

2019 UK Fuel Poverty Monitor

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2019 UK Fuel Poverty Monitor report

- NEA and Energy Action Scotland have produced the annual UK Fuel Poverty Monitor since 2003
- What is it? - examines and analyses the different approaches, policies and programmes to tackle and eliminate fuel poverty across the 4 UK nations
- Focus of the 2019 Monitor - to report on progress in delivering existing fuel poverty strategies in England, Wales, Scotland & Northern Ireland

<https://www.nea.org.uk/resources/publications-and-resources/uk-fuel-poverty-monitor-2018-2019/>



Fuel Poverty in Wales

Humans

- 155,000 households (12%)
- 130,000 vulnerable households
- 18% of all single pensioner households (2018)
- 26% of fuel poor households contained a person aged over 75
- 43% contained a person aged 65 or over
- Tenure - Approx 20% of private rented sector, 11% of owner occupiers, and 9% of social housing sector

Homes

- Older properties - 20% of households living in pre-1919 dwellings
- Poor energy efficiency - 43% of households living in properties with EPC Bands F and G
- Rural - 14% of households living in rural areas

People thought some things worked well in Wales

Fuel poverty targets - 93% wanted Welsh Government to set targets in a new fuel poverty plan

Collaboration - across the sectors to make sure households can access all the services they require

Being able to provide holistic advice that includes income maximisation support

Referring households into local sources of support

Defining fuel poverty - 60% of stakeholders felt that the 10% indicator is effective in defining and identifying households in, or vulnerable to, fuel poverty

Health conditions pilot - means Nest can support low income householders (not in receipt of MTB's) with a chronic respiratory or similar health condition

.... other things less so

EFFECTIVE TARGETING - LESS THAN A 1/3 FELT THAT SUPPORT WAS FULLY TARGETED AT THOSE IN MOST NEED

NEST SCHEME - ELIGIBILITY OF THE WARM HOMES PROGRAMME NEEDED TO BE WIDENED TO THOSE ON LOW INCOMES AND NOT ON A MEANS-TESTED BENEFITS

COMPLEXITY - OF EXISTING SCHEMES CAN LIMIT ABILITY TO ACCESS SUPPORT

FUNDING - FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMMES TO MEET THE NEED

... with lots of suggestions for improvement

- Prioritise fuel poor homes - EPC Band A (SAP 90+) - over the next 10 years
- Review the eligibility criteria for the Nest scheme
- Funding for more holistic advice including home visits
- Local authority-led Affordable Warmth Groups
- Develop a Cold Weather Plan for Wales
- A Strategic Monitoring Board to monitor and oversee the delivery of the new fuel poverty plan

... recognising the wider UK context

- Designate domestic energy efficiency as a national infrastructure priority
- UK-wide fund to prioritise assistance for fuel poor households
- Continuation of the Warm Home Discount scheme beyond 2021
- Suppliers ensure all customers have access to benefit entitlement checks before debt repayment plans are agreed
- Benefit entitlement checks and income maximisation services - especially unclaimed pension credit
- Fuel poverty strategies published and sufficiently resourced to deliver commitments & targets
- Review eligibility for existing fuel poverty support mechanisms to ensure households in most need can receive support
- Align carbon reduction commitments and fuel poverty



Research – priorities

Health

- Fully describe the health benefits of meeting the fuel poverty targets.

Efficient delivery

- Which energy efficiency schemes would help deliver fuel poverty targets most efficiently and how well do current programmes reach the most vulnerable households first.

Target groups

- What does most vulnerable mean, how might that be assessed and how might that change.

Fair Energy transitions

- In what ways might the transition to a smarter, lower carbon, energy world present opportunities or risks for fuel poverty eradication.