

targeting
CO₂
the expanding role
of the energy officer



UK Home Energy
Conservation
Association



Campaigning for Warm Homes

FUEL POVERTY – NATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

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Fuel Poverty Region	Number of Fuel Poor Households 2003	% of Households In Fuel Poverty 2003	Number of Fuel Poor Households 2008	% of Households In Fuel Poverty 2008
North East	95,000	8.7	248,000	22.8%
Yorkshire & Humber	180,000	8.6	406,000	19.2%
West Midlands	146,000	6.7	358,000	16.3%
South West	139,000	6.5	318,000	14.6%
East Midlands	112,000	6.3	287,000	16.2%
North West	178,000	6.3	483,000	16.9%
Eastern	115,000	5.1	291,000	12.7%
South East	149,000	4.4	322,000	9.5%
London	108,000	3.6	270,500	8.9%
England	1,220,000	5.9	2,983,500	14.3%



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The UK Fuel Poverty Strategy is now off track

- Since 2004 progress has been halted and reversed
- Predictions of a 25% price increase this year will mean that Numbers in fuel poverty will be the same as in 1997 when Government came into power
- Half of those affected by fuel poverty are pensioners



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The Energy White Paper 2003 promised

“to ensure that every home is adequately and affordably heated”

The Energy Bill 2007 is currently passing through Parliament, but ...

Where is the reference to ensuring every home is adequately and affordably heated?

The Energy Bill in its current form offers nothing to assist the fuel poor.



The Energy Bill 2007

- The Energy Bill aims to provide greater incentives for renewable energy generation and to make it easier for private firms to invest in offshore gas supply infrastructure, and applies to the whole UK.
- The Bill creates a regulatory framework for carbon capture projects and alters the framework to encourage private sector investment into gas supply security. There will also be measures to ensure owners of new nuclear power stations pay their share of decommissioning and waste costs.
- It intends to strengthen the market framework to help ensure secure and affordable energy supplies and encourage a diverse, secure supply of electricity. It also aims to strengthen the Renewables Obligation to drive greater and more rapid deployment of renewables in the UK.
- In addition a regulatory framework to enable private sector investment in carbon capture and storage (CCS) projects would be introduced and energy companies would be helped to better target their efforts to reduce fuel poverty.



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Campaigners like NEA hoped that the 2008 Budget Statement would have something meaningful to assist the fuel poor.

- Winter Fuel Payments
- Social Tariffs
- Prepayment Tariffs
- Renewables and Microgeneration

Promises of possible action but no concrete policies or significant resources to alleviate fuel poverty



What needs to be done to achieve lower energy costs for low income consumers?

- Increased funding for Warm Front and similar schemes in the devolved nations
- Mandatory social tariffs
- Extension of the Winter Fuel Payment to other vulnerable groups
- Surcharge on prepayment meters should be reduced
- Data sharing
- Ensuring Smart Meters have a role to play in alleviating fuel poverty



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In conclusion

We have been here before and we can turn this around

Partnership working is key – NEA is a member of several coalitions and is working with partners including energywatch, National Consumer Council, Age Concern FPAG and many others to lobby for the asks just noted.

We welcome Ofgem's probe into the energy market, the Treasury Committee inquiry, the Efra Committee inquiry, the Ofgem Fuel Poverty Summit and other consultations which will hopefully facilitate a solution.

We are working with many partners in this room and if we remain focussed we can all help Government to eradicate fuel poverty by a new target date of 2012 for vulnerable households.

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At a Regional Level

- Key regional agencies/depts.
- Input into relevant strategy consultations
- Communication channel
- Profile raising



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At a Local Level

- Work with a range of agencies to deliver 'demonstration' projects
- Activities supported by Defra, Energy Suppliers, Trusts and Foundations, consultancy
- Findings from all project activity feeds into NEA's campaigning and policy work



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At a Local Level

- Coventry PCT project
- Sub-Reg Housing Partnership WY
- Fuel Debt Advice project
- Assisting Local Authorities to deliver affordable warmth

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