status and rurality, may mean that other technologies will be more suitable. The next generation of support schemes will limit the role of fossil fuel based heating to support this transition.

Further details about our vision for UK homes can be found in Chapter 3 of the 'Fuel Poverty Strategy'.

Additional principles

9. Are there any additional principles that you think should be considered for inclusion in the new strategy?

Summary of responses

Given the nature of this question a variety of different views and suggested principles were expressed in the 59 responses, however a key theme that emerged was around the need to place consumers at the heart of the updated strategy.

12% of responses were in favour of a consumer protection principle, responses highlighted several recurring themes. Many stressed the need for stronger safeguards to ensure households receive high quality installations from qualified contractors, preventing poor workmanship and the consequences this can lead to. Respondents also emphasised the need for greater regulation and accountability, particularly for energy suppliers, to ensure fair pricing and ethical practices. Energy affordability was also a key concern, with recommendations for stronger protections against supplier disconnections, fairer management of prepayment meters and measures to prevent consumers from being penalised based on location or energy choices.

Respondents also highlighted the need for accessible consumer advice, noting that while PAS2035 standards have improved quality to some extent, it lacks enforcement around advice provision. Some suggested enforcing independent customer satisfaction surveys to monitor retrofit schemes and ensure consumer care. The importance of training and upskilling was also raised, emphasising the need for long-term funding certainty to support the development of skilled workforces. Equity and partnership working were also raised frequently, recognising the unique challenges faced by vulnerable households, rural communities and those with health conditions, as well as the need for cross-sector collaboration.

Other suggested principles include health and wellbeing (15%), affordability (10%), equity (10%), simplicity (8%) and fairness (5%).

Government response

Protecting consumers is a top priority, and government recognises the importance of having measures in place to ensure that households receive high-quality work from properly qualified contractors. In our consultation, 12% of respondents supported a consumer protection principle highlighting the need for stronger safeguards, greater regulation and accountability, and improved protections for energy affordability.

Following consideration of this feedback, alongside further policy development and stakeholder engagement, we will introduce a new 'consumer protection' principle. This reinforces our commitment to embedding consumer protection and choice at the core of policy design and promoting fair access to support, regardless of housing type, location, or energy system.

Our new Warm Homes Agency (WHA) will support consumers as they upgrade their homes and will offer impartial advice and clear information to consumers, so they can make informed decisions with confidence.

We recognise the importance of high-quality installations and have already taken immediate action to improve the oversight of installations whilst we bring forward root and branch reforms of the wider consumer protection system. We will change the current, failed protections system to one that can command public confidence. We will consult in 2026 on options for bringing the oversight of energy efficiency and microgeneration installations for government schemes under closer government control. Consumers will be at the forefront of this approach, with clearer and more centralised oversight ensuring that they benefit from vital measures to cut bills.

Energy affordability for fuel poor households remains a concern and we are committed to addressing the energy affordability challenges faced by households. We have not added a principle around energy affordability, however the issue of energy affordability has a greater emphasis throughout the updated Fuel Poverty Strategy.

Current progress towards the target

This section of the consultation discussed progress towards the fuel poverty target and considered the ‘reasonably practicable’ aspect of the statutory objective.

Defining reasonably practicable

10. What are your views on the factors set out above which will determine what is ‘reasonably practicable’ in relation to meeting the fuel poverty target? Are there any additional factors that should be considered in the analysis of the number of homes that can achieve the target level by the target date?

Summary of responses

The majority of 75 respondents agreed with the factors set out in the consultation which determined what is ‘reasonably practicable’. 34 respondents gave an explicit view on whether they agreed with the factors proposed in the consultation. 66% of these explicitly agreed with the factors, while 34% disagreed.

Many of those who agreed with the additional factors stated they were sensible and sufficient, though many went on to discuss the importance of certain factors and how these should be addressed in implementation. Among those who explicitly disagreed, many did so because they felt certain factors should not be included. Of these, 33% opposed the inclusion of supply chain constraints, and 25% felt that targeting constraints should also be excluded.

Many respondents provided views on specific ‘reasonably practicable’ factors. 25% discussed value for money. While several respondents its inclusion, many argued that it should go beyond cost and private bill savings to also reflect wider benefits such as improvements to health and wellbeing.

21% of respondents emphasised the importance of property characteristics in determining what is reasonably practicable, with many suggesting each household should be assessed based on its unique features. Another 21% highlighted householder preferences as a key factor. Respondents noted that preferences are variable and can be influenced and called for greater government action to improve household and landlord perceptions around receiving energy efficiency measures.

16% also stressed the need to improve supply chain capability. Recommendations included government committing to long term goals to send clear market signals, investing in workforce upskilling and relaxing planning restrictions for renovation.

Concerns were also raised about households that were not deemed reasonably practicable to bring out of fuel poverty. 16% of respondents wanted to ensure these households still receive support. Suggestions included helping them reach the highest possible EPC rating, providing bill support, or offering information on future assistance.

19% of respondents expressed the term 'reasonably practicable' ought to be more clearly defined, with guidance on specific property characteristics or measures provided. Similarly, 12% called for the target to be defined by quantitative metrics such as a fixed percentage of fuel poor households or sub targets for harder to treat homes, though 5% recognised the complexity of doing this.

Government response

Government will include the factors set out in the consultation as part of the consideration around what is 'reasonably practicable' in relation to the fuel poverty target. This includes namely property characteristics, value for money, householder preferences, supply chain, targeting of support and wider drivers, such as energy prices. Among those who explicitly referenced these factors, the majority supported them. The fuel poverty strategy does not seek to distil these complex and overlapping factors into a percentage of homes that are reasonably practicable to upgrade by 2030. However, government has included a forecast to 2030 to build consensus over anticipated outcomes based upon current policies.

We will ensure that our conception of value for money accounts for a holistic range of benefits, including health and carbon impacts. We will also ensure that households that are not reasonably practicable to bring out of fuel poverty are not excluded from government support.

Government is committed to investing in skills and training to create a robust supply chain capable of delivering the necessary support for households. We will also prioritise improving the targeting of government schemes with improved data sharing. This is increasingly important as the percentage of fuel poor households as a proportion of the total housing stock falls over time.

Updating the policy plan to meet the target

This section of the consultation focussed on the two pillars of energy performance and energy affordability that guide the ambitions of the new strategy and considered how the diverse needs of fuel poor households in England can be supported.

Improving the energy performance of homes

11. What are your priority recommendations for an updated plan to improve the energy performance of fuel poor homes?

Summary of responses

While a variety of views were expressed in the 89 responses, some recurring themes did emerge. Overall, respondents called for simplification and consistency in the design of government schemes, higher minimum energy efficiency standards in the private rented sector, and increased funding for hard-to-treat homes.

Scheme design was a recurring theme, with 60% of respondents mentioning it. Key recommendations included simplifying schemes, introducing regional targets, building on existing schemes, and implementing new initiatives alongside consumer protections. Respondents also called for higher cost caps in schemes, particularly for fuel poor homes that are harder to treat, referencing a similar approach in Waves 2.1 and 2.2 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, which introduced separate cost caps for solid wall homes.

Many respondents emphasised the need for greater consistency in scheme design, particularly regarding standardised eligibility criteria and stable funding across schemes. Some schemes experience frequent changes, stops, and restarts making long-term planning difficult. Schemes such as the Green Homes Grant voucher scheme were launched but quickly discontinued, reinforcing the need for more consistent policies.

Respondents also called for better targeting and engagement, recommending that government improve data-sharing between public agencies to streamline access. They emphasised the need to prioritise retrofit approaches for hard-to-treat homes, alongside collaboration with key stakeholders such as Ofgem, DWP, energy suppliers, local authorities, charities, and other support groups to ensure effective implementation.

Minimum energy efficiency standards in the private rented sector were another recurring theme, mentioned in 28% of responses. Many respondents welcomed government's proposal to introduce higher minimum energy efficiency standards but stressed the need for certainty. They urged government to confirm minimum energy efficiency standards and EPC regulations as soon as possible so landlords can plan and implement the necessary improvements.

Funding and financial support was another key priority. 26% of respondents called for increased funding particularly for hard-to-treat homes, alongside a simplified, less bureaucratic bidding process.

Other recommendations included rebalancing gas and electricity prices, regulatory improvements and accreditation standards, and the creation of a National Retrofit Strategy co-produced by DESNZ, relevant public sector bodies, and industry stakeholders to ensure long-term policy commitment and market stability.

Government response

We recognise the importance of giving consumers confidence and choice when upgrading their homes. That is why a key aim of our new consumer protection principle is to improve the customer experience through better advice and information provided through our new Warm Homes Agency. The Agency will provide impartial guidance so consumers can make informed decisions with confidence.

Our Warm Homes Plan sets out how we will streamline the entire consumer journey, making home upgrades faster, simpler, and more accessible. The new Warm Homes Agency will support the delivery of the Warm Homes Plan and guide consumers through their home retrofit journey. This recognises that the UK's building decarbonisation and energy efficiency landscape is complex. The agency will work to consolidate our existing delivery landscape.

Improving targeting and engagement is a key priority, with steps being taken to strengthen data-sharing mechanisms to ensure better identification of households in need and deliver more effective interventions. More detail is set out in chapter 5 of the fuel poverty strategy.

Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) in the private rented sector were frequently referenced by respondents, and alongside the fuel poverty strategy this government has confirmed MEES regulations in the private rental sector.

Bill support

12. What are your priority recommendations for the design of the energy bill support for fuel poor households?

Summary of responses

There were 84 responses and 94% of respondents supported future energy bill support and emphasised the need to ensure households could afford the energy they needed and did not struggle to keep warm. Only a small number disagreed with energy bill support, mainly because it was seen as a short-term alternative to energy efficiency measures.

Groups identified as priorities for support included:

- those with health conditions
- low-income families
- single parents
- elderly and disabled individuals

- those with atypical payment methods (e.g. prepayment meters) or heating types (e.g. heat networks or off-gas)
- households in rural areas or in properties with low energy efficiency

There was considerable discussion about the method of support. 52% of respondents addressed this, with the most popular approach being a direct bill discount – either a fixed or unit rate discount, or a combination of both. This method was favoured for enabling automatic rebates while preserving access to innovative tariffs. A few respondents mentioned a bespoke tariff for fuel poor households.

Regarding the level of support, 24% of respondents discussed this issue. Some respondents explicitly stated that support should exceed the current Warm Home Discount. Many suggested it should be tied to need, with some referencing the fuel poverty gap. Others noted that support should track current prices, highlighting that the Warm Home Discount has not increased in line with energy prices since its inception in 2011.

There was strong agreement that support should be targeted. Most respondents believed the scope of support should extend beyond the current Warm Home Discount cohort and the potential expanded cohort recently consulted on by DESNZ. Several respondents noted that this should include a particular focus on households using medical equipment. Several responses also highlighted the need for better data matching and sharing to more precisely target vulnerable households, including through household income. Some advocated a phased approach, building on the Warm Home Discount in the short term before transitioning to a more sophisticated model, potentially a ‘social tariff’.

Government response

We remain committed to supporting vulnerable households and will continue to explore the most effective ways to do so. Work is underway to enhance data matching and sharing capabilities, to ensure better options for those most in need. Last winter, the Warm Home Discount supported 3 million households and this government is extending the scheme to an additional estimated 2.7 million low-income households this winter (2025/26). In September 2025 we consulted on the continuation of the Warm Home Discount. We plan to extend targeted energy bill support through to at least winter 2030/31, building upon the reforms to the scheme in 2025.

Many stakeholders highlighted the need for a holistic approach to affordability for vulnerable households, beyond direct bill support. We see our Clean Power Mission as the primary route to reducing energy bills and our Warm Homes Plan as vital for delivering efficiency measures to fuel poor households.

However, to ensure that vulnerable households can afford the energy they need, we are also delivering a new, more holistic approach that:

- delivers increased direct bill support through the energy system, including via the expanded WHD
- ensures that our energy market protects and supports low income and vulnerable households, working with Ofgem to ensure strengthened consumer protections
- provides health related support, such as covering costs for certain medical equipment
- uses the benefits system to ease the burden of energy bills, through measures like Cold Weather Payments and the new Crisis Resilience Fund
- increase household incomes, through our work to raise the Living Wage and introduce stronger employment rights

Supporting fuel poor households

13. What do you think are the priorities for government to support fuel poor households in accessing the energy market fairly and effectively?

Summary of responses

76 respondents answered this question and expressed a range of views on energy pricing, including tariffs and standing charges, the need for consumer protections (especially for pre-payment meter customers switching suppliers), the role of low carbon technologies and smart meters, and the importance of education and advice to help consumers understand the energy market better.

34% of respondents called for fairer pricing and tariffs, including the introduction of a social tariff. Suggestions included an automatically applied social tariff, one for households with a terminal illness, and learning from social tariffs used in other utilities such as water and broadband.

24% of respondents expressed views on standing charges, including calls to reform the charge, raise awareness of what constitutes the standing charge in bills, and remove standing charges for fuel poor households. 32% of respondents raised concerns about prepayment meters, calling for increased protections for prepayment meter customers through reforms to current practices.

20% of respondents highlighted the need for advice to help consumers navigate the energy market. This included guidance on tariffs and energy efficiency products, as well as broader education to help consumers understand their bills, energy usage, and available technologies. Some suggested this could be delivered through awareness-raising campaigns.

25% of respondents called for improved access to low carbon technologies, smart meters, and smart technologies for vulnerable and fuel poor households. This included using smart meter data to identify customers experiencing wider financial difficulties.

Other points raised included the need to ensure digitally excluded consumers are not disadvantaged by changes in the energy market, the rebalancing of gas and electricity prices, and references to Ofgem's Debt Strategy and Consumer Vulnerability Strategy.

Government response

Government is committed to delivering clean, homegrown energy by 2030 through a comprehensive strategy that supports households, protects vulnerable consumers, and reforms the energy market.

Government is taking action to make energy more affordable. We have expanded the Warm Home Discount, which gives vulnerable households £150 off their winter energy bills, to an extra 2.7 million households, increasing the total number of recipients to 6 million. In the Autumn Budget, we also reduced bills for the average household by £150. These measures ensure that those with the greatest need benefit the most from energy bill reductions.

The creation of Great British Energy and the Warm Homes Plan aim to reduce reliance on volatile fossil fuel markets, lower energy bills, and make homes warmer and more energy efficient.

We agree with the need for better provision of advice for consumers about the energy market and available technologies, including smart meters and low carbon technologies. Education about the energy market, including bills, is an important way of helping consumers better understand their energy usage and their options, such as different tariffs. We are committed to work with industry and partners, including charities and trusted organisations, to make the energy market more transparent and easier to understand.

Strategic enablers to implement the new fuel poverty strategy

This section of the consultation discussed how effective targeting, partnership working and ensuring access to trusted and impartial information will be key drivers to helping those in fuel poverty.

Increasing effective targeting of the fuel poor

14. What are your views on how to improve targeting of fuel poor households? Please provide any supporting evidence.

Summary of responses

There were 85 responses to Question 14. Key themes included the importance of data in identifying and targeting fuel poor households, the need for good advice, the benefits of local delivery of both advice and schemes, and the potential for health care providers and trusted organisations to refer households for support.

33% of respondents commented on alternative ways to set criteria for verifying the eligibility of fuel poor households. While views varied, common themes included adopting an area-based approach to delivery, simplifying eligibility assessments, and drawing on data from multiple sources.

81% of respondents shared views on tools to support better targeting. The most prominent theme was the use of data driven approaches, with 56% specifically highlighting data matching and sharing. Other suggestions included using smart meter and smart technology data, reforming EPCs, adopting local delivery models that leverage local authority knowledge, using AI to identify and target fuel poor households, and making better use of Priority Services Register data.

33% of respondents addressed how to improve targeting for children and people with health conditions. A common theme was the need for closer collaboration with the health sector, both to identify households with health-related energy needs and to make better use of health data and engagement opportunities.

41% of respondents discussed the role of referrals in reaching vulnerable households. Key themes included referrals from trusted organisations and health referrals. Suggestions included using trusted agencies and networks, automatic referrals from health services, using health and social care data, and providing training for healthcare professionals.

18% of respondents commented on how to target support schemes to hard-to-reach or hard-to-treat properties. Proposals included taking a localised approach, drawing on the knowledge of local authorities and communities, and using trusted intermediaries and third-party branding.

Government response

Government agrees with the need to adopt a data driven approach to targeting fuel poor households and work is ongoing to explore improved sharing of household data, including income, between departments and more widely. While it is right that government should lead this work there is also an important enabling role for industry and stakeholders.

We welcome respondents' support for referrals from trusted health professionals, while acknowledging the need for training and improved access to health data to enable this. We are keen to explore how we can make this happen at scale while incorporating learning from existing referral routes.

Helping the fuel poor through partnership and learning

15. What else could improve partnership and learning to support the fuel poor?

Summary of responses

There were 66 responses to Question 15. Overall, respondents were supportive of the approach being taken and expressed strong support for increased partnership working. A range of views were shared on partnerships between different organisations and bodies, particularly in government, energy companies, health services, and community and charitable organisations. Respondents also highlighted the importance of advice as a key component of partnership working and emphasised the value of learning from different approaches to delivering advice.

There was general support for the cross-government work on the Child Poverty Taskforce and the Health and Energy Missions, with calls for government to build on this approach. Respondents also advocated for stronger partnerships between industry and public and third sector partners in areas such as housing, income support, public health, energy efficiency, and education, including schools.

18% of respondents emphasised the importance of adopting a local approach to partnership working. This could involve local authorities collaborating with partner organisations (such as regional mayors, trusted local agencies, and communities) while also recognising the capacity challenges faced by local authorities and charities.

15% of respondents expressed support for sharing best practice and learning about what works and what doesn't in supporting and engaging fuel poor households. Suggestions included establishing a knowledge sharing hub or platform for research, policy innovation, and case studies.

Respondents also highlighted the need for improved data sharing between government, health services, local authorities, energy suppliers, and housing providers. Additionally, there were calls to build the internal capabilities of local authorities and housing associations by upskilling staff, including frontline workers. There was also support for closer collaboration between public health bodies and energy efficiency programmes, making it easier for health professionals to refer households into retrofit schemes.

Government response

We recognise the importance of partnership working and support calls to increase it. Partnership working across government is already established and working effectively through initiatives like the Child Poverty Taskforce and government missions.

Further details about our plans for Partnership working can be found in the 'Partnerships and Advice' section of the updated Fuel Poverty Strategy.

Cross-government work on data sharing is ongoing as we seek to improve our ways of matching and sharing data. The updated strategy includes a commitment to expand data matching so that it can provide alternative ways to determine eligibility for support, including those not receiving means tested benefits. Better use and sharing of data are essential to delivering targeted support to vulnerable and fuel poor households.

We agree with the need for improving the identification and sharing of learning and best practice and are keen to explore with stakeholders how knowledge sharing platforms and forums could facilitate this.

Quality advice

16. How could access to quality advice be improved to support the fuel poor? Where should advice be targeted?

Summary of responses

There were 76 responses to Question 16. Overall, responses emphasised the importance of locally provided, accessible, tailored, and well-funded advice services to effectively address fuel poverty.

16% of responses highlighted the need for tailored advice, suggesting that advice should be specific to the needs of each household to ensure it is relevant, actionable, and leads to meaningful cost savings.

9% of respondents recommended increasing marketing efforts beyond websites, with several advocating for national campaigns using TV and radio adverts to reach a wider audience. Additionally, 8% suggested using community venues such as foodbanks, family hubs, and GP surgeries for outreach.

Nearly 20% of respondents stressed the importance of delivering advice through multiple channels, not just online, to ensure it reaches vulnerable households. Over 30% emphasised the value of providing advice through trusted local organisations and community groups, particularly to support those without digital access. Establishing one-stop shops to simplify the advice experience was a popular idea among 16%.

In-person, face-to-face advice was highlighted as important for reaching vulnerable groups by 8% of respondents. Respondents saw leveraging existing support networks as an effective strategy for delivering fuel poverty advice. There were calls for increased funding for community-based generalist advice services, such as Citizens Advice, with 14% emphasising the need to ensure long-term, sustainable funding to retain skilled advisers.

9% of respondents supported developing multi-agency partnerships to provide comprehensive support by integrating energy advice with financial, health, and social services. Almost 12% called for improved and simplified referral mechanisms to enable frontline charities and health and social care workers to easily refer individuals for further advice and support.

Government response

In line with many respondents, we recognise the importance of using multi-delivery channels for advice to the fuel poor and particularly for the most vulnerable. The Fuel Poverty Strategy sets out how we will ensure that all the fuel poor can benefit from quality advice. Additional information can also be found in Chapter 5 of the Fuel Poverty Strategy.

As with responses to Question 7, many respondents highlighted the need for a simple referral mechanism for energy advice from frontline health professionals. The department will work across government, particularly with the Department for Health and Social Care, to investigate the feasibility of introducing a referral mechanism that does not impinge on frontline workers' pre-existing work.

Access to advice

17. How could vulnerable households be supported to access advice? Is there a role for the health and social care workforce or other professional groups supporting vulnerable households?

Summary of responses

There were 78 responses to Question 17. Overall, respondents emphasised the importance of utilising the health and social care workforce, delivering advice locally with the support of a centralised advice agency, being proactive in outreach, ensuring in-person advice is available for vulnerable households, and providing better funding for advice services to effectively support those in need.

57% of respondents highlighted the need for outreach, both directly and via related workforces such as health and social care. Respondents noted that healthcare and professional groups are well placed to offer simple guidance, make referrals, and support interventions that address both energy needs and health conditions. However, 8% specifically pointed out that these services are already stretched. Almost 7% suggested that straightforward, simple, and non-time-consuming referral mechanisms would help reduce the burden on frontline health and social care workers.

13% of respondents proposed creating a centralised advice service to support vulnerable households with energy needs, while just over 19% advocated for advice to be delivered as locally as possible. Many highlighted that centralised and local advice services can complement each other effectively.

A greater need for partnership working was raised by 14% of respondents, who called for collaboration between government and local organisations, as well as among local organisations and community groups themselves.

Responses also highlighted the overlap between digitally excluded and fuel poor households. Suggestions included addressing digital inclusion and working with charities and community organisations experienced in reaching digitally excluded groups. A few respondents specifically mentioned the importance of face-to-face and one-to-one advice for vulnerable individuals. Some went further, advocating for a casework approach in which advisers offer holistic support, including help with increasing household income. There was also some support for a centrally funded one-stop shop to deliver face-to-face energy advice with enhanced support for vulnerable consumers.

Approximately 10% of respondents stressed the need for increased funding in the energy advice sector. With health and social care practitioners and local advice services already under pressure, respondents highlighted the importance of higher and longer-term funding.

Finally, 9% of respondents emphasised the need for a more proactive approach to advice provision. They noted that fuel poor households are often less likely to seek support, may be unaware of available services, or face barriers to accessing advice, making it essential for services to take a more front footed approach.

Government response

Government recognises the unique access that the frontline health and social care workforce has to vulnerable members of society. We are committed to working across government, and with the Department for Health and Social Care to investigate the feasibility of introducing a simple referral mechanism for advice.

Further details of plans to support vulnerable households through data, partnership and advice can be found in chapter 5 of the Fuel Poverty Strategy.

Improving understanding of fuel poverty

This section of the consultation discussed how government's understanding of fuel poverty and its impacts can be improved.

Improving understanding of fuel poverty and its impacts

18. How else can government improve understanding of fuel poverty and its impacts?

Summary of responses

There were 62 responses to Question 18. Responses covered a wide range of issues, with particular emphasis on health, local and area-based knowledge, behavioural and smart data, and learning from international examples.

79% of respondents said that further research is needed to better understand the relationship between fuel poverty and health. 11% explicitly included or prioritised mental health, and a few highlighted the impact of fuel poverty on medical equipment use or end-of-life care. 8% of respondents mentioned damp and mould as underexplored aspects of fuel poverty.

37% of respondents focused on the benefits of localised and area-based approaches. Some called for opportunities to hear from and empower fuel poor households themselves, as well as local authorities and frontline staff. Others emphasised the need to educate both frontline workers and at-risk households, and to better understand the local causes of fuel poverty, particularly in relation to the availability of frontline services and the effects of austerity. Several respondents highlighted the value of learning from best practice, both from local programmes and international examples.

18% of respondents discussed the link between debt, financial vulnerability, and fuel poverty, with some drawing explicit connections to mental health. Others called for more research into how fuel poverty intersects with other forms of vulnerability, including ethnicity, housing tenure, rurality, and transport poverty.

5% of respondents explicitly referenced the need to update or expand the LILEE metric, noting that it does not always reflect the lived experience of fuel poverty.

Government response

We welcome the wide range of suggestions on improving understanding of fuel poverty and its impacts. We recognise the importance of robust evidence and ongoing research to inform policy and delivery.

We are committed to:

- publishing the annual fuel poverty statistics to support transparency, inform public understanding and policy development. We will continue to explore how key fuel poverty metrics are tracked and presented to support more timely and responsive policymaking

- strengthening our understanding on the relationship between fuel poverty and health, including mental health and the impacts on those with medical needs. We will continue to work with the health sector to deepen understanding in these areas
- supporting local and area-based approaches including exploring how locally held data can play a role to ensure that those who need support get it

The government also continues to sponsor the Committee on Fuel Poverty, an independent advisory board to scrutinise its fuel poverty strategy for England and progress towards the target. The Committee publishes an annual report and a research project, which is funded by DESNZ. The latest publications from August 2024 'Can Fuel Poverty be Ended' and 'Barriers and Enablers to Fuel Poor Households Reaching Net Zero', explore key issues such as the link between fuel poverty and clean heat, housing tenure, ethnicity, and the effects of energy efficiency measures.

Reviewing the strategy and scrutiny of progress

This section of the consultation discussed the legal duty to review the strategy and set out how the fuel poverty target and interim milestones are scrutinised.

Existing arrangements

19. Are existing arrangements sufficient to meet our commitments to review and scrutinise government action on fuel poverty?

Summary of responses

There were 46 responses to Question 19. Most respondents felt that the current arrangements for monitoring and accountability on fuel poverty were not sufficient. They raised concerns about the timeliness of data, the effectiveness of existing oversight bodies, and the lack of statutory responsibilities at the local level. A smaller number of respondents felt the current arrangements were broadly adequate but still suggested improvements.

70% believed the current arrangements were not sufficient, with many expressing concerns that the Committee on Fuel Poverty lacks the visibility and authority needed to hold the government to account effectively. Several suggested that the Committee should be granted statutory powers, similar to the Climate Change Committee, and a more prominent public profile.

26% of respondents noted that local authorities are not under a statutory duty to address fuel poverty and often lack the resources to do so. This has led to a disconnect between national strategy and local delivery, particularly in rural and deprived areas. Respondents called for stronger central government leadership, improved reporting mechanisms, and greater resourcing to enable local authorities to play a more strategic and proactive role. Some also proposed that local fuel poverty strategies should be made mandatory, with annual progress reporting to regional bodies.

Around 25% of respondents proposed the introduction of a biannual scorecard of key metrics to improve transparency and track progress against fuel poverty targets more effectively.

20% of respondents called for greater cross-departmental collaboration within government. They argued that fuel poverty should be better integrated into broader strategies on health, education, and housing to ensure policies are aligned and responsive to the complex realities faced by those in fuel poverty.

Government response

We recognise the concerns raised about whether current arrangements for reviewing and scrutinising government action on fuel poverty are sufficient. To increase transparency and accountability, our updated strategy commits to publishing a written ministerial statement to update Parliament on progress to alleviate fuel poverty in England each year. We will also continue to release the annual fuel poverty statistics and will start to publish a scorecard.

The Committee on Fuel Poverty will continue to play an active role in relation to scrutiny of progress on fuel poverty. We have also committed to publishing a response to the annual Committee on Fuel Poverty recommendations. Further detail on this can be found in the ‘Scrutiny of progress’ chapter of the updated Fuel Poverty Strategy.

Further views

20. Do you have any further views or evidence on how the 2021 Fuel Poverty Strategy should be updated?

Summary of responses

There were 39 responses to Question 20. Given the nature of this question a variety of different views were expressed. However, two key themes emerged: the need for a cross-sector approach to tackling fuel poverty, and the importance of energy market reform in shaping an updated strategy.

46% of respondents emphasised the importance of a cross-sector approach to address both the causes and consequences of fuel poverty. This included calls for better coordination between retrofit schemes and housing standards. There was also a desire for stronger integration with the health sector, such as incorporating fuel poverty into NHS winter planning or expanding ‘warmth of prescription’ services that refer and/or passport eligibility for vulnerable households to access support to reduce their energy costs.

38% of respondents reiterated that energy market reform should be central to the updated strategy, particularly in light of rising energy prices since the 2021 strategy was published. Suggestions included debt relief for households most affected by the energy crisis, and reforms to energy bill support and standing charges to ensure protections for vulnerable and low-income consumers.

Respondents also stressed that while energy efficiency and physical upgrades to properties are important, a holistic approach that includes support for debt, vouchers, and advice is equally as important to support low-income and vulnerable households living in fuel poverty.

Government response

We welcome the range of views submitted in response to Question 20 and acknowledge the strong consensus around the need for a cross-sector approach and energy market reform. Tackling fuel poverty requires coordinated action across housing, health, energy and social policy.

Fuel poverty and energy affordability are intrinsically linked to child poverty. High energy costs can be the difference between a household being in poverty or not and can force decisions on which essentials are bought. The Child Poverty Strategy delivers measures to tackle the structural and root causes of child poverty, including the lifting of the two child benefits cap.

One of government's core missions is to build an NHS fit for the future. Living in a cold or damp home significantly impacts respiratory, cardiovascular and mental health, and is linked to increased mortality rates. Through the 10-Year Health Plan, we are prioritising preventative action by supporting fuel poor households most at risk from cold, damp and energy in-efficient homes. This is essential to improving health outcomes and reducing long-term NHS pressures.

Energy market reform remains central to our approach, with a focus on making bills more affordable and ensuring protections for those most at risk, as set out in chapter 4 of the Fuel Poverty Strategy.

This publication is available from:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/review-of-the-fuel-poverty-strategy

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at:

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