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Fuel Poverty and Social Housing in Scotland

Overview

- Social housing in Scotland
- How fuel poverty is defined
- What we do at bureau level
- Partnership working
- Government Policy & Legislation
- Fuel Poverty impact on health
- What is the government & energy companies doing to help vulnerable customers ?
- What are the pressing issues people face to ensure their home is warm ?

Social housing in Scotland

- Local councils and housing associations get government help to provide social housing. This is housing for people in need, at affordable rents, which may be temporary or permanent.
- In Scotland, some services are run by local government, called councils. Not all of these have housing available directly. But all of Scotland's 32 councils are 'housing authorities'

Housing associations / Registered Social Landlords

- are independent, not-for-profit organisations
- are run by a board or committee of volunteers
- provide affordable homes for people in housing need
- are now Scotland's major providers of new homes for rent
- some may provide specialist housing, for example for the elderly or disabled.

At present there are 13 Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) registered in Clackmannanshire with the [Scottish Housing Regulator](#) .

- Everyone deserves the right to live in a safe, secure, warm and dry home which they can afford to adequately heat. For millions across the UK who live in fuel poverty, this right is being denied.
- Source: Energy Action Scotland (2017).



What is Fuel Poverty?

The Government defines “fuel poor” as the need to spend more than 10% of household income to achieve adequate levels of warmth in the home and meet their other energy needs. Extreme poverty 20 %

- Clackmannanshire - 32% of households defined as fuel poor, 7% extremely fuel poor. Falkirk 35% & Stirling 38%.
- Scotland – In 2014 34.9% or around 845,000 households were fuel poor. This compares to 35.8%, or around 860,000 households, in 2013

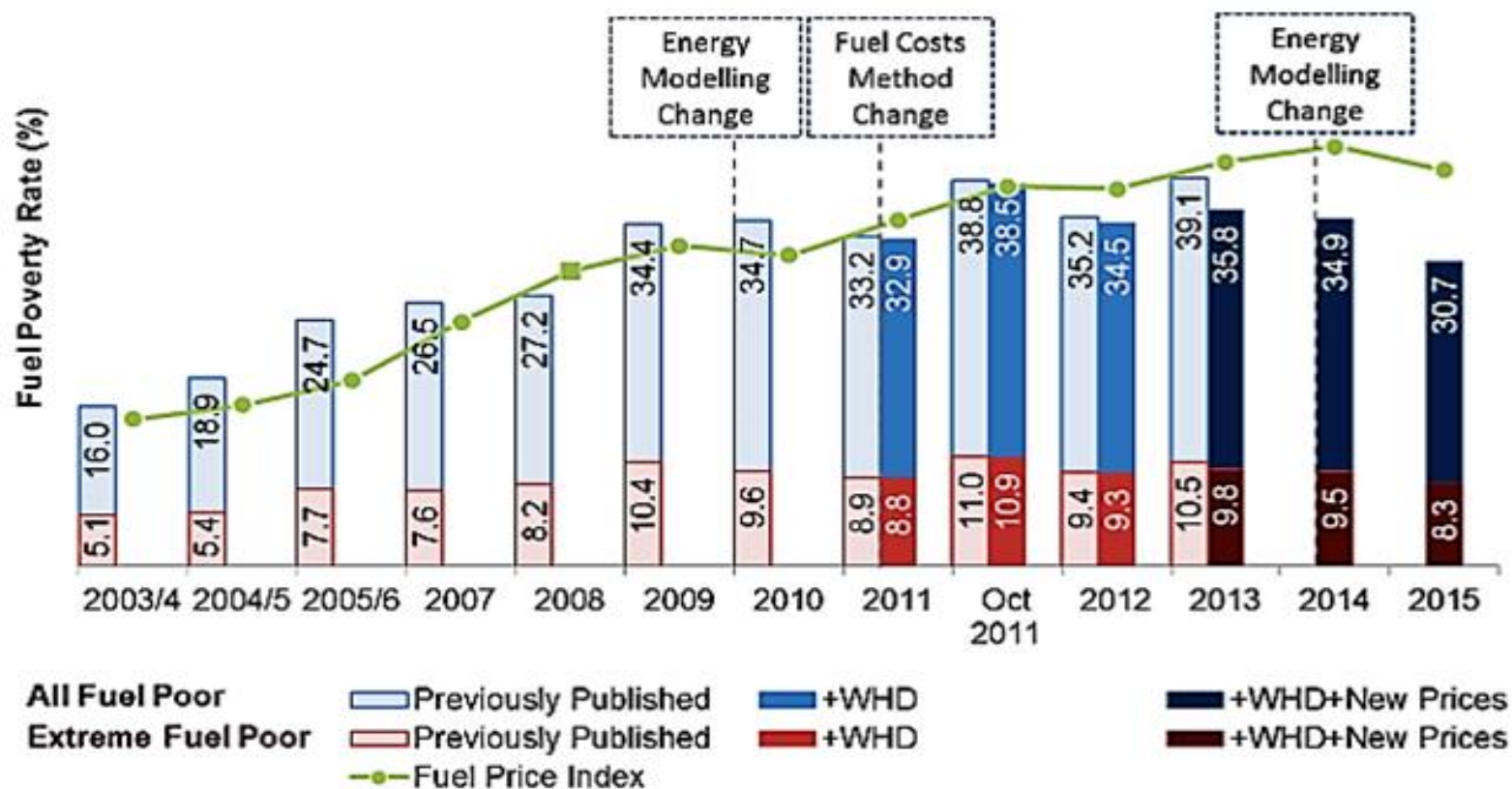
The official figures for fuel poverty in Scotland are published as part of the [Scottish House Condition Survey](#) (Scottish Government). The most recent figures for Scotland relate to 2015. The [Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics Report](#) now only publishes the figure for England and not for the UK as a whole.



Fuel Poverty locally

[illegible]

Figure 18: Fuel Poverty and Extreme Fuel Poverty since 2003/4



Why can't people heat their homes?



- Low income
- Impact of Welfare Reform
- Access to best deals
- Payment methods with suppliers
- Increased energy needs & rising fuel costs
- Ineligibility for financial support
- Lack of knowledge of help available

Fuel poverty in Great Britain

30.7% of households were in fuel poverty in 2015 (a reduction of four percentage points since 2014). Older households are the most likely to be fuel poor. Rural households have seen substantial improvements in fuel poverty (falling from 50% in 2014 to 35% in 2015).



23% of households were in fuel poverty in 2016, a reduction of six percentage points since 2012. Severe fuel poverty fell from 5% to 3% over the same period. Fuel poverty in households considered vulnerable is slightly higher, at 24%. For customers in social housing, the rate of fuel poverty is higher again, estimated at 27% in 2016, having reduced from 33% in 2012.



2.5 million households, 11% of consumers, were in fuel poverty in 2015. Fuel poverty has grown fastest in households where the youngest person is aged between 16 and 24, although rates have fallen since 2010.

What do we do at bureau ?

Accessed funded for 3 projects , participated in prepayment meter research by CAS and set up a local fuel forum

- LEAP / EBD – The Local Energy Advice Project was funded by Citizens Advice Scotland 17.5 hours a week for 18 months, providing holistic advice and support through home visits and outreach service. Energy Best Deal is a 6 month project focussed on switching tariff/ supplier to & access any savings for client through face to face energy assessments and awareness sessions to groups.
- BESN - The Big Energy Saving Network is a National Energy Action (NEA) funded initiative for 6 months at a time, to support trusted third sector organisations by Department for Business, Energy and Industrial strategy to train energy champions /frontline staff and deliver information sessions in the community

Energy Assessments

- Help to understand bill and check if any savings can be made. Are they getting the best deal ? Is there any debt ?
- Check eligibility for Warm Home Discount & add to Priority Services Register if there are any vulnerabilities
- Are there energy efficiency measures needed ?
- Check if the household income can be maximised

Partnership Working

- Clacks Council is our local authority, part of Forth Valley Region (includes Stirling & Falkirk) They offer impartial energy efficiency advice and ongoing support to tenants & owner occupiers

Clackmannanshire
Council



- HES are a government funded network of local advice centres covering all of Scotland. Our expert advisors offer free, impartial advice on energy saving, renewable energy. Part of Energy Saving Trust

Home Energy
Scotland



- Energy Action Scotland (EAS) campaigns for an end to fuel poverty in Scotland and is the only national charity with this sole remit. Part of National Energy Action

National Energy
Action



Fuel poverty consultation by Scottish Government

Consultation on a Fuel Poverty Strategy for Scotland

- “This Government is investing more in tackling fuel poverty than any other Government – £1 billion between 2009 and the end of this parliament – yet around 31 per cent of Scottish households were in fuel poverty in 2015. The Warm Homes Bill will set a new measurement framework and will align itself with wider actions on tackling poverty and inequalities.”
- “This Government doesn’t have powers to control fuel prices, but we do have strategies to increase the availability of affordable low carbon heat. Through our Climate Change Plan, our Energy Strategy and the forthcoming Scotland’s Energy Efficiency Programme (SEEP) we will be paving the way for innovation and coordinated efforts across sectors to find the most effective solutions for households no matter where they live in Scotland”

Policy & Legislation

- The [Housing \(Scotland\) Act 2001](#) set a statutory duty on the Scottish Government to eradicate fuel poverty in Scotland, as far as was reasonably practicable, by November 2016. This statutory duty expired and the target was missed.

Conclusion published in March 2017

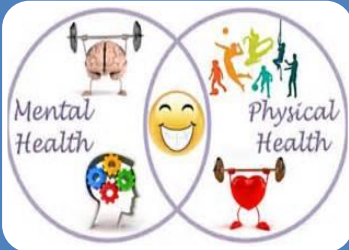
- The Scottish Government is committed to tackling fuel poverty and we welcome the reports of the Strategic Working Group and the Rural Fuel Poverty Task Force and their recommendations for how we might address this issue going forward.
- We want our new fuel poverty strategy to tackle poverty and inequality - that includes ensuring rural households can expect the same support that is offered to householders in urban areas. We also agree that the new strategy must not only address the four drivers of fuel poverty, but be person-centred and go beyond improving the energy efficiency of buildings.
- In order to address many of the recommendations set out by the groups, we will work with partners at both a national and local level. We are not starting from scratch, but we will build on the achievements we have made to date which have led to over a million measures having been installed in over a million homes since 2008. We believe partnership working will ensure the successful delivery of our existing and emerging programmes, and will have a crucial role in the development of a new fuel poverty strategy.
- The Fuel Poverty Forum will play an important role in this partnership working including monitoring progress on tackling fuel poverty and taking forward the actions set out in this response and holding Scottish Government and our delivery partners to account for their delivery.

Impact on health



Cold housing

- Fuel Poverty is linked to Cold Housing
- Increases the risk of damp and mould
- Creates health inequalities



Physical Mental Health & Well being

- Cardio-vascular and Respiratory conditions
- Affects dexterity can increase accidents in the home
- Increases colds and flu
- Social Isolation
- Negative impact on mental health
- Depression, Stress and Anxiety



Excess Winter Mortality rates

- Most extreme contributes towards excess winter mortality
- 2850 EWD in Scotland in 2015/2016 (National Records of Scotland 2017).
- Marmot Review 2011 estimate 40% EWD are cardio-vascular and 33% are caused by respiratory diseases

Social Detriments of health

Health inequalities are the differences in health status between one group and another.

Social detriments of health:

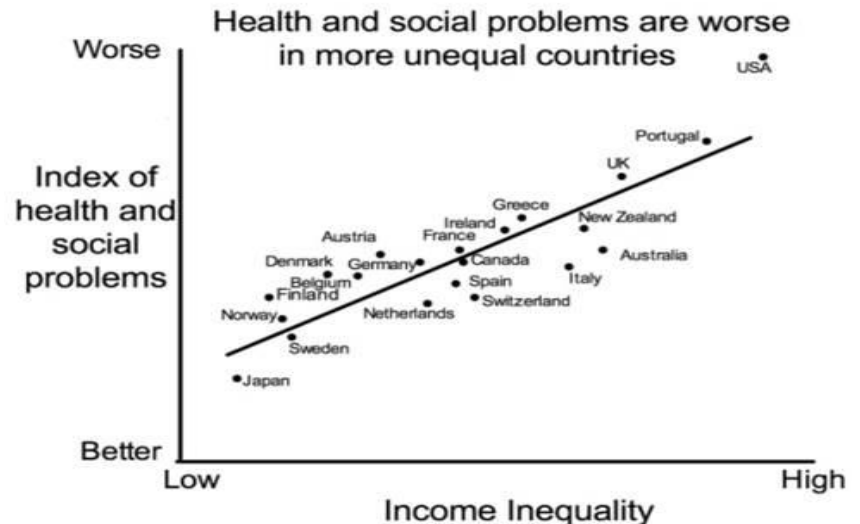
A set of circumstances we are born into, live and work. Financial, housing, health care system, employment

Shaped by political and economic factors

These are inequitable if avoidable

“Good or Poor health in society is neither equally nor randomly distributed...it is socially patterned”.Bax (2016).

Fuel Poverty is avoidable



What is the government doing ?

There are a number of schemes available to help people with the energy costs and needs:

- Priority Services Register
- Warm Home Discount
- Winter Fuel Payment
- Cold Weather Payments
- Energy Company Obligation
- HEEPS -Warmer Homes Scotland, Area based schemes, Loans

Smart meters

- Smart meters are a new type of meter for gas and electricity which will be offered to all British households over the next few years.
- A smart meter can automatically send meter readings to your energy supplier, meaning they can bill you more accurately for the energy you've used.
- Smart meters should mean that manual meter readings, estimated bills and back bills will become a thing of the past.
- Smart meters will also allow you to access more detailed information about your personal energy usage, which can help you with deciding about switching and energy efficiency.
- While energy suppliers are obliged to offer smart meters to everyone by 2020 you don't have to accept one if you don't want one.

A smart meter won't automatically save you money - you'll have to be proactive to reduce your energy costs. The best way to do this is to use the digital 'in-home' display that you'll be offered with a smart meter to keep track of how much energy you're using; you can then try to reduce it.



Good Practice / Improvements required

- Tailored approach to individuals
- Partnership working
- Education / Behaviour change
- Funding available
- Help with self disconnection / standing charge
- Ongoing support for vulnerable clients



Switching Energy Suppliers & help available

This week there are currently 73 suppliers on the market offering competitive deals and one main supplier offering over 140 tariffs for electricity alone . The Big Six also offer help with energy efficiency measures and debt relief .

My Story

- 30 years ago
 - Social Housing
 - Low income household
 - Electric Storage heaters
 - Prepayment meters
 - Heating only in main room & hall
 - 2 main suppliers
- Today
 - Owner Occupier
 - Gas central heating / Double glazing
 - Competitive market
 - Access to no interest loans for energy efficiency measures

Any Questions ?

