

THE SCOTTISH
FUEL POVERTY
ADVISORY PANEL



Annual Report 2023 - 2024

The Scottish Fuel Poverty
Advisory Panel

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Foreword from the Chair

The Panel believe that fuel poverty can and must be consigned to history *by delivering* paradigm-shifting outcomes for families and households across Scotland who at the moment live daily with the challenge of fuel poverty. Since 2019, just over two years before the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel's appointment, fuel poverty levels in Scotland have increased from 24.6% of households living in fuel poverty to 31%¹, with extreme fuel poverty levels rising from 12.4% of households to 18.5% as at the end of 2022. But behind every figure or percentage there is a real family living in fuel poverty. And so, in real terms, the number of families and households living in fuel poverty rose from 613,000 to 791,000. As a Panel we know and see firsthand the real impact of living in fuel poverty, on families and individuals, and their capacity to lead a healthy life. We have heard directly from those living in fuel poverty who describe the physical and mental impact of living in a perceived continual crisis, the choices that families and households across Scotland have to make, and the consequential impacts this has on employment, education and resilience.

Notwithstanding the events that have forced a further 178,000 households into fuel poverty and the increased burden placed on those who were struggling already, the Panel is resolute in its mission to ensure that the strategies and solutions that have been developed to address fuel poverty are meaningful, well targeted, and impactful. With the pressures presented by an increase in people needing support, and the spending constraints of the present economic climate it is critical that strategies and solutions are frequently reviewed to ensure that the intended benefits can still be delivered. Because despite the changing environment, the statutory commitment remains that Scotland is free from fuel poverty by 2040². And to meet these targets, strategies and actions in Scotland and outwith too, by the UK Government, Ofgem, organisations supporting those in fuel poverty, and by the energy system and supply chain, will need to be responsive and evolving.

As this is our first annual report, we will detail the work we have done since our appointment in January 2022, including the advice we have offered on where some additional focus is needed. Our objective, over the past two years, has been to ensure that our recommendations and conclusions are clear and provide a stable foundation which can be built upon in years to come. Our objective is not to criticise, but to provide constructive, evidence and insight-led feedback that further highlights the causes and impacts of fuel poverty and helps to progress the thinking about how it is addressed.

I would like to put on record my thanks to all Panel and Secretariat members who served during the last period. The professionalism, perspectives and passion you bring cannot be underestimated. It is also important to give my utmost thanks and appreciation for those who have supported those suffering fuel poverty across Scotland. I have seen repeated and outstanding examples of the support, guidance and advice that has been provided to those in fuel poverty from across the third and housing sectors, from government and from companies across the energy system and supply chain. I also recognise the willingness of organisations large and small, and individuals too, to engage with the Panel, and the way that we have been welcomed into the debate around how fuel poverty should be best addressed in Scotland. And it is through recognising that although there are many different perspectives and opinions, we all share one common goal in addressing fuel poverty, this makes me optimistic that a continued and collaborative focus on tackling fuel poverty will deliver the much-needed positive outcomes.

As ever, I welcome any feedback or perspective that you might want to share and can be contacted at enquiries@fuelpovertypanel.scot.



Matthew Cole

Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel - Chair



¹ Scottish House Condition Survey 2022: Key Findings (www.gov.scot)

² Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019 (legislation.gov.uk)

About us

The Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel was appointed on 1st January 2022 and our supporting Secretariat was appointed in the third quarter of 2022. We are an advisory non-departmental public body which provides independent advice to Scottish Ministers on fuel poverty and scrutiny of their progress towards delivering Scotland's 2040 fuel poverty targets. As well as the 2040 target to, effectively, eradicate fuel poverty, there are two interim targets: the 2035 target that no more than 10% of households are in fuel poverty, no more than 3% are in extreme fuel poverty and the median fuel poverty gap is no more than £300, and the 2030 target – just six years away – that no more than 15% of households in Scotland are in fuel poverty, no more than 5% are in extreme fuel poverty and the median fuel poverty gap is no more than £350.

We are here to help the Scottish Government work on short, medium and long-term fuel poverty issues and potential solutions, including how support can best be provided to those in, or entering, fuel poverty.

The Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019 sets out specific requirements for the Panel in relation to fuel poverty.

These include:

- commenting on Scottish Ministers progress on fuel poverty targets.
- advising Scottish Ministers on how policies and programmes are addressing the four drivers of fuel poverty:
 - 1) High energy prices.
 - 2) Poor energy efficiency of the home.
 - 3) Low household income.
 - 4) Energy consumption.

The Tackling Fuel Poverty Strategy 2021 extends the Panel's role to include:

- Supporting an evidence-based approach to fuel poverty which puts those with lived experience at its centre.
- Advising on the delivery of the Fuel Poverty Strategy, including on the mechanism for how the strategy-delivery is monitored and evaluated.
- Championing and fostering a collaborative approach to addressing fuel poverty across Scotland.
- Advising Scottish Ministers on the impact of new evidence, technologies, and opportunities to tackle fuel poverty.

We are a small Panel of five **members** collectively working a total of about 63 days a year. We are supported by a Secretariat of three.

We collectively have experience of working to support – either directly or indirectly – those struggling to manage their energy bills, knowledge of the strategies and policies across the fuel poverty landscape and the wider energy system, knowledge of fuel poverty research, as well as first-hand and real-life experience of how difficult life can be when fuel bills become unaffordable.


Our Approach

In the just over two years since our appointment, we have been working to:

- Engage widely with stakeholders across the fuel poverty landscape – in Scotland and beyond – including those with lived experience of fuel poverty, third sector organisations, national and local governments, Ofgem and the Energy Ombudsman.
- Reflect on the Scottish Government's Tackling Fuel Poverty Strategy which shapes and sets the direction for fuel poverty policy in Scotland, offering advice and recommendations to the Scottish Government on the strategy and progress towards its outcomes.
- Contribute to the work to mitigate fuel poverty through participating in cross-sector groups, key consultations, offering Ministers advice and exploring the possibilities for both short and longer-term measures to alleviate, and ultimately eradicate, fuel poverty.
- Develop and formalise our vision, mission and principles (which follow below) and objectives through our initial work up to March 2024. Our objectives are reflected in our recently published Strategic Plan for April 2024 to March 2027 and our Workplan for April 2024 to March 2025.
- Establish the Panel on a strong governance footing.


Our Vision, Mission, and Principles

The panel's vision is for:




A Scotland where everyone lives in an energy efficient home and has access to affordable clean energy – a Scotland where no one lives in fuel poverty.


The panel's work is driven by its mission to:



Strengthen fuel poverty policy, legislation and practice in Scotland and the UK.



Eradicate fuel poverty and increase resilience by engaging with people with lived experience and those who support them.



By advising Scottish Ministers, scrutinising progress, and advocating for action.

In working to realise our vision and achieve our mission, the Panel aims to foster an ethos supported by these principles:

Independent
Undertake work that is independent and objective.

Collaborative
Work in an inquisitive, consultative, and collaborative way, including in the development, delivery and sharing of our thinking and advice.

Understanding
Be respectful and supportive listeners to all, particularly offering a safe space for those with lived experience of fuel poverty to share their insights, understanding and views.

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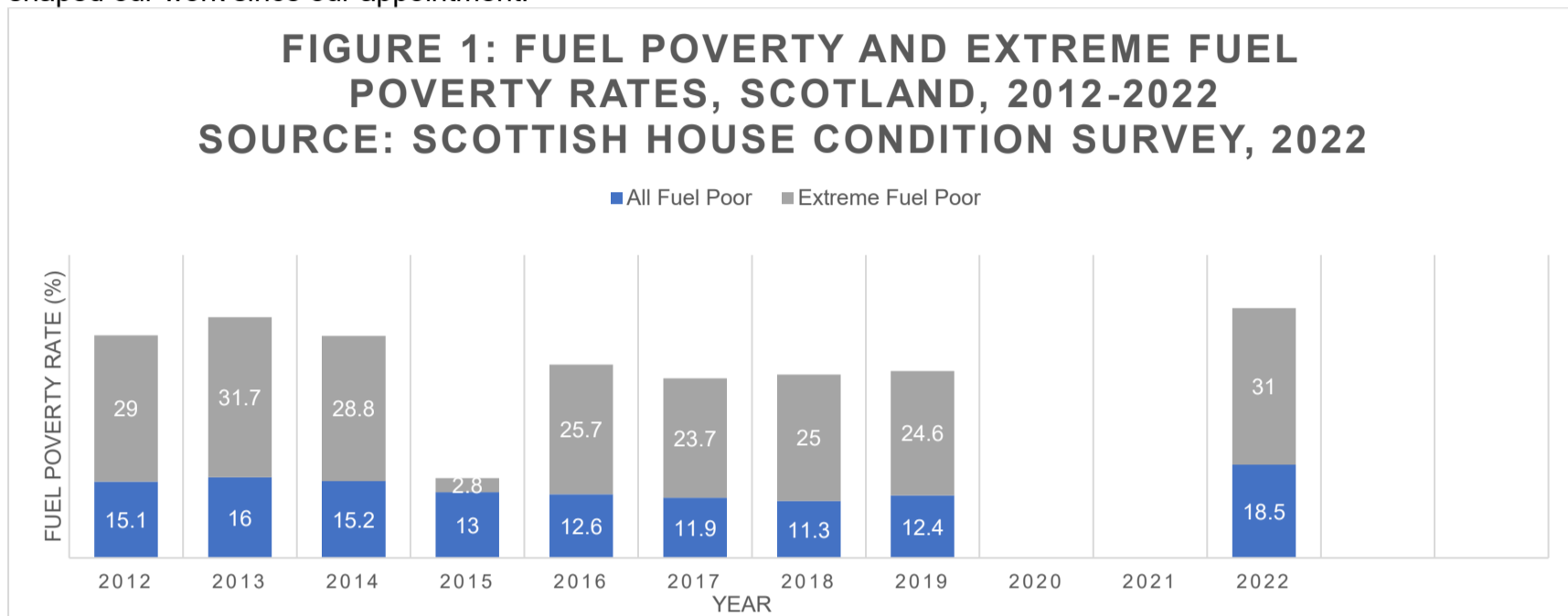
Transparent
Be open and transparent, bringing our Code of Conduct principles to all that we do.

Dynamic
Provide visionary and dynamic advice and input to both long term challenges and the response to immediate need.

Living with fuel poverty in Scotland

Increases in fuel poverty since 2019

The fuel poverty landscape has changed significantly since 2019 when The Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019 was passed: dramatic household energy price inflation has led to increasing numbers of households entering fuel poverty, as well as deepening the level of fuel poverty in already fuel poor households³. Energy price rises and fragile household incomes have created a significant new challenge in tackling fuel poverty. The 2022 Scottish House Condition Survey shows that since 2019, progress made in reducing fuel poverty rates has effectively been reversed⁴. Rates of fuel poverty have risen from 24.6% of households, with 12.4% in extreme fuel poverty in 2019, to 31% in fuel poverty and 18.5% in extreme fuel poverty in 2022 (as shown in Figure 1 rates of fuel poverty and extreme fuel poverty rates, Scotland, 2021-2022). This backdrop of unprecedented energy price inflation, the wider cost of living crisis and their impact on those suffering fuel poverty, has dictated and shaped our work since our appointment.



“It feels like the upheaval [new more efficient heating system] was all for nothing. I can’t afford to put my heating on.”

The price cap underestimates the energy costs for many households (those with electric heating or alternative fuels – primarily those living rurally) because it is based on a dual-fuel gas and electricity model. We have heard about the huge barrier which high energy prices present to keeping warm, particularly for those off the gas grid or using alternative fuels. The “pay more, use less” issue which these households face because it takes more electricity to heat an energy inefficient home to any level of warmth, let alone recommended ones, leads many to under consume or ration. It is not surprising that those with lived experience were passionate about the need for an energy discount mechanism – to protect them from high, and unaffordable, energy prices.

No comparable data collected in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Living in fuel poverty in Scotland – what we have heard

We have heard many difficult stories during our evidence-gathering and stakeholder engagement sessions from those with lived experience of fuel poverty, and from those who support them. Fuel poverty is not inevitable but the 4 drivers of fuel poverty – and how they interconnect – can make the approach to mitigations and solutions complex:



- 1. High energy prices.** Of the fuel poverty drivers, high energy prices are currently the primary driver of fuel poverty in Scotland. In spite of the recent reduction in energy prices (the Price Cap fell from £1,928 in January 2024 to £1,690 in April 2024 – although this does not protect all consumers), Ofgem⁵ has pointed out that energy prices remain higher than before the energy price crisis. This has left a legacy of huge consumer energy debt⁶ and many households are struggling to pay their energy bills⁷. Intelligence suggests that energy prices will continue to be high until the late 2030s⁸, therefore Scotland's ambition to eradicate fuel poverty by 2040 will be in the context of continuing high energy prices.

³ House of Commons Library (2023) Fuel poverty in Commons Library (parliament.uk)⁴ Scottish House Condition Survey: 2022 Key Findings - gov.scot (www.gov.scot).

⁴ Scottish House Condition Survey: 2022 Key Findings - gov.scot (www.gov.scot).

⁵ Affordability and debt in the domestic retail market – a Call for Input | Ofgem

⁶ Consumer Scotland energy tracker (energy-en23-01-energy-affordability-consumer-scotland-energy-tracker-winter-2023-24-briefing.pdf)

⁷ CAS stressed_about_debt_impact_evaluation.pdf (cas.org.uk)

⁸ New forecast warns power prices to remain elevated until late 2030s - Cornwall Insight (cornwall-insight.com)



“It’s good when you live above someone – you get some residual heat from their flat – but it’s difficult if you have lots of outside walls.”

We have heard from those, living in fuel poverty, of their reluctance to heat when they know it will go straight out of ill-fitting windows, how mould and damp is an issue – sometimes an underlying poor fabric issue, sometimes exacerbated because people can’t afford to heat. The affordability of home efficiency measures across the public and private sectors is a barrier to improving the warmth of homes.

2. Poor energy efficiency of the home is an important driver of fuel poverty. However, even those living in an EPC A, B, or C⁹-banded home can be fuel poor. Albeit that for those living in fuel poverty in an energy efficient home, the lower running costs can make the difference between living in fuel poverty and extreme fuel poverty¹⁰. The question of where the costs fall for delivering net zero, in which decarbonising heat in homes plays a significant part, is one which governments, consumer advocacy, Ofgem and industry are grappling with¹¹. But however these costs ultimately fall, they have the potential to negatively impact those suffering fuel poverty unless protecting people from and preventing fuel poverty is at the front and centre of the heat transition. Net zero heating systems have the potential to decrease fuel poverty, but an unintended consequence is that they may also deepen it¹². As Scottish Government accelerates the transition to low-carbon heating systems, there is also a question of impacts on fuel poor households. Such heating systems can create more efficient and warmer homes, yet electricity remains 4 times¹³ the cost of gas. This price discrepancy risks inadvertently increasing bills without dedicated support and protection for those in fuel poverty, or a wider reconfiguration of current energy markets to align electricity and gas prices.



“I feel I’m closing in on myself.”

We have heard about how low income and energy debt are impacting mental and physical health and general wellbeing. Cumulative issues with meters – pre-payment, Smart meters (or the lack of) or a general mismatch between heating systems and meter types – can cause or deepen fuel poverty. Dramatic changes in health or other personal experiences can trigger fuel – and wider poverty – with frightening speed.

3. Low incomes make paying for energy challenging, and often impossible, particularly in an era of high energy prices. Fuel poverty is an intersectional issue where multiple coalescing points of vulnerability determine a household’s risk of fuel poverty. We do know that those with low incomes are often those with higher energy needs – those with disabilities, chronic health conditions, the very young and the elderly. We also know that low incomes cause people to ration fuel and, for some, to self-disconnect their energy supply altogether – impacting their health, wellbeing and overall capacity¹⁴. Fuel rationing and disconnection also have wider negative impacts. For example, where households are experiencing child poverty and/or more than one person has health issues, and/or, the household has debt and arrears. There is also then the wider strain this places on supporting services and those who deliver them.

⁹ [Scottish Housing Condition Survey: 2022 Key Findings](#) – reports that in 2022, 27% of households living in dwellings rated EPC band C or better were fuel poor.

¹⁰ [Scottish Housing Condition Survey: 2022 Key Findings](#) notes that the lowest rates of extreme fuel poverty are associated with higher energy efficiency standards. Only 12% of households living in dwellings rated EPC C or better were in extreme fuel poverty, compared to 23% for dwellings in band D and 32% for dwellings in band E.

¹¹ Energy Research Demand Centre (2024) [Energy prices are going down, but the burden on those least able to pay remains too high - Energy Demand Research Centre \(edrc.ac.uk\)](#)

¹² The Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel (2024) [Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel has Commissioned Research - Fuel Poverty Scotland \(fuelpovertypanel.scot\)](#)

¹³ [New energy price cap level for April to June 2024 starts today | Ofgem](#)

¹⁴ The Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel (2023) [Energy rationing an increasing coping mechanism for dealing with fuel poverty - Fuel Poverty Scotland \(fuelpovertypanel.scot\)](#)



“Many people would benefit from targeted advice on how to use their heating most effectively.”

4. How energy is used in the home – A lack of understanding of both home heating and the wider energy market, as well as varying levels of supplier understanding of individual circumstances, can and does lead to increased fuel poverty. This lack of energy literacy and poor supplier practice can also lead to the under-consumption of energy, which is often unrecognised by typical fuel poverty measurements. Those suffering fuel poverty, and those vulnerable to fuel poverty, can be lifted out of and protected from fuel poverty through consumer protections and interventions that recognise that the prevailing cost to heat a home is unachievable for many.

We have heard many stories about how those suffering fuel poverty struggle to keep warm and the strategies they've developed to try to cope. These range from food rationing, eating hot food rarely or not at all, staying in bed, always wearing outside clothing inside, only heating when the children are at home, among other coping strategies.

Our Work since appointment to March 2024

Advice

Actions to alleviate the impact of energy prices (September 2022)

Shortly after our initial engagement with Scottish Ministers, and with a fuel poverty rate then running at 35% in Scotland¹⁵, we provided them with [initial advice](#) (October 2022) setting out eleven recommendations on actions which could be taken in response to escalating energy prices and the detrimental effect these are having on those suffering fuel poverty. We have continued to advocate for these recommendations – developing them further over the past 18 months. Our recommendations coalesced under four themes:

1. Optimising Advice Agencies' delivery to mitigate the impact of rising energy prices, and other cost of living challenges, on households.
2. Protecting those suffering fuel poverty, and those at risk of entering fuel poverty, from its long-term effects.
3. Continuing to advocate for Government funding and policy change to mitigate the escalating disparity between incomes and energy prices.
4. Effective monitoring and evaluating the Fuel Poverty Strategy.

We also offered our views on the Warmer Homes Eligibility Criteria for 2023–2024 - this led to the criteria being broadened to capture those experiencing fuel poverty but not necessarily in receipt of passport benefits. And [we advised Scottish Government policy makers](#) on bringing a fuel poverty lens to energy strategy and just transition planning and to the Heat in Buildings Strategy and Bill proposals. [We have also advised on the newly devolved Pension Age Winter Heating Payment](#) – recommending a progressive Scottish replacement for the Winter Fuel Payment to provide more targeted support for the fuel poor.

Scrutiny

Reflections on “Tackling Fuel Poverty in Scotland– a strategic approach” (published in September 2023)

Responding to a Scottish Government request to offer advice on their fuel poverty strategy, [we set out a series of recommendations](#) (building on our initial advice to Ministers) on how the fuel poverty strategy could be updated to respond to the significant increase in fuel poverty rates (triggered by the energy crisis), as well as being delivered and monitored. Identified priority areas for action were to:

1. Focus on improving the energy efficiency of Scotland's housing stock through improved planning and accelerated investment.
2. Emphasise the structural importance of advice and advocacy in tackling fuel poverty.
3. Emphasise the key role in the short to medium term of the Fuel Insecurity Fund, and other direct measures, to help with energy costs and managing energy debt.
4. Develop a stronger focus on the opportunities to influence the UK Government energy market reforms in the interests of low income and vulnerable households.
5. Develop a stronger focus on improving health outcomes for those suffering fuel poverty.
6. Explore the value in building on the Scottish Government's Energy Summits to create effective cross-sector collaboration.

In our scrutiny capacity, we have also supported the Scottish Government in developing their initial monitoring and evaluation framework for the fuel poverty strategy.

¹⁵ The fuel poverty figure of 35% here is taken from the Scottish Government's fuel poverty estimates produced when Ofgem' announced, in line with the UK Gov. Energy Price Guarantee scheme in September 2022, its Energy Price Cap of £2,500.

Consequences of the 2024-2025 Scottish budget for progress on the fuel poverty targets

We have [provided comments to the Scottish Government](#) on the challenges of the April 2024-March 2025 budget settlement for progressing Scotland's fuel poverty targets and the need to protect the vulnerable through both short-term crises support and secure the vulnerable from fuel poverty.

Advocacy

Flexible Tariff Discount

We have consistently sought to promote the view that fuel poverty is not inevitable. [We have worked to influence the UK Government on the efficacy of a flexible tariff discount to close the fuel poverty gap](#) (that is the gap between a fuel poor household's income and the additional money needed to lift it out of fuel poverty). We have shared our thinking and rationale with the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and provided evidence to the Energy Security and Net Zero Committee. A flexible tariff discount, as we – along with many others – have argued, can shield and protect those in fuel poverty in the short, medium and long term. We have advocated for a discount that closes the fuel poverty gap, spending money wisely where it will have the greatest impact and using targeting to drive greatest outcomes.

Reform of standing charges

We have also [engaged with Ofgem](#) – advocating for a fairer approach to standing charges which prioritises changes to benefit the most vulnerable consumers and those at risk of fuel poverty. Furthermore, we have [highlighted regulatory breaches impacting those vulnerable to fuel poverty](#), for example, when we heard during engagement with the housing sector of breaches in supplying energy supply to new and existing social housing.

Engagement

We have contributed to building the fuel poverty evidence base across Scotland and it has informed all of our advice and scrutiny work.

We have done this through our engagement with the voice of lived experience, specifically through meeting and listening to the Poverty and Inequality Commission's Panel of Experts (with lived experience of fuel poverty) and with those who have used the advisory and housing services we have engaged with, therefore hearing either directly from people living in fuel poverty themselves or from those who help them.

We have also built our stakeholder network through evidence sessions across the advice, housing and energy sectors, with national and local governments, Consumer Scotland, Ofgem and the Energy Ombudsman, and with England's Committee on Fuel Poverty.

We have participated in Scottish Ministers' Energy and Poverty summits, as well as Ministerial Vulnerable Energy Consumers and Rural Poverty Consumers working groups¹⁶.

We have cemented this stakeholder engagement through participating and attending the Energy Action Scotland and the Scottish Federation of Housing Association conferences. And, importantly, we believe that holding some of our meetings outside the central belt (Aberdeen and Inverness to date) help us to explore and further understand regional experiences of fuel poverty and potential place-based solutions.

We have communicated our work on [our website](#) (launched in March 2023) and via media engagement and newsletters.

¹⁶ Scottish Government (2022) [Tackling the energy cost crisis - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#); Scottish Government (2022) [Cross party anti-poverty summit: First Minister's opening remarks – 3 May 2023 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#). See also [Energy: Rural Energy Consumers Short-Life Working Group - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Research

Working in partnership with the academics, we have commissioned the University of Edinburgh to undertake two pieces of fuel poverty research. The research areas and key findings are:

A systematic review of the unintended consequences of decarbonisation technologies for fuel poverty outcomes – March 2024. The findings of this review showed that:

1. Fuel poverty rates are on the rise, with rising household energy costs exacerbating the cost of living in the UK, disproportionately affecting vulnerable households, potentially worsening their health and overall quality of life.
2. Groups with intersecting demographics at risk of fuel poverty need to be given greater attention, for example minority ethnic households, students, low-income renters, disabled people, and those living in rural and off-grid housing.
3. Four key technologies are key to domestic decarbonisation: heat pumps, hydrogen, heat networks and insulation. Of these, little mention is made of what unintended consequences they could have for fuel poverty.
4. The primary unintended consequence found is the unaffordability of decarbonisation technologies for at risk groups, who are likely to already be on low-incomes.
5. Home decarbonisation technologies come with the opportunity to decrease fuel poverty while contributing to net zero if implemented effectively with supportive government schemes.
6. Several existing schemes and grants are inaccessible to the fuel poor living in Scotland due to closure or their limited availability outside England.

Research on energy service rationing in Scotland: the factors which impact rationing, the groups more likely to be affected and what cross-sectoral activity could help to tackle the problems identified – August 2023. The research findings were that:

1. The groups more likely to undertake self-rationing behaviours, include:
 - the elderly
 - single occupant households
 - families with two or more children
 - households with no central heating
 - households with average incomes affected by rapid increases in the cost-of-living
 - those on low or precarious incomes and not in receipt of benefits.
2. Self-rationing is perceived as more prevalent amongst rural households, affecting those without mains gas supplies who are often reliant on bulk fuel deliveries, but also those on pre-payment meters, which exist in households across the urban-rural divide.
3. Long-term, consistently high, volatile, or rising energy prices are seen to increase the likelihood of energy service rationing, increasing demands for additional financial support and demand for referrals to energy advice services, with implications for staffing levels.
4. Self-rationing carries implications for mental and physical health (and follow on pressures on the National Health Service) and restricted educational access and attainment, decreases in building quality, increase energy debt, leading to poor occupant safety, and increasing pressures on supporting services.

Governance

We have worked with the Scottish Government to produce our Framework Agreement which sets how we and the Scottish Government will work together, and the key roles and responsibilities of the Panel, our Secretariat, the Accountable Officer; Scottish Ministers; and the Scottish Government Portfolio Accountable Officer. As well as our scrutiny, advisory and collaborative roles, the Framework Agreement also covers corporate roles such as financial and risk management. [Our financial statement for the first full year of our operation – March 2023- April 2024 – is set out in Annex A]. Our Framework Agreement with the Scottish Government, published in March 2024, can be viewed – [here](#). One of our responsibilities under this Framework Agreement is to publish an annual report. This is our first annual report and covers the period since our appointment. It is also our first full year of activities since our Secretariat was appointed.

Looking forward to the next strategic and work planning period, we have developed and published our [Strategic plan for April 2024 to March 2027](#) and our [Workplan for April 2024 to March 2025](#).

Members of the Panel

There are 5 panel members who were all appointed through a public appointments process. They are:

Matthew Cole – The Chair – Matt heads up the Fuel Bank Foundation, which provides same-day financial support and proactive advice to families living without heat or power, using the lived experience of the 1.5m people helped to date to influence and shape government policy and industry standards, and to drive a renewed focus on delivering great customer outcomes back across the energy industry. Matt also independently advocates on behalf of the most vulnerable across the utilities' sector and works to drive different strategies to better ensure that customer needs are understood and met as part of a just transition to net zero.

Margaret Corrigan – Margaret is recently retired from managing front-line fuel poverty services, where she worked for 9 years. She has seen first-hand the struggles and subsequent impact on those families living in fuel poverty.

Kirsten Jenkins - Kirsten is a Senior Lecturer in Energy, Environment and Society within the Science, Technology and Innovation Studies group at the University of Edinburgh and Programme Director for the Energy, Society and Sustainability MSc. Alongside her lecturership, Kirsten serves as Managing Editor for the journal *Energy Research & Social Science*, Associate Fellow of the Durham Energy Institute, and external examiner to postgraduate programmes in Development, Environment and Policy at SOAS University of London. Kirsten also runs two large international energy social science networks and works on research grants related to fuel and transport poverty, inclusivity in the energy transition and Just Transitions.

Alister Steele - Alister has 30 years' experience in delivering affordable housing and community regeneration. As Managing Director of Castle Rock Housing Association, he led the development and implementation of the organisation's energy and fuel poverty strategies. He co-founded and chaired Our Power, a not-for-profit energy supply business, and is currently a Board member of Communities Housing Trust and Allia Social Impact Investments.

Fraser Stewart – Fraser is the Just Transitions Lead at the energy consultancy Regen, working with everyone from citizens and communities to energy networks to policymakers and regulators to ensure fairness is built into every bit of the energy system. Fraser brings an intimate knowledge both from a personal and a real-world standpoint, in addition to strong knowledge of policy processes, design, and analysis at local, Scottish, and UK level.



Financial Summary

The Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel was allocated a budget of £250,000 by the Scottish Government for 2023-2024. The Panel's budget is held by the Scottish Government and the Panel is not required to produce audited accounts.

The table below provides a summary of the money that was spent on behalf of the Panel between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024.

The Panel reported a budget underspend this year. This was due to some costs associated with the Panel set up being less than expected and a staff vacancy of three months.

Expenditure, April 2023 to March 2024 –	
Staff Costs	£ 187,211.25
Panels Fees & Expenses	£ 21,790.08
Panel Meetings	£ 3,852.43
Website and IT	£ 9,331.00
Communications and Publications	£ 8,491.20
Research	£ 4,950.76
Admin, Training, and other Costs	£ 1,876.04
Consultancy	£ 4,585.00
Total	£ 242,087.76

The Panel's day rates can be viewed [here](#).