



Topical Digest

Fuel poverty

SUSAN MASSEY, ELEANOR MURPHY AND AIDAN STENNETT

Research and
Information
Service



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Fuel poverty

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This Topical Digest provides Members and their staff with a range of reading materials and sources of information relating to fuel poverty, as well as the approaches to tackling fuel poverty, in Northern Ireland and other jurisdictions.

Should MLAs or their constituency staff have suggestions for information they would like to see in the guide, or have links to useful sources that they would like to share, please feel free to contact the Research and Information Service at:
RaISe_CSU@niassembly.gov.uk

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1 Introduction

The approach of the winter months is often a stark reminder of the significant [impact](#) fuel poverty has on mental, physical and social well-being. Although it is important to also recognise that fuel poverty is a [year-round](#) problem affecting those who, even in warmer weather, struggle with energy bills. [Children and young people](#), [older people](#), [people with disabilities](#), [carers](#), and those living in [poor housing conditions](#) are just some of the groups that are particularly vulnerable to the effects of fuel poverty.

This topical digests provides Members and their staff with a range of reading materials and sources of information relating to fuel poverty and the approaches to tackling fuel poverty in Northern Ireland and other jurisdictions.

2 Northern Ireland Assembly

- Assembly Questions on the topic of fuel poverty can be accessed via this [link](#), or by navigating to the [AIMS Portal](#) on the Assembly website (suggested search terms: fuel poverty, affordable warmth, renewable energy, domestic energy efficiency, Winter Fuel Payment, Cold Weather Payment, energy costs, energy bills).
- Research and Information Service, [Renewable electricity in Northern Ireland: a primer](#) (13 June 2025)
- Oral Ministerial Statement by the Minister for Communities, [Emergency Fuel Support for Winter 24-25](#) (19 November 2024)
- Written Ministerial Statement by the Minister for Communities, [Proposed Policy Changes to the Winter Fuel Payment Scheme in Northern Ireland](#) (30 August 2024)
- Northern Ireland Assembly, Opposition Business, Official Report: [Fuel Poverty](#) (16 April 2024)
- [All Party Group on Fuel Poverty](#): membership and purpose

3 Northern Ireland Audit Office

- Northern Ireland Audit Office, [Northern Ireland Energy Strategy](#) (21 October 2025)

4 Department for Communities

- Landing page for [Fuel Poverty](#) and the [Fuel Poverty and Just Transition Project](#)
- Department for Communities, [Consultation on a draft Fuel Poverty Strategy](#) (December 2024)
- [Fuel Poverty Stakeholder Engagement Report](#) (December 2024)
- [Fuel Poverty Workshop overviews](#) (the Department held a number of workshops from April to June 2024 to gather views on fuel poverty)
- [Fuel Poverty Screening](#) (December 2024)
- See also previous fuel poverty strategy: [Warmer, Healthier Homes: A New Fuel Poverty Strategy for Northern Ireland](#) (Department for Social Development, March 2011)
- Department for Communities, [Housing Supply Strategy: A Home for Everyone 2024-2039](#) (December 2024) see references to fuel poverty and energy efficiency
- Department for Communities, [Changes to the Affordable Warmth Scheme](#) (September 2023) and [Affordable Warmth Scheme Eligibility Changes screening](#) (June 2021)

Department for Communities News Releases

- [Communities Minister welcomes government u-turn on winter fuel payments](#) (June 2025)
- [Communities Minister calls for full reinstatement of Winter Fuel Payment](#) (May 2025)
- [Minister launches consultation on a Fuel Poverty Strategy](#) (19 December 2024)
- [Communities Minister statement on Winter Fuel Payment](#) (30 July 2024)

5 Selection of other Departmental strategies, action plans and reports

- Department for the Economy, [Green Skill Action Plan](#) (May 2025)
- Department for the Economy, [Energy Strategy Action Plan 2024 Report](#) (July 2025)
- Department for the Economy, [Energy Strategy Action Plan 2025](#) (March 2025)
- Department for the Economy, [Increased Socialisation of Connection Costs in the Electricity Distribution Network](#) (January 2025)
- Department for the Economy, [Design considerations for a renewable electricity support scheme for Northern Ireland: response](#) (April 2024)

- Department for the Economy's landing page for [Energy](#) (including information on the energy strategy, energy efficiency, renewables and heat)
- Department for the Economy, [Energy research](#) (domestic customers) includes link to NISRA's [Continuous Household Survey Heat and Insulation Results 2023/24](#)
- Department for the Economy, [Northern Ireland Household Energy Expenditure: Income Differences and Non-Discretionary Impacts](#) (March 2022)
- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs [Climate Change](#) landing page
- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, [Northern Ireland's draft Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2027](#)

6 Northern Ireland Housing Executive¹

- Landing page for the [Affordable Warmth Scheme](#)
- Landing page for [energy efficiency and sustainability research](#)
- Home Energy Conservation Authority [Annual Progress Report 2024](#).
- Building Research Establishment Ltd. (BRE) report for Northern Ireland Housing Executive, [Impact of 2022 fuel prices on fuel poverty in Northern Ireland](#) (21 March 2024)
- [Northern Ireland House Conditions Survey](#)

7 Northern Ireland Consumer Council

- Landing page for [Electricity, oil and gas](#) (Accessed 28 July 2025)
- [Interactive tools – electricity, gas, appliance and home heating boiler price checkers](#)
- [Northern Ireland Household Expenditure Tracker](#)
- [Cost of Living Pulse Surveys](#)
- [A Review of Fuel Poverty Levels in Northern Ireland](#) (May 2022)
- [Research Paper: The Need for a Fuel Bank Scheme in Northern Ireland](#) (December 2021)

¹ The Northern Ireland Housing Executive is the Energy Conservation Authority for Northern Ireland.

8 Utility Regulator

- [Electricity Sector Overview](#): infographic explaining the system and the main components of electricity bills
- [Gas Sector Overview](#): as above but for gas
- [Domestic consumer Bills](#): includes the breakdown of gas and electricity cost on one page.
- [Quarterly Retail Energy Market Monitoring Report](#): includes comparison of electricity and gas prices with other jurisdictions, as well as information on market share and switching.

9 Selection of published responses to the DfC consultation on a draft Fuel Poverty Strategy

- [Chartered Institute of Housing NI](#)
- [Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland](#)
- [Fuel Poverty Coalition](#)
- [Housing Rights](#)
- [Rural Community Network](#)
- [National Energy Action NI](#)
- [NILGA](#)
- [Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations](#)
- [Propertymark](#)
- [Sustainable NI](#)

10 Northern Ireland groups and organisations

National Energy Action Northern Ireland

- News release, [‘Too scared to turn on the heat’ – 40% of Northern Irish households are still in fuel poverty](#) (26 November 2024)
- [Warm, Safe and Healthy at Home — NEA NI’s Manifesto for Homes 2024](#) (24 June 2024)

Northern Ireland Fuel Poverty Coalition

- [Response to Department for Communities: Consultation on a new Fuel Poverty Strategy for Northern Ireland](#) (March 2025). Older consultation responses can be accessed [here](#).

Please note that a large number of organisations responded to DfC's draft fuel poverty strategy and many have published responses on their websites.

- [A New Fuel Poverty Strategy for Northern Ireland](#) (2 October 2023)

Energy Savings Trust

- [Northern Ireland Sustainable Energy Programme](#)

11 Selection of local news articles

- [Stormont strategy to tackle poverty 'not fit for purpose,' says charity](#), BBC News NI (8 June 2025)
- ['Too many families are still forced to choose between heating and eating': Belfast electric utility firm teams up with Northern Ireland social enterprise to heat homes and puts money back in people's pockets](#), News Letter (27 May 2025)
- [Home heating oil prices in Northern Ireland up slightly – but cost of road fuel drops](#), Belfast Telegraph (24 April 2025)
- [Free hot water project to help with fuel poverty](#), BBC News NI (2 April 2025)
- [Stormont one-off fuel payment for pensioners comes 'too little, too late', union says](#), Belfast Telegraph (21 March 2025)
- ['Energy plans will force NI people into fuel poverty,' says DUP MP](#), Belfast Telegraph (6 February 2025)
- [Reality of poverty in area unveiled by Council in new report](#), The Impartial Reporter (23 January 2025)
- [Home heating oil price in Northern Ireland up £20 since start of 2025](#), Belfast Telegraph (16 January 2025)
- [Public consultation on new fuel poverty plan launched](#), The Irish News (19 December 2024)
- [40% of NI households live in fuel poverty, new polling reveals](#), Belfast Telegraph (28 November 2024)
- [Northern Ireland trade union calls for action to address growing fuel poverty crisis for pensioners](#), Belfast Live (27 November 2024)

- [Dramatic rise in reports of mould in Belfast Housing Executive properties](#), Belfast Telegraph (8 October 2024)
- [Solar panels and heat pump 'have made such a difference'](#), BBC News NI (27 September 2024)
- [Charity's warning as increase in children going to bed cold and hungry](#), The Impartial Reporter (23 October 2023)
- [Fuel Poverty Coalition launches new report aimed at tackling crisis in Northern Ireland](#), ITV News (2 October 2023)

12 UK Government

- UK Government, Landing page for [Help with your energy bills](#) (Accessed 2 July 2025). Includes information on the Warm Home Discount Scheme and other support payments.
- Department for Energy Security and Net Zero:
 - [Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics in England, 2025 \(2024 data\)](#) (27 March 2025). More statistics relating to fuel poverty can be found [here](#)
 - [Closed consultation - Review of the Fuel Poverty Strategy: consultation document](#) (7 February 2025)
- Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Policy Paper: [Sustainable warmth: protecting vulnerable households in England](#) (11 February 2021)
- Committee on Fuel Poverty (previously Fuel Poverty Advisory Group):
 - [CFP response to the consultation on expanding the Warm Home Discount Scheme, 2025 to 2026](#) (17 April 2025)
 - [CFP response to the Review of the Fuel Poverty Strategy consultation](#) (3 April 2025)
 - [Understanding the barriers and enablers to supporting fuel poor households achieve net zero](#) (28 August 2024)
 - Press release, [Fuel poverty has not fallen 'to any meaningful extent' in 5 years](#) (28 August 2024)
 - [Can Fuel Poverty be Ended? Committee on Fuel Poverty Annual Report 2024](#) (28 August 2024)
 - [Understanding the challenges faced by fuel poor households – research report](#) (31 May 2023)

13 House of Commons

House of Commons debates and questions

- [Debate on Fuel Poverty: England](#), 12 February 2025
- [Oral Answers to Questions – Fuel Poverty](#), 4 February 2025
- [Debate on Fuel Poverty](#), 6 November 2024

House of Commons Library Research Briefings

- [Domestic energy prices](#) (30 June 2025)
- [Local area data: fuel poverty](#) (9 June 2025)
- [Gas and electricity prices during the 'energy crisis' and beyond](#) (2 June 2025)
- [Cold and damp homes](#) (7 May 2025)
- [Fuel Poverty in the UK](#) (14 April 2025)
- [Help with energy bills](#) (30 September 2024)

14 Scotland

- Landing page for [Home energy and fuel poverty](#) (Accessed 28 July 2025)
- [Tackling Fuel Poverty in Scotland: periodic report 2021-2024](#) (1 April 2025)
- [Scottish Government response to the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel recommendations](#) (February 2024)
- [Tackling fuel poverty in Scotland: a strategic approach](#) (23 December 2021)
- [Fuel Poverty \(Targets, Definition and Strategy\) \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#)
- Landing pages for [Heating cost help](#) (Accessed 28 July 2025)
- [Scottish House Conditions Survey 2023, Section 3 – Fuel Poverty](#) (January 2025)
- [Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel](#)²:
- [Principles and recommendations on the fuel poverty landscape in Scotland](#) (November 2024)
- [Strategy Plan 2024-2027](#) (April 2024)

² The [Panel](#) is an advisory non-governmental body that advises Scottish Ministers on progress towards the 2040 fuel poverty targets.

- [Recommendations to the Scottish Government on its Fuel Poverty Strategy](#) (September 2023)
- Link to [publications and reports](#)

15 Wales

- Senedd Research, [Energy bill remain high and fuel poverty is rising: is the Welsh Government doing enough to meet its fuel poverty targets?](#) (September 2025)
- Welsh Government, [Home energy and fuel poverty](#) (Accessed 28 July 2025)
- Welsh Government, [Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel](#) (Accessed 28 July 2025)
- Welsh Government, [Fuel poverty in Wales: interactive dashboard](#) (29 June 2023)
- Senedd Research, [How rising fuel costs are driving fuel poverty in Welsh homes](#) (8 September 2022)
- Welsh Government, [Tackling fuel poverty 2021 to 2035](#) (30 April 2021)
- Auditor General for Wales, [Fuel Poverty](#) (October 2019)

16 Republic of Ireland

- Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment, [Minister O'Brien launches National Energy Affordability Taskforce](#) (updated 25 June 2025)
- Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), [Energy Poverty in Ireland: Analysis of 2023 data from the Behavioural Energy and Travel Tracker](#) (February 2025)
- Houses of the Oireachtas:
 - Bill page for [Energy Poverty Reduction \(Use of Surplus Renewable Energy\) Bill 2025](#) (last updated 20 February 2025)
 - Joint Committee on Social Protection, Community and Rural Development, and the Islands, [Report on Energy Poverty](#) (June 2024) and [Dáil Éireann debate](#) (10 October 2024)
 - Library and Research Service, [Energy Poverty in Ireland](#) (3 March 2022)
- Public Policy.ie, [Addressing Energy Poverty in Ireland](#) (November 2023)
- Economic and Social Research Institute:
 - [Energy Poverty and Deprivation in Ireland](#) (June 2022)
 - [Fuel poverty in Ireland: an analysis of trends and profiles](#) (29 June 2022)
 - Further ESRI publications on the topic of energy poverty can be found [here](#)

17 European Union

- European Commission, [EU Measures to tackle energy poverty](#) (Accessed 20 October 2025)
- European Parliament, Briefing – [Energy poverty in the EU](#) (2022)

18 Selection of research publications

- Building Research Establishment (BRE), [Warm homes: Solving England's fuel poverty problem](#) (22 May 2025)
- London School of Economics, [There's a problem with how we measure fuel poverty](#) (25 February 2025)
- Marie Curie Northern Ireland, [Dying in Poverty 2024](#) (see p7 on fuel poverty)
- Institute of Health Equity, [Left Out in the Cold: The Hidden Impact of Cold Homes](#) (February 2024)
- Scope, [Extra burden of energy among disabled households](#) (November 2023)
- Centre for Progressive Policy, [The cost of living crisis across the devolved nations](#) (July 2023)

19 UK groups and organisations

- Fuel Poverty Action:
 - [Annual Report 2023-2024](#) (April 2025)
 - Landing page for [About Fuel Poverty](#) (Accessed 28 July 2025)
 - Link to archive of [Consultation submissions](#) (Accessed 28 July 2025)
- End Fuel Poverty Coalition, [About fuel poverty](#) (Accessed 28 July 2025)
- National Energy Action, Links to archive of [News and Insights](#) and [Publications and Resources](#) (Accessed 2 July 2025)
- Fuel Bank Foundation:
 - [Time for change. Time for a fairer future. Fuel Crisis Report 2024](#) (October 2024)
 - [This is not cosy. This is a crisis. The cold, dark truth about winter 2023/24](#) (November 2023)

This information is provided to MLAs in support of their Assembly duties and is not intended to address the specific circumstances of any particular individual or organisation. Inclusion of a resource does not imply endorsement of any particular viewpoint. Whilst we strive to ensure that the information provided here is up to date, the information on external websites referred to may change frequently. This leaflet should not be relied upon as providing legal or professional advice, nor as a substitute for it. A suitably qualified professional should be consulted if specific advice or information is required.

The Research and Information Service is available to discuss the content of this briefing with Members and their staff, but not with the general public.

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