

The Effects Of Fuel Poverty

Pauline Sandell
Fuel Poverty Advisor



Who we are

Centre for Sustainable Energy

- Set up 1979
- Over 45 staff

Energy Saving Trust Advice Line

- Funded by the Energy Saving Trust
- Free, independent and impartial advice
- Part of UK network

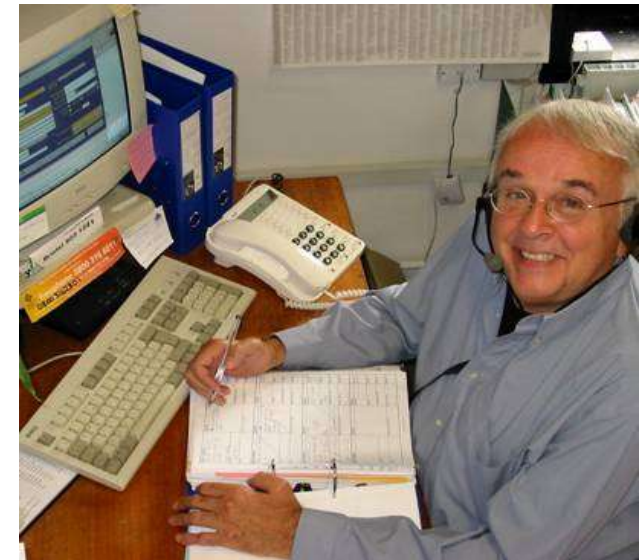
The energy advice network

- Free-phone advice line
0800 512 012
- Home Energy Checks
- Sending supporting information



How we can help

- Free and impartial energy saving advice to householders
- 9-5pm, Monday to Friday with an answering service outside of these hours
- An experienced team of City and Guilds trained advisors
- Referrals from other organisations
- Make referrals to grant schemes
- Literature on a range of subjects
- Strong links with a range of other organisations



Overview

- Fuel poverty – Causes and impacts
- Keeping warm at home – Energy efficiency/Affordable warmth
- Avoiding damp and condensation
- Funding for householders – Insulation subsidies and other grants
- Signposting to other services and support

Fuel Poverty- What Is It?

- The inability to adequately heat the home
- Households spending more than 10% of their income on fuel



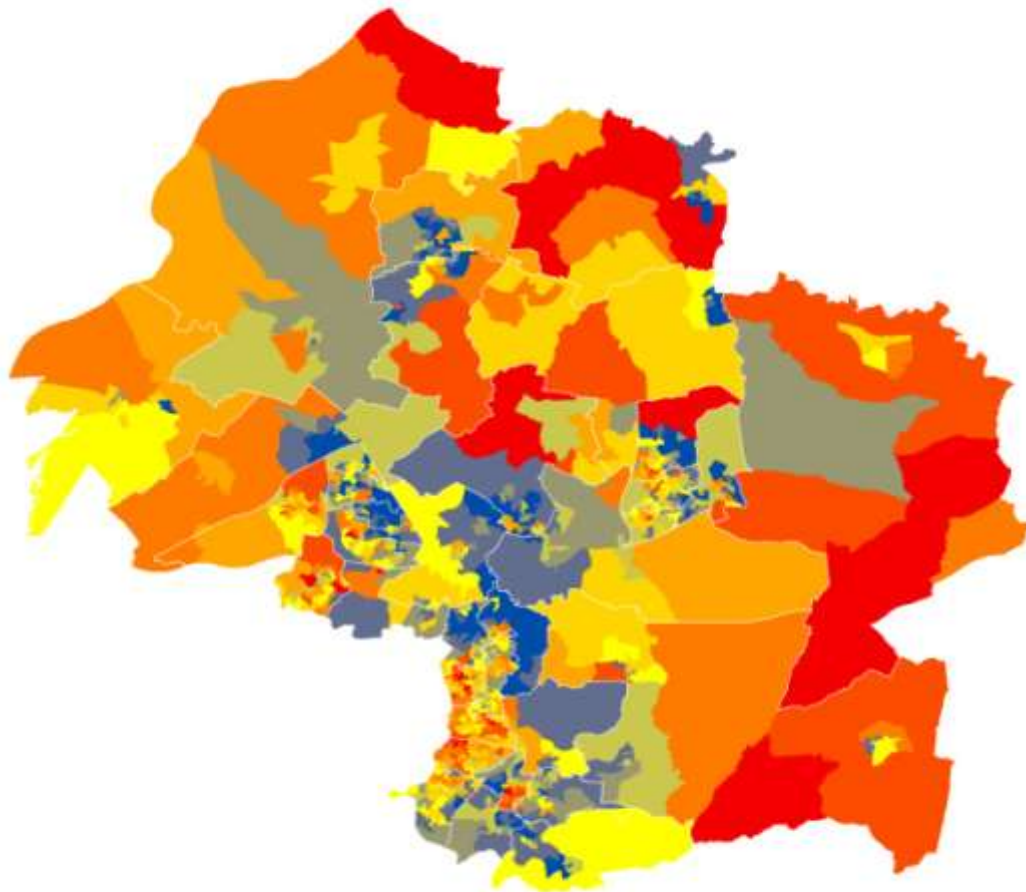
Fuel Poverty Facts

- 5.4 million households cannot afford to pay for the warmth they need and **9 million people** live in these homes
- Over 2.5 million fuel poor homes are occupied by people of pension age
- **3 million homes** suffer severe condensation

Source: UK Fuel Poverty Strategy, DTI











Fuel poverty in S. Glos

Fuel Poverty Indicator Map
South Gloucestershire



Legend

Basic Income Definition
% of households in Fuel Poverty

	3.3% - 4.7%
	4.8% - 5.2%
	5.3% - 5.5%
	5.6% - 5.9%
	6% - 6.3%
	6.4% - 6.7%
	6.8% - 7.1%
	7.2% - 7.7%
	7.8% - 8.6%
	8.7% - 16.8%

Fuel poverty – causes and impacts

Causes of fuel poverty



1. Low incomes
2. Low income householders spending more time in their home than other householders
3. Under occupancy
4. Health-related requirements for additional warmth
5. Rural circumstances (hard to treat housing)
6. Lack of knowledge



Technical Causes

1. Poor housing & levels of insulation
2. Expensive heating fuels/methods of payment
3. Inefficient heating systems & controls
4. Lack of capital for investment



Financial Causes

- The average UK household spends over **£1300** on fuel every year...
- ...but could save **£270** a year by being more energy efficient
- Fuel prices are rapidly increasing. BG putting prices up by 18% electric and 16% gas.
- National Energy Action (NEA) estimates that 1 in 5 households in the UK are classed as 'fuel poor'.





RURAL SERVICES
NETWORK



**Understanding the
real depth and impact
of
fuel poverty in rural England**

**A project by the Rural Services Network
for the Commission for Rural Communities**

CRC research...



- Strong link between fuel poverty and health and wellbeing
- Cold related illnesses such as asthma and respiratory disease higher in fuel poor rural households than non-fuel poor rural households
- Most of these households have to ration their fuel in winter
- Most said that they go without other things to pay for their fuel, and turn their heating down or off in winter to save money on their fuel bills

- A project by the Rural Services Network for the Commission for Rural Communities
- September 2010 <http://ruralcommunities.gov.uk>

Impact of cold damp home on health and wellbeing



- Rise in blood pressure → increased risk of heart attacks and strokes
- Symptoms of arthritis → increased trips and falls
- Illnesses such as asthma and other respiratory diseases
- Social isolation
- Anxiety and depression
- Impact on standard of living
- 50,000 excess winter deaths each year



Being cold...



If it gets far too cold, I go to bed. Last winter I spent more time in bed than I did downstairs. I go to bed early, you know? But during the day, I would go into the kitchen, shut the door, and put the gas heat on in the kitchen like where I have my food and what have you, and then about four o'clock I'd retire to the back room or dining room as you would call it and put the heating on in there, and there I'd stay."

(David, widowed, retired)

Recognising signs of fuel poverty!



What your client tells you:

- Complains of being cold or feeling draughts
- Fuel bills too high, owes money for fuel
- Uses prepayment meter to avoid running up debt
- Stays in bed to keep warm
- Sits with hot water bottle to keep warm
- Wants to stay in hospital because more comfortable
- Uses only part of the house to keep warm



Recognising signs of fuel poverty!

What you notice when you visit:

- Home feels cold or draughty
- Smells of damp
- No visible form of heating OR the only heating is an open fire, individual electric fires or bottled gas
- Ventilators have been blocked up
- Client wears lots of clothes indoors
- Curtains closed in day to keep in heat
- Signs of condensation dampness
- Signs that client only lives in one room



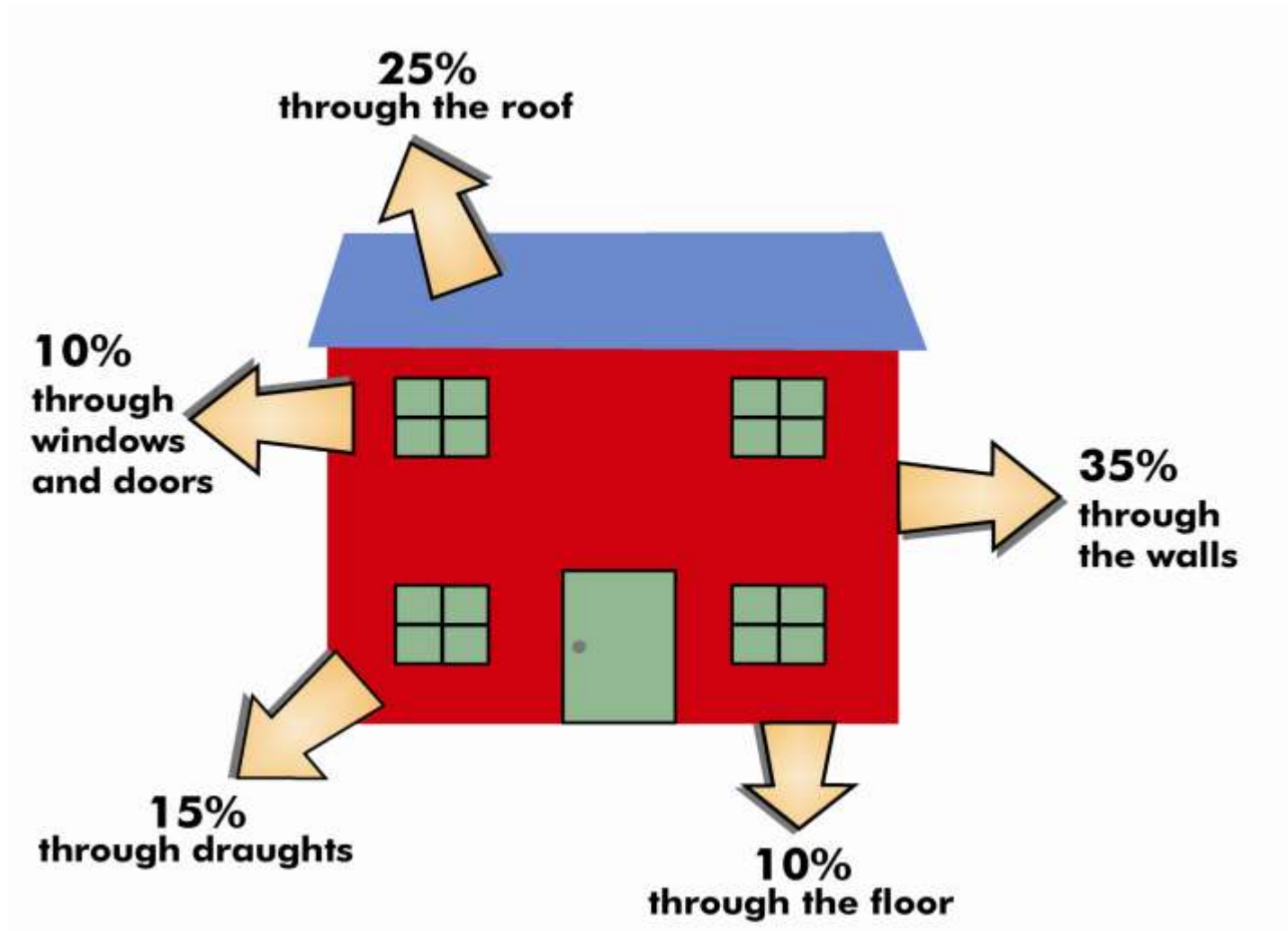
“I don't mind the [prepayment] meter because at least I'm not getting a big bill at the end, so you only pay for what you're doing. I know where I am with it, yes....But I know that if you are on a meter you have to pay more which seems a little unfair”. (Emily, young single, not working mother, living with her son

“You know, you just get so fed up and depressed. It's like there's no help out there... Everywhere you try to get help from, they just shut the door in your face. That's how it feels... But you still have to pay your bills. And it's a struggle. I mean, you manage, don't you because you've got no choice, you have to.” (Lucy, not working, single, living with 12 year-old granddaughter)

Keeping warm at home – energy efficiency/affordable warmth

How we can help!

Heat loss in the home



Insulation



- Loft insulation – saves up to £110 per year
- Cavity wall insulation – saves up to £90 per year
- Hot water tank and pipe insulation
- Floor Insulation
- Draught proofing



Everyday Changes



No Cost Changes:

- Close curtains at dusk & tuck them behind your radiators
- Only boil as much water as you need
- Shower instead of bathing
- Switch appliances off instead of leaving them on standby
- Set hot water cylinder thermostat to 60°C
- Change your fuel supplier.

Everyday Changes

Low Cost Changes:

- Fit a hot water tank jacket
- Use energy saving light bulbs
- Replace appliances with energy efficient models
- Draught proofing
- Fit reflective panels behind your radiator
- Fit low cost secondary glazing

General energy efficiency advice:

- Heating systems – controls (particularly NSH)
- Hot water - controls
- Billing and tariffs (social tariffs)
- A –rated white goods
- CFL's
- Behavioural
- Transport

Avoiding Damp and Condensation

Condensation

- **H**eating
- **I**nsulation
- **V**entilation
- **E**xcessive moisture production



Condensation and damp

- To help avoid condensation problems try to:
 - Reduce the amount of water produced e.g using saucepan lids
 - Provide appropriate ventilation, particularly in the kitchen and bathroom
 - Try to dry clothes outside or ventilate the house whilst drying clothes
 - Increase the heating to reduce the number of cold surfaces
 - Insulate the building to prevent heat loss and warm up cold surfaces

Funding for householders – Insulation subsidies and other grants

S. Glos. insulation grant schemes: *Warm & Well*



- Open to all residents in S. Glos. Council who own or privately rent their properties.
- If you are **over 70**, or qualify for certain benefits you can get **free** cavity wall and loft insulation.

Extra funding when available:

- If you are **over 60** and have savings of < £16,000 and a low income (roughly <£13,000) you can get **free** cavity wall and loft insulation.
- If you have children under 16 and savings <£16,000 and a low income you can also get **free** cavity wall and loft insulation.
- **Everyone else** can get cavity wall insulation for as little as £149, and loft insulation for as little as £179.

Warm Front

- National Government grant scheme
- Grant of up to £3500 for 'warm improvements' (£6000 if you have oil)
- Available to homeowners & private tenants who receive certain benefits
- Measures covered...
 - Central heating repair & replacement (homeowners only)
 - Central heating installation where none currently exists
 - Loft & cavity wall insulation
 - Draught proofing & hot water tank jacket as secondary measures
- Long waiting time for heating works
 - (3-6 months)
- To be replaced by **Green Deal** next year.

All the different grants and financial help available can be very confusing

Contact the Energy Saving Trust advice centre who will help guide you through to the best option for you and your tenant

0800 512 012

enquiries@est-southwest.org.uk

Who else can help?

- Consumer Direct
- Fuel price comparison sites
- Local Home Improvement Agency e.g. Care & Repair
- Winter Fuel Payment helpline (08459 15 15 15)
- Fuel supplier (Priority Service Register and Social Tariffs)
- Citizens Advice Bureau

Questions & Answers

Thank you

Evaluation