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Our ref: AQW 40221/22-27
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From: The Minister

Andy Allen MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

Dear Andy

AQW 40221/22-27 – INFORMATION TO BE PLACED IN THE ASSEMBLY LIBRARY

Due to the volume of detail required to answer AQW 40221/22-27, the information attached at Annex A has been placed in the Assembly Library.

Yours sincerely,

Gordon Lyons MLA

Minister for Communities

This is an operational matter for the Housing Executive. I have sought the requested information from the Chief Executive, who has advised me as follows:

"Housing Executive carry out post-intervention assessments to evaluate the impact that the scheme is having on NI households. These assessments are described below:

(i) Customer Satisfaction Survey (External)

The Housing Executive completes regular Customer Satisfaction Surveys (CSS) for the Affordable Warmth Scheme (AWS). These reports are carried out by external independents.

The purpose of the survey is to provide a clear and robust assessment of this post intervention of the AWS upon completion of works. The findings help identify strengths within the current delivery model and highlight areas where further improvements may enhance overall service quality.

Fieldwork for the most recent survey has now been completed, and the final report is expected to be published shortly. This forthcoming report will present findings from applicants who received assistance under the AWS during the financial years 2022/23 to 2024/25.

Initial results from this latest survey indicate that 96% of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with the AWS.

To obtain these insights, the Housing Executive commissioned Perceptive Insight to undertake structured telephone interviews with AWS applicants. A total of 100 participants were randomly selected from each of the eleven council areas, providing a robust and geographically representative sample of 1,100 completed surveys.

Customer Satisfaction Survey (Internal)

In 2025, the Housing Executive Private Sector Grants Department began conducting internal post intervention CCS for all completed Home Improvement Grant (HIG) applications. From the 2026/27 financial year onward, internal customer satisfaction surveys will also be carried out for all completed AWS applications.

Energy Impact Assessment

Over the past five years, the Housing Executive has commissioned the Building Research Establishment (BRE) to evaluate the impact that AWS has on energy use and carbon emissions. BRE carried out improvement modelling to assess the impact of installed energy-efficiency measures and to quantify the resulting energy savings using the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) 2012 methodology. AFW BRS Evaluation Report GJ Oct 2025

The most recent evaluation examined completed cases from the financial years 2022/23, 2023/24, and 2024/25.

The below table highlights the average cost and co2 savings, achieved per household through the AWS, split by pre improvement Energy Efficiency Rating (EER) band:

Pre-improvement EER band	***Mean energy cost savings (£/year)***	***Mean CO2 savings (tonnes/year)***
C	*52*	*0.3*
D	*217*	*1.2*
E	*372*	*2.2*
F	*665*	*3.9*
G	*1,543*	*4.8*
Total	*351*	*2.0*

(ii) The NI House Condition Survey (NIHCS) is the source data for fuel poverty in

N. Ireland. The 2016 House Condition Survey found that 22% of households (n160,000 households) in N. Ireland were in fuel poverty.

Since then, modelled estimates of fuel poverty have been produced. The estimates of fuel poverty were modelled by BRE using data from the 2016 NIHCS as a base and adjusting the three main components of fuel poverty (fuel prices, household incomes and energy efficiency) to each year of interest. These modelled estimates of fuel poverty were produced for 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 (see table below). It was not possible to produce further fuel poverty estimates due to the length of time from the base year data (2016).

The table below details the estimates of fuel poverty in Northern Ireland, 2016 to 2021.

Please note that estimates from 2017-2021 have been modelled from the 2016 position:

Fuel poor households (full income definition)	*2016 (Base position from NIHCS)*	*2017 (modelled estimates)*	*2018 (modelled estimates)*	*2019 (modelled estimates)*	*2020 (modelled estimates)*	*2021 (modelled estimates)*
Number of households	*160,000*	*128,000*	*131,000*	*179,000*	*180,000*	*179,000*
% of households	*22*	*17*	*18*	*24*	*24*	*24*

Base: all households, Northern Ireland 2016

The 2020 and 2021 modelled fuel-poverty estimates provided more detailed information on the individual components of fuel poverty—fuel prices, household incomes, and energy-efficiency levels—allowing an assessment of the impact each component had on overall fuel-poverty levels. The following combinations were analysed: fuel prices only; fuel prices and income only; fuel prices, income, and energy efficiency improvements (the final fuel poverty estimate). The number and

percentage of households in fuel poverty for each of these scenarios is shown in Table 7.

Overall, energy-efficiency improvements reduced the number of households in fuel poverty by two percentage points in 2020 (equivalent to 16,000 households) and by three percentage points in 2021 (20,000 households), when compared with fuel poverty levels based only on updated fuel prices and household incomes.

These fuel-poverty estimates were informed by data on three main energy-efficiency measures: loft insulation, cavity wall insulation (CWI), and heating system upgrades. Information from several schemes contributed to this analysis, including the Affordable Warmth Scheme, the Boiler Replacement Scheme, Housing Executive heating and boiler replacement programmes, the Northern Ireland Sustainable Energy Programme (NISEP), and housing association boiler upgrades. Data from the English Housing Survey (EHS) and the 2011 and 2016 Northern Ireland House Condition Surveys (NIHCS) were also used.

Table 7, Fuel poverty components, 2020 and 2021:

	2020		*2021*	
	No. of households	*% of households*	*No. of households*	*% of households*
Fuel prices only	*206,000*	*28*	*219,000*	*30*
Fuel prices and income only	*196,000*	*26*	*199,000*	*27*
Fuel prices, income and improvement measures	*180,000*	*24*	*179,000*	*24*

Base: all households, Northern Ireland 2016

The NI House Condition Survey 2023 will report on Fuel Poverty in summer 2026.

(iii) Over the past five years, the Housing Executive has commissioned the Building Research Establishment (BRE) to evaluate the Affordable Warmth Scheme. BRE carried out improvement modelling to assess the impact of installed energy-efficiency measures and to quantify the resulting energy savings using the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) 2012 methodology. Customers who availed of the AWS between 2022

to 2025 would now save an average of £351 per annum on their energy bills.

The most recent evaluation examined completed cases from the financial years 2022/23, 2023/24, and 2024/25.

The below tables highlight the average cost and co2 savings, achieved per household through the AWS, split by pre improvement EER Band:

Pre-improvement EER band	***Mean energy cost savings (£/year)***	***Mean CO2 savings (tonnes/year)***
C	*52*	*0.3*
D	*217*	*1.2*
E	*372*	*2.2*
F	*665*	*3.9*
G	*1,543*	*4.8*
Total	*351*	*2.0*

Health Impact Analysis of AWS (2014 – 2018)

In 2019 the Department for Communities commissioned the University of Ulster to carry out a Health Impact Analysis of some 16,119 AWS interventions completed from 2014 to 2018. This methodology used the Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme (HHSRS) to estimate improvements in physical health from a range of energy efficiency measures. Furthermore, the benefits to mental health were considered alongside reduced unemployment and the impact on economic output.

The monetary value in improved wellbeing and reduced use of NHS services from AWS was also presented.

Further details for this research are attached (see Appendix 1).”